



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Karen Hill, P.E., Transportation Engineer, staff representative for the Traffic Operations Committee and Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

DATE: February 10, 2025

SUBJECT: Response to City Council Referral: Request for sidewalk on Borough Road

Recommendation

Accept this report.

Background

On September 9, 2024, City Council referred communication from Tony Puntin of 86 Primrose Lane requesting the installation of a sidewalk on Borough Road, between 33 Borough Road and Primrose Lane, to the Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) and Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) for review.

Borough Road is an urban collector street about one mile long and is located within the Urban Growth Boundary. One travel lane is provided in each direction with a posted speed limit of 30 mph. It intersects with Fisherville Road to the east and Washington Street and River Road to the west. Sidewalk currently exists along the southern side of Borough Road from Fisherville Road to 33 Borough Road. A 200-foot segment of sidewalk was also constructed in 2008 along the north side of Borough Road between Millstream Lane and Primrose Lane, which in conjunction with a crosswalk at Primrose Lane, provides a connection between sidewalks within the residential developments accessed by these two side-streets.

TOC and TPAC have discussed Borough Road in many capacities over the years. Traffic calming measures previously implemented by the City include:

- In 2006 a traffic signal was installed at the intersection of Fisherville Road/Borough Road, in 2015 the signal was upgraded;
- In 2015 the City realigned the intersection of Washington Street/River Road/Borough Road to improve safety;
- In 2023 the City realigned the intersection of Borough Road/Lilac Street to eliminate the high speed right turns at the intersection; and,

Additionally, when parcels along the corridor are developed or re-developed, the City continues to request sidewalk to be constructed along the respective frontages as part of the Planning Board's development permitting process. The City recently did this as part of the permitting process for a senior housing development located at 61 Borough Road, which was approved in 2023.

Over the past several years, the City has reviewed various requests for the installation of a sidewalk along this corridor. Specifically, this issue was last reviewed by the City Council during its April 13, 2020. During that meeting, the City Council voted 11 to 4 not to construct a sidewalk on this section of Borough Road. Following the City Council's decision, the City repaved Borough Road during the 2020 construction season. In accordance with the City's Street Excavation Regulations, Borough Road is currently under a 5 year "no excavation" moratorium, which will expire in fall 2025.

Please see the attached email from the Deputy City Manager – Development dated February 27, 2024, with associated attachments, for additional information about the history of this particular sidewalk issue.

Discussion

The Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) discussed the recent referral during its September 17, 2024 meeting. Recognizing City Council's April 2020 decision and the City's significant investment to repave Borough Road in 2020, TOC recommended no further action regarding sidewalk at this location at the present time.

The Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) discussed the referral during its September 26, 2024 meeting. Meeting minutes are attached. The Committee recognized the sidewalk segment on Borough Road, between Primrose Lane and 33 Borough Road, is currently ranked #24 out of 117 new segments identified in the City's Pedestrian Master Plan. The 2021 ranking effort evaluated locations based on criteria including safety, school proximity, new access, latent demand, connectivity, and existing demand.

Tony Puntin, 86 Primrose Lane, attended the TPAC meeting to discuss his request. He explained that Borough Road in the area is about a 22-foot wide roadway with 10-foot travel lanes and gravel shoulders. From his experience as a civil engineer, Mr. Puntin stated his opinion that installation of a sidewalk at this location would be a straight-forward project. Mr. Puntin also discussed the neighborhood and why he feels a sidewalk is needed at this location.

Dave Armstrong, of 59 Primrose Lane and Eric Crane, of 18 Winterberry Lane also attended the meeting and expressed support for the installation of a sidewalk on this segment of Borough Road.

TPAC discussed past opposition to installation of a sidewalk at this location from property owners on both sides of Borough Road who did not want the sidewalk along their frontage.

TPAC noted that if the community had wanted to construct sidewalk along this section of Borough Road, it should have been installed concurrently with the reclamation of Borough Road in 2006, or subsequent pavement overlay in 2020. The Committee noted that sidewalk segments, if supported by the community, are typically constructed whenever a roadway is rebuilt or paved by the City as part of the annual paving program. This approach ensures a coordinated and cohesive roadway and sidewalk design, and achieves financial economies of scale for the taxpayers by constructing the sidewalk, roadway, and associated utility improvements simultaneously.

TPAC discussed the history of this particular sidewalk gap noted that the sidewalk priority list is a helpful guide to developing/funding a sidewalk program. TPAC also acknowledged that the

sidewalk program has been coordinated with the City's annual highway paving program, and expressed reservation about constructing this sidewalk segment in the near future recognizing that Borough Road was just repaved in 2020.

Mr. Puntin expressed concern that if the Borough Road sidewalk segment was delayed until such time that Borough Road is repaved again in the future, this could result in the sidewalk segment not being considered for decades.

In addition to Borough Road, TPAC noted that it has recently been asked to review requests for sidewalks on other streets which have also recently been repaved. Examples include Iron Works Road and Broken Ground Drive. As such, it was the consensus of TPAC to have TPAC's Bicycle-Pedestrian Subcommittee re-examine the current sidewalk rankings in relation to the City's highway paving program schedule and to make recommendations regarding sidewalk segments that may not be coordinated therewith. Upon completion, TPAC will review the Subcommittee's analysis and decide whether to make any recommendations to City Council.

cc: Traffic Operations Committee
Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

Attachments:

September 17, 2024 TPAC Minutes

February 27, 2024 Email from Deputy City Manager – Development

Attached to email:

- 1- March 23, 2020 Report to Council
- 2- April 13, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes
- 3- 2023 61 Borough Road "Club 55" Site Plan
- 4- 2021 TPAC Sidewalk Priority List