

**WALKER PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 26th, 2018
6:00 p.m. 701 Elm Avenue Walker Fire Hall Meeting Room**

- 1. Call to Order** 6:01 p.m. by Acting Chair Hansen

Roll Call-

Members Present: Susan Ostlund, Annie McMurrin, Rich Hansen and Randy Carlson

Members Absent: Gary Wilkening

Public: None

Staff: Pamela Smith

- 2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda.**

None

- 3. Announcements by Chair.**

Acting Chair stated the crosswalk request would be updated at the next meeting.

- 4. M/S Ostlund/McMurrin to recommend approval of Minutes for December 18th, 2018.**

Motion passed (4-0)

- 5. Planning/Zoning –Report for December 2017 and for January 2018.**

Smith reviewed the zoning report with the board stating that we ended 2017 with a valuation of permits totaling over 1.8 million, a significant increase from 2016. The permits applied for in January are typically slower; only \$4,000 for the building permits and no sign or fence permits.

- 6. M/S McMurrin/Ostlund to recommend to Council to call for a public hearing for Ordinance 2018-01 an Ordinance adding minimum driveway standards at the Planning Commission meeting on March 26th at 6:05 with the recommended changes.**

Hansen suggested the following changes shown in italics to Section 2. Number 7 of Draft Ordinance 2018-01.

If the driveway abuts an asphalt paved road with or without concrete curb and gutter the driveway material must be concrete or asphalt *whether or not it abuts a paved road.*

Motion passed (4-0)

- 7. Discussion on LU-2015-06, a Variance approval for Sawmill Cove; research possible omission of one condition that required them to provide shrubbery screening around LP tank.**

The Board discussed the audio portion transcribed from August 3rd, 2015 and agreed that this is an agreement between the property owners. It is not part of the Findings of Fact or Conditions of the recorded Variance for PID 96-343-0110 LU-2015-06.

Hansen requested if City staff Bjorklund would notify Jeff Holy to clarify that it was never omitted from the conditions on the recorded document rather it was part of a discussion during the August 3rd, 2015 meeting between James Vareberg, Kristin Holly and Larry Reis.

8. Discussion on Tiny House zoning regulations.

Smith stated that an earlier conversation with Wilkening he noted several things he would like to communicate to the Planning Commission during this meeting. Wilkening had a discussion with Dave Cochran about his property off of 10th Street regarding different opportunities of increasing the density with smaller residential lots within that parcel. They could look into two different phases either splitting it with half of the parcel with smaller residential lots and the other half with 1 or 2 apartment buildings. Wilkening believes that with the possibility of apartment buildings being constructed on that parcel could act as a catalyst of sorts for the installation of water and sewer lines. Wilkening directed Cochran to have a conversation with Mike Paulus of the Cass County EDC to see what options are available through the EDC.

Carlson stated that he talked to a few people and they suggested possibly looking at a Park Model Ordinance. He adds that he spoke with a builder out of Bemidji who had two suggestions on increasing the living space of a tiny home. One option to increase the size of the home is placing the furnace separate from their house and the other would to include a commons area on the grounds to share a washer, dryer and such. Carlson would like to include blueprints of several different models of tiny homes to have available at the next board meeting so they could see the average size of a tiny home in order to help aid with the decision of how big the lot sizes should be. He adds that he would like to make sure that there is adequate space between the lots so the homes are not located too close to each other.

Hansen questioned if there was an inventory of lots in the City that are buildable and how many parcels within City limits are vacant non-conforming lots under 15,000 square feet. He requested staff to see if they could research how many lots existed within City limits. Hansen suggested considering other properties in the City not just the parcel of Dave Cochran's but all non-conforming lots within the City limits.

Hansen stated that he believes there are homes in town that are more of a valuation draw on their neighbors than a brand new tiny home would be. The Board discussed briefly about parcels with dilapidated buildings on them and if they were demolished how the neighbors would welcome tiny homes being constructed next to them. Would they or wouldn't they be receptive towards it.

Hansen stated that with previous experience doing environmental work for a developer that constructed low income apartments or town homes. Having the apartments centrally located was important; considering the possibility that the tenants may not have transportation readily available to them and would rely on walking or biking as their primary mode of transportation. He adds that one drawback looking at Cochran's property is if you are attracting a family that can only afford a tiny home they may also have transportation issues verses if they live right behind the Holiday it would be closer to everything you need. Hansen clarified that he is not trying to eliminate the Cochran property idea but where we can backfill with tiny homes I think it makes sense to have them centrally located. Carlson stated that it would not necessarily be limited to low

income families but also possibly retirees that may want a smaller living space. McMurrin questioned what areas they would consider permitting tiny homes. Hansen stated that he liked Brainerd's Code and how it utilized their non-forming lots within their City limits so it wasn't limited to one area.

The Board agrees that next meeting's agenda should include information on the blueprints of several tiny homes along with information on how many non-conforming lots currently exists within City limits.

9. M/S Hansen/McMurrin approve to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m.