

**WALKER PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 26, 2013
6:00 p.m. 701 Elm Street Walker Fire Hall Meeting Room**

1. **Call to Order** 6:05 p.m. by Chair Wilkening.

Roll Call

Members Present: Jane Ekholm (arrives at 6:10 p.m.), Char Moore, Gary Wilkening, and Greg Smith

Members Absent: Rich Hansen

Staff: Pamela Smith and Terri Bjorklund

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

None.

3. **Announcements by Chair:**

None.

4. **M/S/A Moore/Smith to approve of minutes for July 29, 2013.**

Motion passed (3-0)

5. **Building/Zoning Report.**

Terri reviews the July zoning report.

6. **M/S/A Smith/Moore to recommend to City Council to amend City Ordinance § 33.26 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION, section (A) to read: The Mayor, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint a Planning Commission of seven *five* members. At least one member shall be a City Councilmember.**

Chair Wilkening states that this Board has consistently had an open seat, if not two open seats for a number of years. He recommends to the Board that they consider going to a five member board verses the seven member board that is currently required by City Ordinance. He discusses the problems that could ensue with keeping the current seven member board with two open seats, and only several of the current members being able to attend a meeting that a recommendation or decision made by the Planning Commission could be overturned by a technicality.

Moore notes that this would be a wise move.

Moore-It is harder and harder to get volunteers; people are busy.

Smith-And you have the same people on multiple boards.

Char notes that the open seats have been advertised a number of ways through the local newspaper and through our monthly newsletter that is mailed out.

Terri states that being the size of community that we are that a five member board would suffice.

Wilkening recaps what has been discussed.

Ekholm suggests careful consideration be given to changing structure when the reasons for decisions by our predecessors are unclear. We want to build on the good work of our predecessors and honor the reasons they had for decisions made by knowing why they were made, before changing them. She notes that she doesn't want future Board members to look back and question why this decision was made.

Motion passed (4-0)

7. Discussion on Industrial Park Land use.

The Board discusses the possibility of rezoning some of the Industrial Park to Light Industrial and the other half Residential and also to encourage the selling of these lots. Ekholm states that she doesn't see anyone knocking on door for these properties and questions why the need to sell them. Chair Wilkening explains that initially it was brought up by a City Councilmember as to why the City would hold on to this land, stating that the City should be trying to sell this land and getting it on the City of Walker's tax roll. Moore states that at least one member of the community has approached her and expressed their displeasure of the possibility of rezoning this area. The Board discusses that although one person seems to not like this idea there are several property owners that live in that area that would love to see these properties grow into something bigger than it is. Terri notes that one decision to consider is whether to market this land to developers or divide it to smaller lots. The Board discusses the Water/Sewer lines that are currently in the Industrial Park, and the dividing of lots into five acre sections. The cost of pump stations for each individual user is \$8,000.00. Smith states that he believes that the current Water/Sewer system that is located in the Industrial Park is outdated with the current 2 inch line and suggests that as far as fire protection, that they would need an 8 inch to 10 inch line. Terri states that the cost of a project like this would be significantly large. Terri-How conducive would it be to build Industrial with the terrain?

The Board decides the September Agenda for the Planning Commission should include an on-site tour of the Industrial Park as to better familiarize themselves with the property and terrain before they consider making a recommendation of selling or rezoning of the Industrial Park to the Council.

It is also brought to the attention of the Board that our current Ordinance does not address the keeping of Beehives within City Limits. Chair Wilkening suggests that more research on Beehive Ordinances is needed, and then address this with an individual policy.

8. Adjourn. The meeting of the planning commission was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.