

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Spring Lake Park City Council Work Session was held on March 03, 2025 at the Able Park Building, 8200 Able Street NE, at 5:30 PM.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nelson called the work session to order at 5:30pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

STAFF PRESENT

Attorney John Thames, Building Official Jeff Baker, Public Works Director George Linngren,
Administrator Daniel Buchholtz

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Ordinance 501, An Ordinance Amending Chapter 16 of the Spring Lake Park City Code Relating to Sight Distance Triangles

Administrator Buchholtz introduced the item. He explained that this item had been previously discussed at the February 4, 2025 Council meeting, where it was tabled to a work session for further review and discussion.

Administrator Buchholtz stated that staff prepared the proposed ordinance to clarify conflicting language in the current zoning code, which had created confusion for both property owners and code enforcement staff. He explained that the ordinance proposed a standardized definition of sight triangles, measuring 30 feet along the curb lines from an intersection, as opposed to the current conflicting standards of 50 feet along the curb lines from an intersection and 20 feet from the property line. He further stated that the ordinance set height and transparency standards, limiting obstructions to 48 inches in height and requiring fences and structures within the triangle to maintain at least 75% transparency.

Buchholtz stated that the discussion centered around the impact of the ordinance on existing nonconforming sight triangles. He explained that the proposed ordinance would generally reduce nonconformities across the city. He stated that concerns were raised about enforcement and how the ordinance would apply to both permanent structures, such as fences and walls, and natural obstructions, like overgrown vegetation. He further explained that permanent structures that were nonconforming under the previous

ordinance would be allowed to remain, while natural obstructions could be trimmed to maintain compliance.

Building Official Baker provided photographs and measurements of various intersections where concerns had been raised, including the intersection of Rosedale and Terrace, the intersection of Maple and Able, and the intersection of Sanburnol Drive and the University Service Drive. Councilmembers reviewed the images and discussed specific properties that had been the subject of complaints, including a property at the southeast corner of Sanburnol Drive and University Avenue Service Drive, where enforcement actions had been challenging.

Mayor Nelson and Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff expressed concerns about how the ordinance would impact residents, particularly those who had made improvements based on previous guidance. Councilmember Goodboe-Bisschoff questioned whether a public hearing was necessary. Buchholtz clarified that a public hearing had already been held at the Planning Commission level. He emphasized that the ordinance was less restrictive than the current code.

The Council discussed various methods for enforcing the ordinance, including potential measures such as marking sight triangles with paint on curbs to indicate compliance zones clearly. City Attorney Thames explained the legal framework for addressing nonconforming uses and how the ordinance would impact existing structures and vegetation. He stated that current nonconforming uses would generally not be affected unless they were modified or replaced.

After discussion, consensus of a majority of the City Council was to move forward with the proposed sight distance triangle ordinance, as recommended by the Planning Commission. He stated that it would be placed on the March 17th City Council agenda for approval.

3. REPORT

A. City Council/Staff Reports

Administrator Buchholtz stated that the City had closed on the purchase of the 8478 Highway 65 property, making the City the official owner. He explained that plans were in place to install a vapor barrier at the property, which would allow for potential leasing or other uses while long-term redevelopment plans were considered.

4. ADJOURN

With no further discussion, the meeting was declared adjourned at 6:34pm.

Robert Nelson, Mayor

Attest:

Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer