

February 6, 2021

**To: The Chair and Members of the Civic Works Committee (CWC)**

**Re:** Report on **New Sidewalks in the 2021 Infrastructure Projects**, item 2.6 before the CWC on February 9, 2021

**Request:**

1. That this report be referred back for further input from the residents of Friars Way
2. That I, Ron Standish, be granted delegation status before the Committee this week.

To the Chair and Members:

I am a resident of Friars Way. I am writing to you to express my concerns related to the report that I just received on Friday February 4<sup>th</sup> from our Orchard Park Sherwood Forest Ratepayers association and to request that any decisions regarding Friars Way that I arise from this report be referred back to receive further input from the residents of Friars Way. In addition I request that I be granted delegation status before the Committee this coming Tuesday.

Having read the report I can appreciate the challenges that you, as our Councillors face when it comes to making decisions that directly affect the residents that you serve. It is clear from this report that the City has an overarching strategy for accessibility / walkability that includes building sidewalks and that the City also has regard for the character and the concerns of local neighborhoods and as noted in the report that "implementing new sidewalks is sometimes contentious within neighbourhoods."

As a resident on Friars Way for the past 29 years I can assure you that our street is very walkable. My own experience and my observations are that many people of all ages both on our street and in our neighbourhood are comfortable with walking on our street because the traffic is very low, the street is wide enough to easily accommodate pedestrians and other vehicles while enjoying the mature character of the neighborhood.

I know that the City takes seriously its responsibility to engage the public as noted in this report and that is appreciated. The report is clear that the City has a process to engage the residents of a street when it is proposed for reconstruction after the preliminary design has been done and before final decisions on construction details have been made.

It is in this context that I have the following concerns regarding this report. In my opinion:

- this report falls short in not addressing the 'do nothing' option, ie. addressing when it is appropriate to not build sidewalks, what are the criteria, how best to engage the residents and interested members of the public, and bring the results back to Council, etc.

I know for a fact that though the City planned to install sidewalks on Runnymede Crescent in 2020, in the end the City listened to the concerns of the residents and agreed not to install them as part of the reconstruction. I know that no sidewalks were installed on Finsbury Crescent when it was reconstructed just a few years ago. I expect that there are many other examples that Council is aware of.

- that while this report may be appropriate to advise Committee on 'the framework in which decisions are made to build sidewalks' in a generic sense, I believe that it is inappropriate when it comes to specifically listing streets and determining the outcome before the residents / community have been specifically engaged and heard.

These are two of my concerns and I have others that I can speak to if I am granted an opportunity to speak. I cannot say whether or not the majority of the residents of Friars Way agree with my concerns, as the City has not given us notice and time to engage. I know that there will be a time to engage with my fellow residents after preliminary design has been completed and I am confident that with the right process the residents and the community will be heard.

My hope is that you, as the members of the CWC, would be willing to wait to hear our concerns before making any final decision regarding Friars Way as the decisions you make will have a significant impact on our lives.

In summary, I respectfully request that any decisions coming out of this report regarding Friars Way be deferred and that this element of the report be referred back for further input from the residents of Friars Way in keeping with the processes that the City has prescribed as noted in this report.

Furthermore, I request delegation status before the Committee to speak to this matter on February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully,

Ron Standish  
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