



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Wednesday, October 20, 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, Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)

Absent: None

Staff: Amy Ainslie, Ben Mejia

Public: Lisa Busch, Kent Barkhau, Bill Foster, Ralph Jones, John Stein, Jim Michener, Stefania Potrzuski, Emily Wagner, Trish White, Chance Gray, Loren Olsen, Hugh Bevan, Rebecca Himshoot, Gerry Hope, Sabrina Jenkins, Amy Rowe, Ellen Frankstein, Renee Reeve, 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: [MISC 21-09_Tourism Plan_Staff Memo](#)

Ainslie presented staff analysis and recommendations for Lincoln Street closure options as well as scenarios that were not recommended. Traffic scenarios that were not recommended included partial closures of Lincoln Street as well as partial and full one-way direction of traffic on Lincoln Street. Ainslie noted that all of these partial measures would likely result in confusion and were intensive to mobilize barricades.

Ainslie then presented recommended options. Option A was to close Lincoln Street to vehicles from the Lake/Lincoln with intersections to the Lincoln/Katlian Intersection Feeder routes (Barracks, American, Maksoutoff, Cathedral, and other unnamed alleys) blocked from entry. Option B would leave Lincoln Street open to vehicular traffic as one-way only headed west from Lake intersection to Katlian intersection. Pedestrians, amenities, and vending could take place in the 'east bound' traffic and parking lanes. "Vehicle crossing designations" would be available for bank drive-thru and pull-in parking spaces designated near churches. A temporary but substantial median would be necessary to separate pedestrians and vehicles. This would be in place all season.

Option C was described as a hybrid of the Options A and B where Lincoln would be closed when needed, but otherwise staged to re-open as Option B with all amenities

and potential vending staged in the east bound lane, even when road was fully closed.

The Commission opened the floor for public comment. Jim Michener noted that the projected passengers were approximately three times as many as in 2019. Michener voiced support for Option A, and felt that emergency vehicles could still be allowed through during a road closure. Ralph Jones of the RIDE commented that Lincoln Street closure would disrupt and displace traffic and impact ridership of the RIDE. Kent Barkau advocated for more long-term tourism visioning and planning as well as investigation of how and when to control the number of cruise passengers. Hugh Bevan noted the urgency of ordering supplies now and identifying storage locations. Bevan recommended the City pursue contracting services out for mobilization of barricades through the RFP process and that mass mailing would be necessary to notify the public of road closures. Bevan suggested the City should have a trial run of the closure before the start of the tourist season. John Stein commented that the labor intensive nature of road closures would result in job creation. Bill Foster commented that the closed road should look inviting for pedestrians and voiced support for electric busses, changes to pedestrian crossing cycles at the intersection, and the color used to indicate street parking. Rebecca Himshoot advocated for traffic cops at challenging intersections and crossings. Gerry Hope commented on the willingness of the RIDE to participate in decision making.

Ainslie read public comment from Jim Steffan who advocated for lightering passengers into town from the dock and improving the shuttle bus fleet with preference for electric busses. Steffan suggested the area around the Baranof School playground as suitable for bus drop off.

Commission agreed to resume the discussion in the following regular meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no objections, Chair Spivey adjourned the meeting at 7:25pm.