



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, July 7, 2021

6:30 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

****Special Meeting****

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Stacy Mudry, Wendy Alderson

Absent: Darrell Windsor, Katie Riley (Excused)

Staff: Amy Ainslie, Ben Mejia

Public: Brad Shaffer, Ariadne Will (Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

IV. THE EVENING BUSINESS

A [MISC 21-09](#) Discussion/Direction on Short-Term Tourism Plan

Attachments: [Staff Memo_8.4.21](#)

Ainslie reviewed public comment submitted during the tourism planning forums and showed maps that displayed suggested drop-off locations and areas to avoid. Christianson suggested that Lincoln Street or a portion of it be used only for bus drop-off and pedestrians. The Commission discussed potential impacts to existing tour operators by a city-run shuttle service. Spivey voiced concern over actions that may block businesses during day-to-day operations. The Commission acknowledged that any plan would need to take business operations into account.

The Commission discussed the using the Baranof Elementary School parking lots as a drop-off location. Mudry asked if any summer programs used the school, Spivey and Alderson responded that the Ventures program used the school.

Ainslie noted that frequently identified concerns were inadequate or insufficient number of bathrooms, the traffic and environmental impacts from buses, and emergency service access. Alderson asked staff how the Sawmill Creek Road work would impact transportation and what detours might be expected. The Commission noted that tour bus operators would be challenged by a Jeff Davis Street reroute to access Sawmill Creek Road. Ainslie replied that staff would collect information about the Sawmill Creek Road project. Christianson commented that the Assembly was reviewing the possibilities of unburdening processes for taxi driver permitting, and that more taxi drivers may facilitate dispersion. Christianson voiced concern over safety of tour bus

drivers acting as tour guides and instead suggested that tour operators have separate tour guides and drivers to reduce the possibility of distracted driving.

Ainslie provided updates on cell tower projects in town and informed the Commission that she had reached out to phone and internet service providers to discuss the possibility of expanding coverage and capacity during the cruise season.

The Commission opened the floor for public comment. No comment was made. Christianson and Ainslie identified a potential need for crosswalks on Sawmill Creek Road in front of the raptor center and on Halibut Point Road at the new Cross Trail trail head.

Ainslie provided a summary of findings. The Commission agreed with the findings and commented on the importance of signage and visitor information.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 7:25pm.