

**WALKER PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
April 30th, 2012**

6:00 p.m. 701 Elm Street Walker Fire Hall Meeting Room

1. **Call to Order** 6:08 p.m. by Chair Wilkening

2. **Roll Call**
Members Present: Jane Ekholm, Jeff Holly, Rich Hansen, Greg Smith, Gary Wilkening
Members Absent: Char Moore
Staff: Terri Bjorklund, City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer
Others: Dr. Mary Donohue Stetz, Lori Stein, Blake Nordin, Tad Gravett, Steve Blenker, Bob Yochum, Jim Dowson, Gail Levenson, Carl Berg, Todd Felix, Bob & Shirley Mallory, Doug & Gail Tufte and Scott Gustafson

3. **Additions or deletions to the agenda:**
None

4. **Announcements by Chair:**
None

5. **Public Hearing: LU-2012-04 Initial Zoning, Ah-Gwah-Ching annexation**
Bob Yochum requested the board table initial zoning until the Cass County Board has had time to evaluate the proposed zoning classification. Carl Berg asked why the LDR zoning classification? The property has water, sewer and is ready for commercial use. It was stated by Chair Wilkening that is was not the board's intention to limit the use by zoning property at this time. Al Heinke asked why the DNR land would be zoned LDR. Scott Gustafson of the MN Department of Natural Resources said that this is an aquatic management area owned by the State of Minnesota and requested, with a written letter, that the property 96-002-220 be zoned as public. Gail Tufte wanted clarification that the lakeshore will stay an aquatic management area. It was stated that the easement rights currently in place ensure that the State of Minnesota be the only ones to change that status. The County has 100 foot view easement per Bob Yochum. Doug Tufte asked for clarification of what the State currently owns and has for sale. He stated, he believed that this land is unbuildable and asked could a private person own and place a house on this property? He posed the question, what would the city like to see on this land? Gail Levenson, Cass County Economic Development Corp, stated that in 2004 there was a community re-use plan and 55% of the participants felt health care was the best re-use of this property. We currently have money through a bonding bill that can be used towards the health care campus. This would expire at the end of 2012. Greg Smith asked Gail Levenson how she would like to see it zoned. Gail responded with, please keep the welcome mat out and leave it un-zoned. The 57 acres along 371 would be good for commercial development. Jane Ekholm asked Gail if there is any movement by health care. Gail says there has been some interest. Jane asked what happened to the waivers from when John Warren chaired the committee. Bob Yochum stated that the property still maintains all waivers.

Public hearing was closed at 6:38 pm.

6. Public Hearing: LU-2012-01 Telecommunications Tower Ordinance

Chair Wilkening opened the public hearing at 6:28 pm

There being no written or oral comments, the Public Hearing was closed at 6:28 pm.

7. M/S Smith/Holly (4-0) to approve minutes of March 26th, 2012 Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment.
8. **Building/Zoning Report.** Reviewed and filed by the committee.
9. M/S Wilkening/Smith (4-0) to recommend approval of LU-2012-01 Telecommunications Tower Ordinance.
10. M/S Ekholm/Smith (4-0) to recommend tabling of LU-2012-04 initial zoning of the Ah-Gwah-Ching annexation.

11. Discussion on bulk propane tanks:

Chair Wilkening opened the discussion by saying the City of Walker has no ordinance or zoning class for this type of use at this time. Steve Blenker covered the safety aspects put in place by the MFPA 58. He looked at both sites, the school and the county, and assured set back standards were adhered to and with the county's placement of propane tank, the rules may fall under the jurisdiction of the office of pipeline safety. Bob Yochum stated that the county has three 18,000 gallon propane tanks that are currently located at the Ah-Gwah-Ching property. If they are used by anyone except the County, on County property, they would need to determine fair market value of the tank and sell only with the states permission. The sites proposed at this time are the County parking lot on the south side of Michigan Avenue and the Highway Department. There is interest in the third tank by the Walker-Hackensack-Akeley school and the Leech Lake reservation. If the City of Walker drafts an ordinance, the County would like to be informed of meetings and participate in the drafting of such an ordinance. Todd Felix spoke to the relief valves located in the tank and that one acts as backup in case of failure of the first relief valve. Fire Chief Scott Bruns has had several discussions regarding these bulk tanks and has determined that they are safer than having a 100 lb. cylinder sitting next to someone's home.

Discussion was held on possible screening requirements for tanks. Tonight is the beginning process as how to work towards enabling the installation of the tanks. We would like the entities to submit a design and engage the public on the subject.

There was a short discussion regarding natural gas line, most likely not financially feasible from either direction, Cass Lake or Pine River. Cost looks to be approximately \$5 million.

12. **Adjourn.** The meeting of the Planning Commission was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Approved by:

Submitted by:

Gary Wilkening, Chair

Terri Bjorklund, City Administrator/Clerk