

**WALKER CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES  
WALKER FIRE HALL MEETING ROOM  
Monday February 5, 2007**

**CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Walhof**

- Mayor Walhof called the Public Hearing for the request for vacation of a portion of Factory Street to order at 6:30 p.m.
- Council members present: Fjelstul, Finney, Mohr, Worth, Walhof
- Council members absent: None
- Others present during portions of the hearing included:

Terri Bjorklund, City Administrator  
Dennis Parker, USFS  
Terry Freeman, Landecker's  
Shirley Mallory, Shingobee Twp.  
Derek Anderson, Landecker's  
Willard Arends, Park Board  
Wayne Tennis, Police Chief

Sylvia Bakker, City Employee  
Steve Frick, USFS  
Bob Mallory, Shingobee Twp.  
Will Hoyt, Landecker's  
Dean Morrill, Pilot Independent  
Mara Loomis, WACC  
Jesse LeBlanc, Police Officer

Mayor Walhof stated the City Council would receive comments and concerns pertaining to the USDA's Chippewa National Forests request to vacate a portion of Factory Street. Factory Street is located at an easterly extension of the North line of Lot 2, Block 6, of the Commercial Club's addition to Walker and Highland Ave. Factory Street is currently used to enter into the Walker Ranger Station.

Mayor Walhof turned the Public Hearing over to Dennis Parker, who is the Technical Services Team Leader for the Walker Ranger Station.

Mr. Parker explained to the Council the Walker Ranger Station is in the process of re-developing the district office located at that site. We have recently acquired the old Armory Reserve Site. We have been doing some central site planning, and how we would utilize the site in its entirety. We are looking at building a new office and warehouse complex on this site, and we are going to try and maximize the full use of the facilities there. We had a Public Design Forum last summer, and looked at how we would locate our facilities on the site, and the plan before you tonight is the one that received the most support. It's not finalized in any way shape or form, and we will be working with our engineers and architects and finalizing any final plans.

Mr. Parker explained to the audience and council the layout of the buildings and how they could utilize the existing buildings. They feel that to best utilize the site, it would be in their best interest to ask the City to vacate Factory Street. Factory Street is only being used as an entrance into the Forest Service right now, and does not come down from Highland Street, and we feel it is too steep a grade to even try and build another street down there, but it is a utility corridor. Telephone, electric and sewer run down it right now. The Office right now is supplied by a well, and then the Armory Reserve Site the water comes off from the west. If we supplied the Office with Municipal water we would

just extend the water across from the west, and not bring it down from Highland Ave., but in asking for the vacation of Factory Street we are encouraging the City to maintain the utility rights, easement of the corridor. The wording would be such as to provide for the City to retain a utility easement along that corridor. The vacation we are asking for, isn't all the way out to Highway 371, Reggie Thiel owns the property to the North, and we would only ask to vacant up to the easterly extension, so that there still is an egress, ingress of what remains of Factory Street, so an entrance remains into the Reggie Thiel property.

Mr. Parker asked the council if there were any questions?

Council member Fjelstul, asked if there were any buildings were planned to be built on that portion of Factory Street. Mr. Parker responded that he didn't see any thing for buildings, it would involve how they would put the interior roadways, and parking lots, and there would probably be some utilities running under it.

Council member Fjelstul asked if they happened to know the elevation increase from the bottom of the hill up to towards Highland Ave.. Mr. Parker, stated he didn't know for sure, but that there is a whole lot of contour lines in there. Council member Fjelstul said that the reason he asked was cause when you take a look at the City Streets in Walker going North and South, we don't really have many accesses to get up into that part of town, and for future growth and development, I have some concerns about weather we want to permanently shut that access down, and that's primarily why I asked the question, do you plan on building on the street site, because if there was some way to allow you to use that for a x number of years, and if the Forest Service haven't changed their plans, the City would still have some opportunity to revise their position on it, so we don't totally eliminate that as a street from the future. It might be twenty, thirty, forty years, but right now the City is quite bound by the only way we can go to get from North to South. We don't have 1<sup>th</sup> Street anymore; we don't have 3<sup>rd</sup> Street anymore, so we essentially have 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Street, and 5<sup>th</sup> Street to get up that hill, into what's getting to be quite a development area, and if we continue to run into difficulties getting access off of 371, into that same section of town, I think we have to be a little bit concerned about locking ourselves into any kind of future development. Council member Fjelstul stated he didn't have any objection to what you are doing, for your building site, I just think that at some point in the future it would be necessary to put a road thru there, and we wouldn't want to eliminate that as a possibility, or should the Forest Service relocate at some point in the future, we would still want to have rights to put a road thru there I would think.

Mayor Walhof asked the City Engineer, how does the terrain on Factory Street compare to the like the terrain on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Street, or 5<sup>th</sup> Street. City Engineer, Will Hoyt of Landecker & Associates, said after it would be graded it would be very comparable to like 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

After considerably more discussion, about the terrain, and the Forest Service's concern for security on the site, the Public Hearing was closed.

**ADJOURNMENT – Mayor Walhof**

Mayor Walhof adjourned the public hearing at 6:52 p.m.

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Bradley J. Walhof, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Terri Bjorklund, Administrator