

BARTON DRIVE SIDEWALK GAP DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Time: 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Northside Elementary, 912 Barton Drive

Attendees: Public Present: 28; refer to Appendix A for sign-in sheet.

City staff present: 3; Kayla Coleman, Nick Hutchinson, Anne Warrow

Council members present: 2; Sabra Briere, Sumi Kailasapathy

Re: Barton Drive Sidewalk Gap

Next Steps:

Based on the overwhelming support for this sidewalk the following schedule was established:

July 2013:	City staff will prepare a resolution for City Council's authorization to proceed with the design, construction, and funding of this sidewalk
August 2013 to October 2013:	Obtain topographical information; prepare preliminary design and cost estimate for this sidewalk; and investigate special assessment and other funding opportunities.
November 2013 – February 2014:	Finalize Design, Special Assessment Resolutions to Council, and bidding for construction.
Summer 2014:	Construction of this sidewalk.

Meeting Notes:

- City staff reviewed frequently asked questions related to new sidewalk installation. Topics covered include:
 - o Who pays for new sidewalks?
 - o Other funding sources for new sidewalks
 - o Relationship between sidewalk millage and new sidewalks
 - o Maintenance for City of Ann Arbor sidewalks
- The sidewalk gap being discussed is between Longshore Dr. and Chandler Ave. (along the south side of Barton Dr.); approximately 400 ft.
- The earliest potential schedule for the Barton Drive sidewalk installation is spring of 2014. If it is determined that sidewalk installation should be pursued as soon as possible, then we would begin design this summer, with construction anticipated for spring 2014.
- An alternative to the "as soon as possible" approach is to have the sidewalk installation completed when this section of Barton Dr. is resurfaced (anticipated within the next 3-5 years). There is a cost benefit to constructing the sidewalk at the time of street resurfacing rather than as a standalone project.

Open Discussion Notes:

(Note: this is not a direct transcription of the meeting discussion. This summary has been developed from notes taken during the meeting; comments are paraphrased. Where staff responses or clarification were provided they are shown in italics).

1. Why not just resurface all of Barton Drive this summer? If there is a cost benefit to doing it all at once then why not complete the whole road and the sidewalk now? *Staff response: The area east of Pontiac Trail is in much worse condition than the portion west of Pontiac Trail. There is a cost benefit to completing a sidewalk along with a road resurfacing, but there isn't as much of a cost difference to completing all of Barton Drive at once, compared to completing it in portions.*

2. What is the cost difference of completing the sidewalk with the road resurfacing, compared to completing it as a standalone project? *Staff response: Precise figures are not available because the sidewalk in this location has not yet gone through the design stage, but we would estimate the savings to be around 25%.*
3. Is this section of Barton Drive going to get curb and gutter? *Staff response: Those details have not yet been discussed, however, that would be considered as part of the future road resurfacing project.*
4. This is a very dangerous section of road. I was run off the road in this location while traveling in my wheelchair, and I had a group of 4-5 people with me and the car ran us all into the ditch. It was a terrifying experience and something needs to be done at this location.
5. Why doesn't the Parks and Recreation Department fund the sidewalk, since it is alongside a park? *Staff response: The Parks Department cannot spend Parks Millage funds on private property or within the right-of-way at locations not adjacent to Parks.*
6. I am one of the homeowners adjacent to the proposed sidewalk location; I would like to know how much this is going to cost me and how do I pay for it? *Staff response: precise figures for the sidewalk installation have not yet been determined; there are a number of variables that can come into play when conducting a Special Assessment. There are a variety of payment options, some people may be able to pay Special Assessments over a long period of time, depending on the amount of the assessment. The City Assessor will review the cost estimate and determine which properties would be assessed and the amount of the assessments. A public meeting with all assessed properties will be held after the design of the sidewalk is underway.*
7. How much of the property is not adjacent to a property owner? *Staff response: Approximately 20% of the proposed sidewalk is not adjacent to a private parcel.*
8. What is the purpose of this meeting? What are you looking for? *Staff response: This meeting was scheduled in response to the petition that was submitted. The purpose of the meeting is to gauge interest and support for the potential Barton Drive sidewalk installation project. Based on the feedback received at this meeting, we can make decisions about next steps and how to proceed on this issue.*
9. Who was invited? *Staff response: Meeting notice was distributed through a variety of means including approximately 200 invitations mailed to local residents, distribution on a number of different list servers, and posting to the City website. In addition, Councilmember Briere indicated that she emailed the meeting notice to some of her constituents.*
10. There are HUD developments in the community. Perhaps there are some funding opportunities from that.
11. A resident living near the Barton Dr. sidewalk gap location volunteered to help with organizing fundraising for the sidewalk installation.
12. This is a very dangerous space and the community shouldn't have to tell the City that. The City should know this based on injury reports, etc. we shouldn't have to recount these brushes with injury. What other parts of the City has major entrances and act as hazardous stretches? What other ones could have a higher priority of repair? Once you have a meeting and acknowledge that this is a dangerous area your liability increases. *Staff comment: Up until this point, the City has not had a program for actively locating sidewalk gaps. A program to actively identify and prioritize sidewalk gaps is currently in the planning stages.*
13. Support for a crosswalk at Barton and Brede: lines painted and an overhead sign/ signal.
14. We need to focus on accessibility and safety. We need to be loud and go to City Council to deliver this message.
15. I have been advocating for a sidewalk at Brede. How would I go about submitting a petition for this? Where do I get the petition? *Staff response: Visit a2gov.org/sidewalks, click the link for 'New sidewalks' and you will see a FAQ section. There is a question that says 'How can residents initiate getting a new sidewalk where none currently exists?' Click the link to the petition form and follow the directions for completing and submitting the form.*

16. What is the soonest that the Barton Drive sidewalk could go in? *Staff response: Spring 2014 is the soonest. The City has to work through the funding issues, go through the special assessment process, complete the engineering design, and bid the project.*
17. I think that the City should expedite this sidewalk installation to go faster than next spring. We need it done this summer.
18. Volunteer to provide services for design of the sidewalk.
19. Request that a stop light be installed at the Barton Road/Brede Place/Longshore Drive.
20. What people want in their neighborhood are little things like sidewalks, but the City spends millions of dollars on things like alternate transportation plans, and trying to decide whether they want one railway or four railways... the message I have to everyone here is make your voice be heard. To the attendees of the meeting: make your voice heard. There are traffic engineering studies that should tell us where these sidewalks are needed. There are misplaced priorities, and it is my frustration with the City too.
21. What about when the M14 Bridge gets reconstructed? Should that be considered in the timing of this project? *Staff response: That project is several years out.*
22. MDOT is considering putting fences along the railroad tracks.
23. MDOT is going to want to add more cars to Barton Drive.
24. Is the timing for repaving Barton connected with improved access to Bandemer Park? Or is it disconnected? *Staff response: The resurfacing east of Barton is due to the condition of the pavement. The other part of Barton is estimated for at least a few years out.*
25. What are the steps that we need to take to get this project moving as a neighborhood? *Staff response: The first step is that we are having this meeting. The next step is that staff will put in a resolution to council to approve funding for design of the project.*
26. Do we, residents, need to attend the council meeting? Councilmember Briere: There are council members here tonight, we are hearing you, but you are always welcome to attend the meetings to make sure that your council members have heard you.
27. *Staff comment: We start first by getting approval for funding from council, then we would move forward with developing concepts, and collect community input about what design is appropriate, what kind of vegetation may need to be removed. Then we can move forward with the actual design and installation.*
28. Is there a standard distance from the road that is required? 5 foot path, 10 foot path? *Staff response: the Alternative Transportation Plan calls for a sidewalk in this area. The area also connects to an existing 5-foot wide sidewalk at the east end.*

Feedback form results summary:

- 31 total feedback forms were submitted (including three electronic submissions after the meeting).
- 30 respondents completed at least some portion of the first three questions.
- 26 respondents provided open ended responses on question number four.

1. Do you support sidewalk installation between Longshore Dr. and Chandler Ave.? (along the south side of Barton Dr.)

An overwhelming majority of respondents support sidewalk installation at Barton Drive (29 out of 30).

2. Sidewalk installation between Longshore Dr. and Chandler Ave. (along the south side of Barton Dr.) is needed and should be completed as soon as possible. (Rate your response on a scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

An overwhelming majority of respondents recommend that the sidewalk installation be completed as soon as possible (27 out of 30 either 'agree' or 'strongly agree'). Only one respondent disagrees that the sidewalk installation should be completed as soon as possible and one neutral and one did not address this question.

3. **Sidewalk installation between Longshore Dr. and Chandler Ave. (along the south side of Barton Dr.) is needed and should be completed when this section of Barton Drive is resurfaced.** (Rate your response on a scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Only two respondents scored the option to complete sidewalk installation with road re-surfacing higher than the option to complete sidewalk installation as soon as possible. Though one respondent noted that he was not able to rate the options due to lack of sufficient detail provided (e.g. need more precise cost information). Some who responded that they strongly with both options ("as soon as possible" or when Barton Drive is resurfaced) noted that their preference is for "as soon as possible."

4. **Any other comments, questions or feedback related to the Barton Drive Sidewalk discussion?**

Summary:

- Sidewalk is needed for safety/ this is a dangerous area
 - Pedestrian safety
 - Bicycle safety
 - Children
 - Parents with strollers
 - Handicapped persons
- Sidewalk needed for park accessibility.
- Sidewalk needed to make connections with other pathways.
- Sidewalk is needed as soon as possible.
- Other safety measures needed (suggested at or near the location of the potential sidewalk):
 - Crosswalks
 - Stop sign(s)
 - Stop light(s)
 - Traffic calming
 - Speed enforcement
- Funding recommendations:
 - Border-to-Border trails program
 - Funding opportunities for ADA accessibility

Feedback form results:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Do you support sidewalk installation? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Sidewalk is need and should be completed as soon as possible (1 strongly disagree-5 strongly agree)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	2	5	3	5	5	5		5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Sidewalk is needed and should be completed when this section of Barton Drive is resurfaced (1 strongly disagree-5 strongly agree)		1	1	5	5	3	3	5	3	5	4	1	3			5	5			1	5	1			2	4	1	5	5	5	5

Feedback form- Open ended feedback responses:

1. Filling this gap would improve **safe** access to the boardwalk/ Bandemer Park, and would be highly desirable. Assuming the City pays for all but the portion facing 682 Barton, the direct cost to the neighbors seems small. This stretch of Barton is heavily traveled—by cars, bikes and pedestrians. The winding turns and sightlines increase the need for a sidewalk to enhance safety. Let's not delay.
2. Makes sense to connect the Boardwalk with the rest of Barton Dr. Get funding from Washtenaw County through Border to Border- Bike Trails. **Many** bicyclists use boardwalk and proceed East on Barton; could connect bike lanes, path on Barton Dr and Plymouth Rd. What about compliance with sidewalks being accessible for people with disabilities (ADA); get funding there. This section of Barton Dr appears to be in good condition and doesn't need resurfacing. So sidewalks should be installed sooner.
3. My five year old started calling it the "Danger Ditch." Two elected officials in the room, and still no movement? Sooner [than the Barton Dr. resurfacing].
4. Please don't wait for children (like my son) to DIE like on Plymouth Rd! Fix the problem: Park→ No connecting access.
5. This is such a busy area and forces anyone attempting to navigate on foot to get into the road. This area is heavily used by pedestrian traffic and is a logical gateway to the northern area of the river park and boardwalk. It would be a wonderful service to residents to complete the link from neighborhood to park. I would love to see the City cover all sidewalk construction. Thank you for having this meeting. *Related: There is a very dangerous hole in the chain link fence on Traver Rd. near Moore/Plymouth Rd.; it should be fixed before someone/ some child goes through and falls.
6. This needs to happen before someone gets hurt. Cars come within inches of hitting runners. People with strollers, pets, people with limited mobility and all other non-motorized traffic. We cannot wait until someone gets hit with a car to make a change. 1st choice= immediate, 2nd choice= along with resurfacing.
7. This is a very high traffic area due to M-14 commuters, there is also a blind spot on the curve at Barton near the end of Bandemer Park Boardwalk- a sharp, narrow curve- this is very dangerous area for pedestrians. Please address this issue as it is a safety and community quality issue. Thanks!
8. This sidewalk is for safety of those with strollers and small children on bikes.
9. I just want to be kept in the loop about when and how much this sidewalk will potentially cost me. Thanks for the meeting.
10. Disagree that it is needed but prefer alternative of completing it when Barton Drive is resurfaced.
11. It would have been helpful to have more dollar information on hand this evening. You mentioned other funding sources- but have no details. When will this be available? This project is very important and close to 100% of area residents. We need this ASAP! Thank you. * I understand that [Barton Drive resurfacing] will take 3-5 years. I strongly prefer sooner installation.
12. I was frustrated by how little preparation took place for this meeting by the City. Who exactly will be assessed? How much will this cost in total? What part is the responsibility of the City? I support the construction of a sidewalk but without some basic information which only the City can provide it's hard to make much of a decision. Note: the trees in the wooded lot are not invasives. They're elms, box elders, and ashes. They might all be dying, but they're not invasives.
13. Need curb cut at Chandler and need crosswalk at Brede and Longshore. Also, it is too bad that the owners need to be assessed as it is really a shared City amenity. [I support the sidewalk] but I wish the cost was born by the City not assessed. Also, they need to fix Barton on both sides of Pontiac Trail (east and west).
14. Just do it! We also need a pedestrian crossing at Brede and Barton to allow Hilldale etc. folk access to the lovely boardwalk and new sidewalk. This would work well in combination with a new small round-a-bout at Barton and Brede.
15. This sidewalk would help especially in mud season; but altogether it will make things safer. A section of sidewalk on Chandler near Barton is usually under mud. Why has that section not been fixed by the home owners?

16. I'm not clear on the meaning of the second question. If I'm for the stretch getting a sidewalk installed when Barton is resurfaced, does that mean that I'm not for getting the sidewalk right away? I'm for a sidewalk ASAP. Better speed enforcement is needed on Barton. There's a 15 mph stretch and people are still in freeway-speed mentality. Or traffic calming.
17. I think it should be completed ASAP. Also we need a crosswalk and we need more signage announcing/ confirming the lowest speed limit on Barton. Flashing, signs or whatever is needed to make it safe! Do not wait, please!
18. Should be completed whether or not Barton Dr. is resurfaced.
19. Being in a wheelchair and not having access to a safe entrance to a park is terrifying when there is so much spending to have our City parks upgraded and maintained. There is no safe way to travel on Barton Dr. This project is long overdue. There is also no bike lane.
20. It should be done ASAP! The cost to wait is much higher (just imagine the cost of litigation if someone were to get hit while walking a stroller or wheelchair).
21. The current boardwalk is wonderful as Barton is too frightening to walk along. However, to stop the asphalt entrance to the boardwalk where they did is kind of silly. The asphalt path should go at least to Longshore. And since Barton-Brede is a BLIND INTERSECTION a stop sign and crosswalk is a really good idea for the immediate future.
22. This is an extremely dangerous section for pedestrians and cyclists. It is a necessary public amenity. The City has no excuse to treat this as anything but an immediate priority. It should also be publicly maintained in the same way as the boardwalk which was in part rationalized because it would separate bike and foot traffic along a recognized dangerous roadway.
23. I have two small children and we use the boardwalk all the time and it's very scary at the point with no sidewalk. We also need something for safety to cross the street at the same location! Thank you!
24. (1) I strongly support sidewalk construction as soon as possible. It's a safety and liability issue. One death will cost so much more than any sidewalk. (2) I think funding should be secured and not put the property owners at major cost, as they will then have to perform upkeep, which is an ongoing cost and burden. (3) Please save as many trees as possible ☺ Especially walnut. (4) Please put a flashing light pedestrian controlled crosswalk somewhere along that stretch of Barton. The same kind of pedestrian crosswalk that's along Plymouth Rd and on Huron near the YMCA.
25. This is important for pedestrian safety on Barton.
26. I drive a moped and I am very concerned about the sidewalk for when my wife and I walk from our home on Manor. I am very concerned about the condition of the road on Barton and Brede there are potholes which make it dangerous to drive my moped. I hope both the sidewalk and the road get done.

Additional open-ended feedback received via email:

1. Thanks for sending these attachments and for your work on this project. I'd like to report an incident that happened yesterday on Barton, just east of Brede. A friend of ours who has advancing macular disease was walking to our house from Pontiac Trail. Shortly before she reached Brede, she stepped in a pothole, twisted her ankle, and fell into the road. There were cars coming from both directions, slowly, but they stopped and two people jumped out to offer her assistance. One of them then drove her to our house, where we discovered a bruised and bloodied knee and a swollen ankle. She was very fortunate that the drivers weren't going faster, and weren't on their cell phones (so they paid attention to her fall). Our friend says, "There should be a sidewalk along there!!" ... and we agree. Just thought you would like to have this information. I'm sure our friend would be willing to share this story if needed.
2. Thanks for the update and the meeting.
Sorry you had to go through all that talking.
However it is something that needs to be done sooner than later, even if the city pays for by grant to private persons pay for it.

What would stop one of the home owners from putting one in right now if they wanted with their money?

Thanks again, looking forward to a solution.

3. Thanks for getting back to us so promptly and positively. I agree with several people there who said that we shouldn't have to push on this - the need is so obvious. Do we really have to be obnoxious to get something done in Ann Arbor? The guy in the wheel-chair gave pretty telling testimony!

I trust someone will let us know when it is up before City Council and how we might hope move this much-needed effort through the hurdles.

I was interested that people were saying that kids don't go to school along the Barton Road route. In fact, our kids and all their friends all went to Northside and walked along Barton through all kinds of weather. It would be great for our grand-kids to have a safer walk. We walk along there several times a week going to and from downtown and the U of M campus. That's the most dangerous part of the walk.

4. Since moving here in 2011 I've noticed this is a regular Indy 500 at times with people whizzing by at speeds around 40 I would guess. It makes for a frightening experience especially when one is exiting from their car parked on the street and someone comes whipping by, sometimes very close. In a day of texting and several other driver distractions this is worrisome, As a result of this daily scare I suggest the city put an extra speed bump on Traver between John A Woods and Barton. There are already two further up the street and I sometimes think the reason people speed so much is once they've cleared the earlier speed bumps they are trying to make up for lost time. This irrational speeding seems to cross most demographics I've seen teenagers, older working guys and Soccer Moms all going by way too fast (makes me wonder what the 'moms' would think if people were speeding in their neighborhoods with their children at risk).

So, in short what does a resident do to petition the city for put in a speed bump. I think this stretch of road really needs it.

Thanks for reading.

5. Thanks for everyone's efforts on the sidewalk. A safe cross walk and we will be all set.

APPENDIX A- Sign-in Sheet

Name
Kathy Grunwald
Terry Morris
Rodger Bowser
Mike Hintzen
David Wm Cohen
Roberta Palmer
Nancy Taylor
Thomas Taylor
Sarah Boren-Rao
Hsie Dyke
Jay Snyder
Ernan Skib
Elena Chesney
Cliff Williams
Peter T. Bower
JOHN STAN
ANDY KAUFMAN

Sheryl Korsnes
Kayla Coleman
Anne Warrow
Nick Hutchinson

Name	A
Sabra Briere	1
Melanie Sobocinski	
Nadine Alpen	
JEFF HAYNER	
Noemi Barabas	
Sumi Karikopathy	
Craig Teschendorf	
Fran Wright	
Barbara Lucas	
Jonathan Levine	
Carey Chesney	
Carlene Colvin-Gardak	