



**CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** February 18, 2020

**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**From:** B. Francis, City Manager

**Subject:** Use of Pavers for sidewalks

**Background:** The Belle Isle Municipal Code, Section 50-36 states *“All subdivisions shall have four-foot concrete sidewalks on both sides of all streets except streets projected to carry in excess of an ADT equal to 3,500 vehicle per day (vpd) which shall have five-foot concrete sidewalks. All sidewalks shall be located within the street right-of-way. Sidewalks shall be a minimum of four inches in thickness, except at driveways where the required thickness is six inches. Sidewalks shall be designed to include handicapped ramps at all intersections. On a case-by-case basis, upon approval from the city engineer and city manager or the city manager's designee, a developer may make a voluntary contribution to a sidewalk fund to pay for construction of sidewalks in lieu of actual construction of sidewalks. The amount of the contribution shall be on a per foot basis, as may be approved from time to time by the city engineer and the city manager or the city manager's designee.”*

There are no other materials allowed for sidewalks in the code. The City has received several complaints from residents that there are some residences where the property owners have paved their driveways including removing the concrete sidewalk and laying paver in its place. There are approximately 15 properties that have this condition. Others paved the driveway, stopping at the sidewalk and still others paved the driveway, kept the concrete sidewalk but then paved the driveway apron with the understanding that if the City had to dig up the apron, then the City would not be responsible for relaying the pavers. The City sent letters requesting that the pavers be removed and concrete installed according to the code. Those who received letters requested to address the City Council to allow pavers to be used across the sidewalks. There are two cases where the permit were approved that allowed pavers across the sidewalks. This was an error on the part of the City and the zoning officer at the time.

Many communities allow pavers to be used in place of concrete. When referring to pavers, they are both concrete and brick. Pavers are considered a "segmental material" because each paver is separate and is often not tied or bonded together the way a concrete slab is formed. Bricks have unique maintenance requirements and most

communities consider bricks to be more costly and problematic to maintain than concrete. However, bricks and pavers can be individually replaced by experienced personnel with a smaller amount of effort than replacing entire sections of concrete sidewalks. More recently, pavers have been manufactured and placed to create a more permeable surface and reduce surface runoff, but this requires more spacing between the materials. Pavers can be produced in many shapes, sizes and colors. They are durable, versatile and can be reused. Like all other sidewalk materials, attention to proper construction can reduce maintenance problems and costs in the future.

One of the shortcomings of pavers is that they can pop out of place and present a tripping hazard more easily than concrete or asphalt slab sidewalks. Both concrete and asphalt can also be horizontally cut or ground to mitigate tripping hazards, whereas bricks and pavers can be reused, but often have to be removed and repositioned so the base material can be modified to effectuate the leveling of the sidewalk.

**Staff Recommendation:** Pavers that are not laid correctly can be a maintenance problem and a safety hazard. The staff recommends the following:

- a. Continue to use concrete for sidewalks.
- b. Do not allow pavers to be used as sidewalks or allowed across sidewalks.
- c. Allow for stamped concrete to be used as sidewalks
- d. Allow for pavers or stamped concrete on driveway aprons in the right-of-way with the property owner signing an agreement with the City that the City will not be responsible to replace pavers if work is done on the apron.
- e. Change the Municipal Code to allow the above recommendations.
- f. Those property owners with pavers across the sidewalk will have their pavers replaced by the City, at no cost to the property owner, as future City budgets allow.

**Suggested Motion: I move we approve the staff recommendations and direct the staff to draft and ordinance with the recommendations.**

**Alternatives:**

1. The Council could approve pavers to be used for sidewalks.
2. Do not allow pavers for the driveway aprons.
3. The Council could grandfather in those property owners who have sidewalk and apron pavers with the condition that if they replace the pavers then they have to put concrete back as the sidewalk.

**Fiscal Impact:** TBD

**Attachments:** None