

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of August 5, 2015

**SUBJECT: Racquet Club of Ann Arbor Public Sidewalk Waiver
(3010 Hickory Lane)**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Racquet Club of Ann Arbor's request for a waiver from the requirement to install public sidewalks along the Geddes Avenue and Hickory Lane (south of entry drive) frontages.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the requested waiver from the installation of public sidewalk along Geddes Avenue be **supported**. Based on detailed information provided by the petitioner's engineer, staff concurs that the constraints of slope, utility poles and a fire hydrant make the costs of sidewalk installation excessively disproportionate to the probable use of this segment of sidewalk.

Further, staff recommends that the waiver from the installation of a public sidewalk along Hickory Lane, south of the Racquet Club of Ann Arbor entry drive, be **supported**, because creating this short length of sidewalk at this time will provide very limited facilities with no system value in the near and intermediate term.

STAFF REPORT

Staff previously recommended postponement of this sidewalk waiver petition to allow staff the opportunity to review the petitioner's cost analysis of a 8-foot wide public sidewalk in the Geddes Avenue right-of-way and the petitioner an opportunity to explore a 4-foot wide alternative design. Earlier this week, the petitioner submitted documentation about the feasibility of a 4-foot wide sidewalk alternative. These two alternatives are discussed below.

Full Width Alternative

The petitioner submitted calculations to demonstrate this sidewalk is excessively disproportionate in cost compared to the sidewalk being constructed by the City on the north side of Geddes Avenue. The estimated cost of an 8-foot back-of-curb sidewalk fronting the Racquet Club of Ann Arbor site is approximately \$218,000, or \$571 per lineal foot. This estimate is derived by relocating overhead lines, temporary poles to continue service, relocation of underground utilities, light poles, retaining walls, grading and fencing. In comparison, the proposed City installed sidewalk is estimated to cost \$380 per lineal foot.

Reduced Width Alternative

The petitioner provided the dimensions available between the 2 utility poles, 3 light poles and a fire hydrant located on south side of Geddes Avenue and the Racquet Club fence on the north property line. Based on this information, staff determined that this alternative sidewalk would range in width from 2.5 feet to 5.2 feet within the right-of-way. The petitioner declined to provide a sidewalk concept that would encroach on private property, due the location of a stand of mature and landmark trees along the north property line.

STAFF COMMENTS

Project Management - The City's Geddes Avenue design consultant, HRC, concurs that the proposed sidewalk in the right-of-way would be difficult to install due to the location of utilities (regardless of width).

Planning – Any waiver of public sidewalk requirement along the Geddes Avenue or Hickory Lane sidewalk segments would be limited to the current site plan proposal. Future site plans for the Racquet Club of Ann Arbor would require the sidewalk(s) to be constructed or a new waiver granted by City Council. At that time, the northern Geddes Avenue sidewalk will be either under construction or completed, giving staff additional information on the use and need for this southern Geddes Ave sidewalk link.

Prepared by Christopher Cheng
Reviewed by Wendy Rampson
8/5/15

Attachments: 4-foot Alternative Sidewalk Memo

c: Project Management
Systems Planning
File No. SP14-065



August 4, 2015

City of Ann Arbor
301 East Huron Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48107
Attn: Chris Cheng

RE: Ann Arbor Racquet Club – 4' Geddes Road Sidewalk

Dear Chris,

At the recommendation of City officials we have done a preliminary examination of the feasibility of installation of a four foot wide pedestrian walkway along the south side of Geddes Road in the ROW immediately adjacent to the Ann Arbor Racquet Club. While it is technically possible to install some form of walkway in this area, the six fixed utility structures in this area greatly comprise the desirability of the improvement. Most notably are the short-comings in the clearance from these objects. The clear span between these utilities and the property line from west to east is as follows:

- Light pole 3.4'
- Utility pole 5.2'
- Light pole 3.5'
- Hydrant 4.0'
- Utility pole 3.7'
- Light pole 2.5'

Installation of the walk between the utilities and the back of curb is more difficult due to sharp grade changes that occur immediately off the back of curb that would require the alteration or relocation of the utilities due to the grade change.

We would be happy do discuss this in greater detail at your convenience or at the planning commission meeting.

Sincerely,

Scott W. Betzoldt, PE
MIDWESTERN CONSULTING, LLC