



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Darrell Windsor (Chair), Katie Riley, Wendy Alderson, Robin Sherman, Thor Christianson (Assembly liaison)
Excused: Stacy Mudry
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Kim Davis
Public: Karen Case, Jere Christner, Andrew Hinton, Ben Kraft, JJ Carlson, Ariadne Will

Chair Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

Ainslie requested moving item C after A and B. Commissioners discussed and decided to leave the agenda as it was.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 24-04](#) Approve the March 20, 2024 meeting minutes.

**M/Alderson-S/Riley moved to approve the March 20, 2024 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie informed commissioners of the number and volume of permits and filings, the next few agendas would be full. The short-term rental report would be moved to May 15.

B [MISC 24-04](#) Modification of a utility easement at Lots 2 and 3, Cedars Subdivision.

Ainslie informed commissioners of a modification to a utility easement at Lots 2 and 3, Cedars Subdivision. Per the subdivision code, the commission was to be notified in writing of any modifications.

VI. REPORTS

C [MISC 24-03](#) Housing Summit Update and Sitka Tribal Housing Needs Assessment.

Ainslie provided an update on the recent housing summit with partners Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) and Baranof Island Housing Authority (BIHA). The Sitka Tribal Housing Needs Assessment report highlighted the indigenous population loss due to

unaffordable housing. The housing summit had picked a few topics to focus on such as; establishing a local housing network, creation of new housing at higher densities, preventing displacement of mobile home parks, and the development of pocket communities with tiny homes and communal facilities.

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

D [CUP 24-03](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 343 Wortman Loop in the R-1 LD single-family and duplex residential low density district. The property is also known as Lot 20A, Block 1, Lot Line Adjustment of Lots 20 and 21, Block 1 Cascade Creek Subdivision. The request is filed by Karen Case. The owner of record is Karen Case.

Ainslie introduced a conditional use permit for a short-term rental (STR) at 343 Wortman Loop in the R-1 LD single-family and duplex low density residential district. The applicant was requesting the STR for the lower level, one-bedroom apartment with a maximum capacity of four guests. Quiet hours were listed from 10PM - 7PM and trash would be handled by the applicant. The property was well buffered by vegetation on the sides and rear with adequate parking for two vehicles and access to the property was from Wortman Loop. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant Karen Case was present. Past renters had been interim for periods of three months, and she was wanting to provide short-term housing for sports or events happening in town. She had added additional bear instructions to the renter handout and would be picking up the trash placed by renters in the trash bin for storage in the garage until trash pickup day. Public comment from Jere Christner was in favor of the STR. Commissioners discussed the loss of long-term rentals and reduced housing stock for year-round residents but stated this was following the code requirements.

M/Riley-S/Alderson moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 343 Wortman Loop in the R-1 LD single-family/duplex low density residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 20A, Block 1, Lot Line Adjustment of Lots 20 and 21, Block 1 Cascade Creek Subdivision. The request was filed by Karen Case. The owner of record was Karen Case. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M/Riley-S/Alderson moved to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

E [VAR 24-05](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a zoning variance to reduce the southwest front setback from 14' to 5' at NHN Jarvis Street in the C-1 general commercial district. The property is also known as the Remainder of Lot Three (3) US Survey 3695. The request is filled by Andrew Hinton. The owner of record is Alaska Mental Health Trust, State of Alaska.

Ainslie introduced a zoning variance request at NHN Jarvis Street in the C-1 general commercial district for a reduction from 14 feet to 5 feet to the southwest front setback. This was to facilitate construction of permanent supportive housing project with 12 residential units, a caretaker unit, and a services building which would be built during phase two. This was to provide affordable housing for the chronically homeless and provide behavioral health services, employment services, and individualized support on-site.

This property was an irregular shape and had difficult topography as it sloped towards Indian River. The Sitka Homeless Coalition (SHC) had a 30-year lease with the Alaska Mental Health Trust for the front 2 acres of the lot. The property was platted as a corner lot with two front setbacks as it abutted two rights-of-way (ROWs); Jarvis Street and the undeveloped Haley Avenue. As platted, these two ROWs only adjoin in one corner and do not intersect. The lot line abutting Jarvis street was about 810 feet in length, with only the first 68 feet abutting the ROW. The majority of the property line functioned more as a side lot line, which warranted consideration of a setback more in line with its functional use. Staff recommended approval.

Applicants Andrew Hinton and Ben Kraft were present. They had no additional details to add to the staff report. Public comment from JJ Carlson stated this side of the valley could be expanded in the future and the placement of the service building being developed in phase two could limit further development of the lot. Commissioners discussed the unique platting, ROW's and topography of the property.

M/Alderson-S/Riley moved to approve the zoning variance for a reduction to the southwest front setback at NHN Jarvis Street in the C-1 general commercial district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Remainder of Lot Three (3), U.S. Survey 3695. The request was filed by the Sitka Homeless Coalition. The owner of record was Alaska Mental Health Trust, State of Alaska. Motion passed by voice vote 4-0.

M/Alderson-S/Riley moved to adopt and approve the required findings for variances involving major structures or expansions as listed in the staff report. Motion passed by voice vote 4-0.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Windsor adjourned the meeting at 7:56 PM.