



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Minutes - Final

Planning Commission

Chris Spivey, Chair
Darrell Windsor, Vice Chair
Tamie (Harkins) Parker Song
Debra Pohlman
Randy Hughey

Tuesday, August 2, 2016

7:00 PM

ANB Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Spivey called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A Approval of the July 19, 2016 meeting minutes.

Hughey/Windsor moved to APPROVE the July 19, 2016 meeting minutes.
Motion PASSED 5-0.

IV. REPORTS

B Planning Regulations and Procedures.

V. THE EVENING BUSINESS

C Public hearing and consideration of the acquisition, retention, and disposal chapter of the Land Use Plan.

Scarcelli gave a brief history of the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Alaska Native Sisterhood, and thanked ANB and ANS for hosting the meeting. Scarcelli introduced Barb Sheinberg as the Comprehensive Plan consultant. Sheinberg spoke of her approach to planning as looking at economic, social, and environmental impacts of potential decisions. Sheinberg stated that she previously worked with Sitka's Local Emergency Planning Commission, Sitka Community Hospital, and SEARHC on planning projects.

Scarcelli highlighted points from the draft Municipal Land Use policy and procedure. Scarcelli stated that the current land disposal process is cumbersome to staff, commissioners, and applicants. Following discussion at the June meeting, "Community Need and Character" and "Public Good" have been added as criteria for property disposal.

Commissioner Hughey stated that the policy speaks primarily of the City and

Borough of Sitka as city government, but amendments should be made to refer to the community as a whole. Hughey stated that the 6 month appraisal window seems tight, and perhaps 1 year is a better window.

Chair Spivey spoke from a lending standpoint that a lot can change in 6 months.

Commissioner Pohlman stated that the 6 month window could create a financial hardship for people. Spivey stated that perhaps the approval should be valued on a city assessment rather than an appraisal. If someone were to finance a property, an appraisal would be required in the lending process.

Clyde Bright stated that he believes everyone wants affordable housing, and property should be put on the market so it gets on the tax rolls. Bright stated that the best use isn't to keep property locked up. Bright stated that surveys are expensive and can be cost-prohibitive to applicants.

Commissioner Parker Song asked about the rate at which parcels will be put on the market. Scarcelli stated that this wouldn't be codified in this policy, but would be a decision made by the Assembly every year. We have to look at the needs each year.

Pat Alexander asked if certain zones would be focused on first, as this policy seems very broad. Scarcelli stated that zones and possible rezoning will be addressed at later meetings.

Paulette Moreno introduced ANB and ANS leaders. Moreno stated a desire to collaborate and revisit the respect for indigenous people in the Comprehensive Plan. Moreno stated that every word is important. The community's character has many faces, but the original was Tlingit. Moreno asked if any tideland lease payments are distributed to Tlingit people who have traditionally stewarded the tidelands. Moreno encouraged the Assembly through the Planning Commission to seek native input on what is historically significant. Moreno stated that every inlet, tideland, and stream has a Tlingit name. Moreno encouraged the Commission to move forward with respect.

Gerry Hope stated that he brought a Tlingit clan map to provide to city staff. Hope stated that there are often big stories that go along with Tlingit place names. Hope stated that we should look for opportunities for acquisition.

Charles Bingham stated that three historical district designation processes have been in progress, but he is unsure if any have been finalized. Some teeth should be given to the community's ability to preserve historic properties.

Matthew Jackson stated that we need a more robust list of criteria, perhaps a logic model or flow chart. Jackson stated that he believes most of the criteria focus on the economic bottom line, but not as much focus on social or environmental concerns.

Hughey stated that there is an inconsistency under "Method of Sale." Language of selling to the highest bidder is inconsistent with some criteria for sale. Hughey stated that "Location of the Property" criterion should be written as "the best viable alternative is to sell the property," and the sale should "maximize the total economic or social return."

Scott Saline asked about the list of municipally-owned property. Scarcelli stated that the inventory is in progress. Hughey stated that individuals will be able to nominate properties for sale. Saline stated that he believes the tideland valuing process is skewed.

Chandler O'Connell stated that language should be amended to state that sales and leases shall benefit and not harm public resources.

Garry White asked about on-demand land inquiries. Spivey stated that has not been determined. Garry White stated that the Industrial Park bases preliminary approvals on an approximate value, with appraisal to be conducted later.

Bright stated that the city should consider taking a lower initial payment in exchange for a higher property tax rate until the property is paid off. Scarcelli stated that creative financing options are being discussed nationwide. Spivey stated that it would be similar to a Local Improvement District.

Joy Wood asked for patience with native individuals in regard to land use. Wood stated that some individuals in homes in the Village believe that their ancestors are in the wood of the homes. Wood stated that native individuals are often very attached to the land.

Paulette Moreno introduced Bertha Karras, an elder. Karras asked how the city acquired this land that they consider selling. Saline stated that he knows that he bought land that was confiscated through the Dawes Act, and he is trying to do mitigation. Karras stated that the city must go through at least two or three people to buy individual parcels of land.

Richard Nelson observed that the conversation has not been about monetary gain, but about cultural and social gain. Nelson hopes that the strength of the non-monetary values will be reflected in the document.

Kitty Sopow stated that she is a Department of Defense Lands Investigator, and offered her files for viewing.

Pat Alexander stated that lands are associated with different clans, and STA resource protection has a lot of resources.

BREAK 8:28-8:43

Spivey asked if anyone else had comments on the municipal land management policy. Alexander stated that it would be nice for the city to donate land for another communications tower. Alexander stated that the city should look into trading for Mental Health land.

Bright stated that he previously recommended the Assembly appoint an affordable housing taskforce.

Moreno stated that language is very important, and policy has resulted in current outcomes such as limited tideland access. Moreno stated that policy gives too much power to city government and not enough to the community. Moreno thanked Scarcelli for participating in the native community. Hughey asked Moreno what language she wants to see in the document. Moreno stated

that the purpose statement should more explicitly address historic value. Moreno stated that the sale only benefits the purchaser, not the community. Moreno stated that many parcels are being sold to outsiders. Moreno stated that a portion of the proceeds for leased lands should benefit the native community, and specifically the clan that historically owned the land. Moreno stated that sales and leases should be approved by the Assembly and a tribal designee. Moreno stated that Criteria for Lease #6 has very western language, and high demand indicates that someone wants to come in and develop an oceanfront homes.

Charles Bingham stated that acquisition is on the agenda, but the focus of discussion has been on disposal. Scarcelli explained that the disposal policy is a subset of the broader discussion on municipal land management. Acquisition was discussed at the June meeting. Bingham stated that there is need for sidewalks and access points to properties up the hill from Katlian Avenue.

Bright stated that the Petro fuel dock should be relocated due to fire risk. Bright stated that there had been discussion of moving fish processors from Katlian Avenue to the old pulp mill facility, but it never happened. This relocation should be put in the Comprehensive Plan.

D

Walkability assessment - Katlian Avenue.

Scarcelli stated that the group walkability assessment would be postponed to a later meeting, as it was getting late. Scarcelli introduced attendees to SMapp and showed how to access the walkability assessment on the Comprehensive Plan website. Scarcelli introduced the walkability assessment, and said that people can do this on their own if desired.

Alexander stated that some of the businesses on Katlian create an eyesore. Fish processors don't put equipment away, but residential property owners can get a fine from the city for having items in their yard. Alexander stated that sidewalks do not get cleared unless they are owned by businesses.

Moreno stated that Celebrate Katlian submitted comments via the Public Works website. Half were answered and fixed, while half were not.

Joy Wood recommended walking the neighborhood with elders.

Bingham stated that the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan has not been updated since 2002. Bingham suggested replicating the walkability assessment in various areas of town.

Bright recommended that Public Works plow the snow to one side of the street instead of both.

Moreno mentioned the idea of making Katlian a one-way street.

Scarcelli asked Sheinberg to come forward and discuss future scheduling.

Sheinberg stated that she wants to have a collaborative Comprehensive Plan process, and believes that this was a good meeting. Sheinberg suggested a schedule for upcoming meetings: September 6 – economics; October 5 or 6 – housing and infrastructure; possibly October 25 – community meeting. Land

use and community facilities at later dates. Sheinberg explained meetings in a box.

O'Connell stated the need for a crash course for people who are new to comprehensive plans. O'Connell stated that a 10 minute intro at the meeting would be helpful. Parker Song stated that more media attention could be sought.

Sheinberg asked about the best modes for getting people informed. Participants stated that diverse means should be used, such as social media, radio, and newspaper.

Moreno asked how much time Sheinberg would dedicate to the project. Sheinberg stated that she plans to be in Sitka at least 3-4 days per month.

Alexander stated that the more people that are included, the more cumbersome the process becomes. Sheinberg stated that an option is to make people available 15 minutes before the meeting to help newcomers get up to speed.

VI. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Scarcelli thanked all attendees for good engagement. Walkability will be addressed at the next meeting.

VII. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Hughey/Windsor moved to ADJOURN at 10:20 PM. Motion PASSED unanimously.

ATTEST: _____
Samantha Pierson, Planner I