Malvern Planning Commission

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September 22, 2015

Mr. David G. Bramwell
President, Malvern Borough Council
Malvern, PA 19355

Re: **Recommendations to Accompany Walkability Study and Report Files**

Dear Mr. Bramwell.

Summary

Over the past twelve months the Planning Commission (MPC) has made a detailed study of Borough sidewalks and their condition. Since 'walkability' in large part depends both on the existence of sidewalks and sufficient information in the form of navigational aids, we also reviewed signage needs and identified a locations where additional sidewalks would enhance the pedestrian experience. We also looked at the adequacy of lighting on sidewalk - equipped areas.

Overall Results

Recent well-designed streetscape projects have added to the Borough sidewalk inventory. And planned sidewalk sections on Old Lincoln Highway (and Monument Avenue) will continue that trend. Lighting for night-time walking in sidewalk - equipped areas is generally adequate.

The older sidewalks in the Borough have not been well maintained, resulting in a significant number of trip hazards and a large quantity of seriously deteriorated sections.

Although signage has been enhanced over the past few years, there are plenty of opportunities to provide more and better signs.

Products of the Study

The results of this work are summarized / detailed in the accompanying **Report and Presentation Deck** for use by Borough Council. A **Spreadsheet Workbook** has been provided to Borough Management. This workbook contains detailed sidewalk condition data and lists of 'representative' sidewalks that either (a) have trip hazards or (b) have deteriorated to the point where they need repair. Additional spreadsheets in the workbook include the coding conventions used by the data collectors, details of the signage review,

and locations we identified as priorities for additional sidewalks. The report is intended for Borough Council decision making. The Workbook is intended to be a first step in a Borough - managed database of sidewalks.

Recommendations

The MPC offers the following suggestions and recommendations:

- that 'Sidewalks' become a part of the **BC permanent agenda**, in much the same way as Parking.
- that a **Sidewalk Management Program** be established for the Borough, consisting of (a) annual data collection of sidewalk conditions, (b) maintenance of the database, and (c) reasonable enforcement of existing sidewalk ordinances.
- and lastly that an energetic on-going effort be made to **expand the network** of sidewalks and trails. This effort to include annual budgeting and increasing the number and scope of grant applications for streetscapes and pedestrian - related projects.

On-going Dialogue

We believe that there is plenty to discuss and expect that a continuing conversation about sidewalks among Borough Council, Borough Management, and MPC is necessary and would be fruitful.

Questions may be directed to the undersigned.

Sincerely yours,

David B. Knies, PhD

Chair, Malvern Planning Commission

Malvern Borough Planning Commission

Walkability Study - 2015

Executive Summary

This report details a survey of Borough sidewalks and signage completed in the fall of 2014. It follows-on a study performed in 2008 by the Planning Commission. It provides both general and specific recommendations to Borough Council on (1) the condition of existing sidewalks, (2) locations where sidewalk or pathway installation would best enhance pedestrian access to important destinations within the Borough, and (3) suggests locations and configurations for signage to safely guide travelers - both pedestrian and vehicular - to places of interest in the Borough. This report is accompanied by a spreadsheet - workbook with detailed sidewalk condition data captured by street and address rangesw. It is anticipated that the spreadsheet - workbook will be used to assist Borough Council and Borough Management in making pedestrian-centered decisions. The spreadsheet database can be also used to track evolving sidewalk conditions through periodic updating.

Respectfully submitted by Malvern Planning Commission members engaged in the data collection and formulation of recommendations:

Tom Burns

Dana Carosella

Amy Finkbiner

Dave Knies

Chris Mongeau

Geoff Rubino

*Carroll Sinquet*t

1. Introduction

This report summarizes the results of a survey of sidewalks, lighting, and signage conducted during the fall of 2014 in the Borough of Malvern. The purpose is to update a similar 2008 study performed in 2008, and provide recommendations to Malvern Borough Council on (1) the condition of existing sidewalks, (2) locations where sidewalk or pathway installation would best enhance pedestrian access to important destinations within the Borough, and (3) identify locations and configurations for signage to guide both pedestrian and vehicular travelers to places of interest in the Borough. This brief report is accompanied by an Excel spreadsheet with detailed data, captured typically by street and address range. It is anticipated that the spreadsheet - database will be used to assist Borough Council and Borough Management in making pedestrian-centered decisions.

2. Methodology

The sidewalk survey was undertaken using the following definitions and characteristics in the table below:

Column - Entry	Definitions	Notes
Location / Street	Street surveyed	Typically 'by block'
Address Range	Block(s)	
Sidewalk	Does a sidewalk exist here?	Y= Yes; N= No
Side	Directional side of the street surveyed	captured where possible
Type	Sidewalk Description	1= Victorian, 2= Standard, 3= Non-standard
Lights	Is there an overhead light here?	Y= Yes; N= No
Street Classification	1= Arterial, 2= Collector, 3= Distributor, 4= Local Access Street	From the 2011 Comprehensive Plan
ADA	Compliant: Y= Yes; N= No	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
Sidewalk Condition Rating	G= Good, RPR= Repairs Needed, HZD= Trip Hazard to be Fixed	Safety - centered Judgements applied
Curb	Does a curb exist here?	Y= Yes; N= No

3. Overall Recommendations

Manage the Overall Condition of the Sidewalk Inventory

Sidewalks are typically reviewed for repair when either (1) a property is sold and purchased or (2) a complaint is lodged with Borough Management by a resident. Borough Council should revisit this approach to determine whether a more pro-active approach would be beneficial. One change could be to have all Borough staff note sidewalk sections in need of repair as they move about the Borough in pursuing their routine activities. Sections needing repair would be reported to the Codes Enforcement Officer who would initiate the owner-notification process. The spreadsheet database could be used to track improvements. The accompanying spreadsheet workbook (a separate file in .xls format) identifies representative sidewalk sections most in need of maintenance. These sidewalk areas are categorized as:

- Representative Trip Hazards, and
- Representative Repairs Needed.

Placing New Sidewalks

At present, first-time sidewalks are put in place in conjunction with either (1) a targeted streetscape improvement project or (2) a SALDO project. These are good practices. Additional locations for sidewalks could be identified by employing a strategy of looking at street-blocks near to high volume pedestrian destinations, e.g. Burke Park and Memorial Park and designating those streets and blocks for sidewalk installation. The sidewalk fund could be the initial source to pay for this. In many cases sidewalks already exists for some portion of a block. Both Malvern Avenue and Crest Avenue are examples where sidewalk completion would yield improved access. The database could be used to help identify the street-blocks. Section 4 (below) lists recommended priorities for new sidewalks.

Annual Updating of Existing Sidewalk Conditions

A former Planning Commission member - Tom Burns - has generously offered to collect data update the spreadsheet data base on a once-per-year basis. This would provide the Borough with a ‘current’ status for all existing sidewalks and enable whatever approach to sidewalk maintenance management Borough Council elects to put into place.

4. Specific Recommendations - New Sidewalks/Trails

The following locations are suggested as priorities as funding for new sidewalks (or trails) becomes available through grants or Borough sidewalk accounts:

- **Access to Memorial Park and Ball Fields**
  - Crest Avenue (West side, King Street to Monument Avenue) - Sidewalks already exist in front of several homes.
  - Malvern Avenue (West side, King Street to Monument Avenue) - Sidewalks already exist in front of several homes.
  - Monument Avenue (North side, Malvern Avenue to Sugartown Road)
- **Old Towne South**
  - South Warren Avenue (West side, Malvern Prep to First Avenue) - Safe pedestrian access along the South Warren Avenue corridor could be greatly enhanced by the establishment of a pathway from Malvern Prep to First Avenue. A trail that begins as a sidewalk within the Malvern Prep grounds and opens to a trail that proceeds through the Battlefield and connects to First Avenue would afford foot traffic – and student runners – a safe path to Borough streets. New SALDO projects at Malvern Prep could provide a source of funding for this sidewalk / trail.
  - West First Avenue (North side, Warren Avenue to Powelton Avenue)
  - Channing Avenue (West side, First Avenue to St. Patrick) - There are no sidewalks along the Baptist Church parking lot, and the sidewalks on the other side of the street do not present a reasonable alternative since they are in poor condition. A walkway could be potentially be added with minimal cost by re-striping the parking lot and adding parking blocks / car stops.
- **Old Towne North**
  - East Broad Street (South side, Bridge Street to Old Lincoln Highway) - Sidewalks already exist in front of several homes.
  - Bridge Street (Crossing at Broad Street) - This area presents a public safety concern. The Borough should investigate methods to provide safe crossing, e.g., crosswalk markings with signage, or a sidewalk along the East side of Bridge Street from Broad Street to King Street.

5. Specific Recommendations - New or Replacement Signage

- **Multi-Use Informational Signs**
  - Consider a **"uniform signage system"** combining welcome messages and directions to important destinations (e.g., train station, library, post office, parks, firehouse, Borough Hall, parking, businesses). Current signs, where they exist, are small. Place these signs at:
    - Major intersections: Old Lincoln Highway & Bridge Street, Bridge Street & East King Street, King Street & Warren Avenue
    - Borough boundaries: North Warren Avenue, Old Lincoln Highway (north and east sides), East King Street, South Warren Avenue, Monument Avenue, West King Street.

- **Borough Hall** - add a sign identifying Borough Hall / Library / Police Station at the corner of Channing and First Avenues.

- **Paoli Battlefield** - add / enlarge directional signs at King Street and Warren Avenue, and eastbound on King Street at Sugartown Road.

- **Parking Signs**
  - Replace "Municipal Parking" signs with larger signs that say "Public Parking" for all Borough parking lots.
  - Consider pursuing improved permanent parking signage for the Eastside Flats complex.

- **Stop Signs**
  - Consider pursuing the addition of stop signs at South Warren and Second Avenues.

- **Street Signs** - are missing for Monument Avenue at Sugartown Road, Crest Avenue at Highland Avenue, Sugartown Road at Highland Avenue, First Avenue at both Wayne Avenue and Woodland Avenue, Warren Avenue at both First and Second Avenues.

6. Recommendations - Overhead Lighting

- No new priorities identified.

7. Acknowledgements

This work was accomplished by the Malvern Borough Planning Commission members listed on page one during the fall of 2014. John Finkbiner also participated in the data collection. Lynne Hockenbury and Mark Niemic - newest members of the MPC - participated in the reviews of this project. We wish to acknowledge the extraordinary contributions of Tom Burns who created the spreadsheet - workbook, and coordinated the spreadsheet data-entry.



Map 9-3
Existing Sidewalks (as of September 2011)
Malvern Borough Comprehensive Plan

This map was digitally compiled for internal maintenance and developmental use by the County of Chester, Pennsylvania to provide an index to parcels and for other reference purposes. Parcel lines do not represent actual field surveys of premises. County of Chester, Pennsylvania makes no claims as to the completeness, accuracy or content of any data contained hereon, and makes no representation of any kind, including, but not limited to, the warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular use, nor are any such warranties to be implied or inferred, with respect to the information or data furnished herein.

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Map Features

Existing Sidewalks

- Both Sides
- One Side
- None

Base Features

- Municipalities
- Roads
- Railroad
- Ponds & Streams
- Parcels

CPC

N

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

September 2011

Data Source: CCPC and Malvern Borough, 2011

Walkability Study #2

Focus on an *Increasingly* Walkable Community

Malvern Planning Commission 2015

DBK 9-15-15

S/W Relevant Documents

- SALDO Section 515 … "S/W and Trails
  - 'B' … S/W for new required per BC wishes
  - 'C' … Owners responsible for maintenance
- 2012 Comprehensive Plan
  - p 2-5 … update standards for s/w's
  - p 2-8 … pedestrian access to Paoli Battlefield
  - Ch 9 p 9-5 … key connections lacking

Useful Outputs of Walkability #2

- Spreadsheet database of s/w's and current condition
- 'Representative List' of specific trip hazards
- 'Representative List' of other needed s/w repairs
- Suggestions for new Signage throughout the Borough
- Suggested priorities for new sidewalks and trails

Staffing for S/W Management

- Options include
  - consulting firm
  - in-house staff
    - Borough - resident ‘volunteer’
- Suggest the volunteer approach
  - consistency from survey to survey
  - volunteer reports - in through Zoning & Codes
  - ***mirabile dictu … we have a Volunteer!***

Priorities: New S/Ws and Trails

- Objectives
  - access to parks, battlefield, places of interest
  - add on North - South Streets
- Suggested Locations
  - Access to Memorial Park / ballfields / tennis / playlot
    - Crest & Malvern Avenues
    - Monument Ave. - Malvern to Sugartown
  - West 1st Ave - Warren to Powelton
  - Channing - 1st Ave to St. Pat's
  - Old Towne North
    - East Broad … Bridge to OLH complete the s/w
    - Bridge St. … crossing at Broad is a continuing safety concern
  - South Warren Ave - Malvern Prep to 1st Ave
    - a trail … next time Malvern Prep has a SALDO

Lessons Learned

- S/W survey best conducted by one person vs. many
  - condition evaluation differs by …
    - evaluator's subjective scale
    - by age … TH for a 65+ not necessarily TH for a 35er
- annual survey avoids disconnects
  - w. data entered to a [e.g.] spreadsheet db

In Summary

- Malvern presents itself to the World as a ‘walking community’ … we aspire to live up to that!
- Current s/w management practices good but not sufficient
  - s/w inspected as part of U & O permitting
  - hazards reported by citizens are processed one-off
- Extension of the s/w network could be accelerated thru
  - budgeting process, and
  - grants

Next Steps … Two Key Initiatives

Sidewalk Program Management

- Update s/w condition DB annualy
- Intelligently enforce existing ordinances
- Consider 'Sidewalk Superintendent' for DB

Extending the Sidewalk Network

- Increase grant applications
- SALDO provisions
- Include s/w $ in budgets