



MORGANTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

February 11, 2016
6:30 PM
City Council Chambers

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Vice-President:

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Tim Stranko, 2nd Ward

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William Kawecki, City Council

STAFF REPORT

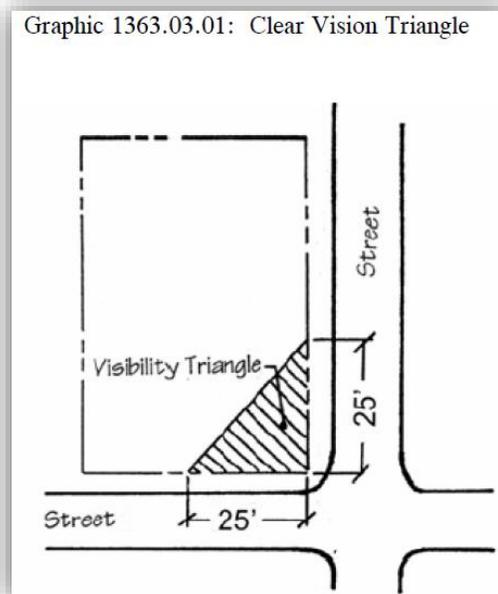
CASE NO: TX16-01 / Administrative / Clear Vision Triangle

REQUEST:

Administratively requested Zoning Text Amendments to Sections 1329.02 “Definitions” and 1363.03 “Safety and Vision” as they relate to providing for safety and vision at street intersections and driveway entrances.

BACKGROUND and ANALYSIS:

The Planning and Zoning Code provides prescriptive standards for ensuring unobstructed vision at street intersections. The Graphic 1363.03.01 “Clear Vision Triangle” is clipped from the Code to illustrate the dimensions of the visibility triangle.



The current standards present the following deficiencies.

1. The indiscriminate 25-foot standard for the legs of the clear vision triangle is a two dimensional, one-size-fits-all regulatory approach that does not reflect the geometry of Morgantown’s roadway network.
2. The 25-foot standard does not reflect more urban development patterns.
3. The City Engineer is not provided latitude to consider traffic engineering principles on which related guidelines are published by the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH), the American Association of State Highway and

Development Services

Christopher Fletcher, AICP
Director

Planning Division

389 Spruce Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
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Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE).

4. Additional site specific considerations are necessary to ensure public safety including intersection alignment, grades, posted speed limits, stopping sight distances, the presence of traffic control devices such as stop signs and traffic lights, etc.
5. Current provisions are specific to street intersections and do not address driveway entrances onto streets and alleys.

With the assistance of the City Engineer, text amendments are presented in Addendum A of this report addressing these deficiencies, which serve to further public safety.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully advises the Planning Commission to forward a favorable recommendation to City Council to amend the Planning and Zoning Code as presented in the Addendum A of this report (deleted matter struck-through; new matter underlined) based on the information and findings presented herein.

Development Services

Christopher Fletcher, AICP
Director

Planning Division

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STAFF REPORT ADDENDUM A

TX16-01 / Administrative / Clear Vision Triangle

The following text amendments are recommended, with the assistance of the City Engineer, to address deficiencies in the Planning and Zoning Code's regulatory approach to ensuring clear line-of-sight at intersections and driveway entrances (deleted matter struck through; new matter underlined).

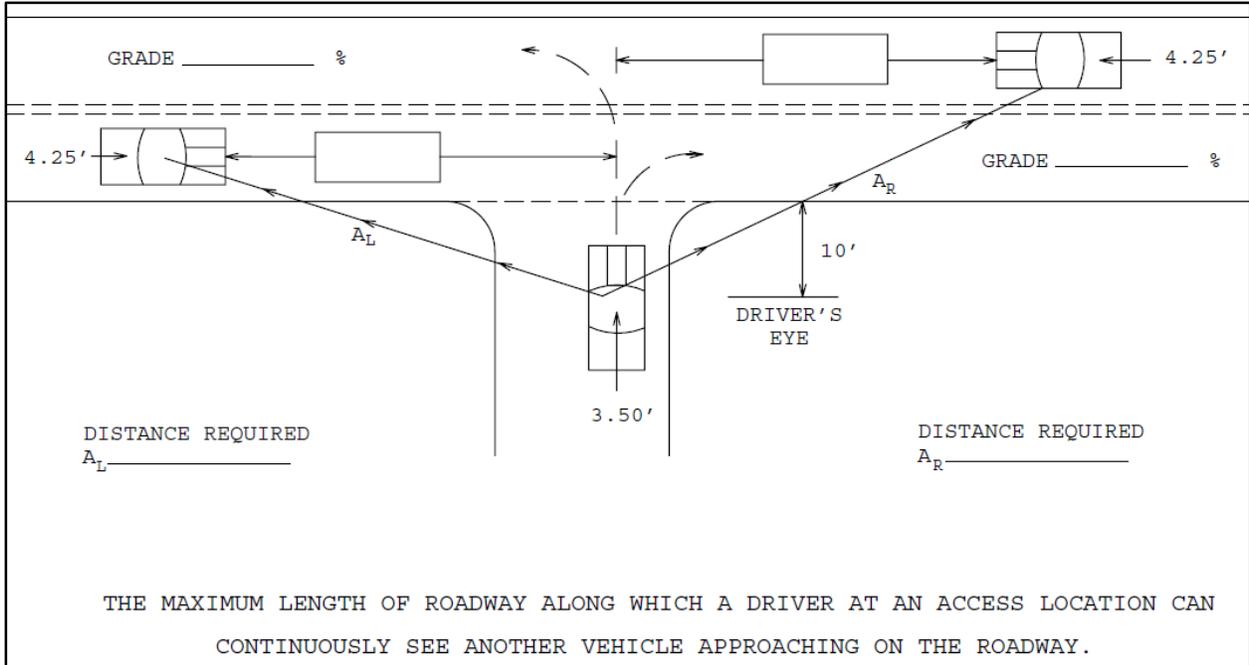
1329.02 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS.

CLEAR VISION TRIANGLE – A triangular area of unobstructed vision or measured sight distance at street intersections or where driveways enter a street or alley between ~~two~~ three and one-half (3.5) and eight (8) feet above the proposed driveway surface and the street pavement surface. The form of this triangular area is determined by the stopping sight distance as defined and regulated under this zoning ordinance. ~~road surface and within a triangular area at the street corner, which area is bounded by the street property lines of the corner lot and a line connecting points twenty-five (25) feet distant from the intersection of the property lines of such lot.~~

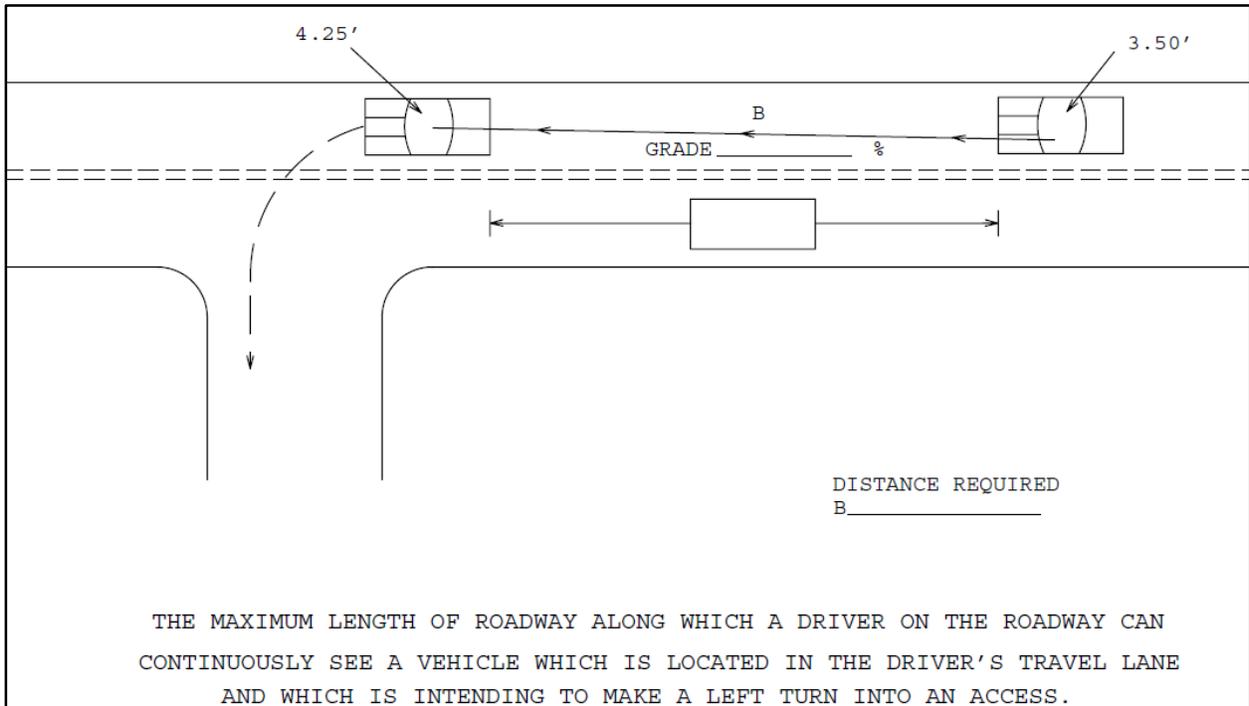
SIGHT DISTANCE – The distance measured between the height of a driver's eye and the height of an object without horizontal or vertical obstruction to the line of sight. For the purpose of measuring sight distance, the driver's eye height shall be three and one-half (3.5) feet above the proposed driveway surface and street pavement surface and the object's height shall be four and one-quarter (4.25) feet above the proposed driveway surface and street pavement surface. The lateral placement of vehicles at the driveway and on the roadway shall be consistent with the operation of the driveway and roadway.

STOPPING SIGHT DISTANCE – The distance required by a driver traveling at a given speed to stop the vehicle after an object on the roadway becomes visible to the driver. For each direction along the street, the shortest of the following lengths shall be measured sight distance for that direction along the street as described and illustrated.

- (a) The maximum length of roadway along which a driver at an intersecting street or driveway location can continuously see another vehicle approaching on the roadway. The driver's eyes at a driveway location shall be ten (10) feet back from the pavement edge (curb or edge of shoulder) as illustrated below.

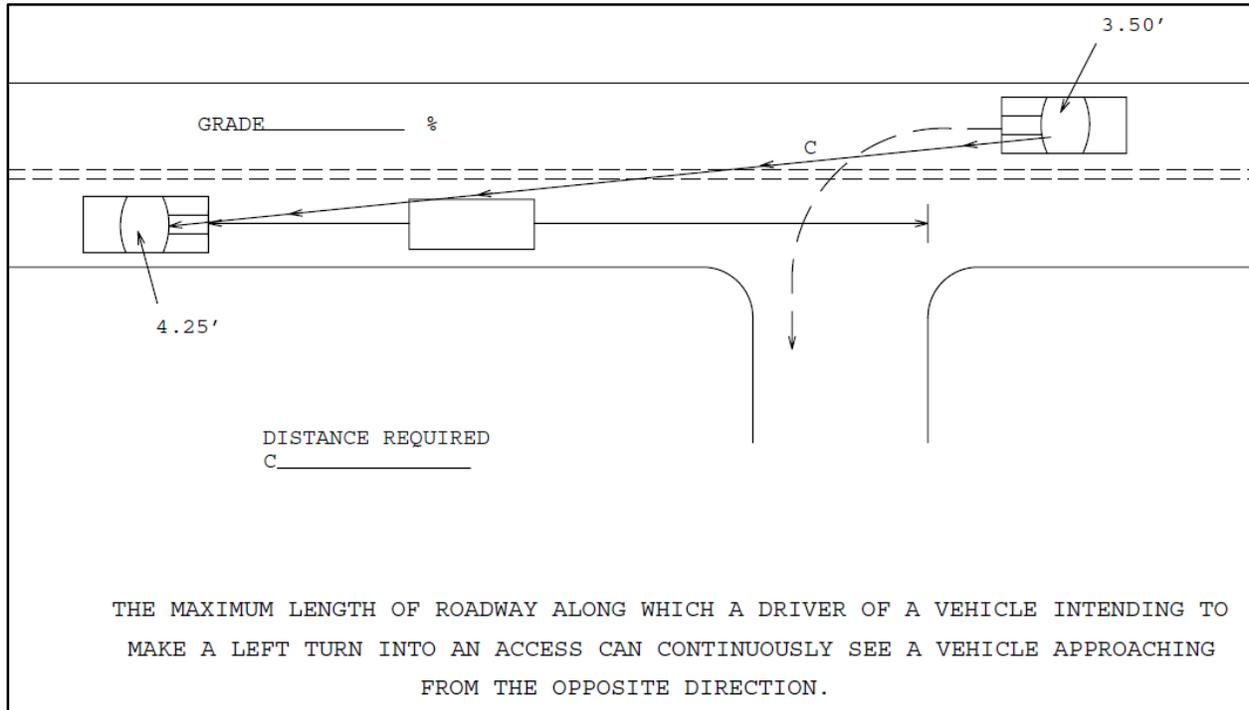


(b) The maximum length of the roadway along which a driver on the roadway can continuously see a vehicle which is located in the driver's travel lane and which is intending to make a left turn into an intersecting street or driveway as illustrated below.



(c) The maximum length of roadway along which a driver of a vehicle intending to make a left turn into an intersecting street or driveway can continuously see vehicles approaching from the opposite direction. This distance is measured from the location of the

approaching vehicle to a point on the roadway where the left turning vehicle crosses the path of the approaching vehicle as illustrated below.



1363.03 SAFETY AND VISION.

The following regulations provide for the maximum safety of persons using sidewalks and streets as determined by the City Engineer: on any corner lot, a wall, fence, sign, structure, display of merchandise or any plant growth which obstructs sight lines at elevations between two and one-half (2-1/2) feet and eight (8) feet above the crown of the adjacent roadway shall not be placed or maintained within a clear vision triangle of the area of the lot twenty-five (25) feet along the property line from the street right-of-way at intersections.

- (A) On any corner lot at street intersections or where driveways enter a street or alley, a wall, fence, sign, structure, display of merchandise or any plant growth, which obstructs measured sight distance, shall not be placed or maintained within a clear vision triangle.
- (B) Sight distance for vehicles entering the street from another street or from a driveway shall meet the minimum stopping sight distance for the operating speed on the adjacent roadway as shown in Table 1363.03.01 "Safe Stopping Sight Distances Required at Different Operating Speeds" and should be as long as can be justified economically. The operating speed is normally assumed to be the posted speed limit. If a traffic study establishes that the operating speed is lower than the posted speed limit, then the lower speed may be used to determine the safe stopping sight distance.

Table 1363.03.01: Safe Stopping Sight Distances Required at Different Operating Speeds

Design Speed (mph)	Stopping Sight Distance (ft)						
	0%	3%		6%		9%	
		Upgrade	Downgrade	Upgrade	Downgrade	Upgrade	Downgrade
15	80	75	80	74	82	73	85
20	115	109	116	107	120	104	126
25	155	147	158	143	165	140	173
30	200	200	205	184	215	179	227
35	250	237	257	229	271	222	287
40	305	289	315	278	333	269	354
45	360	344	378	331	400	320	427
50	425	405	446	388	474	375	507
55	495	469	520	450	553	433	593

The sight distance values in Table 1363.03.01 are for passenger vehicle and single-unit trucks only. If the driveway entrance is classified as an industrial driveway, then additional sight distance shall be provided as recommended in the current edition of American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets."

- (C) The applicant is expected to perform whatever work is necessary within the property and frontage boundary lines to meet the minimum requirements specified in Table 1363.03.01. If the minimum distances cannot be met by such work, the City Engineer may, but is not required to, determine a lesser distance as acceptable.

