

June 15, 2015

Dear Mayor and Council:

Writing on behalf of the Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force I want to clarify two points which were raised in the brief discussion preceding your decision to postpone until July 6th first reading of proposed revisions to the snow and ice ordinance of Chapter 49 (Sidewalks). Since Council members will be reviewing the proposed revisions over the next month your Task Force believes it important that you have accurate information with regard to the proposed revisions.

First, nothing in the proposed revisions to the ordinance call for property owners to clear snow and ice from crosswalks, as was stated at the last Council meeting. Property owners do have a responsibility under the existing ordinance to clear snow and ice from sidewalk approaches and ramps leading to crosswalks from the adjoining main sidewalk.

Secondly, and similarly, the responsibility of property owners to clear concrete bus stop pads that adjoin their sidewalk is an existing obligation under the current ordinance, albeit a poorly publicized and enforced one. And this is precisely why the Task Force feels it is important to improve the ordinance language so as to make this existing responsibility clear to all.

A combined lack of public knowledge and lack of rigorous City-wide enforcement of these requirements has led to significant problems of safety and access for sidewalk users during the last two winters especially, and these concerns have been an important part of our deliberations and our proposed revisions. We hope this clarification will be helpful in your further consideration of these revisions.

Sincerely,

Linda Diane Feldt, Chair
Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force