

**WALKER PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
July 30th, 2012
6:00 p.m. 701 Elm Street Walker Fire Hall Meeting Room**

1. **Call to Order** 6:00 p.m. by Chair Wilkening

Roll Call

Members Present: Jane Ekholm, Rich Hansen, Greg Smith, Gary Wilkening, Char Moore

Members Absent: Jeff Holly

Staff: Terri Bjorklund (City Administrator) and Meghan Compton

Others: Kelly Nelson, Michael Cronin and Mary (District Manager, Holiday)

2. **Additions or deletions to the agenda:**

Switch items #3 and 4.

3. **LU-2012-08 Nelson – Request for a rezoning of property at 607 2nd Street S.**

Chair Wilkening summarized the rezoning of Grandma Jo's assisted care facility as a multi-family unit (up to 5 units).

Nelson – After 13 years as assisted living, we have decided to retire. The property currently has a conditional use permit as an assisted living facility. The downstairs was designed to be two separate apartments. Willard has a separate apartment upstairs, leaving a big 'L'. This remaining area will be divided in two wings, the north will be one wing and the L to the East another. They will keep the exterior appearance the same so that it fits with the neighborhood. There are garage spaces and additional parking. Skywater townhomes is behind them and Golden Living is across the street so it fits in with the neighborhood.

Moore – The Chamber received frequent questions on rental facilities. Does the ordinance dictate how much square footage each unit would need to be?

Chair Wilkening – The ordinance deals with impervious surface and parking.

Ekholm – Only one person would need to park on the street?

Nelson – There are nine parking spaces, five spots upstairs and four downstairs.

Ekholm – It is in character with our plan.

Hansen – Is the square footage (on the documentation) a measure of the property size?

Bjorklund – Yes

M/S/A: Ekholm/Smith a recommendation to move the item to City Council, recommending a public hearing at the Planning & Zoning meeting in August 2012.

Motion passed: (5-0)

4. **Holiday Station Stores – Request for Ordinance text amendment**

Chair Wilkening – This item would also require a public hearing, requested by the City Council. Our statement for our ordinance requires a 50' setback from traffic controls. Holiday sent backup with photo attachments in realm of traffic controls.

Michael Cronin – We are requesting you take a second look to one provision in your ordinance. It hasn't proved to be a distraction. St. Paul has operated for two years and Minneapolis less than one year. With numbers like that, if there was a distraction, it would show. We would appreciate the opportunity to use this technology...so we can come forward with a conditional use permit. Our goal isn't to attract things to the sign but continuing to balance inside sales for four reasons. 1. We haven't recovered from pay at the pump as it doesn't bring people in to the store. Our messages are almost

always on dark background with light letters. 2. Fewer and fewer people are smoking...this is a chance to sell you something else. 3. Our pantry strategy. Most people don't know we sell bananas, apples or oranges. This gives us an opportunity to market our fresh items, including milk at low prices. 4. Gas usage is down due to the economy so Holiday needs inside sales. We think this will continue to strengthen our store.

Chair Wilkening – From a language standpoint, there is Exhibit A and Exhibit B. They are very similar in language

Michael Cronin – the choice in language is for your city attorney to decide on.

Chair Wilkening – said this would be an opportunity for review

Smith – Can appreciate these two alternatives. He sees it as applicable to the entire sign ordinance, rather than just one component.

Michael Cronin – The State Statute won't allow that

Hansen – It's more like a variance

Ekholm – Is there a reason it couldn't be at the property line, 50' away? We don't have the staff to regulate and use discretion. The reality is it's not practical for us to be that flexible.

Chair Wilkening – Do we recommend taking it to City Council and requesting a public hearing?

M/S/A Smith/Hansen to move the item to City Council.

Motion passed (4-1) Nay: Ekholm

5. Announcements by Chair:

There is a great similarity in packets to what we are used to and thanked the City staff for the work they put in.

6. M/S/A of minutes: Moore/Hansen (5-0) Motion to approve minutes of June 25th, 2012

7. Building/Zoning Report. The June report was recapped by Chair Wilkening. Report was reviewed and filed by the committee.

7a. Additional items:

Bjorklund – Regarding a discussion with Cass County on the Earth Moving ordinance, we need to clarify if we are expecting the County to administer shore land ordinance only, or the whole section?

Hansen – Just the shore land

Ekholm requested data on water samples from our wells

Bjorklund – Those that you get from the city are actual water samples and not from the wells. Any time the landfill at Hoss's exceeds, the City has to be informed.

Hansen – Pollution control would have that information

Ekholm – received on email from the League of MN Cities regarding training.

Wilkening – bring those items to meetings. We do have a small budget for training if there is interest in participating.

Bjorklund – At the last meeting, you requested maps of the Wellhead Protection areas to be over-laid on our zoning map. I have requested them and it should be a simple process and should have them available to you soon.

8. **Adjourn.** The meeting of the Planning Commission was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Approved by:

Submitted by:

Gary Wilkening, Chair

Terri Bjorklund, City Administrator/Clerk