

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

- 1. Call to Order** 6:04 p.m. by Chair Wilkening

Roll Call-

Members Present: Susan Ostlund, Annie McMurrin, Rich Hansen and Gary Wilkening

Members Absent: Randy Carlson

Public: None

Staff: Pamela Smith

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

Chair Wilkening would like to add a couple of layouts of Dave Cochran's property in conjunction with the tiny house discussion.

- 3. Announcements by Chair on the crosswalk request.**

Chair Wilkening states that ultimately this will be a MnDOT project. They have 371/Minnesota Avenue tentatively scheduled out about 3 to 5 years; and that would be the time to do that. McMurrin questioned if it was sidewalk or crosswalk. Wilkening stated it would be a sidewalk on the Dollar General and Napa side of the road. He added that Public Works would stay on this and there was going to be a fair amount of conversation with MnDOT in the next month or two. Hansen questioned if there was going to be any discussion about the bypass. Wilkening stated that more of the discussion would have to do with Tower Avenue; it is more in conjunction with the potential move of Superone. They would need access off Hwy 371 in a better fashion that it currently has to the old Tabaka property. The discussion will also cover the possible installation of a round-a-bout. Wilkening will update the board after more discussion with MnDOT.

- 4. M/S Ostlund/Hansen to recommend approval of Minutes for February 26th, 2018.
Motion passed (4-0)**

- 5. Planning/Zoning –Report for February 2018.**

Smith reviews report with the board.

- 6. Public Hearing 6:05 pm. To hear public comment on Ordinance 2018-01, an Ordinance adding Minimum Driveway Standards**

Public hearing opened at 6:15 p.m.

No public comments or questions were heard.

Public hearing closed at 6:16 p.m.

- 7. M/S Hansen/McMurrin to recommend the adoption of Ordinance 2018-01, an Ordinance adding Minimum Driveway Standards.
Motion passed (4-0)**

8. Discussion on Tiny House zoning regulations.

The Board discussed the building requirements that the City of Cokato has. Hansen feels that it is irrelevant to the discussion on the tiny houses; they don't have an Ordinance on regulating tiny houses yet. Wilkening stated that part of the problem of getting a development going is sewer and water cost for the developer. If you can have more lots per line it will cost less. He suggested considering a Planned Unit Development that would actually change the lot size within; rather than worry about tiny houses. Keep the setbacks the same as the current setbacks. Hansen believes that our goal is to provide as many options as possible; adding that the Planned Unit Development makes a lot of sense. He adds that it may still make sense to have a tiny house Ordinance in conjunction with this as to allow tiny houses on the recycled lots only within City Limits. One possibility is to allow the construction of tiny homes only on vacant lots or if the current building on the lot is facing condemnation. The board discusses the difference of park models and the seasonality of tiny home models. Hansen noted that we all know that people build tiny houses all over the Country. He questions will they build them in Walker, I don't know? But right now they can't. The question is do we want to make an adjustment to our Ordinance so people can build tiny homes if they so choose. McMurrin questioned the reduction in the lot sizes and how small the lot sizes would be. Hansen clarified that Wilkening was referring to the reduction of lot sizes in conjunction with the PUD to get a lot of them in there versus to allow tiny homes to be built on current lots that are shown as 15,000 sq. ft. McMurrin clarified that the PUD discussion with the reduction of lot sizes to be 7,500 square feet would still allow the installation of a regular size home but it would give them the option to build smaller if they so choose. The Board discusses the smallest size of house they could see allowing is 400 sq. ft. Wilkening submitted three different plans that Dave Cochran provided. He stated that he put Dave Cochran and Mike Paulus in contact with each other. He noted that during the discussion with Mike Paulus, Mike had mentioned his previous experience in working with economic development out of Arizona and Wilkening questioned if he knew anyone that would be interested in possibly getting involved with a PUD. He said that he possible does have someone. Wilkening stressed that what ultimately what has to happen to make this property work is to get enough density in it to afford the sewer and water. He added that Mike has a copy of the plan and expects that by now whoever the developer is will have it shortly. He indicated if we could come up with something in regard to lot size so it didn't have to be 15,000 sq. ft. he could probably get the developer to commit to two units; one he would start right away and one he would construct in the future. McMurrin clarified that they were speaking about apartment buildings. Wilkening stated yes apartment buildings. The Board discusses placement of water and sewer at this location. Hansen clarified that if allowing smaller buildable lot sizes on this parcel could help spur development. The Board states that reducing the lot size from 15,000 sq. ft. to 7,500 sq. ft. would not prevent regular size homes from being built there it would also allow smaller homes to be built there as well whereas before they couldn't. If you decided not to build a tiny house and you wanted to build a regular house you still could; it would fit on the lot. Ostlund questioned if the 33 vacant lots shown in the search provided would not be able to be built on currently because they are less than 15,000 sq. ft. now. Hansen explained that they would be able to be built on because they are considered legally non-conforming. Ostlund clarified what they are doing by allowing smaller lot sizes but not

necessarily just for tiny homes. The Board agrees that this is a better idea; by giving the people the option to put whatever kind of house they would like. Wilkening discussed the possibility of requiring alleyways for access. If we were to allow 7,500 sq. ft. lot would it make sense to split that with an alley or require that? Requiring the alleyways would give a place for the sewer and water and allow for the houses to be in front and the garage and stuff in the back. The Board collectively agrees that it would add a bigger tax base and the smaller lot size and higher density can lead to more affordable housing whatever we can do as a City to reduce the development cost and encourage more development. It is noted that none of this development would be Section Eight housing. The Board would like to find a way to allow the reduction of lot sizes on the parcel owned by Dave Cochran through Planned Unit Development. Hansen would also like to still move forward allowing 400 sq. ft. houses in that area. It doesn't mean that they are going to build that small but at least they would have the option and I think as well as some recycled lots in town it would make sense. The Board brings up the fact that nobody that has a conforming lot currently would want to build a 400 sq. ft. house. The Board discusses other smaller houses in town. Wilkening stated we might have the opportunity to suggest the availability of single family homes or dedicated areas to Park or Wetland. Wilkening requested staff to find out if in Planned Unit Development we can allow for smaller lot sizes than we currently allow. Do we have to change the Ordinance or do we make it one of the conditions of the PUD? Smith questioned if they would like her to research the other lots in town and work on possibly wording an Ordinance geared toward allowance of tiny houses in other areas of town. The Board stated they would prefer that Smith work on only the PUD research at this time.

9. Chair Wilkening adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.