



**Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 4, 2024
6:30 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick Blees called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Patrick Blees, Chair
Andrew Wise, Vice-Chair
Arthur Alvarez, Jr., Commissioner
Stephanie Kane-Burback, Commissioner
Elizabeth Gadbois, Commissioner
Cameron Muhic, Commissioner
Jim Rathe, Commissioner

STAFF/LIAISONS

Jason Nordby, City Council Liaison
Brandy Howe, Community Development Director

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Blees asked for a motion to adopt the April 4, 2024 meeting agenda.
M/Muhic, S/Gadbois.
Motion carried 7-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of March 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Blees asked for a motion to approve the March 7, 2024 meeting minutes.
M/Rathe, S/Wise.
Motion carried 7-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

VI. WORKSHOP DISCUSSION

a. Fence Regulations – Continuation of March Discussion

Howe presented the staff report and proposed ordinance updates for fences and walls. In summary, the ordinance clarifies that a permit is required for the installation, construction, alteration or moving of a fence. The ordinance clarifies that fences may be allowed in an easement, provided that it is placed at the



owner's risk and drainage is not interrupted. The proposed ordinance establishes rules ensuring access to utility boxes and hydrants and separate regulations for residential and non-residential fences. The height of fences for residential properties increased in the front yard from 3.5' to 4' if the fence is 50% opaque and in the rear yard from 6.5' to 7'. The ordinance clarifies the definition of the front yard to be the area between the closest point of the principal structure and the front property line. Fence regulations for swimming pools have been updated to comply with state statutes.

Wise asked for clarification on opacity. Blees stated that he does not see a problem with having an opaque fence in the front yard as long as it complies with the height requirements. Muhic stated that opacity regulations would completely rule out the picket fence as an option. The commission recommended removal of the following language in section 11(b)(i)(2): "and have a minimum of 50% opacity (open to air and light)". Nordby stated he agrees with removing the opacity regulation, but wonders if it is a safety issue with children at play. Alvarez stated that safety may be an issue if a fence directly abuts a street. Muhic stated that the fence should never directly abut a street as there is typically city right of way between a lot line and a street.

The Planning Commission indicated that no fence shall be designed to electrically shock. Wise indicated concerns on barbed wire being permitted on nonresidential property in the MU-3 district, as the MU-3 district is quite large. Nordby asked if a business would need to demonstrate proof of insurance for installation of barbed wire fence. After discussion, the Commission decided to leave the barbed wire language as written.

Blees recommended changing the language of "property residentially used" to "residential uses."

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at their next meeting and consider a recommendation to City Council of approval of the ordinance on fence and wall regulations.

VII. REPORTS

Howe shared that she has submitted her resignation and her last day with the City of North St. Paul will be May 10, 2024. She stated that it has been a pleasure to work with the Planning Commission.

Nordby thanked the Planning Commission for their detailed work and stated that yard waste pickup begins the week of April 15, 2024.

Blees stated the annual North St. Paul Cleanup Day will be held on May 11, 2024 from 8am-11am, and the Citywide Garage Sale will be held May 2-4, 2024.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Blees asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 PM.
M/Rathe, S/Muhic.
Motion carried 7-0.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, May 2, 2024 at 6:30 PM.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

Chris Cherne
Planning Commission Secretary
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