



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, June 15, 2022

7:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Darrell Windsor, Stacy Mudry, Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)

Absent: Wendy Alderson (Excused), Katie Riley (Excused)

Staff: Amy Ainslie, Hahlen Behnken Barkhau, Melissa Henshaw

Public: Raymond Wampler, James Sturm, Dan Williams, Maegan Bosak (SEARHC), Brett Haavig, Chad Goeden, Kelly Goeden, Shannon Haugland (Sitka Sentinel)

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A [PM 22-12](#) Approve the June 1, 2022 meeting minutes.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the June 1, 2022 meeting minutes.
Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

V. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ainslie updated the Commission on modifications made to the Lincoln Street Closure as part of the Short-Term Tourism Plan. She reported that staff raised the threshold for closing Lincoln Street to vehicle traffic from 3,000 to 4,000 cruise ship passengers. She noted that this would keep Lincoln Street open on every Friday and Saturday in July and August, improving accessibility of the downtown businesses, particularly banks, for local customers. Ainslie also mentioned there would be a three week break before the next meeting.

VI. REPORTS

B [MISC 22-09](#) Strategic Plan Presentation

Henshaw presented the progress on the Strategic Plan to the Commission. She described it as a five-year plan focused on the delivery of city services and noted the opportunities for public engagement. She reported that work on the plan had begun in January, with the final plan expected to be ready for Assembly consideration at the August 30th Assembly meeting. She invited commissioners to provide their feedback for the plan.

VII. THE EVENING BUSINESS

- C** [VAR 22-13](#) Public hearing and consideration of a zoning variance to reduce the front setback from 14' to 3'4" at 5318 Halibut Point Road in the R-1 single family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 1, Tract B-1, U.S. Survey 3670. The request is filed by Raymond Wampler. The owner of record is Raymond Wampler.

Ainslie introduced the proposal to reduce setbacks for a planned single-family home at 5318 Halibut Point Road. She explained that while the lot was large at over 20,000 square feet, the buildable area was heavily restricted by a steep hillside. She noted that the Halibut Point Road right-of-way was much wider than the paved surface of the road; the right-of-way was 50 feet from the centerline of the road, while the paved surface was 12 feet from the centerline. Ainslie also noted significant vegetation buffering, and the underdeveloped nature of the area. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant, Raymond Wampler, was present. Wampler stated that he was requesting this variance in addition to a setback reduction previously approved under case file V 21-09 because test digging had showed the hillside to be mostly rock. Wampler had been advised not to blast the rock, which was why he was requesting a further reduction to the front setback.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the zoning variance for a reduction to the front setback at 5318 Halibut Point Road in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval. The property was also known as Lot 1, Tract B-1, U.S. Survey 3670. The request was filed by Raymond Wampler. The owner of record was Raymond Wampler. Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to adopt and approve the required findings for variances involving major structures or expansions as listed in the staff report. Motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

- D** [CUP 22-21](#) Public hearing and consideration of a conditional use permit for a short-term rental at 2016 A & B Cascade Creek Road in the R-1 single-family and duplex residential district. The property is also known as Lot 1B, Bickar Subdivision. The request is filed by James Sturm and Dan Williams. The owner of record is James Sturm.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a short-term rental (STR) for both units within a duplex at 2016 Cascade Creek Road. She described each unit as being approximately 1300 square feet with two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Ainslie explained that the lot size was average for the neighborhood, that parking was abundant, but that the condition of Cascade Creek Road may be unfamiliar to visitors. She described the neighborhood as quiet, and noted that the guest handout prohibited parties or events, and included quiet hours. Ainslie noted that the renter handout also laid out garbage handling procedures and prohibited fish processing. She cited the lack of other STRs in the neighborhood, natural buffers, and the moderate density of housing as mitigating factors. Ainslie noted the proximity to a cross trail access point as a benefit of the site. She cautioned that two units nevertheless represented a significant increase in

density. Staff recommended approval.

The applicants, James Sturm and Dan Williams, were present. They stated that they intended to manage the property themselves. They explained that they intended the rentals to appeal to families, noted work done to stabilize the hill side behind the property, plans to improve the site with garden space. Windsor suggested installing a shed to protect trash cans from bears.

The commission opened the floor for public comment. Chad and Kelly Goeden stated that they owned a neighboring property at 2012 Cascade Creek Road and voiced concerns about poor garbage handling attracting bears to the area. Chad Goeden described multiple past incidents of bears getting into garbage in the neighborhood, including at least once at the property in question. He stated that STR clients would be more likely than long term residents to cause garbage handling problems. Goeden expressed his support for the applicants, provided his concerns were addressed.

The commission directed staff to include the installation of a shed to protect trash cans as a condition of approval. Spivey wondered if it would be best to have only one dwelling unit be used as an STR at a time. No Commission action to create this limitation was taken.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the conditional use permit for a short term rental at 2016 A and B Cascade Creek Road in the R-1 single family and duplex residential district subject to the attached conditions of approval as well as the requirement to install a shed for storage of trash and trash cans. The property was also known as Lot 1, Bickar Subdivision. The request was filed by James Sturm and Dan Williams. The owner of record was James Sturm. The motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to adopt and approve the required findings for conditional use permits as listed in the staff report. The motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

E [P 22- 05](#)

Public hearing for a conceptual review of a condominium plat at 631 Alice Loop in the WD waterfront district. The property is also known as Lot 2A, Dr. Walter Soboleff Replat. The request is filed by the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC). The owner of record is SEARHC.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a condominium development at 631 Alice Loop. She noted that the development would require both a platting approval process (major subdivision) and a zoning approval process (conditional use permit). She stated that an important part of the approval process would be the creation of a homeowner's association document, which the commission would consider at a later meeting, and that no motion was required at this conceptual phase. She presented the plat of the property and the general design of the structure, describing it as a seven plex consisting of units with 1200 square feet of living space on the top floor, a high garage on the first floor, and a small mezzanine level in the garage. She noted that there was more than sufficient parking, designated access from Alice Loop, and private utilities installed within the subdivision. She noted the presence of a 20' easement at the rear of the property and waterfront at the Northeast end to preserve buffers and open character of neighborhood.

A representative for the applicant, Maegan Bosak of SEARHC, was present. Windsor asked her why SEARHC was making this application after nearly completing

construction of the project. Bosak responded that the project was being developed in conjunction with the SEARHC's hospital expansion, and that needs had changed. Christianson asked what the property would be used for if the current application was declined. Bosak responded that she did not see any reason why it would be but that it could continue to be used as rentals. Mudry asked who would maintain the homeowner's association, Bosak responded that it would be SEARHC.

No Commission action was taken.

F [VAR 22-12](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a platting variance to reduce minimum lot sizes for a minor subdivision of 728 Indian River Road in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property is also known as Lot 10, Indian River Land Subdivision. The request is filed by Brett Haavig. The owners of records are Brett Haavig and Amanda Johnson.

Ainslie introduced the proposal for a subdivision of an undeveloped lot at 728 Indian River Road. She explained that the variance was needed because the resulting lots would be 4800 square feet, smaller than the 6000 square foot minimum lot size in the R-2 MHP district. In support of the request, she noted appropriate access and utility capacity from Indian River Road, that the lot was cleared and flat, that a similar request had been approved in the same subdivision, and that the application was in keeping with the general intent of the Indian River Road neighborhood. Ainslie also noted the inclusion of a plat note to reduce side setbacks from 5'/9' to 5' on both sides. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant, Brett Haavig, was present. He thanked the staff and commission for their work but did not provide any other testimony.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the platting variance to create two substandard-sized lots at 728 Indian River Road in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property was also known as Lot 10, Indian River Land Subdivision. The request was filed by Brett Haavig. The owners of record were Brett Haavig and Amanda Johnson. The motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to adopt the required findings for platting variances. The motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

G [P 22- 04](#)

Public hearing and consideration of a preliminary plat for a minor subdivision to result in two lots at 728 Indian River Road in the R-2 MHP multifamily/mobile home district. The property is also known as Lot 10, Indian River Land Subdivision. The request is filed by Brett Haavig. The owners of record are Brett Haavig and Amanda Johnson.

Given that the subdivision had already been discussed during the previous item, the staff report was brief. Ainslie noted that the most likely development of the two lots were single family homes, and that such structures were in high demand in Sitka. Staff recommended approval.

The applicant, Brett Haavig, came forward. Commissioners had no further questions for Haavig.

M-Mudry/S-Windsor moved to approve the preliminary plat for a minor subdivision to result in two lots at 728 Indian River Road in the R-2 MHP multifamily and mobile home district. The property was also known as Lot 10, Indian River Land Subdivision. The request was filed by Brett Haavig. The

owners of record were Brett Haavig and Amanda Johnson. The motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

M-Windsor/S-Mudry moved to adopt the findings as listed in the staff report. The motion passed 3-0 by voice vote.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 7:52 PM.