



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, February 6, 2019

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Randy Hughey, Taylor Colvin, Victor Weaver
Absent: Darrell Windsor (Vice Chair), Aaron Bean (Assembly liaison).
Staff: Scott Brylinsky (Interim Planning Director), Maegan Bosak (Community Affairs Director), Amy Ainslie (Planner I)
Public: Naomi Palosaari (STA), Dan Palof, Rosie Palof, Chance Gray, Steve Clayton, Trina Woodcock, Charlie Woodcock, Lolly Miller, Nancy Yaw Davis, Bob Sam, Roger Schmidt, Dirk White, Kris Karsunky, Derek James, Anne Pollnow, Richard Wein, Lisa Busch

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

M-Hughey/S-Colvin moved to move item F (ZA 19-01) up in the agenda to discuss before the visioning session and other evening business. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

M-Hughey/S-Weaver moved to approve the January 16, 2019 minutes. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

A [PM 19-01](#) Approve the January 16, 2019 minutes

Attachments: [01-Jan 16 2018 DRAFT](#)

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Charles Bingham informed the Commission that the Alaska Walk & Bike Conference would take place in Sitka on June 4-8. On the 6th and 7th, there would be sessions focused on making communities more walkable and bikable, and how to work with local planning commissions and departments on these initiatives. Commissioners were encouraged to attend.

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Brylinsky followed up on a question from the Commission regarding landslide mapping that was raised during consideration of the Sitka Hazards Mitigation Plan at the 1/16/19 meeting. Landslide risk and mapping was set to be completed in June and available for public review at that time. The annual short-term rental (STR) report responses were due on 2/15/19, the results would be presented to the Commission at

the 3/6/19 meeting. The Planning Department was still working on a Master Plan for the No Name Mountain area and would be submitting a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) next week. Interviews for the Planning Director position had taken place; the hiring committee was still searching. Brylinsky mentioned that the Commission may need to review permitting for the placement of small cellular towers, he would inform the Commission as more details were available.

B [MISC 19-04](#)

Annual Election of Officers

M-Hughey/S-Weaver moved to elect Chris Spivey as the Chair. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M-Colvin/S-Hughey moved to elect Darrell Windsor as the Vice Chair. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

C [MISC 19-05](#)

2019 Commission Visioning Session

Attachments: [2019 Visioning Session](#)

Bosak started by giving the Commissioners a refresher on the work efforts that went into the Sitka Comprehensive Plan. There were several housing and land use actions in the Plan that would require Commission and Planning Staff focus to complete. Bosak asked that the Commission pick five to ten actions to prioritize for 2019.

The Commissioners agreed on Housing Actions H1.1a, H1.1b, and H1.1c. Hughey advocated for the inclusion of H1.2e, "Create an affordable housing fund to offer development incentives." He envisioned this would work like an enterprise fund, perhaps using the taxes from short-term rentals or permit fees. Spivey agreed with the idea in principle, but was wary of increased fees or taxes on citizens at a time where city budgets were already stretched. Hughey contended that in order for affordable housing to happen, money will have to be made available. The commissioners agreed to tackle H1.1a, H1.1b, and H1.1c first, and then work on H1.2e, perhaps enabled by work on H1.2g.

Given the discussion on item F of the agenda and work already initiated by staff, LU 3.2 was a logical choice. Commissioners also felt LU 8.2 went hand-in-hand with the housing actions they had selected. Also, as work has already been initiated on the No Name Mountain area Master Plan, No Name Mountain was selected as the Focus Growth Area.

VI. REPORTS**VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS****D** [CUP 19-01](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a request for a conditional use permit for quasi-institutional group housing at 1421 Halibut Point Road in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 1-B, of a Minor Subdivision of Lot 1 of Hager Subdivision. The request is filed by Sitkans Against Family Violence (SAFV). The owner of record is David Levesque.

Attachments: [CUP 19-01 SAFV 1421 HPR Staff Report 2.6.19](#)
 [CUP 19-01 SAFV 1421 HPR Aerial Map](#)
 [CUP 19-01 SAFV 1421 HPR Site Photos](#)
 [CUP 19-01 SAFV 1421 HPR Plat](#)
 [CUP 19-01 SAFV 1421 HPR Administrative Back-Up](#)
 [CUP 19-01 SAFV 1421 HPR Public Comment](#)

Brylinsky presented the staff report. Michelle Mahoney, the Executive Director of SAFV, spoke on behalf of the SAFV. Mahoney stated that the permanent shelter had renovations scheduled to start in the spring of 2019 with plans to finish in December. The owner, Dave Levesque, also spoke in support of the request.

Given the temporary nature of the request, staff recommended an additional condition stating "This permit expires one year after activation, but may be extended upon Planning Commission approval." Spivey and Hughey requested that staff change the condition to have the permit expire after eighteen (18) months after activation rather than after one year.

M-Hughey/S-Colvin moved to approve the request for a conditional use permit for quasi-institutional group housing at 1421 Halibut Point Road in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 1-B, of a Minor Subdivision of Lot 1 of Hager Subdivision. The request is filed by Sitkans Against Family Violence (SAFV). The owner of record is David Levesque. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M-Hughey/S-Colvin moved to adopt the required findings. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

E [P 18-15](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a minor subdivision for a zero lot line at 746 Alice Loop in the Waterfront District. The property is also known as Lot 2 Charlie Joseph Subdivision. The application is filed by Kris Karsunky. The owner of record is Jay Stevens.

Attachments: [P 18-15 Karsunky 746 Alice Loop Staff Report 2.6.19](#)
 [P 18-15 Karsunky 746 Alice Loop Aerial Map](#)
 [P 18-15 Karsunky 746 Alice Loop Proposed Plat & Site Plans](#)
 [P 18-15 Karsunky 746 Alice Loop Site Photos](#)
 [P 18-15 Karsunky 746 Alice Loop Plat](#)
 [P 18-15 Karsunky 746 Alice Loop Administrative Back-Up](#)
 [P 18-15 Karsunky 746 Alice Loop Public Comment](#)

Brylinsky presented the staff report. Spivey asked staff to clarify if the covenants for the Charlie Joseph Subdivision precluded the development of zero lot lines, Brylinsky answered that the Charlie Joseph Subdivision covenants do not. The covenants for the nearby Ethel Staton Subdivision which is on the water side of Alice Loop does have more restrictive covenants, including restrictions on zero lot line development.

Kris Karsunky spoke as the applicant. Karsunky stated that he had originally planned to do a subdivision of the property but had some issues with setbacks and easements in terms of developing the lot, and that building a zero lot line seemed like the best option.

Ainslie read a letter received by Paul Haavig into the record.

M-Hughey/S-Weaver moved to approve the conceptual plat of a minor subdivision for a zero lot line at 746 Alice Loop in the Waterfront District. The property is also known as Lot 2 Charlie Joseph Subdivision. The application is filed by Kris Karsunky. The owner of record is Jay Stevens. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

M-Hughey/S-Weaver moved to adopt the required findings. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

F [ZA 19-01](#)

Public hearing and consideration of proposed amendments to Sitka General Code Title 22 Zoning regarding permitted, conditional, and prohibited uses in a newly created zoning Overlay District for portions of the historic Sheldon Jackson College campus. The request is filed by Chance Gray. The owners of record are Alaska Arts Southeast Inc., State of Alaska, Youth Advocates of Sitka, Sitka Sound Science Center, Sitka Summer Music Festival, Sheldon Jackson College Childcare Center, and Sitka Tribe of Alaska.

Attachments: [ZA 19-01 SJ Overlay District Staff Report 2.6.19](#)
[ZA 19-01 SJ Overlay District Aerial Map & District Boundaries](#)
[ZA 19-01 SJ Overlay District Draft Ordinance](#)
[ZA 19-01 SJ Overlay District Application](#)
[ZA 19-01 SJ Overlay District Notice & Mailing List](#)
[ZA 19-01 SJ Overlay District Public Comment](#)

Brylinsky presented the staff report on the zoning text change to add an overlay district for the historic Sheldon Jackson campus. Bosak mentioned that there were two actions in the Comprehensive Plan that reference the zoning change, and were discussed as a part of the Comprehensive Plan process. She also noted that the Sheldon Jackson campus is a National Historic Landmark.

The applicant, Chance Gray, presented on the case. The updated zoning code reflected the uses of the Sitka Sound Science Center (SSSC). He also noted that these changes had been included in the Comprehensive Plan which incorporated three years of public comment. One of the main objectives of this zoning text change was to maintain their food service in the Mill Building. The SSSC wants to continue to promote education, art, science, and economic activities in the community.

Naomi Palosaari and Bob Sam spoke on behalf of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA). STA owns property that was a part of the proposed area for which the overlay district would apply. The tribe did not have sufficient time to consider this proposal, but were particularly concerned about their property in this area because it is a known cemetery and burial site. Activities such as a bunkhouse or hotel, festivals, stores, or food trucks next to the property could lead to disturbance or destruction of the gravesite. STA wants this property, and all cemeteries in Sitka, to be rezoned to ensure their protection.

Anne Pollnow spoke as a member of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Pollnow noted that this item had not gone before HPC and that given the historic nature of the buildings on this campus it ought to. She expressed concern about how the zoning change could affect the historic designation of the properties in the proposed

overlay district.

Richard Wein asked the Commission to slow down the process and wait for the proposal to have more definition. In particular, he wished to see more conditional rather than permitted uses as to not give future owners/users carte blanche ability to develop the area.

Roger Schmidt spoke as the Executive Director of the Sitka Fine Arts Camp (SFAC). Schmidt recalled a conversation he had with the former Planning Director, Wells Williams, when SFAC took over portions of the Sheldon Jackson campus. Williams stated that the R-2 designation of that campus did not truly fit the historic uses of the campus which included a tannery, electric generation, a college, and food services. Schmidt reinforced that a new zoning designation was needed to allow the unique uses of the campus, but also agreed with previous statements regarding the protection and preservation of the area's heritage.

Nancy Yaw Davis posed a few questions to the Commission. She inquired about the background of the applicant, what the total acreage of the overlay district is, whether or not the whole campus needed to be rezoned at once or if it could be done by portions at a time, what the rationale for the borders of the district were, and why her plot on the corner of Jeff Davis and Sawmill Creek was not included.

Lisa Busch spoke as the Executive Director of SSSC. Busch also emphasized the importance of protecting the character of the area and neighborhood. Busch said that the Ludwig's Chowder Cart which had been operating from the Mill Building on the SSSC's property was in danger of losing its ability to operate at the Mill Building going forward if zoning changes were not made. She also stated that the SSSC wants to help with the process of better defining the zoning change.

Ainslie read written public comment sent to the the Planning Department prior to the meeting into the record. This included letters from Colette Nelson, Matt Christner, and Trista Patterson.

The Commissioners agreed that the issue of cemetery designation was a separate, but important item that needed immediate attention. There was also agreement that while there was a need to rezone the area and protect historic uses of the campus, there was concern about the type of enterprises or development that could be enabled by the zoning change. Spivey commented that it was important to include the Historic Preservation Commission in the process. Commissioners Hughey, Colvin, and Weaver all expressed a desire to see more conditional uses rather than permitted uses. Weaver requested an opportunity to work collaboratively on the details of the rezoning with interested groups. Spivey asked to see a list of all current, non-conforming uses of the area.

M-Colvin/S-Hughey moved to postpone formal action and requested the item to come back at the next Planning Commission meeting. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objection, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.