



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

6:30 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

****Special Meeting****

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chris Spivey (Chair), Darrell Windsor, Stacy Mudry, Wendy Alderson, Katie Riley, Kevin Mosher (Assembly Liaison)

Absent: None

Staff: Amy Ainslie, Ben Mejia

Public: Chris McGraw, Sabrina Jenkins, Melissa Henshaw, Amy Rowe, Hugh Bevan, Pat Kehoe, Lynne Brandon, Rachel Roy, Michael Harmon, Craig Warren, David Epstein, Joanne Schmidt, Ariadne Will (Sitka Sentinel)

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

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 introduced the discussion with a focus on traffic from the cruise ship dock to downtown. Ainslie introduced Joanne Schmidt and David Epstein of Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT). The Commission requested the project schedule and detour routing for the DOT project on Sawmill Creek Road scheduled to begin in the summer of 2022. Epstein stated that while he was unable to provide specific information about the project, Epstein explained that the project would take place during the cruise tourism season and they recognized the impact on travel the project would have on traffic but would work closely with the city to mitigate impacts.

Attendees participated in an exercise where comments were added to a map of Halibut Point Road from the cruise dock to the Halibut Point Road and Sawmill Creek Road round-about. Comments included suggested areas for cross-walks, areas for sidewalks or walking paths for pedestrian safety, concern of traffic increases and possible traffic device alternatives.

The Commission opened the floor for public comment. Rachel Roy noted that rural status may be impacted by the number of traffic lights or other road works and that rural status was very important to the community. Schmidt responded that she was not

aware of any impact to rural status as a result of road and traffic improvements.

Alderson voiced concern over the expected traffic increase and impacts on Halibut Point Road as a result of housing and clinic development at the Community Hospital site.

Epstein informed the Commission that cross-walks in the area 5951 Halibut Point Road would require traffic calming methods.

McGraw stated that on the busiest day, there would be an anticipated 30 coaches per hour as well as tour operators.

Michael Harmon, Public Works Director, explained that traffic engineers could find the appropriate solutions but public input would be helpful to identify problems and goals for engineers to take into account. Harmon explained that the project on Sawmill Creek Road would have an impact on traffic. The Commission voiced concern over impacts to daily life, other construction projects, and tourism that the roadwork would cause.

No motion made.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 7:33pm.