



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## Minutes - Final

### Planning Commission

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Wednesday, June 1, 2022

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

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#### I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Darrell Windsor, Stacy Mudry, Katie Riley (telephonic), Thor Christianson (Assembly liaison)  
Absent: Wendy Alderson (excused)  
Staff: Amy Ainslie, Hahlen Behnken  
Public: Jill Hirai, Michael Pountney, Maegan Bosak, Shannon Haugland (Sitka Sentinel)

**Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.**

#### II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

#### III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

##### A [PM 22-11](#)

**M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the May 18, 2022 meeting minutes.  
Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

#### IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

#### V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie updated the Commission on the hiring of Behnken as planning assistant on a temporary basis. Ainslie informed the Commission that staff would like to align public notice requirements for Commission meetings with those of the Assembly and the other boards/commissions; the Planning Commission was the only body that required two advertising days rather than one. Commissioners were apprehensive given community complaints about insufficient notice. There was discussion about the cost of advertising and agreement that more detailed analysis of advertising expenditures was needed. There was consensus to bring this item back as an agenda item at a future meeting for consideration with additional information.

#### VI. REPORTS

#### VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

##### B [P 22-02](#)

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a planned unit development at 1410 and 1414 HPR, the second phase of the Sitka Community Land Trust's (SCLT) housing development in this area. Ainslie explained that the PUD would alleviate development standards, particularly in regard to lot size and setbacks. She noted that the standard minimum lot size in the R-2 zone is 6,000 square feet, while in the proposal the range of sizes for the single-family home lots was 2,647-4,271 square feet. She also noted that utilities would be provided and maintained privately, and that parking would meet the required number of spaces but would be provided in a central location rather than on each lot. Ainslie described setbacks as being 10' front and 5' sides for lots 1-7, 0' rear on lots 1-4 since the lots abutted the undeveloped portion of the Davidoff Street right-of-way, and 8' rear on lots 5-7. Ainslie reviewed the applicants plans for the project as a whole, such as provision of common space in the northwest corner of the site, including gardens, green space, recreation facilities, and parking. She also noted work done by the applicants to evaluate and stabilize the hillside. Staff recommended approval.

Windsor asked who would own the lots after project completion, and if it was SCLT, why subdivision was necessary. Ainslie responded that SCLT retains ownership of the lots, Spivey commented that subdivision of the lots created a legal description for each property which would likely ease access to financing for prospective buyers.

Jill Hirai, a board member for SCLT, was present. Hirai also confirmed Ainslie and Spivey's comments regarding Windsor's question on the need for subdivision. Hirai gave a brief description of the concept including common spaces and lot layouts. Commissioners and Hirai discussed whether exceptions for lot coverage may be needed, particularly for lots 5-7 which may have single-story homes. There was consensus that SCLT should determine whether greater than 50% lot coverage may be needed and if so, include a modified lot coverage standard on the final plat for those lots.

**M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the preliminary plat for a planned unit development at 1410 and 1414 Halibut Point Road in the R-2 multifamily residential district. The properties were also known as Tracts 1 and 2, portion of U.S. Survey 500 according to Plat 63. The request was filed by the Sitka Community Land Trust. The owner of record was the City and Borough of Sitka. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

**M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to adopt the findings as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 4-0 by voice vote.**

**C**      [MISC 22-08](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a request for temporary approval to operate natural resource extraction and mining support facilities (rock screening and crushing) at 300 Airport Road and 227 Tongass Drive in the public lands district. The properties are also known as Lot 15E US Survey 1496 and Lot 1, SEARHC Subdivision. The request is filed by the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC). The owners of records are SEARHC and the State Department of Education.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for temporary approval for rock screening and crushing in support of the SEARHC hospital expansion project. She explained that blasted rock generated from site preparation would be used as fill on the site after being processed. She noted that offsite processing would generate significant truck traffic across downtown, exacerbating congestion issues already occurring that summer. She also noted that while natural resource processing is not typically allowed in the Public lands district, the code did offer this ad-hoc approval process. Ainslie presented the locations

of the two proposed processing sites, as well as the distances to other uses such as Mount Edgumbe High School (MEHS) and Coast Guard housing. At the Tongass Drive site, there was minimum separation of approximately 400-500 feet, and elevation differences particularly to MEHS facilities. At the Airport Road site, there was minimum separation of approximately 650-870 feet. Ainslie cited noise generation as a primary concern, and that proposed limitations on hours of operation (7am -6pm Monday through Saturday) were proposed as mitigation. She also noted that SEARHC would be incentivized to mitigate adverse effects as much as possible, due to their hospital being the closest use and remaining in operation for the duration of the project. The request was for a temporary approval lasting from July 1st to December 31st, 2022. She concluded that the application benefited the project and the community as a whole by reducing negative traffic impacts; staff recommended approval.

The applicants, SEARHC representatives Michael Pountney and Maegan Bosak explained the temporary nature of the permit, the benefits to traffic, and the necessity of rock crushing to complete the hospital project. They also noted their incentive to self-mitigate impacts. Pountney stated that he did not believe rock crushing would be louder than other construction activities. Ainslie noted that the application only applied to screening and crushing, not the blasting and grading activities which were already approved through the grading permit process.

Mudry raised safety concerns relating to crushing activities generating rock or metal projectiles threatening nearby uses. Applicants noted fencing, distance, vegetation, and elevation barriers to any flying debris. Mudry asked what recourse the public would have for complaints, particularly those from nearby residents in Coast Guard housing. Ainslie responded that one of the conditions of approval provided recourse for those with a meritorious complaint. Commissioners agreed that the Planning Commission, rather than the Assembly, would likely be the more appropriate hearing body for any complaints made given their familiarity with these types of cases. Riley stated that she was in favor of the 300 Airport Road location but had concerns about 227 Tongass Drive given its proximity to neighboring uses.

**M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to recommend approval of the request for temporary approval to operate natural resource extraction and mining support facilities (rock screening and crushing) at 300 Airport Road and 227 Tongass Drive in the public lands district. The properties were also known as Lot 15E US Survey 1496 and Lot 1, SEARHC Subdivision. The request was filed by the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC). The owners of records were SEARHC and the State Department of Education. Motion passed 3-1 by voice vote.**

**M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to adopt the findings as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 3-1 by voice vote.**

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**Seeing no objections, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.**