



ENGINEERING • 115 Executive Parkway, Suite 400 • Hudson, Ohio 44236 • (330) 342-1770

Date: October 17, 2019

To: Mayor Basil and City Council

C: Jane Howington, City Manager
Thomas J. Sheridan, P.E., P.S., Asst. City Manager – Professional Services
Frank Comeriato, Asst. City Manager – Operations

From: Bradley Kosco, P.E., P.S., City Engineer

Re: Vet. Trail Phase 4/Barlow Road Sidewalk Project – September 2019 Public Mtg. Summary

The City Engineering Department held a public meeting for the preliminary design of the Veterans Trail Phase 4 / Barlow Road Sidewalk Improvement Project with residents on September 28, 2019 at Ellsworth Golf Course. The meeting was attended by approximately 22 residents who voiced their opinions on the project. In attendance at the meeting were Councilor Radigan and Mayor Basil, along with various City staff and a representative from the project design firm.

At the meeting, residents were provided a Fact Sheet about the current project design that outlined the project history, major project elements and project Frequently Asked Questions. Residents were also asked to provide written comments, which were submitted to the City after the meeting. A copy of the Fact Sheet, FAQ and written comments submitted is attached to this memo.

Most of the resident comments were regarding the Veterans Trail Phase 4 (from Ellsworth Golf Course westerly boundary to Terex Road), 8-foot asphalt path section of the project (see attached map for further reference). Concerned residents adjacent to the proposed 8-foot trail noted the potential impacts to their property including the following main topics:

1. Alternate Trail Alignments and Sidewalk Options
2. Trail Proximity to Private Property and impacts to Property Value
3. Tree/Landscaping Impacts
4. Blocking of Trail with Parked Vehicles in Residential Driveways
5. Trail Maintenance/Legal Liability

A summary of each concern is provided below for aid in staff discussion with Council about the project.

1. Alternate Trail and Sidewalk Options

Owners indicated that alternate trail, sidewalk and bike lane designs should be evaluated prior to finalizing the current design of the Veterans Trail Phase 4 section of the project. Staff re-reviewed the alternate designs previously discussed with Council as identified on the map and Typical Sections noted below:

Alternate Alignments & Sections Examined During Design

Current Design – 8’ Asphalt Path

- 8’ path on north side of Barlow Road from Metroparks Hike & Bike Trail to connection at Veterans Trail Phase 3 (Ellsworth Golf Course)

Construction Cost..... \$900,000
ODNR Funding..... \$500,000
City Cost..... \$400,000

Alternate A - 5’ Concrete Sidewalk

- 5’ walk on north Side of Barlow Road from Metroparks Hike & Bike Trail to connection at Veterans Trail Phase 3 (Ellsworth Golf Course)

Construction Cost..... \$820,000
ODNR Funding..... \$0
City Cost..... \$820,000

Alternate B - 5’ Concrete Sidewalk + 5’ Bike Lanes

- 5’ walk on north Side of Barlow Road and 5’ bike lanes on both sides of road from Metroparks Hike & Bike Trail to connection at Veterans Trail Phase 3 (Ellsworth Golf Course)

Construction Cost..... \$1,545,000
ODNR Funding..... \$0
City Cost..... \$1,545,000

NEW: Alternate C - 8’ Asphalt Path Through Church Property to Terex Road

- 8’ asphalt path from Ellsworth Golf Course, through church property on Terex Road, then along the north side of Terex Road to the Metroparks Hike & Bike Trail.
- Project would be delayed (12 months +)
- Additional Environmental Permitting costs unknown at this time
- Easement Costs Unknown at this time
- Would negatively impact future ODNR funding

Construction Cost..... \$925,000
ODNR Funding..... \$500,000
City Cost..... \$425,000+

2. Trail Proximity to Private Property and Impacts to Property Value

Concerned residents adjacent to the current Veterans Way Phase 4, 8-foot path alignment noted concern of the trail’s proximity to their property. A number of residents noted their opinion that the path is not necessary, is too wide, will change the “look” of their property and lower property values.

Staff noted that the current project design was implemented based upon the 2017 public meeting comments and Council discussions. Also noted was that the 8-foot path is being partially funded from a \$500,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and that the grant requires that the trail be a minimum of 8-feet wide, offset from the road and have an asphalt surface. Most homes on

the north side of Barlow Road in this area are approximately 60-feet from the existing road edge, which will leave about 48-feet between homes and the back edge of the new trail (8-foot trail + 4-foot grass strip = 12 feet).

At the meeting, staff also noted that according to the Summit Co. Auditors office and other resources, that sidewalk and trail projects will often increase property values.

3. Tree/Landscaping Impacts

Residents with tree removal in front of their properties, expressed a desire to be reimbursed for any tree removal or to have replacement trees planted.

Approximately 65 trees are required to be removed along the entire project alignment between the Metroparks Hike & Bike Trail to SR 91. The tree removals are due to their proximity to the new trail/sidewalk or grading impacts near the tree. The trees to be removed are within both the public right-of-way and on private property. In addition, several trees behind the new trail/walk will need trimmed due to their branches conflicting with the new trail or relocated, overhead electric/communication wires.

Property owners who have tree removals or grading on private property have signed work agreements allowing for the tree removal and grading to take place.

Owners also noted that retaining walls should be utilized instead of grading on private property. During design, the construction of retaining walls was reviewed versus grading impacts on private property. Retaining walls are more costly than grading and often require a similar footprint for construction due to the footprint and excavation necessary for the wall. For those reasons, the use of retaining walls were not used for the project.

4. Blocking of Trail with Parked Vehicles

City of Hudson Ordinance 660.07(c) states that no obstruction of any sidewalk shall remain for more than one hour. Residents expressed concerns regarding the potential loss of parking space in their driveway after the 8-foot path or sidewalk with grass strip next to roadway is constructed. Owners also noted concern that there will be little room for trash cans and leaf stockpile during the fall. This concern is the same for any location where new trail or sidewalks are to be constructed in front of existing homes.

5. Trail Maintenance/Legal Liability

City of Hudson Ordinance 660.5 states that sidewalks are required to be maintained by the adjacent landowner. Hudson ordinances state that a sidewalk is defined as the portion of a street between the curb lines or lateral lines of the roadway, and the adjacent property lines, intended for use by pedestrians.

Property owners along the trail section of the project expressed concern over the requirement to remove snow/ice for the 8-foot path, especially along a busy road like Barlow Road that will be frequently plowed, throwing snow/ice from the roadway onto the trail several times a day. Owners also indicated that they do not want any legal liability should a pedestrian slip/fall and become injured along the new trail.

Staff noted that currently, the City does not expend its resources monitoring sidewalk, snow/ice removal and suggests that owners clear one or two passes of any trail/sidewalk with a snow blower or snow shovel, which provides sufficient area for pedestrians to walk.

Recommendations

Based upon resident input on the topics noted above, and other comments received by the City, staff recommends the following items be considered by Council if the current design of the Veteran's Trail Phase 4 / Barlow Road Sidewalk is approved for construction:

- A) Provide follow up letters to all owners along Barlow Road, between Terex Road and SR 91 of the summary of the discussion of the items noted above. The correspondence will also include responses to each comment submitted on the attached spreadsheet, estimated project schedule, information on the project website and how to sign up for future project updates via the City's "Constant Contact" email system.
- B) Design a separate tree planting plan, developed with consultation by the City Arborist and public input, to replace select trees removed by the project. The tree planting would take place shortly after completion of the trail construction project under a separate contract.

In addition, the City Arborist can work with individual owners on a case-by-case basis to perform tree inspection, root aeration and pruning on existing trees that are to remain in close proximity to the new trail.