



CITY OF SPRING PARK
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMITTEE AGENDA
APRIL 12, 2017 – 7:30 PM
SPRING PARK CITY HALL

SESSION #1: PLANNING TACTICS

ATTACHMENT 1: INTERVIEW RESULTS

ATTACHMENT 2: PLANNING TACTICS SECTION FROM 2030 COMP PLAN

SPRING PARK TACTICS INTERVIEW ISSUES

Community Identity

1. Need to clean up – enforcement
2. Redevelop bad sites
3. Community gatherings
 - Events
 - National Night Out
 - Inter-community events
4. Keep Post Office
5. More activities for children and young adults
6. Improve street conditions

Protect Single Family Neighborhoods

1. Rental ordinance – inspections and repairs
 - Rentals in single family neighborhoods
 - Party houses
 - Low end rentals have created nuisances and public safety issues
2. Large home over builds
 - Cramped neighborhoods
 - No side yard setbacks
 - Overburden the small lot
3. Improve streets
4. Solely single family zoning district – avoid introduction of twinhomes
5. Enforce on poor site conditions – junk, outdoor storage – junk properties are the most frequent complaint to City Hall
6. Target poor condition homes for redevelopment

Multiple Family

1. Aging apartments
 - Condition
 - Rents
 - Rental ordinance – inspections and repairs
 - Improve housing conditions to reduce resident complaints
2. Quantity of multiple family in the City

Commercial

1. Improve appearance
 - Clean up bad sites
 - Target redevelopment sites
 - Area behind City Hall
 - Gillette site
 - Screening of rear yards along the regional trail
 - Clean up outdoor storage – enforcement
2. Positives
 - Back Channel Brewery
 - Drive In
 - Lord Fletchers
 - Post Office
3. Future desired business
 - Restaurants

Industrial

1. Most felt that the industrial area of the City is done well
 - Well maintained
 - Employment base
 - No problems or issues
2. Question the long range future of the site due to location, transportation, changing markets
 - Future land use

Lake Minnetonka

1. City's greatest asset – protect and improve the water quality
 - Sump pump ordinance
 - Stormwater improvements – public and private – to treat stormwater before entering the lake
 - Protect shoreline from development
2. Preserve County boat access

Parks

1. Don't over-utilize Thor Thomson Lake
 - Park use and amenities to a scale that fit the park
2. Provide directional signs to City tennis courts

3. Wilkes Park – the community garden very positive
 - Update play equipment
 - Improve pedestrian access to Wilkes Park
 - Clean up or screen the property to the east of the park

Trails

1. Regional trail is a great asset to Spring Park
 - Provide more local connections to the trail
 - Screen trail from rear yards of adjoining commercial sites
2. Local sidewalks and trails
 - Sunset Trail

Communications

1. The need for greater outreach to community
 - Digital records
 - Use social media
 - Newsletter, direct mailing
 - Electronic agenda
2. Promotion of the community
 - Community events – National Night Out, Winterfest
 - Spirit Wear

Streets and Infrastructure

1. Comprehensive inspection and evaluation of streets and utility infrastructures
 - Older sanitary sewer
 - Slip-lining
 - Annually televised inspection and jetting of one-fourth of the City
 - High I/I in sanitary sewer due to clay and ductile pipes
2. Water system is generally in good shape
 - Tower in good shape and adequate capacity
 - Treatment facility to remove TCE from wells 1 and 2
 - Wells 1 and 2 pumps need screens to reduce sand collection when running at full capacity. Without the screen, the pumps must be idled down to reduce sand collection. This reduces the well capacity.
 - Well 3 needs to replace the drop pipe and pump housing.

3. Streets – condition of local streets was identified numerous times in interviews
 - Narrow rural street design
 - Poor condition
 - Poor stormwater management – no curb or stormwater collection
 - Poor streets distract from the appearance of a neighborhood
 - Street replacement has been difficult due to neighborhood opposition
 - Need for systematic plan for improving existing streets and utilities throughout the City
 - Need for a financing strategy to reduce local opposition to needed improvements
 - Need to be proactive rather than reactive on infrastructure improvements to avoid a future system failure

Redevelopment Target Sites

1. Park Island Apartments
2. Properties surrounding City Hall
3. Properties north of the Post Office
4. Property on east end of Wilkes Park
5. Select single family homes on Northern Avenue

Administration / Implementation

1. Need for a street and infrastructure replacement plan
 - Evaluation of existing streets and infrastructure to identify priority areas
 - Design an urban street section that fits the City's narrow streets
 - Outline a financing strategy for public improvements
2. Code enforcement – many suggested that the lack of aggressive code enforcement has resulted in expanding problem sites
 - Need for more aggressive citation and litigation, if necessary

Introduction

This section of the Comprehensive Plan is the Planning Tactics, which is devoted to the summary of comments and concerns raised in the Tactics interviews conducted with the City of Spring Park staff, City Council members, as well as a few other key stakeholders in the community and comments from the first Comprehensive Plan Task Force workshop.

Identification of each and every issue raised in the interview and workshop process was not attempted. Rather, issues presented herein represent a broad categorization of topics raised. Generally, there was a strong consensus on many topics, however, where opinions differ, both sides of the issue are presented. The following perceptions and issues represent topic area requiring specific attention throughout the comprehensive planning process.

Community Identity

Most people interviewed described Spring Park as a small lake community. This is the identity that the City wants to preserve and promote. The following community strengths contribute to Spring Park's quality of life and public image:

1. Lake Minnetonka surrounds Spring Park. The highly valued water body provides open space, recreational opportunities, and land value to Spring Park residents. Access to the lake provides an aesthetic and economic enrichment to the community. Most interviewed expressed a need to continue to protect this natural resource for future residents.
2. The small town government and fiscally conservative government. The City is operated and maintained with small and efficient public staff.
3. The opportunity for the regional trail through the community contributes both recreational and transportation amenities that contribute to the City's identity.

While complementary to the City as an attractive place to live, interview participants also identified the following community concerns that may threaten the City's historic identity:

1. Lakeshore lots along Lake Minnetonka continue to appreciate in value due to their limited availability. While this benefits the City with regard to tax base, it also presents the following concerns:
 - a. Increased land values result in increased property taxes. Substantial increases in property taxes can make it difficult for middle income households to continue to afford their homes.

- b. The high value lakeshore lots are attracting more affluent households capable of affording premium lakeshore values. This trend is changing the socio-economic demographics of the City. With their new investment, the new property owners have different expectations for the neighborhoods and the City related to house size, neighborhood appearance, and City services. Some have expressed that with the continued in-migration of affluent households, the City is being segregated into the “haves and the have nots.” These changed expectations have produced some conflicts within neighborhoods.

Single Family Land Uses

- 1. Spring Park is characterized by long narrow single family lots. Historically, these lots contained seasonal cottages and summer homes. As the City matured, these seasonal residences became year round homes. The existing pattern of single family lots raises the following concerns:
 - a. The narrow lot patterns result in tight living arrangements. These small lots are expected to contain the house, outbuildings, automobile parking, seasonal storage of boats and docks, and provide useable yard for the resident. This was an acceptable arrangement when Spring Park was a resort community with small cottages and single car households, however, as the City evolved to full time residents, property use changes with larger homes, maximizing use of their property. This has created issues related to property line disputes, outdoor storage, monster homes, and greater impervious lot coverage.
 - b. Many of the houses in Spring Park were constructed prior to zoning regulations and as such, do not meet required building setbacks. These reduced setbacks contribute to the City’s tight development pattern. With new construction and building additions, property owners want to preserve their right to the non-conforming setbacks and expand their homes into the balance of the lot. Without uniform setbacks, the expanded house size begins to dwarf the lot and adjoining homes.
 - c. With new redevelopment within the single family neighborhoods, property owners pursue the “biggest bank for the buck”, resulting in larger, taller, more expensive homes. While the City wants to continue to encourage reinvestment in its housing stock, the City needs to re-evaluate past practices and define its future expectations for house sizes, lot coverage, and setbacks.
 - d. The City has identified that the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of the City’s existing single family neighborhoods must be a priority of the 2030

Comprehensive Plan. To achieve this goal, the following suggestions were offered:

- Maintain required building setbacks.
 - Stick to the City’s minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet.
 - Limit single family lot impervious surface.
- e. Single family homes along Sunset Drive are zoned for medium density housing alternatives. The City will explore whether a low density zoning may be more appropriate for these single family lots.

Multiple Family Land Uses

Multiple family housing represents 70 percent of the City’s current housing stock. The City’s multiple family housing stock has provided a variety of housing options for Spring Park residents. This land contributes to the City’s tax base, providing some relief for single family homeowners. Through the Tactics interviews, the following options were presented:

1. Many interviewed raised concern over the quantity of multiple family in the City. Currently, it represents 70 percent of the City’s housing stock.
2. In looking to the future, many indicated that if the City wants redevelopment, multiple family housing provides a viable land use option. High land costs and other redevelopment costs tend to push density to make redevelopment financially feasible. A number of people interviewed expressed that the most recent redevelopment efforts (Lakeview Lofts and The Mist) included too much density, too big of buildings, and the lack of amenities as shortcomings in the projects. Others pointed out the expanded tax base and that these projects replaced a number of marginal to blighted buildings. The end results is an improvement over previous conditions.
3. In looking to the future, the City needs to further define the redevelopment ambitions related to land use, density, building design, building height, and amenities to aid in guiding future projects.
4. Attractive streetscape design along County Road 15 portray a positive community identity.

Commercial Land Uses

In 2007, the City of Spring Park undertook a planning effort to establish design guidelines for future commercial development and redevelopment. This effort recognized the electric composition of Spring Park’s commercial area. The City efforts strive to maintain the vitality of existing businesses, while enhancing the appearance of the commercial area.

Through the Tactics interviews, the following concerns were expressed with regard to the commercial areas of the City:

1. The City would like to promote commercial businesses that are compatible with the City image of small lake community. In this regard, smaller businesses that benefit from proximity to the lake, or serve the local lake lifestyle. Preferred businesses listed through the interviews include smaller lake oriented retailers, office use, coffee shop, or a sit down restaurant.
2. The appearance of select commercial areas is a concern for the City related to building conditions, exterior storage, and exterior sales. The City’s 2007 Design Guidelines is the City’s effort to improve on existing conditions.
3. A number of businesses were identified as examples of uses the City wants to continue to promote:
 - a. Marina Shopping Center. Recent face lifts on the building have improved its overall appearance. Introduction of the medical clinic as a shopping center anchor is seen as a very positive addition to the community.
 - b. Lord Fletcher’s Restaurant is a community landmark that draws regional customers to Spring Park.
 - c. The Drive Inn Restaurant on County Road 15 is a community attraction that provides good food and a unique dining atmosphere. Special events at the Drive Inn, such as “old car night” makes the site a local and regional destination.
4. In general, most interviewees would like more commercial, retail and service uses within the community. The types of businesses that are desired are those that address the day-to-day needs of Spring Park residents and businesses that cater to the lake activities, and the lake community lifestyles.
5. Some commercial zoned properties along County Road 15 have limited accessibility due to severe topography. The City will investigate alternative land uses for these sites.

Industrial Land Uses

Spring Park has 8.5 acres of land zoned M, Manufacturing to accommodate existing industrial land uses. In discussion of this land use category, the following comments were offered:

1. The current industrial property has a successful multi-tenant building that is a vital and active land use in the City. The property owner has indicated that they have no plans for redevelopment in the near future.
2. Most interviewees are pleased with improvements and appearance of the industrial area of the City. This site contributes to the attractive streetscape along County Road 15.
3. The industrial area of the City provides a significant contribution to the City’s tax base and provides local employment opportunities.
4. The limited size of the industrial site, its location away from major highway systems, and growing commuter traffic on County Road 15 have raised questions over the long term viability of industrial land use in Spring Park.

Transportation

The following comments were offered regarding Spring Park’s transportation infrastructure:

1. Most of the people interviewed recognized the growing traffic volumes on the County highway system. This presents concerns for Spring Park related to site and neighborhood access, congestion at controlled intersections and increased commuting times for Spring Park residents working outside of the City.
2. The local street system is characterized by very narrow and frequently dead-end streets. These streets are located on very narrow rights-of-way, providing limited opportunity for improvement or expansion. The local street configurations present concerns for street maintenance, snow removal, on-street parking, and access for emergency vehicles.
3. The City recently completed a street condition study that reveals streets that need some repair or improvement. The City needs to include a systematic strategy for undertaking street improvements.
4. Most of the interview participants want a pedestrian friendly community. The City supports the regional trail on the Hennepin County rail right-of-way. This regional trail will provide a pedestrian/bicycle trail that traverses the entire community, providing opportunity for local trail connections that may link City neighborhoods and commercial areas.

5. The Hennepin County regional trail corridor represents a significant pedestrian/bicycle thoroughfare through the City, however it passes along the backs of properties. There is a need to enhance the aesthetic quality of the pedestrian/bicycle corridor by screening the adjoining land uses.
6. There is a need for a trail head associated with the Hennepin County regional trail with associated parking, landscaping, and trail amenities.
7. Sunset Drive (County Road 51) is a County road with narrow right-of-way and with adjoining land uses in close proximity to the street. Due to high traffic volume and traffic speeds, there is a need to segregate pedestrian and automobile traffic through the creation of a trail or sidewalk along this street.
8. Long range plans (post 2030) for a light rail transit on the Hennepin County rail right-of-way is supported by the City. The transit component would provide commuter traffic relief for County Road 15 and provide a transit amenity that will support Spring Park's future land use development.

Community Facilities

Stormwater

1. The City adopted its Local Water Management Plan in 2004 that outlines the City's strategies for stormwater management.
2. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has identified West Arm Bay of Lake Minnetonka as impaired water. The impaired clarification is based on nutrient/eutrophication and biological indicator criteria. The City of Spring Park will need to study the City's stormwater discharge into the bay and implement a plan to reduce total maximum daily loadings in accordance with MPCA standards.
3. The City works with Minnehaha Creek Watershed District on all construction projects addressing issues of erosion control, stormwater management, and on-site inspections.

Municipal Water

1. The municipal water system was described as being in generally good condition, with some pipes being a little undersized. There are some dead-end water mains that result in slow water pressure in some neighborhoods. Future looping of these dead-end water mains would resolve the water pressure issues.

2. The water tower and City reservoir have sufficient capacity to meet the City's needs.
3. Some of the new, taller redevelopment projects required the installation of pressure pumps within the building to insure appropriate water pressure and fire protection in the upper stories of the buildings.

Sanitary Sewer

1. The sanitary sewer system utilizes seven lift stations to collect and move sanitary sewage through and out of the City.
2. The sewer collection system is older and has some areas that require repair and/or replacement. A plan for sanitary sewer repairs is necessary.
3. The City has adopted and implemented an Inflow and Infiltration (I and I) Plan to reduce stormwater flows into the City's sanitary sewer.

County Boat Launch

1. The County boat launch is an amenity that benefits the City. Through Task Force discussion, it was suggested that the City work with the County to enhance the boat launch, both aesthetically and functionally through landscaping, launch improvements, and off-site parking for boating guests.

Issues Map



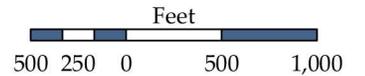
City of Spring Park



Community Issues



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