

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park Planning Commission was held on January 22, 2024, 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 Brad Delfs
Commissioner Kelsey Hollihan
Commissioner Eric Julien
Commissioner Sharon Weighous

STAFF PRESENT

Building Official Jeff Baker, City Planner Kristin Baldonado, Administrator Daniel Buchholtz

OTHERS PRESENT

Brandon Prior	6351 20 th Ave	Lino Lakes MN 55030
Said Sajady	8325 University Avenue NE	Spring Lake Park MN 55432

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ELECT OFFICERS

A. Chair

Motion made by Commissioner Cobbs, seconded by Commissioner Hollihan, to elect Commissioner Hansen as Chair for 2024.

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

B. Vice Chair

Motion made by Commissioner Cobbs, seconded by Commissioner Julien, to elect Commissioner Delfs as Vice Chair for 2024.

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes – October 23, 2023 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 Hollihan, Commissioner Delfs, Commissioner Cobbs, Commissioner Julien, Chairperson Hansen. Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit for Northtown Auto Sales, 8325 University Ave NE, to Permit Auto Repair

Planner Baldonado provided an overview of the conditional use permit request from Northtown Auto Sales, which operates a car sales lot at 8325 University Avenue NE. She stated that the applicant is seeking a conditional use permit to allow auto repair and servicing on used vehicles in the C-2 zoning district.

Planner Baldonado stated that Northtown Auto Sales currently has an existing conditional use permit (CUP) which allows for auto sales and cleaning of vehicles. The original CUP (then called a “special use permit”) was approved in March 1985 and allowed auto sales, but no repair, with a maximum of 50 cars parked on site. A CUP amendment in December 1985 increased the allowed number of cars on site to 58 and allowed parking to within 5 feet of the front lot line. Two CUP amendments in 1993 allowed a taller garage door and added storage and cleaning of vehicles to the list of permitted uses.

Planner Baldonado reported that staff is recommending approval of the CUP with the following conditions:

- Auto repair may be conducted on site as long as all repair work is done completely within the building and all other conditions of this permit are adhered to.
- A new landscaped boulevard along the University Avenue frontage road will be added, consisting of an additional 4-ft-wide landscaped area, in addition to the existing 5-ft-wide landscaped area, for a total of 9 ft wide. The new boulevard will be planted with low shrubs in a plan to be prepared by the

owner and reviewed and approved by the City Planner and City Engineer. The plan is to be completed by October 31, 2024.

- The number of cars on site at any one time, including vehicles for sale, involved in repair, or customer parking, is limited to 58.
- All vehicles on site must be legal and operational for public highways.
- Hours of operation are 9 am to 9 pm, Monday to Friday and 9 am to 6 pm on Saturdays.
- On-site lighting to be confined to the premises. Any changes in site lighting plan are to be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer.
- Existing green space to be maintained.
- Fencing will be kept in good repair and attractive appearance.
- All other City standards related to drainage of the site and other site features are to be followed. Any changes must be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer.

Commissioner Hollihan asked what provisions are being put in place to ensure that after the warranty year that the shrubbery will not be overgrown. Planner Baldonado suggested that city staff do periodic inspections. Commissioner Hollihan inquired if there could be a provision stating that the landscape needed to be aesthetically pleasing. Administrator Buchholtz stated that it could be added as a condition of the landscaping.

Commissioner Weighous wondered if 9 pm was too late to be repairing cars considering the close proximity of residential housing. Administrator Buchholtz stated that 9 pm is earlier than what the code allows, and it is consistent with the current CUP. Commissioner Weighous asked how the City can ensure that the car limit of 50 is not exceeded. Administrator Buchholtz stated that the Police Department does periodic car counts at night, and if the property owner is over the limit, the violation is reported to the Code Enforcement Department for possible action.

Building Official Baker stated that each auto dealer's lot is counted for compliance. He stated that the count is done around the time of license renewal.

Commissioner Weighous asked Building Official Baker if there were regulations on chemicals or oil which could be hazardous. Building Official Baker stated that upon the final inspection their rules and regulations that are followed up on. He said that the business is inspected to make sure the chemicals and oils are in the proper containers, and that all documentation pertaining to each chemical is in place.

Mr. Said Sajady, representing Northtown Auto, gave a response to the staff report and made the following requests:

- Requested that the previous CUP not be voided, simply amended to include the auto repair use.
- That the landscape requirement be removed, because the business needs visibility from University Avenue.
- That the limit on cars not be reduced to 50 but be increased.

Administrator Buchholtz stated that there are three existing Special Use Permits, which is confusing. He said the proposed CUP would serve as the one document that governs the use of the property versus trying to figure out which CUP to follow. He stated that the landscaping is a recommendation from staff because the City is working to beautify the University Avenue Corridor.

Mr. Sajady stated that the hours of the business are 9am – 5pm. He said that the repairs on vehicles is done on their inventory and are done inside the shop.

Commissioner Delfs inquired if there was another way to beautify the corridor versus the current proposal of tall trees. The Commission discussed using mulch and low shrubbery instead of the trees.

Motion made by Commissioner Julien, seconded by Commissioner Weighous to recommend

Conditional Use Permit for Northtown Auto Sales, 8325 University Ave NE, to Permit Auto Repair with the following modified conditions:

- The current Special Use Permit at 8325 University Avenue NE, approved in March 1985 and amended in December 1985 and December 1993, is voided and replaced with a new Conditional Use Permit.
- Auto repair may be conducted on site as long as all repair work is done completely within the building and all other conditions of this permit are adhered to.
- A new landscaped boulevard along the University Avenue frontage road will be added, consisting of an additional 4-ft-wide landscaped area, in addition to the existing 5-ft-wide landscaped area, for a total of 9 ft wide. The new boulevard will be planted with low shrubs in a plan to be prepared by the owner and reviewed and approved by the City Planner and City Engineer. The plan is to be completed by October 31, 2024.
- The number of cars on site at any one time, including vehicles for sale, involved in repair, or customer parking, is limited to 58.
- All vehicles on site must be legal and operational for public highways.
- Hours of operation are 9 am to 9 pm, Monday to Friday and 9 am to 6 pm on Saturdays.
- On-site lighting to be confined to the premises. Any changes in site lighting plan are to be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer.

- Existing green space to be maintained.
- Fencing will be kept in good repair and attractive appearance.
- All other City standards related to drainage of the site and other site features are to be followed. Any changes must be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer.

Voting Aye: Commissioner Weighous, Commissioner Hollihan, Commissioner Delfs, Commissioner Delfs, Commissioner Julien, Chair Hansen. Motion carried.