

Darwin McClary

From: Cory Johnston <cory@johnstondesign.org>
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2025 8:54 PM
To: Teresa Rutt; Stan Ford; Michael Lamb; n moshier; c cyrowski
Cc: Darwin McClary; Sonja Stout
Subject: Public Comment on Sidewalks Agenda Item 10.D.

Multiple special meetings and my moving out of the Village have put me somewhat behind on what is happening, so these comments are regrettably a bit late. Please accept these as public comments for item 10.D. of the January 27, 2025 Village Council meeting.

The sidewalk standards cited in the information for this meeting are incomplete and do not comply with governing ADA criteria. No justification is provided for using a ¾" and ½" differential versus the ADA criteria. There is no mention of slope and cross slope requirements, or that some sidewalks have very steep slopes on one side that would send someone into the street if they fell.

The information states the Village will pay for work at crosswalk ramps, so it is recognized that these are part of public safety paid for by public taxes, while the remainder of the sidewalk is for some unknown reason treated differently.

These conflicting and contradictory criteria open the Village to both state and federal lawsuits by anyone, whether injured or not, especially when the standards presented are arbitrary and inconsistently imposed.

The Village and DDA often claim walkability as a value and asset of the Village and yet little is done to improve the overall walkability. I could find nothing in the information provided that addressed the numerous locations where vegetation encroaches over the sidewalk and reduces the available walking area. There is little sense in spending a lot of money on a sidewalk that can't be walked on.

Property owners are required to pay the full cost of sidewalk work, but it appears that cost is controlled by the Village, not the client who has little or no say over what the Village may charge them. In addition, it seems streets are paid for by the Village through public taxes while sidewalks are not, other than ramps at crosswalks. This sets a priority that streets have a higher public priority and safety concern than sidewalks even though it is very possible that sidewalks are used more by the local taxpaying public than the streets which are often used by people simply driving through while sidewalks pose a higher risk to residents and visitors who pay no local taxes or sidewalk assessments. This hardly seems fair and equitable to have arbitrarily different standards for different modes of transportation. Public streets and sidewalks are all on public property and therefore a public responsibility.

The downtown area is highly subsidized by tax dollars already through the DDA and those property owners are not held to the same standard as everyone else since the DDA contracts to maintain a few of the downtown sidewalks (see January 21, 2025 DDA meeting information) while other sidewalks in the DDA tax district receive no such benefit. This hardly seems fair and equitable when properties in one location are treated differently than others. This contradicts the stated Sidewalk Maintenance Responsibility policy.

Doing only the minimum required, or less, will not make the Village of Lake Orion a better or better place to live or visit. For the sake of the public and public health, safety, and welfare, please consider doing better than what is being proposed.

Cory Johnston
826 Corners Court

Orion, Michigan

I do not have official emails for councilmembers Dandalides and Comparoni so have sent this through the Village website links.