



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
TOWN OF ARLINGTON

51 Grove Street, Arlington, Massachusetts 02476
Phone: (781) 316-3104 Fax: (781) 316-3281

Memo to: Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager

From: Mike Rademacher, Director

Date: July 28, 2017

Subject: Policy Discussion for Sidewalk Replacement in Historic Districts

Adam,

Recently the issue of sidewalk treatment in Historic Districts has been discussed. Most recently, when DPW planned to reconstruct a street within an Historic District with new concrete sidewalks, some of the property owners on that street objected. Their desire was to have brick walks rather than concrete. The major difficulty with regard to this topic, in my opinion, is twofold; the cost of constructing and maintaining brick sidewalks, and the issue of accessibility and brick surfaces.

Understanding that there are challenges associated with brick surfaces, there is still a desire to provide options to property owners in Historic Districts when it comes to the sidewalks material. One such option which has gained some momentum would be to allow property owners in an Historic District to “buy up” to a sidewalk treatment other than concrete (or asphalt). “Buying up” would essentially mean the property owner would pay the cost difference between a concrete sidewalk and an agreed upon sidewalk alternative. The preferred sidewalk alternative would be a concrete path, with brick trim. The details regarding this alternative still need to be ironed out but for discussion I propose the following:

- During the planning of paving and sidewalk construction projects, DPW Engineering will inform the Historic Districts Commission (HDC) of the proposed work.
- The HDC will reach out to the property owners within the proposed project limits and inform them of the work. At the same time, requesting a response from each location which would desire to “buy up” to a different sidewalk treatment.
- The HDC would then, through an agreed upon formal process, inform DPW Engineering of the property owners interested in the program.
- DPW Engineering would then meet with each interested party to outline what can be accomplished given possible ADA or geometric constraints.
- If a plan is agreed upon between DPW Engineering and the property owner, the property owner would submit fee to the Town for the “buy up” amount.
- DPW Engineering coordinates the work with its Contractor

A rigid schedule will need to be established to accomplish the above as complications will arise if these steps are taken in a last minute fashion.

In order to provide the Board with orders of magnitude, the following prices per linear foot can be referenced. However, any work to be performed under this proposed program would still need to be competitively procured and pricing could vary.

Asphalt Walk - \$12/lf

4" concrete walk - \$20/lf

6" concrete walk - \$23/lf

Brick trim in concrete walk - \$49/lf

Brick walk - \$79/lf