



**CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION AGENDA  
MONDAY, MARCH 03, 2025**

**ABLE PARK BUILDING, 8200 ABLE STREET NE at 5:30 PM**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
  - A.** Ordinance 501, An Ordinance Amending Chapter 16 of the Spring Lake Park City Code Relating to Sight Distance Trianges
- 3. REPORT**
  - A.** City Council/Staff Reports
- 4. ADJOURN**



# Memorandum

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**To:** Mayor Nelson and Members of the City Council  
**From:** Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer  
**Date:** February 27, 2025  
**Subject:** Sight Triangle Ordinance Amendment

## Background and Importance of Sight Distance Triangles

Sight distance triangles play a critical role in ensuring public safety at intersections. These regulations help maintain clear visibility for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians by restricting obstructions that may hinder sightlines. Properly defined and enforced sight distance requirements reduce the risk of collisions and enhance overall traffic flow.

The City's current zoning code contained inconsistencies regarding sight distance triangles, leading to confusion for property owners and enforcement staff. The proposed ordinance aims to resolve these inconsistencies by establishing a uniform standard for defining and maintaining sight triangles at intersections.

## Summary of Proposed Ordinance Changes

The proposed amendment, Ordinance 501, revises Chapter 16 of the City Code to create a clearer, enforceable standard for sight distance triangles. Key provisions include:

- *Updated Definition:* The sight triangle is now defined as two sides measuring 30 feet along the curb lines from an intersection, with the third side connecting these points. This replaces previous conflicting descriptions.
- *Height and Transparency Standards:*
  - No structure, fence, wall, tree, shrub, or other obstruction may exceed 48 inches in height within the sight triangle.
  - Fences and structures must maintain at least 75% transparency to ensure visibility.
- *Consistency in Measurement:* The ordinance shifts from measuring from property lines to curb lines, making compliance easier for residents.

The Planning Commission reviewed these changes and, after incorporating feedback from its initial consideration in November 2024, recommended approval of the revised ordinance at its January 27, 2025 meeting.

## Impact on Non-Conforming Sight Distance Triangles

A key concern discussed during the February 3, 2025 Council meeting was the impact of the ordinance on existing non-conforming sight distance triangles. As stated during the meeting, properties with permanent structures that currently do not conform to the new ordinance are grandfathered in place, meaning they will not be required to make immediate changes unless modifications are made to the existing structures.

However, enforcement will differ depending on whether the obstruction is a permanent structure (e.g., fences, walls) or a natural obstruction (e.g., trees, shrubs):

- *Permanent Structures:* If a non-conforming fence or wall is replaced or reconstructed, it must comply with the new ordinance. Existing fences that remain unchanged may continue as they are.
- *Natural Obstructions:* Property owners may be required to trim or remove trees and shrubs that exceed height limits within the sight triangle, as these obstructions can grow over time and create safety hazards.

At the City Council's request, staff is seeking feedback on any concerns regarding the proposed language and recommendations to ensure the ordinance aligns with the Council's vision.

IF you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Building Official Baker or I at 763-784-6491.

**SPRING LAKE PARK  
ORDINANCE 501**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 16 OF THE SPRING LAKE PARK CITY  
CODE RELATING TO SIGHT DISTANCE TRIANGLES**

**NOW THEREFORE**, be it ordained by the Council of the Spring Lake Park, in the State of Minnesota, as follows:

**SECTION 1:****AMENDMENT** “16.20.080 Yard Requirements And Regulations” of the Spring Lake Park Municipal Code is hereby *amended* as follows:

AMENDMENT

16.20.080 Yard Requirements And Regulations

- A. *District requirements.* Yard requirements shall be specified for each district in this title.
- B. *Extent of front yards.* Except for driveways, the front yard shall extend along the entire frontage of the lot and along both streets in the case of a double frontage or corner lot.
- C. *Walls, fences, and hedges.* A wall, fence, or hedge may occupy part of the required front, side, or rear yards.
- D. *Double frontage lots.* On double frontage lots, the required front yard shall be provided on both streets.
- E. *Corner lots.*
  - 1. ~~The required front yard of a corner lot shall contain no wall, fence, or other structure, tree, shrub, or growth which may cause danger to traffic on a street or public road by obscuring the view. The required front yard of a corner lot shall be unobstructed above a height of three feet in a triangular area, two sides of which are the lines running from the corner of the property along the property lines to points 20 feet from the corner of the property.~~ The required front yard of a corner lot shall remain free of any wall, fence, structure, tree, shrub, or growth that does not maintain at least 75 percent transparency and could obstruct visibility, creating a traffic hazard. Chain link or decorative fencing that maintains at least 75 percent transparency may be allowed, provided it does not exceed a height of 48 inches from grade level at the lot line. The sight triangle is defined as a triangle formed by two sides measuring 30 feet along the curb lines from the intersection of two intersecting streets, with the third side being a straight line connecting the endpoints of these measurements.
  - 2. In all instances, there shall be a minimum of 25 feet side yard setback when abutting a street.

**Cross-reference:**

Intersection Sight Triangle, see SLPC 16.64.040

- F. *Rear yards opening onto alleys.* In determining the depth of rear yard for any building where the rear yard opens into an alley, one-half of the width of the alley, but not exceeding ten feet, may be considered as a portion of the rear yard, subject to the following qualifications:
1. The depth of any rear yard shall not be reduced to less than ten feet by the application of this exception; and
  2. If the door of any building or improvement, except a fence, opens toward an alley, it shall not be erected or established closer to the center line of an alley than a distance of 15 feet.
- G. *Exemptions to yard regulations.* Measurements for yards required in each district shall be taken from the nearest point of the wall of a building to the lot line in question, subject to the following qualifications:
1. Cornices, canopies, or eaves may be extended into the required front yard a distance not exceeding four feet, six inches;
  2. Fire escapes may extend into the required front yard a distance not exceeding four feet, six inches;
- H. A landing place or uncovered porch may extend into the required front yard a distance not exceeding six feet, if the landing place or porch has its floor no higher than the entrance floor of the building. An open railing may be placed around the place;
1. A covered porch may extend into the required front yard a distance not exceeding six feet, if the landing place or porch has its floor no higher than the entrance floor of the building and is not enclosed with windows, screens or the like. The covered area shall not exceed 60 square feet and shall be architecturally compatible (siding, roof material, roof pitch, and the like) with the principal structure. An open railing may be placed around the porch.
  2. The above enumerated architectural features may also extend into any side or rear yard to the same extent, except that no porch, terrace, or outside stairway shall project into the required side yard distance.

**SECTION 2:**            **AMENDMENT** “16.28.030 Fences” of the Spring Lake Park Municipal Code is hereby *amended* as follows:

AMENDMENT

16.28.030 Fences

- A. *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to promote a pleasant physical environment and to protect the public and private property within the city by regulating the location, height, type of construction, and maintenance of all fences.
- B. *Definitions.* For the purpose of this section, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.
- BOUNDARY FENCE.** Any fence parallel to the property line.

**FENCE.** Any partition, structure, wall, or gate erected as a divider marker, barrier, or enclosure and located along the boundary, or within the required yard. A **FENCE** shall not include naturally growing shrubs, trees, other foliage, or trellis.

**PRIVACY FENCE.** Any fence used for screening of outdoor living areas and for enclosures where restricted visibility or protection is desired. **PRIVACY FENCES** shall not require a permit as stipulated in the following paragraph.

C. *Permit required.* No fence shall be erected or substantially altered in the city without securing a permit from the Building Inspector. All permits of this type shall be issued upon a written application which shall set forth the type of fence to be constructed, the material to be used, height, and exact location of the fence. A fee as set from time to time by Council resolution shall be paid with each application.

D. *Location of fences.*

1. Fences, when constructed to enclose any lot or tract of land, shall be located in such a way that the entire fence shall be on the property of the owner, but not on the property line, except by mutual consent of both property owners prior to construction. Posts and framework shall be placed within the property lines of the owner and the actual fencing material, such as wire, lumber, pickets, and the like, shall be placed on the side of the fence which faces the street or the adjacent property.
2. No fences shall be allowed or constructed on street rights-of-way. Fences may, by permit, be placed on public utility easements so long as the structures do not interfere in any way with existing underground or overground utilities. Further, the city or any utility company having authority to use those easements shall not be liable for repair or replacement of these fences in the event they are damaged or destroyed by virtue of lawful use of the easement.

3.

E. *Construction and maintenance.*

1. All fences shall be constructed in conformity with the wind, stress, foundation, structural, and other requirements of the State Building Code and every fence shall be constructed in a workmanlike manner and of substantial material reasonably suited to the purpose for which the fence is to be used. Every fence shall be maintained in a condition of reasonable repair and shall not be allowed to become and remain in a condition which would constitute a public nuisance or a dangerous condition. If a fence is allowed to become and remain in such a condition, the Building Inspector is authorized to notify the owner or owners of the fence of the condition and allow the owner or owners ten days in which to repair or demolish the fence.
2. Link fences, wherever permitted, shall be constructed in such a manner that the barbed end is at the bottom of the fence.
3. No barbed wire or barbed wire fences shall be allowed on private property in residential districts.

F. *Residential district fences.* In single- and multiple-family residential districts, no fence may exceed four feet in height above the ground level, in front of the front line of the residential structure, along any street or highway right-of-way, or in the front yard as defined by this title. In these districts, fences along the side lines to the rear of the front

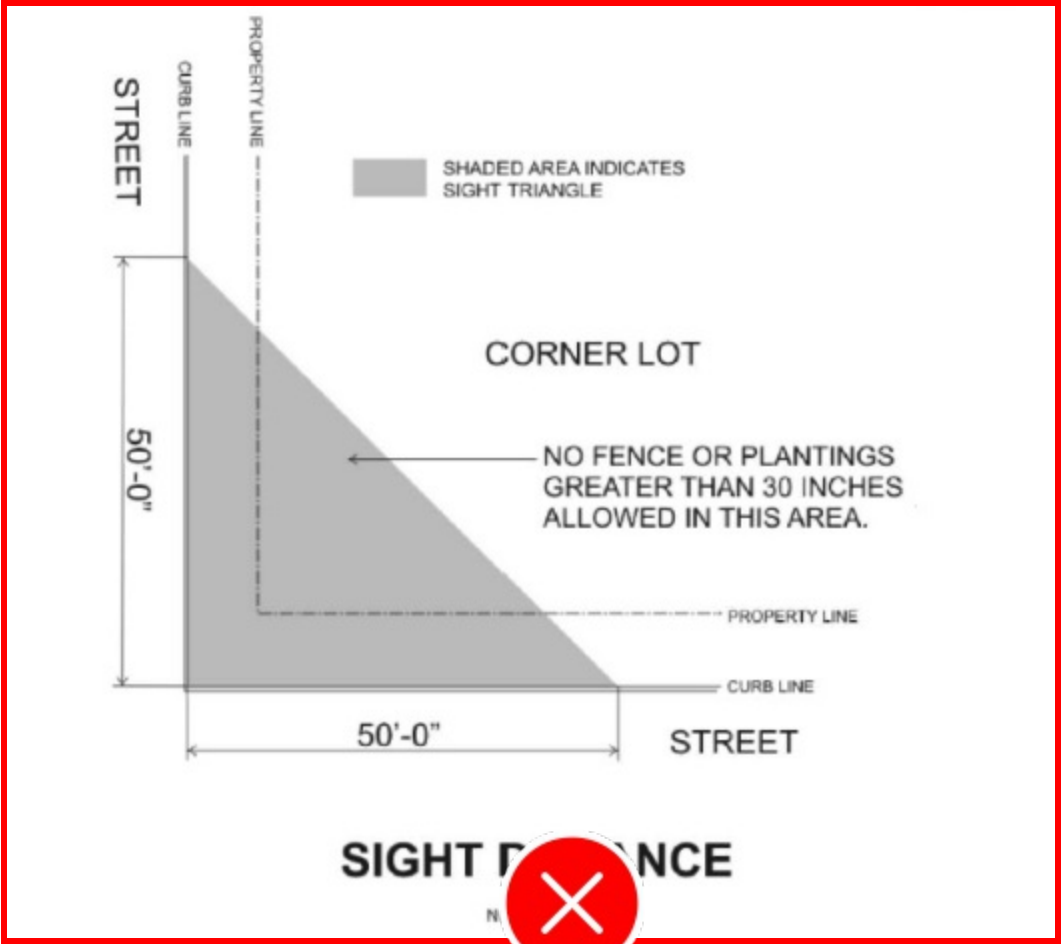
line of the residential structure and along the rear line, including rear lines abutting street or highway right-of-way zones, may not exceed six feet in height above the ground level. The required front yard of a corner lot shall not contain any fence which may cause danger to traffic on a street or public road by obscuring the view. On corner lots, no fence shall be permitted within the intersection sight distance triangle as shown in SLPC 16.64.030, App. C.

- G. *Commercial and industrial fences.* In business and industrial districts, fences may not exceed eight feet in height above the ground level, and the use of barbed wire is prohibited, except that the top one foot of any fence in these districts may be constructed of barbed wire. Fences located within the sight distance triangle, as defined in SLPC 16.64.030, Appendix C, shall be no less than 75% transparent and shall not exceed a maximum height of 48 inches measured from ground level.
- H. *Special purpose fences.*
1. Fences for special purpose and fences differing in construction, heights, or location, may be permitted in any commercial or industrial district in the city, only by issuance of a conditional use permit approved by the City Council after a recommendation by the Planning Commission, and upon evidence that the special purpose fence is necessary to protect, buffer, or improve the premises for which the fence is intended.
  2. The approval of these buffer fences may include stipulations as to the material, height, or location of the special purpose fence.
- I. *Non-conforming fences.* All existing fences at the time of the adoption of this section, which are not in violation of this section and are not located within a public right-of-way or easement, but which violate other sections of this chapter, may be continued to be maintained and to exist but may not be replaced, if destroyed or removed, to the extent that the violations be continued.

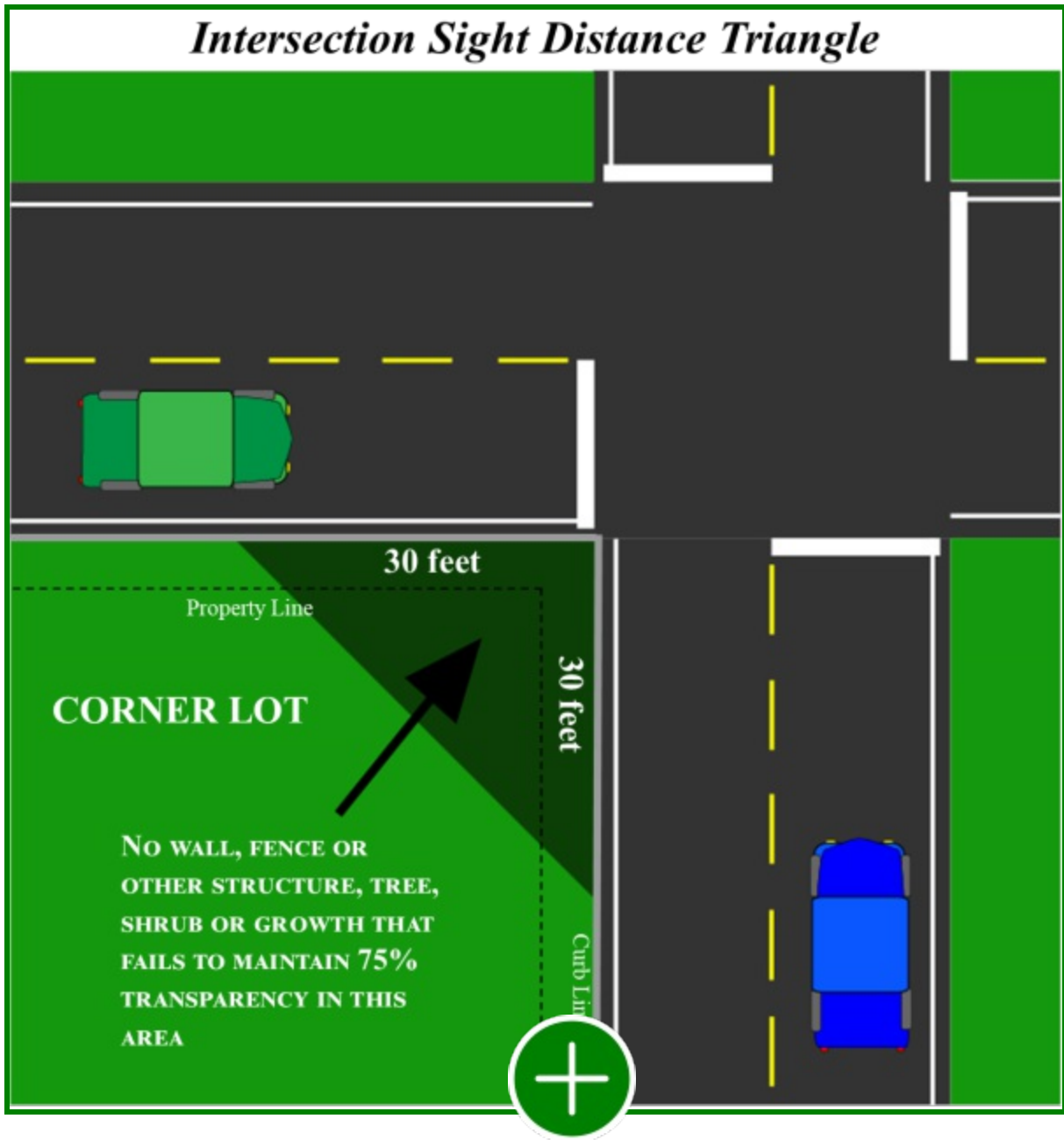
**SECTION 3:            AMENDMENT “16.64.030 Appendix C: Intersection Sight Distance Triangle” of the Spring Lake Park Municipal Code is hereby *amended* as follows:**

AMENDMENT

16.64.030 Appendix C: Intersection Sight Distance Triangle







**SECTION 4:**      **EFFECTIVE DATE** This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon approval and publication according to law.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE SPRING LAKE PARK COUNCIL

\_\_\_\_\_.

|                                 | <b>AYE</b> | <b>NAY</b> | <b>ABSENT</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|----------------|
| Councilmember Wendling          | _____      | _____      | _____         | _____          |
| Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff | _____      | _____      | _____         | _____          |
| Councilmember Dircks            | _____      | _____      | _____         | _____          |
| Councilmember Moran             | _____      | _____      | _____         | _____          |
| Mayor Nelson                    | _____      | _____      | _____         | _____          |

Presiding Officer

Attest

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Nelson, Mayor, Spring Lake  
Park

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator,  
Clerk/Treasurer, Spring Lake Park

## OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park City Council Regular was held on February 3, 2025 at the Able Park Building, 8200 Able Street NE, at 7:00 PM.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### 2. ROLL CALL

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Ken Wendling  
Councilmember Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff  
Councilmember Lisa Dircks  
Councilmember April Moran  
Mayor Bob Nelson

#### STAFF PRESENT

Building Official Jeff Baker, Public Works Director George Linngren, Police Chief Josh Antoine, Engineer Phil Gravel, Attorney John Thames, Administrator Daniel Buchholtz

#### VISITORS

|                            |  |                            |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Eric Julien                | 700 Holland Lane NE                              | Spring Lake Park, MN 55432 |
| Representative Erin Koegel | 5 <sup>th</sup> Floor Centennial Office Building | St. Paul, MN 55155         |

### 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 4. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA

### 5. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

#### A. Legislative Preview from Rep. Erin Koegel

Representative Koegel announced her recent appointment as co-chair of the transportation committee. She highlighted her community outreach efforts, including Metro Transit tours and a visit to the Ramsey-Washington County Recycling and Energy Center. She noted the potential for Anoka County to participate in curbside composting once the new compost facility is operational. Additionally, she shared plans for an upcoming MSP airport tour to address safety concerns following recent incidents.

Representative Koegel also discussed investments in infrastructure to support job growth, the housing market, and the transportation budget. Representative Koegel provided updates on the University Corridor project and the sales tax exemption request for the City Hall Renovation/Expansion project.

**6. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes - January 21, 2024 City Council Meeting
- B. Contractor's Licenses
- C. Resolution 2025-05, Approving A Charitable Gambling Premises Permit within City of Spring Lake Park

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to approve the Consent Agenda.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

**7. DEPARTMENT REPORTS****A. Public Works Report**

Public Works Director Linngren stated that January was a quiet month for the Public Works Department. He said that the slower pace allowed staff to move and organize materials and get caught up on cleanup and administrative tasks.

Public Works Director Linngren stated that the final grant approval for the street sweeper project was granted by BWSR for \$320,000. He stated that the grant provided a valuable opportunity to acquire the street sweeper at no cost.

**B. Code Enforcement Report**

Building Official Baker stated that building inspections were light for January, however the cold snap led to problems with heating and hot water in several units throughout the City. He said that property maintenance codes, does require hot water temperature (110 degrees for an adequate duration) and heating requirements (68 degrees in the middle of the living room).

Building Official Baker stated that there were some concerns about a few properties on the verge of being uninhabitable, with aggressive cleanup recommended to prevent further issues. He noted that no housing revocations have occurred in January, some properties were missed for scheduled inspections due to a software glitch. He said the issue has been addressed, and the affected properties were given extra time to comply.

**8. ORDINANCES AND/OR RESOLUTIONS****A. Ordinance 501, An Ordinance Amending Chapter 16 of the Spring Lake Park City Code Relating to Sight Distance Triangles**

Administrator Buchholtz stated that the zoning code was found to have conflicting language regarding standards for site distance triangles, especially in relation to corner lots and

intersection visibility. He noted that the inconsistencies caused confusion for property owners about enforcement and maintenance responsibilities. Administrator Buchholtz said that to address the inconsistency issue, the city drafted a revised ordinance and presented it to the planning commission for their consideration in November 2024. He said that after receiving their feedback, which was that the original draft was too restrictive, so staff adjusted the ordinance. He said the revised ordinance was presented to the Planning Commission at the January 2025 meeting, where the Planning Commission recommended approval.

Administrator Buchholtz said the revised ordinance establishes a clear and consistent definition for site triangles. He noted the new standard measures the site triangle as two sides extending 30 feet from the curb lines at the intersection of two streets, with the third side connecting the points. He noted that the adjustment reduces the 50-foot measurement and replaces the property lines with curb lines, which makes it easier for residents to measure.

Administrator Buchholtz stated that the ordinance sets a transparency standard, requiring at least 75% transparency within the site triangle. He noted that this will prioritize safety for both motorists and pedestrians. He said both the planning commission and staff recommend approval of the revised ordinance.

Mayor Nelson inquired about the properties that may not be following the new ordinance. Administrator Buchholtz stated that those properties in the triangle currently are grandfathered in place.

Motion made by Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff to schedule discussion on Ordinance 501, An Ordinance Amending Chapter 16 of the Spring Lake Park City Code Relating to Sight Distance Triangles.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

B. Resolution 2025-04, Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 501

Motion made Mayor Nelson to table Resolution 2025-04, Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 501.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**10. REPORTS**

A. Attorney Report

Attorney Thames gave an update on the remediation work at 8478 and 8492 Highway 65. He stated tht the closing on 8478 Highway 65 will be scheduled shortly.

A. Engineer's Report

Accepted as presented.

C. Administrator Report

No Report

**11. OTHER**

None

**12. ADJOURN**

Motion made by Councilmember Wendling to adjourn.

Voting Aye: Councilmember Wendling, Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff, Councilmember Dircks, Councilmember Moran, Mayor Nelson. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.

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Robert Nelson, Mayor

Attest:

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Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer

## OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park Planning Commission was held on January 27, 2025, at the City Hall, at 7:00 PM.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hansen called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### 2. ROLL CALL

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Hans Hansen

Commissioner Rick Cobbs

Commissioner Eric Julien

Commissioner Sharon Weighous

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

Commissioner Brad Delfs

#### STAFF PRESENT

Building Official Jeff Baker

#### OTHERS PRESENT

Ken Wendling

547 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE

Spring Lake Park MN 55432

### 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 4. ELECT OFFICERS

#### A. Chair

Motion made by Commissioner Julien, seconded by Commissioner Cobbs, to elect Commissioner Hansen as Chair for 2025.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Weighous, Commissioner Cobbs, Commissioner Julien. Abstain: Chairperson Hansen. Motion carried.

#### B. Vice Chair

Motion made by Commissioner Weighous, seconded by Commissioner Cobbs, to elect Commissioner Weighous as Vice Chair for 2025.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Weighous, Commissioner Cobbs, Commissioner Julien, Chairperson Hansen. Motion carried.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES****A. Approval of Minutes – November 25, 2024 Meeting**

Motion made by Commissioner Cobbs, seconded by Commissioner Julien, to approve the minutes from the October 23, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Weighous, Commissioner Cobbs, Commissioner Julien, Chairperson Hansen. Motion carried.

**6. OLD BUSINESS****A. Review and Recommend Approval of Proposed Sight Distance Triangle Ordinance**

Building Official Baker gave an overview of the Sight Triangle Ordinance. He stated that the Ordinance had some changes made since the first review in November of 2024. He stated that instead of 50 feet from the corner of the curb, it is now 30 feet. Building Official Baker stated that the biggest change is the 75% transparency. He stated that no structure within the area may exceed 48 inches in height from grade level.

Building Official Baker noted that the ordinance resolves inconsistent descriptions and standards have been removed to create a unified and enforceable standard. He said the ordinance prioritizes unobstructed visibility within the sight triangle to enhance traffic safety.

Commissioner Hansen noted that the city would be focusing on visual obstructions, such as trees, shrubs, and fences, that may hinder visibility at street corners.

Commissioner Weighous inquired if there are any residents that are grandfathered into the new ordinance. Building Official Baker stated that everyone has corrective actions taken against them. He stated that unless the resident comes into City Hall to get a new permit to rebuild he will not act, however once they do they must come into compliance.

Motion made by Commissioner Julien, seconded by Commissioner Cobbs to Recommend Approval of Proposed Sight Triangle Ordinance.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Weighous, Commissioner Cobbs, Commissioner Julien, Chairperson Hansen. Motion carried.

**7. OTHER**

Building Official Baker gave an update on the City Hall Renovation/ Expansion Project at City Hall. Commissioner Weighous inquired about the location for the meetings. Building Official Baker said that the date will be announced later once the video equipment is installed.



Commissioner Hansen inquired about training for City staff on Active Shooters. Building Official Baker said he was not aware of any upcoming training for staff. Councilmember Wendling stated that the walls of City Hall are bullet proof/bullet resistant and doors are heavier.

## **8. ADJOURN**

Motion made by Commissioner Cobbs, seconded by Commissioner Cobbs to adjourn.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Weighous, Commissioner Cobbs, Commissioner Julien, Chairperson Hansen. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.