

**City and Borough of Sitka
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
January 15, 2008**

Present: Don Alexander, Richard Parmelee, Jeremy Twaddle, Planning Director Wells Williams, Planner Sara Russell, and Secretary Maria Finkenbinder

Absent: Larry Crews, Brian McNitt

Members of the Public: Russ Thorpe, Craig Giammona (Sitka Sentinel)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Consideration of Minutes from the January 2nd, 2008 meeting:

MOTION: M/S Twaddle/Parmelee moved to approve the minutes from the January 2nd, 2008 meeting.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED 3-0** on a voice vote.

The evening's business:

**MINOR SUBDIVISION – FINAL PLAT
SJ MAIN CAMPUS PARCEL AND TRACTS
IN INDIAN RIVER VALLEY
SHELDON JACKSON COLLEGE**

Public hearing and consideration of a final minor subdivision plat to create large tracts involving the Sheldon Jackson main campus parcel and tracts on the Indian River Valley. The request is filed by Sheldon Jackson College. The property is also known as a Subdivision of USS 407, Tract B and a Portion of Mission Plat Subdivision

Mr. Williams briefly reviewed the plat presented in the previous meeting, restating that the property will be subdivided into five tracts with the goal of getting the Indian River Valley property separated from the main campus and sold to bring money in and start satisfying concerns of Sheldon Jackson College (SJC) creditors. He also pointed out that the dedication of Lincoln St. to the municipality would be taken up later on when the applicant comes back for the subdivision process of the main campus.

Ms. Russell read for the record an email correspondence from Peter Thielke, property owner of three lots located on the corner of Biorka and Jeff Davis Streets. Mr. Thielke expressed concerns about the City bending over in the past "to meet Sheldon Jackson's needs/demands, much to the detriment of other property owners." He also said that he doesn't want "the City to offer more money in the form of actual cash loans or other in-kind incentives. In his email, he admonished the City Assembly "to watch out for its on residents, and to hold SJ accountable in all ways if it does start building." He indicated that he doesn't want eyesores facing his house across Jeff Davis St. He's hoping that any proposed structures on SJ property will come up for public comment before building commences.

MOTION: M/S Twaddle/Parmelee moved to approve the final plat for SJ property.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED 3-0** on a voice vote.

ZONING CODE ENFORCEMENT

Mr. Williams spoke about scheduling of public hearings to give interested individuals and groups an opportunity to comment on the Board's proposals to strengthen zoning code enforcement. He stressed that he wants the process to be as transparent as possible. There will be more discussions on this subject on February 5th and the 19th when a full board is present. In particular, the Board has to decide whether they should recommend a full time enforcement person or part time. A work session with the Assembly is scheduled on February 26th, 6:00-7:00pm.

Mr. Parmelee felt that the question whether the City should hire a full time or part time employee is something that can be taken up with the Assembly during the work session, explaining that it all depends on what the City can afford or how it could be worked into the budget.

Responding to the Chair's query about the job description, Mr. Williams said that it will be dealt with later on. He thought that after the employee is hired, the first couple of months would be spent on public information campaign to let everybody know about the new position and the enforcement rules and procedures. He also felt that they need to bring in an attorney to help the Planning Department avoid unnecessary consequences.

Mr. Twaddle raised the question on how far back can the new code enforcer go in reviewing past violations. He expressed concern that some people may not even be aware that they violated the zoning code. He stressed that they should be clear on the timeline and what specific violations they should focus on.

Mr. Williams said that Mr. McNitt has a good template on how to proceed with the process. He suggested giving Mr. McNitt the opportunity in the next meeting to share his thoughts, which Mr. Williams felt could provide an actual basis for their recommendations to show to the Assembly.

PROPOSED BUILDING CODE CHANGES

Mr. Williams told the Board that the City Building Department is scheduled to have a work session with Assembly regarding the proposed changes. Of importance to the Planning Commission is the grading oversight. He explained that folks have been going out on their own renting equipment and building rock-retaining walls particularly in the Hillside Subdivision. Issues have started to surface, which now necessitates tightening of grading regulations.

MOTION: M/S Twaddle/Parmelee moved to endorse the proposal from the Building Department to tighten the regulation of grading activity.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED 3-0** on a voice vote.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Williams informed the members about the public hearing on land use for Whitcomb Heights (South Benchlands) on Jan. 23rd, 6:30 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: M/S Twaddle/Parmelee moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Chair, Don Alexander

Secretary, Maria Finkenbinder