



Petersburg Borough

12 South Nordic Drive
Petersburg, AK 99833

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

12:00 PM

Assembly Chambers

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:00pm.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT

Commission Chair Chris Fry
Commission Vice-Chair Heather O'Neil
Commission Secretary Sarah Fine-Walsh
Commissioner Joshua Adams

ABSENT

Commissioner Marietta Davis
Commissioner Mika Cline

Commission Chair Fry excused Commissioner Cline from this meeting.

3. Acceptance of Agenda

The agenda was accepted as presented.

Motion made by Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Seconded by Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

4. Approval of Minutes

A. February 10, 2026, Meeting Minutes

The February 10, 2026, Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved.

Motion made by Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Seconded by Commissioner Adams.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

5. Public Comments

Tom Kowalske spoke on his own behalf in support of the letter Mika submitted to the Commission regarding Haugen Drive tower.

6. Consent Calendar

7. Public Hearing Items

- A. Consideration of an application from American Cruise Lines for a minor subdivision at 121 DOCK ST (PID: 01-008-099)

Motion made by Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Seconded by Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh.

Commission Chair Fry spoke to say this looks straightforward to him.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

- B. Consideration of an application from Ken Howard for a variance from the yard setback requirements to allow for construction of a garage and carport 5' from the side property line and 15' from the rear property line at 1006 N NORDIC DR. (PID: 01-002.229).

Motion made by Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Seconded by Commissioner Adams.

Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh spoke in support of the variance.

Commission Chair Fry stated that if the variance isn't approved the applicant would likely repair the existing nonconforming structure.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

- C. Recommendation to the Borough Assembly regarding an application from Taylor Jensen to purchase borough owned property at 505 MILL ST (PID: 01-011-328).

Motion made by Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Seconded by Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh.

Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh asked Director Cabrera if the Commission should choose one of the choices in the recommended conditions of approval. Director Cabrera responded that having both would satisfy the issue. They could do either one depending on how they want to develop the property.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

- D. Consideration of an application from Scott & Stacey Fredricksen for a variance from the yard setback requirement to allow for construction of a deck within 6" inches of the side and 4' feet from the rear property line at 701 RAMBLER ST (PID: 01-011-552)

Aaron Buller spoke representing Scott & Stacey Fredricksen. He made note of a mistake in the staff report and stated the correct setback would be 6" from the rear which is the east property line and 4ft from the south property line. He mentioned they would be willing to make the deck 5' from the property line which will satisfy the 5' setback requirement, the 6" from property line on the Buschmann side is the issue the Commission might have.

Motion made by Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Seconded by Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh.

Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh spoke with concerns that if the Commission approved the variance, it would be appealed to the Borough Assembly and overturned, which would disappoint the applicant.

Commission Chair Fry spoke with concerns about not meeting fire code which requires 10 feet between building. If a roof is ever put over the deck, there could be other issues like snow shed into the neighboring property. For this reason, he is not inclined to approve it as a 6" or even 4' setback, a 5' would be considered.

Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil stated that if an amendment is done to the application to show 5' from the property shared by their neighbor and for the back side, if Ronn Bushmann gives his approval it's all undeveloped land back there down his long driveway.

Director Liz Cabrera spoke to say a variance stays with the property. If the Commission is inclined to find a reason that meets the criteria for a variance that she could not determine, maybe postpone and have the applicant resubmit with at least a 5-foot setback from the property line.

Commissioner Adams spoke to say the words of a neighbor bare a lot of weight with the Buschmann's being the most affected, he would like to hear what they have to say about it.

Director Cabrera reminded the Commission that you have to adhere to the criteria to grant a variance. You have to find that the application satisfies the criteria for a variance, none of the criteria involves what the neighbors say.

Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh motioned to postpone the application until it is resubmitted.

Stacey Fredricksen spoke to get clarification on what the Commission is seeking for the variance.

Voting to postpone the variance application.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

- E. Consideration of an application from Joyce Cummings for a minor subdivision at 188 MITKOF HWY (PID: 01-029-090 & 01-030-010)

Motion made by Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Seconded by Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

- F. Consideration of an application from Sandy Beach Holdings for a major subdivision at 410 SANDY BEACH RD (PID: 01-003-275).

Commission Chair Fry asked Director Cabrera to give some background on this since it's been before the Commission previously. Director Cabrera stated the Commission approved this preliminary plat a couple of years ago. The approval is good for one year and there was no extension, before final plat approval, the Commission must determine that the submitted plat is the same as the previously approved preliminary plat. Once approved the applicant can submit for final plat approval.

Steve Hurst spoke representing himself as the applicant. He spoke to say construction is complete, all site improvements, roads, drinking water, wastewater, power has all been installed.

Commissioner O'Neil asked Steve Hurst if Curlew Lane has been installed with roundabout or cul-de-sac and has the stream been covered. Steve replied that yes, there is a culvert that is shown on one of the attachments it includes some insulation that the State requested to prevent freezing.

Commissioner Adams asked Steve Hurst if the existing fill pad was extended to include all of Lots 5 and 6. Steve replied that the existing fill pad is a dash line that exists only on lot 6, that was there prior to construction.

Commissioner O'Neil asked Steve if he contacted ADFG to be certain the stream was not a fish stream. Steve replied that it was not listed on their inventory as a salmon stream. The engineer and application advised we did not need to reach out to them.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams

8. Non-Agenda Items

A. Commissioner Comments

- Wireless Communication Overlay Zoning

The Commission discussed properties within the Borough for tower location.

Commissioner Adams shared his thoughts on data centers.

Discussion whether data centers should be included in wireless communication overlay zoning.

B. Staff Comments

- C. Next Meeting is April 14, 2026.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:45pm.

Motion made by Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Seconded by Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil.

Voting Yea: Commission Chair Fry, Commission Vice-Chair O'Neil, Commission Secretary Fine-Walsh, Commissioner Adams