



Village of Western Springs

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study: Public Question Form

Analysis of Submitted Questions and Comments

May 11th, 2021

Summary:

The Village of Western Springs offered Forest Hills residents the opportunity to submit questions and comments pertaining to the Forest Hills Sidewalk - Feasibility Study that was conducted by V3 Engineering. The form was available between April 5th and April 30th. During that time, staff collected and reviewed one hundred seventy-six submissions. The submissions yielded a total of four hundred thirty-two questions and one hundred fifty-eight comments. Questions that were submitted have been collated for the Village Board's review. This information was presented to the Public Works and Water Committee meeting on May 6th, 2021 and will be presented to the Village Board on May 10th, 2021.

Background:

In early 2019, residents from Forest Hills approached the Village Board to discuss ways in which the Village could complete the sidewalk system in the subdivision. The matter was presented to the Infrastructure Commission during the summer of 2019, wherein the Village's existing sidewalk policy was reviewed. The current policy was established in 2006 and is accompanied by a sidewalk report which outlines the history of sidewalk installations within the Village. The report outlined that sidewalks were historically installed during the construction of the subdivision, and the costs for the improvements were passed on to residents through a special assessment.

The Infrastructure Commission concluded, with a recommendation to the Public Works & Water Committee, that the Village should proceed with a modest, "in-house" developed survey to the residents of Forest Hills to determine resident interest in completing sidewalks. The survey would serve to evaluate the overall opinion of residents regarding the construction of sidewalks in areas where they are currently non-existent. The Commission concluded that if the results of the survey confirm that the majority of residents are in favor of a revised sidewalk policy, the Village Board could then consider a feasibility study to determine the potential cost for completing sidewalks.

Methodology:

The Village Board approved a feasibility study in the fall of 2020 to assess the feasibility and cost of completing sidewalks in the Forest Hills subdivision. The feasibility study was published on the Village website for review by the public. The Village solicited questions and comments on the study. This was accomplished by utilizing an online form through the Village website and question forms that were available for residents to fill out in the lobby of Village Hall. A copy of the form may be found in Appendix A. Village staff read and compiled the results of the form submissions, as well as emails sent to staff concerning the study. Staff has provided answers to the most frequently submitted questions which can be found on the Village website, as well as in Appendix D.

Results:

The Village collected a total of one hundred seventy-six (176) responses, with the majority being through the online form. Respondents left a total of four hundred thirty-two (432) questions. Respondents provided a total of one hundred fifty-eight (158) comments. The Village received fifty-two (52) identical submissions from different individuals. The fifty-two identical submissions included the following:

Questions:

1. Can the Village conduct additional research to uncover grant funding options and the amount/likelihood of receiving such funds?
2. Can the Village outline financing options that spread the costs over many years?
3. Can the Village put forth a plan that spreads cost equitably for all Forest Hills community members?
4. Can the Village outline solutions that mitigate the loss of healthy trees in our community including replanting new ones?

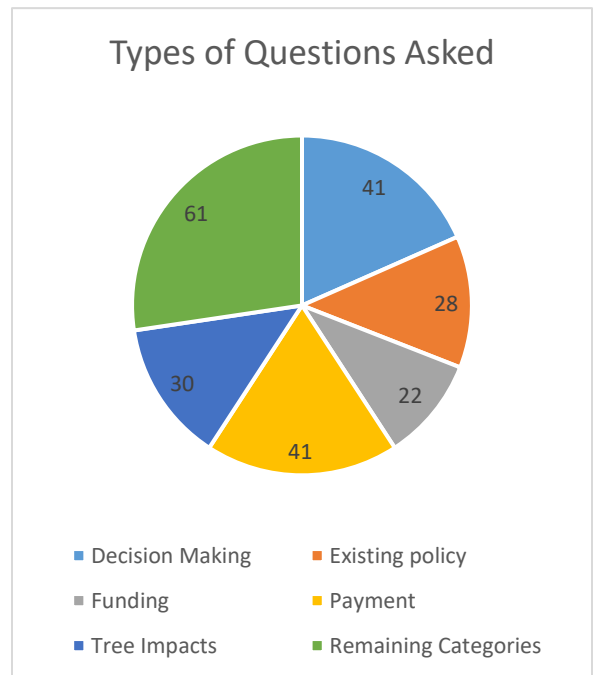
Comment:

I support sidewalks and want to move forward in the process to better understand cost offsets including grant options, financing alternatives as well as solutions that will help to mitigate the loss of healthy trees in our community.

Analysis:

Due to the large number of identical submissions, those submissions were condensed to a unique question for each of the four submitted for the purposes of the analysis. For this purpose, unique is defined as deviating in language used. Of the 432 total questions submitted, 223 unique questions were posed by respondents, including the four questions that were submitted fifty-two times each.

These unique questions were broken down into fifteen categories. The categories and the corresponding number of questions submitted in each category are as follows: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Regulations (3), Bid Process (2), Cost (5), Data and Metrics (11), Decision Making (41), Driveway and Utility Impacts (10), Existing Policy (28), Funding (22), Future Plans (4), How to Oppose (7), Maintenance (6), Payment (41), Placement (6), Safety Concerns (7), and Tree Impacts (30).



A complete list of the questions that were submitted by respondents can be found in Appendix B.

A total of one hundred fifty-eight comments were submitted through the form. There were fifty-two identical comments submitted. Many respondents vocalized their stance on the installation of sidewalks in Forest Hills. Of the one hundred fifty-eight comments, eighty-four respondents (55%) were in support of the installation of sidewalks. Sixty-eight respondents (44%) were opposed to the installation of sidewalks. Seven respondents (5%) did not state a preference in their comment.

Fifty-two of the eighty-four comments that were in favor of sidewalk installation were made up the identical comments submitted by different individuals. For those who provided reasons why they are in favor of sidewalks, increased property value, safety, walkability, and wanting contiguous sidewalks were the common reasons stated. Safety and wanting contiguous sidewalks were the two most mentioned elements.

Sixty-eight respondents that vocalized opposition to sidewalks being installed in Forest Hills. Sixty-six percent (66%) of comments cited cost of installation. Thirty-eight (38%) percent of comments stated that Forest Hills was already safe without sidewalks. Concern about parkway tree removal was mentioned in twenty-eight percent (28%) of comments. Sixteen percent (16%) of comments mentioned sidewalks ruining the aesthetics of Forest Hills. Sixteen percent (16%) stated that the resources that would allocated towards sidewalk installation would be better served elsewhere. Nine percent (9%) of comments included maintenance concerns such as snow removal.

A complete list of the comments that were submitted by respondents can be found in Appendix C.

Appendix A

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study: Public Question Form

Copy of Public Question Forms

Village of Western Springs

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study: Public Question Form

Introduction

In early 2019, residents from Forest Hills approached the Village Board to discuss ways in which the Village could complete the sidewalk system in the subdivision.

The Village Board approved a feasibility study in Fall 2020 to assess the feasibility and costs of completing sidewalks in the subdivision. The feasibility study is now available on the Village website for review. The Village is soliciting questions and comments on the study, using an online form. The Village has also setup a project website at: <http://www.wsprings.com/Forest-Hills-Sidewalk>.

Feedback will be summarized and presented to the Village Board for further discussion. Forest Hills residents without internet access may pick up a question form in the lobby at Village Hall, which may be left in the drop box outside the main doors.

Please submit any questions or comments no later than April 30, 2021.


Questions

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone _____

Address: _____

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-  Agendas & Minutes
-  Recreation Services
-  Rave Alert/Smart911
-  Service Requests

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Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study: Public Question Form Save Progress

Introduction

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Please submit any questions or comments no later than April 30, 2021.

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study
[Direct Download](#)

Questions*

Please submit your questions pertaining to the Feasibility Study here.

Additional Comments

First Name	Last Name	
<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	
Email	Phone #	
<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	
Address1		
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Address2		
<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>		
City	State	Zip
<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>



Receive an email copy of this form.

Email address

This field is not part of the form submission.

Submit
Submit and Print

* indicates a required field

Appendix B

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study: Public Question Form

Comprehensive List of Submitted Questions

Questions:

ADA Regulations:

1. Is the current WS sidewalk policy in line with ADA regulations?
2. If the policy results in unsafe sidewalks which start and stop in unpredictable manners, how can this comply with ADA regulations?
3. Why is it even a question if we should do this? How are sidewalks not part of the people with disabilities act?

Bid Process:

1. Are we going to bid the Job to ensure we get the best cost?
2. Can we bid the Job to check the feasibility study?

Cost:

1. How would the costs of this entire sidewalk installation project be funded?
2. What is the cost of ensuring there are fully connected sidewalk paths on one side of every street?
3. If you have a corner house, does the cost not triple?
4. What is the most cost-effective solution to the “problem?”
5. What would the costs be for each individual homeowner?

Data and Metrics:

1. How many homes are there on both sides of the street in the area where sidewalks would be constructed as part of the Complete All Streets plan? How many of those homes DO NOT now have sidewalks?
2. How many homes are there are on the one side of the street where sidewalks would be constructed as part of the Recommended Alternatives plan? How many of those homes DO NOT now have sidewalks?
3. If this is a safety issue, what metrics are being used? What other solutions are or have been considered and what are the costs associated with these alternative solutions?
4. What metrics indicate that safety is a major concern surrounding this issue?
5. Is there actual hard data to show not having sidewalks is a safety issue specific to this community?
6. What data is the village using that shows having no sidewalks is a safety issue? We have lived in this village for 38 years; raised 4 kids and have not experienced any safety issues

7. Over the last 50 years, broken down by decade, how many vehicle/pedestrian collisions have there been in the Forest Hills subdivisions? How many fatalities?
8. Of those collisions, what percentage occurred at non-intersections, what percentage occurred at non-intersections where there were no sidewalks?
9. But safety from what? What are the statistics around the safety of Forest Hills and Western Springs?
10. How many sidewalks have been added over the last 3, 5, 10 years and since inception of these programs?
11. Being a lifelong resident of WS and FH, I have never had an issue with the sidewalks as is. I am unaware of any incidents involving residents and children's safety with regard to sidewalk access. If there are any relevant statistics, is this something that could be made available to residents? If there have been issues, why is this topic not being discussed village-wide?

Decision Making:

1. Will this come to a referendum vote or is this a Village Trustee vote?
2. Will Forest Hills residents have the opportunity to vote whether they want to pay for the sidewalks after we are told what the cost will be for each household?
3. How will the decision be made to move forward?
4. Why are you only targeting Forest Hills?
5. Why is this not a Village wide referendum considering the many other areas without universal sidewalks?
6. If safety is the issue, what metrics are being used? What other solutions have been considered? What is the most cost-effective solution?
7. Why are we pandering to a few activists at the expense of long-term Village homeowners?
8. Why are Forest Hills residents being singled out for this punishment, when there are also places without sidewalks in timber Trails, Ridgewood, Fairview Estates, Old Town West and Northwest and Field Park?
9. There are many other neighborhoods in Western Springs that do not have universal sidewalks (Ridgewood, Old Town West, Field Park, etc.) Why is this EXPENSIVE WASTEFUL project targeting only Forest Hills? How was this project initiated and why only in this subdivision?
10. Why is this not a village wide referendum considering the many other areas without universal sidewalks?
11. Why are sidewalks not being considered for other areas of the village which do not have them?

12. Has the village explored the possibility of providing completed sidewalks on only one side of the street?
13. Is the installation of stop signs at problematic intersections a less expensive alternative to assuring pedestrian safety?
14. Why put money into sidewalks when we have others issues in the village that need addressing. Infrastructure, street repair, flooding, etc? This is a waste of money.
15. Are individual homeowner approvals needed since sidewalks are on easements?
16. Why is the village doing a feasibility study for only Forest Hills?
17. Is safety the main issue for this proposed s referendum and if so shouldn't the entire village be included?
18. Why is this study only being considered for Forest Hills? There are other areas of town without sidewalks. If the argument is for safety, then every part of the village should be considered for sidewalks
19. Given the aging of our infrastructure (streets, sewers, water mains) why is the village not focusing financial resources on those items instead of sidewalks?
20. Why is Forest Hills being targeted?
21. Can we revisit the flawed determination of which side of a street is mandated to install sidewalks?
22. If safety is the main concern for the village, then why aren't other sections/neighborhoods of Western Springs a part of this feasibility study?
23. Can I assume that the study has a section explaining the results, etc.?
24. Why is FH FIRST TO ADOPT THIS PLAN?
25. Why is the feasibility survey recommending one side of the street?
26. Why do you call this a feasibility study? This is feasible, it is putting sidewalk down.
27. Why is this question not up for a village-wide referendum?
28. Why is the village considering installing sidewalks on one side of each street?
29. Will homeowner have an option to contract individually for sidewalk?
30. There are many areas in Western Springs without sidewalks. If this is a safety issue, shouldn't this be a village wide referendum?
31. Why is Forest Hills the only area in Western Springs focused on the installation of sidewalks?
32. Why is this not a village wide referendum?

33. Why is Forest Hills being targeted for sidewalks when there are other areas of Western Springs that do not have sidewalks?
34. What other solutions were suggested or researched?
35. You are looking at spending in excess of \$4 million for something that is not supported by everyone. Are there no issues that could use that money that everyone could get behind- flooding, water quality, paving?
36. The study thoroughly describes the landscaping issues involved for all properties, but then proceeds to recommend a timeline based solely on price. My question is that I thought this issue was primarily a safety issue and - if so- wouldn't the timeline be better determined based on that?
37. It seems as if a small number of residents have persisted in pushing this agenda, is this really the most important issue our village faces?
38. Could this be pursued on a block by block basis?
39. It seems that the survey did not receive responses from the majority of the FH residents and was not overwhelmingly positive; why is this still being pursued so aggressively?
40. We are concerned that this is not being considered as a Village-wide project; why the focus on FH and how is this fair to the rest of the village?
41. Would our money not be better spent on fixing the current water drainage issues?

Driveway and Utility Impacts:

1. If I read it correctly, the study suggests our driveway is asphalt when it is concrete. How will damage be mitigated in the process? If there is damage to our property or lot, will the provider be liable? How will the Village handle these issues as they will surely rise?
2. Why do we need to redo the driveways? We have places this is not the case. This again is driving the cost up.
3. Can we revisit the flawed calculation of the depth of poured concrete for sidewalks vs apron vs sidewalk across driveway?
4. How will resident's yards and driveways be affected?
5. With the driveway aprons proposed to be 7" PCC and sidewalks are 5" PCC why are the sidewalks that cross a driveway 6" PCC? The sidewalks crossing a driveway see the same loads as the apron so why not make the sidewalks crossing the driveway 7" PCC like the aprons?
6. How will you relocate power lines that follow the street corners on certain blocks?
7. If sidewalks are put in will the city pay for the damage and repair to our lawns and other plants?

8. How would sidewalks impact existing landscaping and other installations and who would pay for that? You are proposing cutting up my driveway and damaging its integrity-who would pay for that?
9. In a village already dogged by water problems, would more hardscape exacerbate the issues and make flooding even more extreme?
10. If backyard flooding continues to increase, would that not have a negative impact on property values?

Existing Policy:

1. Once the sidewalks are complete will there be an effort to enforce people to use them?
2. Is there is a requirement that people building new homes in Forest Hills must put in sidewalks?
3. If so- isn't that when the Village already decided that sidewalks were essential?
4. Did the Board at the time, fail to anticipate that they were creating a useless patchwork of sidewalks that would stay that way for decades to come without further action?
5. Have you considered the original plan for sidewalks? Which was to update sidewalks as teardowns occurred. It was a long term plan which would potentially take another 20 years to finish sidewalks in Forest Hills
6. Is there not already a Village program for residents who desire to put in sidewalks?
7. Why is the Village considering changing the 2006 Rule retroactively for homeowners with no sidewalks?
8. Is this approach to sidewalk installation a significant change from previous Western Springs Board Policy?
9. Does the Village benefit financially (through permits or other) when residents are required to put in sidewalks?
10. Why is this not a village wide referendum considering the many other areas without universal sidewalks?
11. How would this project effect Western Springs resolution 06-1933?
12. Why are new homes that are built required (at their expense) to put in sidewalks if the village is not planning to develop a system that connects them all?
13. Have many current owners alleged that representations were made to them by Village officials that sidewalks would be installed throughout the subdivision?
14. Can you tell me how many SSAs for sidewalks have been established since the policy was established?

15. Is there a village program in place for residents who do want sidewalks?
16. Why aren't sidewalks mandated throughout all of Western Springs? Why is the Forest Hills area singled out to shoulder this cost? Other areas throughout the Village, that are adjacent to schools and/or public facilities, also do not have sidewalks. I don't see any statistics that show that the Forest Hills area is, for some odd reason, any less safe than other areas of Western Springs.
17. Because this is required I would ask why not let the sidewalks crease with new builds?
18. Since all new construction has been required to put a new sidewalk on the property, why would we not keep the blocks consistent and have full sidewalks? To have some blocks with and some without seems silly. We have children that walk to school and they shouldn't have to weave on and off sidewalks - PLUS it's not safe for them!
19. We don't we have sidewalks?
20. Is there not a 2006 Rule that covers this and is being ignored?
21. Doesn't the village already have a program for residents who want to put in sidewalks? If so, why is the Village considering this EXPENSIVE project?
22. Has the Village of Western Springs, through its officials, ever made representations to any owners or prospective owners that sidewalks would be installed throughout the subdivision?
23. Why is the village considering changing the 2006 rule retroactively for homeowners with no sidewalks?
24. Are there current programs in place for people who want sidewalks to get them (sidewalks)?
25. Are the current programs working? If so, why is change necessary?
26. Why do you want to change the 2006 rule retroactively?
27. Is the Village willing to take financial responsibility for any flooding issues? And how would they pay for that?
28. If FH residents of any block really agree and want sidewalk on their block, is there anything prohibiting them from doing so?

Funding:

1. Which Administrative resource in the village takes leadership for grants?
2. How much is the Village paying towards this project?
3. If yes, how much and how will this money be collected? Through higher taxes?
4. How, specifically, is this sidewalk project expected to be funded?
5. What public funding/grants are available to the Village to offset the direct costs of the project?

6. To what extent can the Village apply for grant funding under the Infrastructure Plan being proposed by the Biden Admin.?
7. Can the Village conduct additional research to uncover grant funding options and the amount/likelihood of receiving such funds?
8. Will the village look for grants/funding to subsidize the costs?
9. Is there a way to not make our taxes higher?
10. How many attempts have been made at seeking grants for sidewalk projects in the village? Is there a reason the village isn't seeking out these funds?
11. Can grant funding be given to help with the cost of the sidewalks?
12. Which grants has Western Springs applied for? How else can we give effort to finding grant and foundation money?
13. How can the Village finance the costs for the sidewalks?
14. When will the Village put forth a plan to install sidewalks that shows financial equity across Forest Hill stakeholders?
15. Is the village able to use any of the funds from the American Rescue Plan towards this project?
16. Is the Village able to get any state grant money to fund this project?
17. Did the study include any information about funding sources?
18. If an SSA was implemented, can you tell me the village's dollar share of cost for the installation of the sidewalks? And how many properties were involved?
19. Can you tell me if any Federal Department of Transportation grant monies were used for the construction of sidewalks where none previously existed?
20. At this time I am more in favor of the alternative project over the total sidewalk installation. Either way, I am wondering how this project would likely be funded.
21. If the project moves forward and residents are required to pay a portion of the cost, what will the Village do for those that are unable to pay the fee? Will there be a grant or other program for those that do not have the money?
22. How will the project be funded?

Future plans:

1. What about Ridgewood? They do not have sidewalks. Are they next?
2. Will sidewalks be installed in the rest of the village?
3. How will the results be announced and disseminated to all residents?

4. If this is a safety issue, how is it not an issue village wide? There are many areas all over WS that do not have universal sidewalks, why are they not included?

How to Oppose:

1. How do I veto this?
2. What are the rights of home owners that don't want to participate or don't want to lose a historic tree on their property? Do we estimate any legal expenses if neighbors fight this in court?
3. Can someone refuse sidewalks on their own property, if they cannot afford, or do not want to do this?
4. Why should we pay if we don't want sidewalks? (If people with partial sidewalks don't like the way they look, it is the fault of that previous village board who created the silly ordinance)
5. If the village determines to install sidewalks, will the residents who don't want sidewalks be allowed to be excluded from having sidewalks installed in their parkways?
6. Can you tell me if any SSAs that were established for sidewalks were not implemented because of the objections of the homeowners? Can you tell me how many properties were involved in those SSAs?
7. Is there a reason why we cannot not opt out of the installation if we choose?

Maintenance:

1. What happens when the snow falls and sidewalks become slippery?
2. Will the city repair and improve the existing sidewalks?
3. Will the sidewalks have to be shoveled by the homeowner when a certain amount of snow falls?
4. Will the Village contemplate handling of snow removal of the corner lots?
5. Will the village be snow plowing the newly installed sidewalks?
6. Sidewalks require consistent upkeep, how are we going to pay for this maintenance when they inevitably become uneven (a tripping hazard) and unkempt-looking?

Payment:

1. Who is going to pay for this?
2. Who is responsible to pay for and how much?
3. Who is paying for the sidewalks?? All residents of WS? Or just residents in Forest Hills?
4. How will each resident be billed for their portion of each phase?
5. Why are these costs not being shared by all Western Springs residents versus just Forest Hills residents?

6. Does all sub-divisions of Western Springs pay or the assessment fee to be absorbed only by Forest Hills residents?
7. If my side of the street does not receive sidewalks, will I be paying?
8. If my side of the street does not receive sidewalks, will I pay less than my neighbor across the street?
9. For those currently with sidewalks, will they be paying as well and the same rate as I?
10. You have given us a total cost to the village. Does that include the individual costs that property owners are paying? Everyone in the village needs to understand their individual financial impact.
11. I do not pay for street repairs or street replacement, which are owned by the Village. Why should I, or any resident, pay for sidewalk costs which are similarly owned and maintained by the Village and are on Village right-of-way property?
12. Will the village board tell Forest Hills residents how much each household they will have to pay for the sidewalks?
13. Will we be able to contribute to make sure people who can't afford an assessment pay?
14. How can we ensure people that cannot afford to pay for the sidewalk are not required?
15. Will people that have sidewalks be subsidizing cost for those would do not have sidewalks?
16. Is some of the cost to be funded by the affected homeowners, and the rest by the whole village?
17. Is some of the cost to be imposed by all of the homeowners in Forest Hills, even if all the homes on a block already have sidewalks?
18. How or why can I be mandated to pay for a sidewalk on what I assume is on Village easement and that I don't want?
19. What will Forest Hills residents pay for sidewalks?
20. Why wouldn't the Village pay the entire cost of the sidewalks? If safety is the issue, then the cost of putting sidewalks throughout the entire Village should be via referendum; with the cost of same spread across ALL residents. The Board should not use a "feasibility study" to circumvent the burden of a referendum.
21. Back in 2006, I feel like I already paid a premium for my home because the lot contained sidewalks. Now I am going to have to pay an additional expense for those homeowners who didn't have to pay a "sidewalk premium" when they purchased their house originally? I think that's unfair.
22. Why do the home owners have to pay 70%?

23. Why is the majority of the burden being forced on the homeowners? Why isn't the Village absorbing more of the cost if it is a Village and safety concern?
24. Does the Village have any long-term financing options available to spread the costs to residents over several years?
25. How do we protect elderly residents on fixed incomes from additional tax burdens in connection with this project?
26. What would be the three year plan to have sidewalks installed, and how is it going to be paid for?
27. Can the Village outline financing options that spread the costs over many years?
28. Can the Village put forth a plan that spreads cost equitably for all Forest Hills community members?
29. How will payments be made by homeowners for the sidewalks?
30. Have WS taxes as a whole been contributing to maintaining the sidewalk system throughout the village? (If so, could the village then give some thought to how the entire village tax income might contribute to this project rather than just FH... if FH has been contributing to the other sidewalk systems over the years)
31. If there are cost implications for creating these sidewalks, do you assume even those who don't approve for the project to pay?
32. How is the project being paid for?
33. What is the cost to the Village that is inevitably passed along to homeowners who do and do not currently have sidewalks? And what is the cost to the homeowners who will have new sidewalks put in front of their homes? And please be very specific.
34. Is the homeowner only responsible for the cost of the sidewalks? Or are they responsible for the cost of the tree removal, utilities being moved, etc?
35. Will residents who previously had to pay out of pocket for sidewalk be reimbursed?
36. What will households pay for sidewalk installation?
37. Have there been village projects in the past that have been billed to just one area like Field Park or Forest Hills?
38. For retirees or those on fixed incomes, will there be discounts?
39. What is a Special Service area?
40. Who's paying for the new sidewalks?

41. How does the Village plan to accommodate those of our many citizens who may be on a fixed budget? How do we expect those families to participate and afford this project?

Placement:

1. How far up the property line will the sidewalks be placed?
2. Why can't we have sidewalks on one side of the street only? As Countryside has?
3. Why is the feasibility study recommending the option of only putting sidewalks on one side of the street? Why should only one side of the block be forced to pay for sidewalks that (1) are not statistically shown to be necessary; and (2) will presumably be used by people from BOTH side of the street?
4. Do we need sidewalks on both sides of the street?
5. Can sidewalks be built on one side of the street?
6. I wonder if the location of the school has also been considered in which sidewalks should be a priority. Are those high traffic areas and areas where no sidewalk exists on either north/south or east/west side of the street being considered a priority?

Safety Concerns:

1. Is the Village willing to take on the legal liability of a personal injury or wrongful death suit when this situation is entirely preventable?
2. Why does safety not seem to be a concern to the Village, for Forest Hills or the other areas without universal sidewalks?
3. If safety is being used as an impetus to do this, where is the study for us to see, as to why Forest Hills is a particularly dangerous area--more dangerous than these other areas of Western Springs that have no sidewalks?
4. What are the safety concerns/considerations for the project, specifically, for blocks that are dead ends/cul de sacs with no through traffic?
5. What measures aside from sidewalks are being implemented or considered to address the traffic and pedestrian safety concerns?
6. We have flooding and paving issues, how is adding more sidewalks going to alleviate these problems?
7. I wonder why this study drew conclusions without considering safety. If it was solely a study to lay out issues- then why include recommendations of a timeline at all?

Tree Impacts:

1. Specifically, how many mature trees would have to be removed if both sides of a street were to have sidewalks laid?
2. Why would mature trees be removed instead of altering the location of the sidewalk installation?
3. Why would residents be forced to have mature trees removed to have unwanted sidewalks installed?
4. Is tree conservation is being considered in the effort?
5. How many trees will be removed? What's the type of trees and their health?
6. Can the Village outline solutions that mitigate the loss of healthy trees in our community including replanting new ones?
7. What can be done to replace lost trees?
8. Is there no way to alter the sidewalk path to save as many trees as possible?
9. Can we please not remove mature trees as part of this project? They are a hallmark of Forest Hills and I'd hate for us to lose them.
10. If trees are removed and these trees on what is village property will the village replace the trees on the owners' property because of the sidewalk allocation?
11. Why is it necessary to cut down my parkway tree as indicated in the feasibility study?
12. Tree lost and tree replanting plans, how will the village approach this?
13. How will you protect existing large trees that line certain blocks?
14. There are many costs that are associated with trees in the parkway and utility adjustments. It is not clear who is responsible for those costs. Also, the estimated cost for a tree to be removed seems very low.
15. I didn't appreciate how significant the impact that sidewalks would have on neighborhood trees. Given that, will the Forestry people on Staff be asked for their input?
16. The village recently had an inventory of all trees noting condition, etc. Could that inventory be related to the trees in the sidewalk study?
17. Could those staffers give an opinion or estimate of the effect that sidewalk construction would have on the cost of tree maintenance, removal and replacement?
18. What is the cost to remove affected trees?
19. Knowing the placement of trees, I imagine quite a few will need to come down. How will that then affect the appeal of Western Springs? And will those trees be replaced elsewhere on the parkway?

20. If mature parkway tree is removed, will the Village replace it?
21. I am wondering what the plan would be for replacing the trees, mature or otherwise, that would need to be removed in order to complete the full sidewalk project or just the recommended alternative project?
22. The study projects that Forest Hills will lose 72 trees, plus additional trees that are "impacted." Is the cost of tree replacement fully taken care of by the village? It is unfair that property owners would have to pay for any part of the replacement costs of a tree. Is the replacement costs for trees included in this feasibility study, or is that an additional cost to the village?
23. How would the village, if we do put in sidewalks, install such a path without harming our trees or residents' claims to their trees?
24. Can we just go around the mature trees?
25. Are tree removal and utility costs charged to the specific property affected or included in the total cost of the project?
26. My only question is what will happen to the number of beautiful mature trees that grace many of the parkways throughout Forest Hills?
27. Can the Village outline solutions that mitigate the loss of healthy trees in our community including replanting new ones?
28. How many mature trees would be killed because some people want sidewalks?
29. Since the Village has a multi-year plan to treat, take down existing trees, and replant more resistant breeds of trees - Wouldn't it be a good idea to work with them to make sure none of these new trees planted are in the sidewalk line?
30. Our village has always been filled with mature trees (Tree City USA). Those trees have been decimated by Dutch Elm disease in the past and Ash Borer beetles more recently. With so few of our beautiful mature parkway trees still in existence, why are we even considering any project that would jeopardize any of our remaining trees?

Appendix C

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study: Public Question Form

Comprehensive List of Submitted Comments

Comments:

- If sidewalks were to be installed, my driveway would not meet the ADA cross-slope requirement; in order to make the new sidewalk meet the required cross-slope it would require the replacement of the remaining driveway to the curb and I assume would match the concrete finish installed last year. Also at the time of the permitting I was required to increase the strength of the concrete for the last 5-10' to 7,000 #. Would this be done in the replacement and the matching of reinforcement bars installed? In addition, due to existing topographical contours the installation of a new sidewalk will likely require re-contouring portions of our yard so as not to create damming within my yard but allow the correct overland flow into the curb storm water management system. This work and the replacement sod would be a Village costs???
- Once the sidewalks are complete will there be an effort to enforce people to use them? It seems everywhere there are sidewalks nobody uses them what with folks running and jogging and simply walking in the street regardless; a hazard. If there's a sidewalk folks should use them.
- We have sidewalks in our area and do not want to have to pay for them in other areas!
- I do not want sidewalks and do not feel that I should have to pay for sidewalks.
- Has anyone suggested that he or she did not notice that there were no sidewalks before purchasing a home in Forest Hills?
- Why is the village considering installing sidewalks on one side of each street? This would financially penalize one half of the residents while all the residents would benefit. This option would be unacceptable to me and I certainly would vote against it if it became the recommended option.
- Who is going to have to pay for this? I live in Field Park and am not willing to contribute one cent of my tax dollars for this project. I bought my home 42 years ago in an area that had sidewalks. That was my choice, just as it was choice of those who settled Forest Hills to locate in an area without sidewalks.
- At this time I am more in favor of the alternative project over the total sidewalk installation. Either way, I am wondering how this project would likely be funded.
- I do not pay for street repairs or street replacement, which are owned by the Village. Why should I, or any resident, pay for sidewalk costs which are similarly owned and maintained by the Village and are on Village right-of-way property?

- We have been residents of Forest Hills for 28 years and raised 2 children in our Fair Elms home. Safety and sidewalks have never been an issue. We bought our property without sidewalks and like the look as is. To be assessed a heavy sharing cost would be a burden that would be very difficult, especially during these challenging economic times due to Covid. Why is the majority of the burden being forced on the homeowners? Why isn't the Village absorbing more of the cost if it is a Village and safety concern?
- Can we come to an agreement that sidewalks on one side of roads is a great start/minimum goal, and perhaps all that is needed long term?
- Why does anyone want to keep having this same issue with residents? If you don't do all the sidewalks, you are only kicking this fight down the road for a later time. If anyone believes this job will become less expensive in the future, that's a good strategy. But the reality is, it won't. Just do all the sidewalks.
- Why do we have to go through this every 15 years? Thought this was settled years ago.
- If certain residents want sidewalks, then the Village already has in place a process for them to install sidewalks. I do not see where the residents (and, perhaps non-residents) who are advocating for sidewalks have even attempted to utilize that option. Why should residents, who have not attempted to utilize the existing process for installation of sidewalks, be permitted to impose the requirement for sidewalks on all Forest Hills residents -- or all Fair Elms residents
- I live on the 5300 block of Grand Ave. This is a very busy street that has a high volume of traffic turning off of 55th street. There are a lot of families with young children on this block. Our children have to ride their bikes and scooters, and we have to push our children in strollers in the street. Inevitably, someone will be hit by a car. Is the Village willing to take on the legal liability of a personal injury or wrongful death suit when this situation is entirely preventable?
- After reviewing the study results, I was surprised to see the engineer's recommendation that would allow for sidewalks to be installed on a single side of some or all of the streets in lieu of both sides. Understanding the cost differences of course, my question is how do sidewalks on only one side of the street minimize the safety concerns related to excess pedestrian use of the streets? That approach would simply increase the amount of undue crossing of the streets at non-intersections. My underlying (and sadly disappointing) question is that with the recent past, current and foreseeable future exponential increase in tax revenues for Western Springs based on the skyrocketing new and existing home values, why aren't the projects that directly involve public safety such as the need for sidewalks always at the top of the "spending list" over such

aesthetic improvement projects like park equipment and landscaping improvements that continue to take precedent?

- Are you aware of the number of seniors that this plan affects? And their fixed incomes?
- Selfishly speaking - - I am a bit concerned about having to remove snow for those on a corner lot. That's quite a bit of increased square footage to be responsible for - - substantially so compared to non-corner lots. Will the Village contemplate handling of snow removal of the corner lots?
- As an additional concern, we have a very large old tree in our front yard with far reaching roots. Sidewalk construction could needlessly adversely cause harm to our tree. We highly value this tree.
- Not that long ago It survived the digging for the fiber optic lines right alongside it and also digging near it where a utility line for the house across the street was disconnected from ours. The idea of taking down many mature trees would make Forest Hills a pretty bleak place like a new subdivision. It seems unfair to ask people on one side of the streets to bear that expense and damage to their property.
- My house has two old, large trees in the front lawn that stand either in front of or in the path of any sidewalk that could be constructed. I neither want to lose the trees nor my legal claim to them. I also love the reputation our village has for its trees, and love the feeling we have with so many nice tree-lined roads. I also notice most houses with a sidewalk do not have trees. How would the village, if we do put in sidewalks, install such a path without harming our trees or residents' claims to their trees?
- Full support of sidewalks in the neighborhood to increase safety and walkability with children.
- No questions. The sidewalks are imperative for the safety of our children walking to school, our elderly getting their exercise and socialization (curb cuts and un-level surfaces are difficult to navigate and pose fall hazards), the walkers, runners, and bikers on their commutes who have to navigate among vehicles with drivers who often speed or are texting, etc. My children and I walk to church and school, and have had numerous instances with drivers speeding by us way too closely as we try to get as close to the side of the road possible. This is even more difficult with no sidewalk, as we are usually sharing the road with a multitude of construction and yard work vehicles. Everyone can benefit from community sidewalks. We have a sidewalk in front of our home and still have a sizeable yard. It doesn't detract from the beauty of the neighborhood, only enhances utility and cohesion.

- Please finish what the Village started for the safety of children, those with handicaps, and others that just want a pleasant walking experience. The only other two options are to wait at least another 50+ years to have all new sidewalks as a result of new construction- or rip out the ones you have now for a unified look. Thank you in advance.
- We are not in favor of sidewalks and feel it will be a false sense of security for the children as residents back out of their driveways. It also will be quite an intrusion while putting sidewalks in and certainly an unnecessary expense. We all moved into this neighborhood without sidewalks and many of us strongly want it to remain that way. Thank You for taking questions and comments.
- When we had sidewalks installed on Lawn Avenue 10-15 years ago residents on the street paid over a 3 year period (special tax assessments) without residents from other areas of the village participating. Therefore, only residents who are receiving new sidewalks will be paying for these just as has occurred via voting by the past village Board decisions/actions.
- In 1998, our family moved from a block in Forest Hills that did not have sidewalks to a block with sidewalks because we wanted them for our family. The cost of a home or lot with sidewalk is higher than the cost of one without. We were willing to pay that extra cost to have sidewalk. If a decision to install sidewalks throughout Forest Hills is made, the homeowners who are gaining sidewalks should cover that cost, not everyone in the subdivision.
- Not a question as much as a comment. I would prefer the millions of dollars, I think it was \$3 million, was referenced to fix all of Forest Hills, be used instead to fix our water mains. That will be a large undertaking and we should be building up the fund for that. That is more important to me and the long term marketability of our town than these sidewalks. Our water main breaks are getting a lot of notice and this impacts new homeowner's decisions to move to this town.
- Although I have been a proponent of sidewalks since our family moved here 30 years ago, the majority of my neighbors were against it, and I believe are still against sidewalks if it means they will have a bigger tax burden. My philosophy is that sidewalks are not only for the enjoyment of the resident of that address, but benefit those who use the sidewalks to get to school, church, the library downtown, the train or to travel on foot anywhere they wish to go in the Village. I believe we should institute a long term plan that puts in sidewalks on a priority basis starting at the schools and stretching outward. Potentially doing only one side of the street at a time until money becomes available. Although the idea of doing one side of the street at a time might seem strange we have witnessed it to be successful in several suburbs of Kansas City who had a

long term plan which included sidewalks over a 10 year period. And having sidewalks on one side of the street is better than no sidewalks at all. It seems apparent that when the Village wants to put in sidewalks in certain areas they find the money to do so. If the Village would have started a 30 year plan to complete sidewalks thirty years ago I would not be submitting these comments, because they would already be completed. I suggest the Village put forth a long term plan for putting a limited number of sidewalks each season funded not out of the taxes of the individual resident but out of a more general fund. If the funding were done as I suggest, I believe you would find a lot more support for sidewalks in Forest Hills and probably throughout the Village.

- We have better things to allocate tax dollars to other than sidewalks. As a resident with sidewalks that I had to pay for, I am not willing to fund sidewalks for the rest of the area.
- I am a woman living alone, and am against having additional sidewalks in Forest Hills. My property does not have a sidewalk. My family has lived in this house since 1965 and I am getting old. I don't know who will pay for the sidewalk. I don't have the money to pay for it personally, and I don't want to pay taxes for it. I realize that over time, change is inevitable on whatever front, towns included. But it is overbearing for people to move into a suburb that has been as it is for countless years, and to force established residents to remake the town to their liking. And what imagined problem is this very expensive solution meant to cure? People walk straight ahead from the existing sidewalks over my lawn and other peoples' lawns all the time. I am happy for them to do so, and have never heard any sidewalk-free resident complain about that. Also, if new residents feel these sleepy streets are unsafe, they are living in a very privileged and arrogant bubble. I've lived all over the world, off-and-on, always periodically returning to Western Springs. Nowhere compares to Western Springs in terms of safety, both street safety and other aspects of safety. I am upset to think other residents are pinpointing my property and demanding to change it to their specifications against my will. I wish they could instead see the beauty of this town where I have felt and been safe through so many years. Lastly, it is not fair to spring this on the elderly who are on fixed incomes and not suited to doing such work themselves. If a sidewalk IS put onto my property against my wishes, the village needs to create, in tandem, a program to clear the sidewalks in front of seniors' homes. This solution doesn't entirely reassure me, though, because the village could well cancel such a program after a few years, when I am even less able to do snow removal. I don't know how I would cope. Thank you for asking for, and considering my concerns.

- When potential buyers come to our community and buy homes with no sidewalks, that a decision they make then. There shouldn't be an issue with this! This same proposal came to the board when my son was 3 years old, he's now 22. Forest Hills moms tried it then and it didn't pass. My first 2 homes in Forest Hills had sidewalks, my current home does not. I am against paying for sidewalks now, and feel if this is important to a homeowner, they need to buy a house with sidewalks already in place. My understanding is the homeowner will have to pay half the cost new sidewalks...what if we are opposed to it? The village needs to spend the dollars on replacing/repairing the streets. Central ave in Old Town is awful.
- Pedestrian Safety is of paramount importance to a residential neighborhood. I encourage the board to approve the implementation of all sidewalks in Forest Hills.
- As the original homeowner of this property, and have resided here since 1958, I am personally opposed to sidewalks on my property. It also appears that a very old elm tree (I'm guessing probably close to 80 – 100years old) may have to be removed. I would also oppose this.
- The millions of dollars proposed to be passed onto the tax payers is not necessary. There already is a program which allows for property owners to add sidewalks with a cost sharing program with the Village. I have already paid for sidewalks twice at my own expense. Once when the property was purchased 30 years ago and a second time when the property was improved 19 years ago. I don't have any desire to pay for anybody's sidewalks. If passed, do not include me in this new and unnecessary expense.
- I would like to express my opinion that we desperately need connected sidewalks in Forest Hills. It will not only be much safer for our community along with being ADA compliant, it will increase our property values. I strongly support sidewalks in Forest Hills.
- The engineer proposal of 1.8 million seems the best. It is cheaper, and saves more mature trees which is desirable. The sidewalks are contiguous which is a positive. As we walk our dog we notice more and more people walking around
- As a new resident of Forrest Hills in 2020, we were shocked to learn that we are forced to walk down the middle of the street to get our children to school. Paying nearly \$20k/year in property taxes and we have to navigate traffic of distracted drivers every morning and afternoon to get our children to/from school. Teenage drivers are constantly speeding around and looking at their phones by our house and we are forced to share the road with them. Does someone have to die before anything will be done?
- I am really hoping the sidewalks are passed!

- This is terrific and we encourage the installment of sidewalks on Fair Elms. In my opinion the sidewalks increase the safety of both adults and children. Fair Elms is well traveled by pedestrians for access Spring Rock Park and Forest Hills Elementary School. Every day we witness scores of people relegated to walking in the street with and without dogs, strollers, children, mere exercise, etc. Sidewalks are so very necessary on this well-traveled avenue. Although, we have lived on the 4800 block of Fair Elms since 1999, we have seen the homes gradually turn-over and a constant influx of young children who love to play outside. It would be wonderful for these children to have the ability to ride a bike down their block rather than just looping their driveways. We have three in college now and one junior in high school. Ever since our 1999 move-in we have wished for our children. Although our need has diminished, the need for today's young kids on the block persists. Sidewalks enhance the property value, the safety and the experience of living in Western Springs. We applaud the sidewalk project and I hope it happens.
- In all seriousness, one of the biggest issues is PEOPLE DO NOT CURRENTLY USE THE SIDEWALKS THAT ARE ALREADY INSTALLED AND THIS NEEDS TO CHANGE. First off, Covid was an excuse to keep distances and push people into the street but let's get real. It is beyond annoying and dangerous to have open sidewalks yet have multiple people walking in the (middle of the) street, three abreast, oblivious to cars and traffic. Forest Hill's streets are already crowded with landscape trucks and construction vehicles - THEY ARE NOT FOR PEDESTRIANS!!!! If you have multiple people, go over to Commonwealth or Spring Rock Park Trails but STAY OUT OF THE STREET. The village absolutely needs to start telling people to STAY OUT OF THE STREET and even issue tickets to people walking in the streets IF sidewalks are present. WHY SPEND MONEY ON SIDEWALKS IF NO ONE IS USING THEM!!!!!!
- The removal of trees is upsetting and I would vote for NO sidewalks.
- When did those who support sidewalks realize that there were no sidewalks here? They bought here knowing the situation. It appears that this is being pushed through by a large vocal group, but keeping it among their peer-group and forcing this upon the neighborhood. This needs to get to a vote and have some financial relief for many residents.
- My block would lose several trees, leaving me with no shade in my yard, and losing the aesthetics of trees in my and my neighbors' front yard. I'm not ok with this. The village has prioritized fixing infrastructure for water and pipes. I also propose that investment in renewable

energy within the village would be a better use of taxpayer dollars, rather than cutting down 72 trees which would negatively impact the environment.

- This is an unwanted initiative undertaken by a few and being imposed on long term residents and financially impacting them in addition to aesthetically detracting from the neighborhood. Unwanted and unneeded. We have lived here since June of 1998. Our kids attended Forest Hills School. Since that time there have been no incidents or accidents due to the absence of sidewalks. We are just fine with the status quo and are totally against construction of sidewalks on our streets and through our lot. Why should we bear the cost of such unwanted construction? Why should mature trees on our lot be impacted and removed at our cost? This is an unnecessary initiative undertaken by a bunch of loudmouth, busybody, stay at home neighbors with too much time on their hands. Why should they be able to impose their desires on other long-term residents? The Village of Western Springs should be more worried about paving our streets and filling potholes; keeping our sewers and water quality and municipal services up to snuff and addressing the flooding in our neighborhoods for the taxes we already pay instead of imposing unneeded and unwanted projects and unneeded and unwanted incremental costs to residents!
- I have read the study and believe that my property is not affected, but I wanted to confirm. My address is 4xxx Fair Elms Ave. I want to make sure that the beautiful tree in front of my property is safe.
- ADA does not mandate sidewalks, but it does mandate that certain characteristics be maintained where sidewalks are present. As it's evident that sidewalks are present in Forest Hills, it would seem that ADA compliance would be required. Having a policy which creates unsafe and unpredictable sidewalk access and continuity would appear to violate ADA regs. How can the village expect residents to pay anything extra to correct a Village policy which may have been enacted and results in non-compliance?
- I live on Lawn Avenue and do not remember getting the original survey. It doesn't seem like the response rate was very high, that might be part of the problem with that. That said, I support the minimal proposal to get contiguous sidewalks on one side of most of the streets. However I don't know when the town originally put the requirement in that tear downs or I assume houses that go under a certain amount of renovation are required to put sidewalks in. It might be a good idea to put an actual Sunset date on that and say that maybe by 2026 or 2028 that all residences will be required to have sidewalks?

- I think it is critical that sidewalks be completed to the southern ends (to 55th) of Lawn and Grand. Those are "through" streets to 55th and unfortunately are subject to many speeding vehicles cutting through to avoid Wolf Road. There should be 4 way stop signs at every intersection on those streets, too. But if that can't happen at least give children and families a safe place to walk, on completed sidewalks, on Lawn and Grand.
- I am in the 49 hundred block and bought the house because it did have a side walk. As a result we paid extra for the house and pay more taxes. I am absolutely opposed to pay for anyone else's sidewalk. I think that is outrageous that the cost will be passed through as higher taxes for me. It is not like the people that moved in that they didn't know there was not a sidewalk in front of their house. I can't imagine that there are that many original owners or that many houses that didn't have a change in occupants such a passing the house to a family member. If they want a sidewalk, go ahead, let the homeowner pay for it. Welcome to being a homeowner and not expecting the government to subsidize a cost that the homeowner should pay for.
- I am concerned about the costs of this project and the potential number of mature trees to be removed. I would expect a very high majority of existing affected residents to be in favor of this project in order to move forward with it and yet I know a number of long term Forest Hills residents without sidewalks who are happy without them. I moved on a block with sidewalks because at the time I had small children and didn't want them riding bikes or wagons in the street. Persons who move into the subdivision into homes without sidewalks do so knowingly. They shouldn't complain that the village should do something to help them.
- There are no safety problems here and our kids walked to school every day from 5236 Fair Elms Ave. About 15 years ago I went up and down Fair Elms with a petition against sidewalks and delivered results to the board. Everyone I spoke to signed the petition against sidewalks. For my husband and I, our desire is to have the extra green space with trees/gardens that would need removal. One important reason we like this area is the nice green front yard.
Believe me, there are no safety problems that I have seen or heard about in the 30 years we have lived here. The only problems are when the village starts to make unwanted changes to the area, like allowing Commonwealth to be built - they had to bulldoze the forested area across Flagg Creek, which chased away many birds to the area. Then we had a monster bridge built two houses down that I have to look at every day from the yard - with graffiti. So - stay away, leave us alone!

- Forest Hills streets are very dangerous for families with young children and even dog-owners. There are far too many streets that have 2 way stop signs vs 4 way stop signs and this can be very confusing. Also, sidewalks should be completed on Lawn/Grand as those are through streets to 55th and by far the most dangerous in the areas without sidewalks. Where are people with strollers and dogs supposed to walk? They are forced to weave in and out of the sidewalk and street which can be very difficult when a toddler or other young child is trying to scooter or bike as well. The lack of sidewalks does not promote strong neighborhood/ community development.
- We purchased our home over 25 years ago, and chose a property WITHOUT sidewalks. We do not want to add another sidewalk, and have no intention of paying for something that we vehemently oppose. Have any of you noticed the poor condition of many of the streets in town? PLEASE focus your efforts on "infrastructure" that benefits the entire Village population.
- Been on Fair Elms fifty-five years, children attended Forest Hills, McClure and Lt. Have always liked the "rural" character the absence of sidewalks create. I have no interest in having sidewalks installed on or around my home.
- I do wonder how the neighborhood could have sidewalks in some areas and not others. It seems to be an inequity with sidewalks available on the streets adjacent to the larger more expensive homes and few or none on many streets with more modest homes like the 5300 and 5400 blocks of Fair Elms, Central, Woodland, Grand and Lawn. As an evening and early morning walker I have had many close calls with cars that do not see me. In the dawn, dusk and dark it is difficult for drivers to see those on the street. If you add parked cars, homes with parked cars from workers (construction or landscaping trucks) it becomes even problematic and unsafe at times. We are in support of sidewalks.
- I'm concerned about the mature healthy trees. If they are cut down to accommodate the sidewalks, that is wrong. If the streets were in better repair, maybe riding bikes on the street wouldn't be so dangerous. People/seniors who moved here long ago survived this dilemma of no sidewalks & there were very few accidents. Residents were conscious of children riding bikes on the street & slowed down.
- I am definitely against this side walk issue. I have lived Forest Hills since 1967 and have been unaware of any problems. While driving on Grand Avenue I see more people walking in the streets (including ladies w/strollers and baby buggies) even though there are sidewalks

available. People run in the streets also. What happens when the snow falls and sidewalks become slippery? In the 5400 block of Grand young children are DRIVEN to school.

- I have lived in Forest Hills for more than 30 years, raised two children who attended Forest Hills School, and the issue of sidewalks has been raised on numerous occasions over the years -- but has never been found to be necessary -- with no adverse consequences. While the purported need has been stated to be for the "safety of children", I have never seen ANY statistics or safety studies done that confirm such a need; especially when weighed against the enormous cost of sidewalk installation both in dollars and loss of beautiful trees. I have not heard of, or experienced, any spate of injuries or reported close calls that would warrant the mandate of sidewalks.
- I am deeply concerned about safety and children and am a long-time, active member of this wonderful Village of Western Springs. However, I do not feel that there is a demonstrated need for sidewalks in Forest Hills area. The "perception" of some that there is a safety-concern requiring sidewalks in the Forest Hills area does not appear to be reflective of "reality." The perception: (1) has not been borne out by any safety study; (2) does not make sense if the mandate is not required for the entire Village; (3) does not appear to be the least burdensome solution (assuming, arguendo only, there is found to be a demonstrated problem); and (4) should not be imposed where the proponents have not utilized the existing Village program for sidewalk installation. Sidewalks are a burdensome and costly endeavor and should be a last resort -- and only in the event of a demonstrated need. I am opposed to the mandated sidewalk initiative for the Forest Hills area.
- We no longer wish to have sidewalks in Forest Hills for some of the following reasons. Our own children are grown and gone. We care about other children, but very few of them walk to school on our block. They are driven to school. We do not want to see the destruction of trees on our block! The sidewalk would take down our own tree that we have been babying and treating as well as many others, including a grand and beautiful Elm tree: one that has survived Dutch Elm disease! We also do not want our driveway once again torn up and we do not want to pay for sidewalks! Let the sidewalks naturally increase with new homes!
- The question you are asking is this justified? What you should be asking is do the people who live in the houses that are affected want this. It sounds to me that you are trying to project the wishes of the entire Western Springs onto the residents who live in the Forest Hills Subdivision. I would love for you to publish the data that shows what the people who live in areas that do not

have sidewalks really want. After talking to neighbors, we think this is ridiculous and what you are trying to do will likely ignore our wishes and will turn our neighborhood into something you want, not what we want.

- Children like to play in the cul-de-sac outside of our home. If sidewalks are installed in front of our home and a child gets injured, we don't want the unnecessary risks to children and financial burden of this. We also have a tree in the parkway that is 60+ years old, to add sidewalks you would have to remove this tree. All of the above, and the fact that there is no need for sidewalks due to the fact that we are at the end of the cul-de-sac is why we are against sidewalks being installed at our address or Forest Hills in general.
- I do not want my front yard trees removed for sidewalk installation nor am I willing to pay for sidewalk installation.
- We do not wish to have additional sidewalks in Western Springs. I believe they detract from the village's ambience, making it more an extension of Chicago, We moved here in 1988 from Chicago and have enjoyed daily walks facing traffic without any worries. Why change a good thing?
- I would love to feel safe when my kids walk to school that they can consistently walk on a sidewalk and not have to go onto the street for any part of the walk. Traffic during drop off and pick up school is crazy and cars are constantly weaving between landscapers, utility workers, construction trucks etc. to have kids in the street ALSO during these hours is just dangerous!
- We are in favor of having sidewalks. I think it will be much safer and avoid a tragic car/pedestrian accident by installing sidewalks. Many people walking dogs or going for walks at night are at risk. In this day of texting, cell phones etc...a split second of not paying attention can injure or kill a person or pet.
- The maintenance of the current sidewalks is very poor. Why should I or anyone pay for new sidewalks when the old sidewalks need repair? Repair out current sidewalks and I may consider supporting new sidewalks
- I am not in favor of adding sidewalks. I am a 30 year resident of Western Springs. Our family has lived in 3 different homes on Fair Elms Avenue and I have raised 3 children in this neighborhood. Safety has never been an issue for my family and any family I know.
- We do not wish to incur the cost of putting in sidewalks and are concerned about any additional unknown future costs which may be incurred if our tree's roots are damaged in the construction and our tree dies. There is a significant cost to taking down a tree of this size, let alone losing the

beauty and aesthetic that it brings to our house and block. Mandating sidewalk construction and imposing such a lopsided financial responsibility on the homeowners is not only a burden to us but also to the many retired residents on limited incomes. Personally, the cost of the sidewalks plus any additional future unknown costs make this a no-win situation for us. We vehemently oppose sidewalk construction in Forest Hills.

- We do not want a sidewalk put in our property on Fair Elms.
- We have lived in the Forest Hills neighborhood for 32 years. Our two children and two grandkids walked to and from school without the presence of sidewalks. Forcing residents in just this neighborhood to install sidewalks at considerable residential expense, while other neighborhoods are exempt, does not seem very democratic, nor, in my opinion, will it significantly improve the safety of walking in the neighborhood. At this time, I do not support the installation of sidewalks in Forest Hills.
- I am absolutely in support of installing uniform sidewalks throughout the Forest Hills community of Western Springs. However, the residents of Forest Hills need additional information from V3 Engineering in order to complete their assessment of the project. It is not enough to simply provide an overstated cost estimate of \$4.6 Million (20% contingency PLUS 5% annual inflation factor over 5 years) without also providing information about available public funding/grant opportunities to the Village or potential financing options. The Village Board will certainly need additional information before it takes a vote on the matter. Let's move forward with this project and get additional information so that the residents can fully understand what we're doing
- I support the push for sidewalks in Forest Hills. My kids ride bikes and the family takes frequent walks, and it would be best if we don't have to walk in the street from a safety perspective. Plus it looks bad when part of the town doesn't have sidewalks and part does. Did we or did we not win the 2007 "Best town to raise kids" award from BusinessWeek? Were we not the second best place to live in the country in 2019 according to Homesnacks? I joke a bit but seriously, we should have sidewalks in our town from a safety perspective.
- Thank you for the survey results. We support completing sidewalks on one side of each street since this is a huge safety issue only made worse with so many delivery (Amazon) trucks. In order to fully support this, we need a cost per household. We would also like to know what efforts could be made to secure grant funds in order to offset some of the cost.
- I have no questions. Sidewalks in Forest Hills are completely necessary from a safety standpoint.

- I support sidewalks and want to move forward in the process to better understand cost offsets including grant options, financing alternatives as well as solutions that will help to mitigate the loss of healthy trees in our community. (This response was submitted by 51 respondents)
- As a current Forest Hills resident, I very much oppose any cost sharing program to fund this project. In no way is it equitable to those who knowingly purchased a home with a sidewalk to fund sidewalks for those with homes without.
- We need sidewalks in WS ASAP! I'm sick of walking down the street to try to get to school or the park with my 4 kids and having to have the kids dart into someone's driveway or yard just to avoid getting hit by a car. There have been way too many close calls with my own kids and plenty of other kids I have seen. If one accident happens and a kid gets hit by a car I'm sure this wouldn't be such a hard decision for people. Let's do this now before it is too late. Also, as a Realtor, all this will do is add property value in the neighborhood.
- We do not need sidewalks. I already paid for a sidewalk for my house when I built it - I'm not paying for someone else's
- I have young children and feel walking to school can be very unsafe at times. I support sidewalks and want to move forward in the process to better understand cost offsets including grant options, financing alternatives as well as solutions that will help to mitigate the loss of healthy trees in our community.
- I like the recommendation of one side of the street having sidewalks and minimizing the impact to as many mature trees as possible. The trees are an important part of Forest Hills, and removing them would be devastating! Thank you for conducting this study.
- With more sidewalks, which we desperately need for public safety, we will also need more street lights. As it is now, the streets are very dark, which makes it scary to walk our dogs at night. We've purchased light up dog collars and arm bands so we are visible to cars. Have had far too many near misses with drivers who didn't see us walking in the street since we don't have consistent sidewalks here.
- The village should continue to address and move forward the issue of sidewalks where residents are requesting. Cost offsetting for through funds and grants need to be sought and an equitable plan should be established to create a safe walking system in our village.
- Most people purchased homes in Forest Hills knowing that there were no sidewalks in portions of the subdivision.

The fact that the village is even contemplating the destruction of mature trees that give the area its ambiance is disturbing. Please do not spend more tax payer money on this endeavor.

- I do not want sidewalks. I live on Fair Elms. My four kids that are in high school and college now did fine without sidewalks. If people want them, they can get them and pay out of their own pockets.
- No questions from my end. I read through the questions posed in the email and think those are reasonable. I support adding the sidewalks!
- No questions, 100% in favor of putting sidewalks in place, at least on one side of the streets.
- Thank you for allowing FH residents to offer comments. On our property, we enjoy a majestic, healthy tree that is nearly to the street on Fair Elms. Imposing, thick roots stretch in all directions. Our tree's wide, leafy branches reach out over our entire front property – as well as my neighbor's property to the south and two homes directly across the street. We all can't bear to think of removing this tree for concrete sidewalks. I just don't understand how our tree can be spared if sidewalks are installed. The sidewalk would almost need to come up to the middle of our front yard. It seems to us that every 5-10 years, a group of residents (mostly young families) petition the village for sidewalks throughout Forest Hills. And, fortunately, the sidewalk initiative never passes. We have lived in Forest Hills since 1989, and we've raised our four children here. They (and we) survived just fine without sidewalks. We truly believe if the lack of sidewalks is an issue for some Forest Hills residents, they should not have purchased a home here. Many beautiful neighborhoods exist within WS that have sidewalks on every street. The co-payment is not an issue for us in any way. We simply don't want to lose the beautiful character of our mature trees in Forest Hills – especially for sidewalks. Disease has stolen enough of our trees in Western Springs; we don't need to compound the problem with active removal for sidewalks. Thank you!
- I do support sidewalks in FH. We paid \$4500 in 2009 for our "sidewalk to nowhere" when we built new construction. I'd like to see the village turn this into a connected sidewalk! At the same time, some kind of credit should be given to homeowners who have already paid to place their own sidewalks. We paid \$4500 in 2009 for our "sidewalk to nowhere" when we built new construction. I'd like to see the village turn this into a connected sidewalk! At the same time, some kind of credit should be given to homeowners who have already paid to place their own sidewalks.

- Having lived at 5xxx Grand Avenue for the past 53 years, I am not in favor of the proposal to have continuous sidewalks installed in the Forest Hills area. The cost of doing so would give me very little benefit and be a detriment to my property. My sons walked to Forest Hills School 4 times a day during the school year from 1st grade on. Woodland was the only street with a continuous sidewalk to 51st and then to Central where the school is located. If a group of neighbors wanted sidewalks we had to get the permission of everyone on the block to share in the cost. That was impossible to achieve. Safety never seemed a serious enough reason at that time or more recent proposals. Village. I think there are many more pressing infrastructure upgrades for the village board to address that would benefit more property owners throughout the whole village. As I write this in late April there is a water main break in Ridgewood. Last winter there were numerous breaks in the older areas of town. Many properties have drainage problems. I had standing water in the backyard for several months last spring and summer when we had lots of rain.
- I moved into my current house in June of 2020, so I was unable to participate in the initial questionnaire back in early 2020. I do enjoy my large front yard and the large trees that grow along our street, many of them very close to the street. I am worried that a sidewalk project would damage or destroy many of them.
- Lived in Forest Hills for over 40 years and yes definitely many traffic issues and driver distractions but being aware and teaching our children awareness is primary! Sidewalks do not guarantee safety! I do not support this project for Forest Hills and do not want to be required to pay to have them installed!
- Without sidewalks, people (including women, children, and the elderly) are put at risk by having to walk in the street. Children are at risk by having no choice but to ride their bicycles in the street.
- I am saddened to see so many elderly and youth in the busy streets, especially when the weather is awful. I hope this will happen!!
- In year 2000, the 5000 block of Lawn was forced to construct sidewalks. I was required to pay 70% of the sidewalk on MY property. As long as that policy is adhered to, I do not object to the construction of any sidewalks. If the idea is to distribute the cost of these new sidewalks across all Forest Hills Residence, Then I am against this idea. I have already paid my fair portion. Otherwise the project should reimburse me, and all others, that had paid for their own

sidewalks back then. I just had to replace 3 sections of this same sidewalk last year, and I had to pay AGAIN my 70%.

- The cost estimate (and this is only an estimate that makes general assumptions, which probably means the costs will be higher) for the recommended alternative plan is \$1,838,314.12 plus an additional \$155,000 for Phase II and Phase III cost. Let's assume the cost is \$2,000,000. Are the homeowners who will be getting the sidewalks required to pick up 70% or \$1,400,000 of the entire cost? And the remaining homeowners in Forest Hills to pick up the remaining 30% or \$600,000 of the entire Recommended Alternative Total? I believe the Village needs to be very honest how much this is going to cost the homeowner's who are going to be expected to pay 70% of the cost. It seems many of the homeowners who don't have sidewalks have not voiced support for sidewalks and to force this on them is going to create a big expense for them as well as changing the appearance of their lot since they will be losing many trees and also creating additional upkeep during the winter months.
- If the Village decides that it will mandate the Alternative Recommendation, what is going to prevent the village in the future from mandating that every home have sidewalks when the Alternative Recommendation project is completed? The people pushing for sidewalks probably will not want the Alternative Recommendation.
- In reading the comments from the Sidewalk Survey, the responses are all over the place. There is no consensus for requiring sidewalks and there is definitely no agreement on how to pay for them. Many people who already have sidewalks indicated they have absolutely no interest in paying for the sidewalks in other parts of Forest Hills. Many homeowners seem willing to pay for sidewalks even if they already have sidewalks. And many people currently without sidewalks have zero interest in having sidewalks and therefore paying for them. The monetary cost and the loss of trees is extreme. This issue of putting in sidewalks came up 25 years ago when I had little children and the conclusion was that the cost wasn't something the majority of Forest Hills residents were willing to bear. Homeowners need to know exactly how much their share of the cost is going to be. The study recommended putting sidewalks only on one side of certain streets due to the exorbitant cost and great number of trees that are going to be lost. And since this is being pushed hard by a small group of homeowners' who already have sidewalks in front of their homes, I believe the fair thing would be for EVERY homeowner in Forest Hills to pay the cost of the proposed sidewalks. If this is a safety issue, then everyone benefits from safety and must share the burden equally. But not everyone feels that way. I think you may have to have a

referendum to ensure that everyone is heard. Only 44% of homeowners responded to the Sidewalk Survey. No one can say that a majority is in favor of sidewalks; and no one can say a majority is opposed to sidewalks since a majority of homeowners did not respond. The Village Board is unfortunately in a tough spot to make this decision. I don't think there is a clear mandate to install sidewalks. In conclusion, I do not believe the sidewalks are necessary. This is a very big expense for the impacted homeowners and the destruction of so many mature trees.

- I am not interested in new sidewalks in Forest Hills. It is an unnecessary cost to the village and the residence of Western Springs. Safety isn't an issue as there haven't been any incidents as a result of not having sidewalks throughout Forest Hills. Where there aren't sidewalks people can walk across the front parkways of the homeowners or walk in the street. I say stick with the existing sidewalk replacement program that is in the village. In addition, there seem to be plenty of home teardowns occurring so new sidewalks should be regularly be getting installed. If the vocal minority wants more sidewalks installed have them go ahead and build them in front of their own homes. I don't see that additional sidewalks in Forest Hills as a need or high priority for the village, many of the homeowners or myself. In these challenging times I say save the village's money and our money too.
- We do not want sidewalks installed on our parkway. We bought our home 53 years ago and are now 82 years old. At our age we do not want the financial burden connected with sidewalk installation nor the physical responsibility of keeping said sidewalks clear during winter snowstorms especially since we are on a corner lot.
- Thanks for continuing to work on this issue. My family recently adopted a dog, and walking him in the neighborhood has reinforced the true safety issue that currently exists for all residents but especially children. As one of the 'safest' towns in Illinois, I think it's our duty to work on determining a cost effective way to improve the safety of Forest Hills.
- In 2017 we were obligated to pay \$4312.50 for the sidewalk in front of our house. The Village did not help. Now you want us to help pay for other residence's sidewalks. Do you consider this fair, or will we get a rebate?
- It seems that this is really a village-wide issue and a village policy is best developed based on the voters' response on a referendum.
- I do not want sidewalks in front of my house!
- Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the March, 4 2021 Forest Hills Feasibility study. My Wife and I strongly oppose the recommendations of the study. We feel that taxpayer monies

would be better spent on more pressing infrastructure needs, such as the many roads the need repair/replacement. These repairs would benefit all residents, not just those who use sidewalks. Charging Forest Hills Resident for the installation of sidewalks will likely present a financial hardship for senior citizens and other on fixed/limited incomes. The removal of trees, shrubs, flower beds, and other vegetation to put in sidewalks will adversely affect the aesthetics and ecology of that is a lovely area of Western Springs. This was a major factor in our relocation here 45 years ago. Our area is named Forest Hills for a reason. A contractor recently did a very good job replacing our driveway with one of asphalt, including the parkway portion owned by the Village. We would be upset to see a portion of our driveway torn up and replaced with concrete. Our friends in other areas of Western Springs have questioned why Forest Hills is being singled out for the addition of sidewalks, when other areas of the village also have blocks with no sidewalks. Perhaps the scope of the sidewalk study addressed by the feasibility study is too limited. We feel there needs to be a great deal more discussion about new sidewalks in Western Springs before any action is taken. We don't believe safety is a concern with this issue. Forest Hills is a relatively quiet area; we have no problem walking out dog five times a day, on sidewalks or streets; we are unaware of accidents in the area that sidewalks would have prevented; and the additions of stop signs over the years have only made vehicular traffic less dangerous. Again, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and ask questions regarding this issue, and we hope our input will be seriously considered in the final decision-making process by the Western Springs Village Board.

- Once again, the Village Board sent out a simple inquiry about sidewalks. You have relied upon the uninformed opinions of 51% to proceed with the sidewalk study. Why not send out a second more complete inquiry and see what the results will be Fully disclose to each homeowner the costs and ramifications of the vote, or at least provide a reasonable estimate. The last time such a Special Service Area was created for Grand Avenue, the residents fought it when they learned the full story. Before proceeding with a Special Service Area... Please explain what a Special Service Area is and how, once passed, the homeowners would face difficulty to overcome or defeat the "Special Service Area." (Petitions signed by 50+ percent of the affected homeowners and 50+ percent of the registered voters.) Please explain that homeowners would be paying the lion share (percentage) of cost. Please explain that the cost to each homeowner would be based, not on the length of the sidewalk, but on the assessed valuation of the property. (Some homeowner's could be paying twice as much, or more, than neighbors with the same sized lot.)

Please explain that the cost would be charged on the homeowner's real estate tax bills, over 5 years, with interest. Please explain that the homeowner cannot prepay to avoid interest. Please explain that homeowners, included in the "area" could not opt out and install their own sidewalks to avoid excessive cost. Please explain that the cost to each individual homeowner could far exceed that that homeowner would pay to have a sidewalk installed by their own contractor. Please explain that those who proposed and favor the sidewalks that federal grant money would not reduce the costs to the homeowners, but would only reduce the village's share of the cost. Please tell those who expressed concern over children, bikers, or people in wheelchairs, that the village would not face liability for the lack of sidewalks. The village could face liability for cracked or severely uneven sidewalks where a trip hazard exists. Please explain the responsibility homeowners would have for upkeep, and snow removal, in sidewalks are installed.

- Why are sidewalks necessary in Forest Hills? In order to maintain a healthy lifestyle, my husband and I typically walk 5 miles per day, often using the sidewalks and the streets of Western Springs and neighboring communities. Based on our walks, I am convinced that it is not necessary to proceed with a sidewalk construction program in Forest Hills. There are several reasons for this determination but first we must ask "Why sidewalks and why now? In the late 1950's the Forest Hills subdivision was envisioned by its builders and residents, including the Vaughn Family who originally owned a nursery nearby and lived in Forest Hills for over 40 years, as a retreat from an urban setting to its east. It was created to resemble a park with no fences, open yards, much green space between homes and no sidewalks. So what has changed? Is it safety, property devaluation, or a poor aesthetic? I maintain that none of these things has really changed. One argument for mandating sidewalks that could be made is increased safety for pedestrians and bicycle riders. Based on government rules, bike riders are required to use the street, so that leaves us with the pedestrians. In order to be safe, sidewalks must be level and well-maintained in both warmer months and in the winter, with snow and ice. My experience with the present sidewalks in Western Springs are that they are not cared for or maintained in a manner that makes them safe or useable without a large degree of caution. Many of the existing sidewalks suffer from unevenness due to settling, and/or heaving due to tree roots or other ground disturbances. This situation creates tripping hazards and places where a stroller can't be easily pushed ahead without stopping and raising the front wheels over the bumps in the sidewalk. In the winter things get even worse. We are unable to walk to downtown Western Springs as

typically 20% of sidewalks are covered with snow or ice and not safe to use. In fact, sidewalks are, in general, less safe to use than the roads, which are always plowed and salted. So if the concern is safety of children playing or going to school, parents are generally aware that driving children to school is the better option and one they prefer. During the school year, vehicles line the streets around St. John of the Cross, Forest Hills School, McClure Middle School, and Lyons Township HS South Campus to drop off and pick up children. Although there is a safe school bus system, families choose to drive clearly making a choice against walking. Are aesthetics the reason we have for insisting on a sidewalk construction program? Sidewalks were mandated by the village for all new construction creating a checkerboard of sidewalks in Forest Hills. Is it constitutional to mandate a sidewalk where a homeowner knowingly and willingly purchased a home without any sidewalks? Does the Village government have the right to mandate that residents change the character of their neighborhood because of a silly rule allowed to be made years ago? I think not. As for existing homes, there are many residents on a fixed income who did not wish and continue to not wish nor can afford to install sidewalks. They also cannot nor want to maintain them. They now need to hire someone to shovel and salt in the winter and edge in the summer. As their living expenses increase but their income does not, they are forced to move out. Our community suffers as it becomes more homogeneous forcing our most valuable older residents out of the neighborhood. If current sidewalks are being poorly maintained, not salted and shoveled, broken and uneven, by current homeowners and the village, why do we expect new sidewalks to fare any better? Or maybe the argument can be made for increased property values with added sidewalks? This reason also fails in that property values in Western Springs will hold and improve based primarily on the quality of our schools and the ability of the Village to maintain water quality, downtown businesses, parks and recreation, road and current sidewalk integrity, etc. Let's get better at doing what is necessary before we create new, additional maintenance problems and associated costs. I mention the above as I believe that Western Springs homeowners and the village are not really demonstrating a strong need or desire for sidewalks. If homeowners and the village were committed to having sidewalks as a safe method of getting around town they would be well constructed, well cared for and well maintained. I'm not seeing this commitment. What I am seeing is a lot of people not using or needing the sidewalks because of the poor condition of existing sidewalks. I say stick with the existing sidewalk replacement program. Existing home tear downs occur regularly so new sidewalks will be regularly mandated and installed. If the

vocal minority wants more sidewalks installed, they should be allowed in front of their own homes. I don't see that additional sidewalks in Forest Hills as a need or priority for the village, many of the homeowners or myself. In these challenging times I say save the village money and keep from making any additional poor decisions at the expense of Western Springs residents.

- I live on the west side of the 4800 block of Fair elms in Western Springs. We do not have sidewalks, and are not interested in getting them on my property. In fact, my neighbors on my block unanimously agree that we do not want to lose our trees and we do not want our taxes to increase for the purpose of sidewalks. I've lived in this home for 25 years, and I'm offended that a few very vocal people in the community (many of which already have sidewalks) are telling me to spend 70% of the cost to do my sidewalks, while also losing 4 beautiful, mature trees. I would not fight you if the village chooses to spend 30% of the costs to do some of the sidewalks, but I beg you to leave my block (the West side of 4800 block of Fair Elms) alone. One of your plans was to only do the east side of the street. Please do that instead, if you choose to do any sidewalks. We have severe water infrastructure concerns within the village, and we should also be investing money into climate change initiatives. Additionally, losing 72+ trees to this project is harmful to the environment and the climate.
- I hope you are going to put sidewalks in all of the village. Why are you selecting forest hills only? This was brought up a few years ago on south grand aver it was voted NO. You say kids need walks to go to school. B>S> kids don't walk to schools, they are driven to and back. You say it is 70 /30. bs again that's our taxes to begin with.
- Old town north has areas similar to Forest Hills... no sidewalks. When only one W.S. are is considered, it no longer feels like the village is acting in a cohesive manner. I believe this should be a village wide referendum. I moved from Old Town North to Forest Hills wanting no sidewalks. I never anticipated an extra expense burden imposed while on a fixed income.
- We need continuity in our sidewalks for the safety of our community. This is a top priority.
- Who's paying for the new sidewalks? I already paid for mine. Not paying again!!!! In 2000 we had sidewalks put in because the 5000 block of Lawn had one vote that pushed the issue to put sidewalks in. We had a special assessment added to our real estate taxes to pay for the sidewalk in front of our house. In the 9 years since the sidewalks have been here there are more people still walking in the street then the sidewalk. Asking those people (pushing strollers, walking with their friends, runners etc) why they are still in the street (with all the construction, landscape vehicles on both sides of the street) their answer is because the street surface is smoother.

WOW I guess safety is not an issue as people for sidewalks are saying. Don't get me started on snow shoveling of sidewalks.

- We do not have sidewalks and we do not want sidewalks. Everyone knew what they were purchasing and what the rules were when they purchased their house. There does not appear to have been any discussion of WHY we should install sidewalks, rather you have jumped to how it should be done. In fact, you have spent tax dollars on the how and will possibly decide to spend more tax dollars on how, without ever appropriately answering the WHY we need sidewalks? In listening to the meetings on-line, I have not heard a consistent reason for sidewalks. Safety appears to be mentioned the most. But safety from what? What are the statistics around the safety of Forest Hills and Western Springs? What other solutions were suggested or researched? What is the most cost-effective solution to the “problem?” It appears that sidewalks are a solution in search of a problem rather than the other way around. If this is a safety issue, how is it not an issue village wide? There are many areas all over WS that do not have universal sidewalks, why are they not included? Deciding who this would impact based on their proximity to someone else does not seem equitable. In fact, it appears discriminatory. Survey results are on your website. Without 100% participation it is not a true representation of the residents’ views but rather just representation of the loudest voices. The village spent money on a feasibility study, wouldn’t it be better spent on getting 100% participation of the area affected before moving forward with additional studies. I know of many neighbors who have been unaware that this discussion has even been occurring. What would the costs be for each individual homeowner? There is continuing talk about getting “funds” from some government agency but if/when those funds fall through who would actually have to pay for this “solution.” Are there current programs in place for people who want sidewalks to get them? YES. Current homeowners can work with the village and split the cost if they want sidewalks. Current homeowners can input sidewalks on their own at much lower costs. New construction required to install sidewalks (2006 Rule). How many sidewalks have been added over the last 3, 5, 10 years and since inception of these programs? Are the current programs working? If so, why is change necessary? Why do you want to change the 2006 rule retroactively? Is this fair to homeowners who followed the rules since 2006? What about homeowners who are purchasing today? We have flooding and paving issues, how is adding more sidewalks going to alleviate these problems? How many mature trees would be killed because some people want sidewalks? Planting a sapling does not replace a mature tree for 20 or 30 years? How would sidewalks

impact existing landscaping and other installations and who would pay for that? You are proposing cutting up my driveway and damaging its integrity-who would pay for that? Why do you think it is okay for a subset of residents to use the Board to impose their desires on another subset of residents against their wishes? Do you think it is okay for my neighbors to unilaterally commit me financially to something I do want or need? You are looking at spending in excess of \$4 million for something that is not supported by everyone. Are there no issues that could use that money that everyone could get behind-flooding, water quality, paving? We do not want sidewalks. We do not want to pay for sidewalks, we do not want our neighbors to pay for sidewalks we don't want or need and we do not want our village tax dollars to be used to study the feasibility of sidewalks any more than has already occurred.

- As a resident of Fair Elms Ave in Forest Hills we do NOT want sidewalks and certainly don't feel that we should have to pay for something we don't want. Here are some reasons: The question is as divisive now as it was in 2006. Roughly half the people don't want sidewalks. Last year we saw Flagg Creek at its highest level in the 30 years we have lived here. Sidewalks will replace ground that helps absorb rain water. Sidewalks will create more storm runoff. This was not considered in the analysis. The study shows that many mature and healthy trees will be cut down with nothing gained. The safety concerns raised are false. We are not aware of any safety incidents in 30 years. In fact, sidewalks may add some safety issues such as children riding bicycles on sidewalks with pedestrians and cars backing out of driveways. There are more important issues that need to be addressed. As part of an article on the drilling of a new well for drinking water, Tower Topics explained that we lose roughly 40% of our well water to leaks in the water main system. This is so high that we don't even qualify for Lake Michigan water if faced with a true emergency such as a problem with the source aquifer. This is a potentially devastating problem and a long term plan should be developed to upgrade our infrastructure. I'm sure our board members don't want to be responsible for a problem similar to Flint Michigan.
- I've lived in Western Springs, Forest Hills 54 years, raised three children without and without sidewalks. I hardly feel the need to have them now, especially at this time with the economy and pandemic putting strain on most people, whatever their financial means are. Also, I find the area quite safe as is.
- Maybe instead of putting money into sidewalks we could be concerned about the flooding issues in Western Springs (Ridgewood) and our streets specifically Ridgewood. This problem has

been brought up to the board many times and nothing has been done. So let's start fixing our infrastructure and not add sidewalks yet.

- The study thoroughly describes the landscaping issues involved for all properties, but then proceeds to recommend a timeline based solely on price. My question is that I thought this issue was primarily a safety issue and - if so- wouldn't the timeline be better determined based on that? For instance- the amount of traffic on Lawn and Grand is more than twice the amount of traffic on the other streets because they are the only two streets in Forest Hills open all the way to 55th street. Prioritizing sidewalks on these streets would make a greater impact. I wonder why this study drew conclusions without considering safety. If it was solely a study to lay out issues- then why include recommendations of a timeline at all? Similarly, the East/West cross streets of 53rd and 54th would make a bigger impact safety-wise than many other streets. I realize that these cross streets may present the biggest issues regarding trees because of the smaller setback. Since the Village has a multi-year plan to treat, take down existing trees, and replant more resistant breeds of trees - Wouldn't it be a good idea to work with them to make sure none of these new trees planted are in the sidewalk line?
- My household is NOT in favor of installing sidewalks. We have lived happily without them for 50+ years. We love trees(!) and the beautiful expanse of yard between our house and the street
- We encourage the Village to look for funding sources for sidewalks. We are have concerns about the inconsistency of sidewalks in our neighborhood. Thank you for continuing to look at this issue and consider improving safety for residents of Forest Hills.

Appendix D

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study: Public Question Form

Collated Public Questions with Staff Responses



Village of Western Springs

Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study

Collated Public Questions with Staff Responses

The Village solicited questions and comments on the Forest Hills Sidewalk Feasibility Study from the public. Between April 5th and April 30th, 2021, an online form was available on the Village website, as well as a paper form that were available in the lobby of Village Hall for residents to submit questions and comments. Village staff read and collated the questions submitted by the public and staff has provided the following responses:

Question:	Frequency:	Response:
Can the Village conduct additional research to uncover grant funding options and the amount/likelihood of receiving such funds?	61	Village staff is always on the lookout for available grant funding for all projects within the Village. Currently the Village has over eight active grants for various capital improvement projects within the community.
Can the Village outline financing options that spread the costs over many years?	55	A specific funding mechanism has not yet been determined, however the Village does have three generally accepted funding mechanisms that can be used for projects with a public/private component. Special Service Areas (SSA), Special Assessments (SA) and Referendum. SSA's and SA's can cover a localized area or a large area and residents within the boundary would participate. Referendums generally would cover the entire community. All the funding mechanisms can have a payback period from a few years to 10+ years, but the payback period generally does not exceed the lifespan of the improvement.
Can the Village put forth a plan that spreads cost equitably for all Forest Hills community members?	51	The various funding options the Village can explore would distribute private costs equally amongst those residents participating. However, the calculator for the cost does differ depending upon the funding mechanism. Special Services Areas for example calculate the individual cost based upon the Equalized Assessed Value of the home and not the frontage of the home or amount of sidewalk installed.
Can the Village outline solutions that mitigate the loss of healthy trees in our community including replanting new ones?	56	Presently only a feasibility study has been completed. Phase II (Design Engineering) would determine the specific layout of the sidewalk and identify tree removals and impacts.
Why is Forest Hills being targeted?	4	Residents from the Forest Hills subdivision approached the Village in 2019 to request sidewalks be installed in the subdivision.
Will sidewalks be installed in other sub-divisions that do not currently have them?	4	Additional sidewalk installations in other locations are not being reviewed or discussed by the Village Board at this time. The Forest Hills feasibility study was completed due to a specific request from residents in the Forest Hills subdivision.

Question:	Frequency:	Response:
Is the current Western Springs sidewalk policy in line with ADA regulations?	4	The sidewalk policy itself does not address ADA requirements, however all private construction and Village projects are required to adhere to ADA guidelines when new sidewalk is installed.
Is the Village going to bid the Job to ensure we get the best cost?	2	Yes, all public construction projects go through either a competitive bidding or proposal submission process.
Will this come to a referendum vote or is this a Village Trustee vote?	8	The Village Board has yet to make a determination on next steps, but will be reviewing the comments regarding the feasibility study into the early summer.
Has a study on safety been conducted by the Village?	4	The feasibility study is an engineering study to assess the potential cost and right of way impacts for new sidewalks in the Forest Hills subdivision.
If safety is the issue, what metrics are being used?	7	The feasibility study is an engineering study to assess the potential cost and right of way impacts for new sidewalks in the Forest Hills subdivision.
What other alternatives have been considered to address safety?	3	The feasibility study is an engineering study to assess the potential cost and right of way impacts for new sidewalks in the Forest Hills subdivision.
Will Forest Hills residents have the opportunity to vote whether they want to pay for the sidewalks after we are told what the cost will be for each household?	1	The Village Board has yet to make a determination on next steps but will be reviewing the comments regarding the feasibility study into the early summer.
Are individual homeowner approvals needed since sidewalks are on easements?	2	Potential sidewalks would be installed on Village right of way and not on private property. Easements would not be required. The Feasibility Study has "Typical Cross Sections" under exhibit 4 (pg. 24) in the study.
Given the aging of our infrastructure (streets, sewers, water mains) why is the village not focusing financial resources on those items instead of sidewalks?	1	Residents from the Forest Hills subdivision approached the Village in 2019 to request sidewalks be installed in the subdivision.
How will damage to private property be mitigated in the process? If there is damage to our property or lot, will the provider be liable? How will the Village handle liability issues?	5	Specific driveway impacts and required improvements would be identified in Phase II (Design) Engineering. Additional driveway adjustment costs would be incorporated into the overall project cost.
Will driveways need to be altered in order to accommodate sidewalks?	5	The installation of sidewalks may require some driveways to be altered to ensure that the sidewalks meet the minimum allowable cross slope for ADA requirements. The allowable cross slope for sidewalks is 1.5%.

Question:	Frequency:	Response:
Why is the Village considering changing the 2006 Rule retroactively for homeowners with no sidewalks?	13	The current sidewalk policy is not planned to be amended or changed at this time. Residents from the Forest Hills subdivision approached the Village in 2019 to request sidewalks be installed in the subdivision.
Does the Village benefit financially (through permits or other) when residents are required to put in sidewalks?	1	The Village does issue construction permits for all private construction within the Village.
How much is the Village paying towards this project?	5	No sidewalk installation has been approved by the Village Board at this time and cost participation, including funding options, have not been determined.
How will payment for sidewalk installation work?	6	If the Village utilizes a Special Service Area, Special Assessment or Referendum, the payment would show up on resident's tax bills and would be paid back over a yet to be determined time period, , but not exceeding the lifespan of the improvement.
If there is already a sidewalk in front of my home, will I have to financially contribute towards installation of other sidewalk?	3	Participation for residents who have existing sidewalks may be required and would be dependent upon the funding mechanism and identify project areas. The Village has access to three primary funding tools for public/private improvements. Special Service Areas (SSA), Special Assessments (SA) and Referendum. SSA's and SA's can cover a localized area or a large area and residents within the boundary would participate. The project areas must be contiguous. Referendums generally would cover the entire community. All the funding mechanisms can have a payback period from a few years to 10+ years, but the payback period generally does not exceed the lifespan of the improvement.
Is there is a requirement that people building new homes in Forest Hills must put in sidewalks?	6	The Village's existing sidewalk policy indicates that all new home construction in the Village, except for new construction in the Ridgewood subdivision, must install sidewalk if there is currently none.
If so- isn't that when the Village already decided that sidewalks were essential?	1	The Village Board completed a study on sidewalk installations and developed a new sidewalk policy in 2006, which can be accessed on the Village website at wsprings.com/Forest-Hills-Sidewalk
Can someone refuse sidewalks on their own property, if they cannot afford, or do not want to do this?	6	The proposed sidewalk would be installed on public right of way and not on private property. The Village Board is actively seeking input from Forest Hills residents on the overall interest of sidewalk installations.
Specifically, how many mature trees would have to be removed if both sides of a street were to have sidewalks laid?	5	The specific number of trees to be removed would not be determined until Phase II (Design Engineering) is completed, however the feasibility study does identify the potential project impacts under table 2-1 (page 2) of the study.

Question:	Frequency:	Response:
What are implications on existing sidewalks?	2	Any new sidewalk installations would be designed to meet existing sidewalks. If required ADA adjustments would be implemented on existing sidewalks.
Will the sidewalks have to be shoveled by the homeowner when a certain amount of snow falls?	2	The Village does not coordinate snow removal on any sidewalks within the community, except for specific areas near some schools. Snow removal is the responsibility of the homeowner.
What other solutions are or have been considered to address safety concerns and what are the costs associated with these alternative solutions?	4	The current feasibility study was contracted to look at the potential project costs and impacts to the right of way and surrounding areas. No alternatives to sidewalks have been reviewed at this time.
Why is the village considering installing sidewalks on one side of each street?	5	Due to the potential cost of installing sidewalks through the entire subdivision, Village staff requested the consulting engineering to look at a recommendation that would achieve sidewalk accessibility on each street without the necessitate of sidewalk to be installed on both sides.
Who is going to pay for this?	15	The Village Board has yet to decide on the payment structure or funding mechanism for the installation of new sidewalks. The Village has an existing sidewalk installation policy and ordinance from 2006 that identifies a 70% resident and 30% Village cost share for new sidewalks installed though a Special Service Area process. The sidewalk policy also states that new construction must install sidewalk in front of the home at 100% of the cost to the resident.
Who is responsible to pay for sidewalks and how much will each household owe?	6	The specific project costs and funding mechanism has not yet been determined by the Village Board. The existing sidewalk policy identifies a Special Service Area process for the installation of sidewalks. The cost per home within the special service area is determined by the Equalized Assessed Value of the home and is not determined by the frontage of the home.
What happens if a resident cannot afford to have sidewalks installed in front of their home?	6	The Village Board will first have to determine if any sidewalk installation project will proceed forward and what the funding and cost participation will be. Once that is determine the Village Board can meet with residents to develop options and criteria for those with financial concerns.
Is there a village program in place for residents who do want sidewalks?	5	The Village has an existing sidewalk policy established in 2006 that provides for a cost participation and funding program for those areas requesting sidewalk. Information on the existing sidewalk policy and program and be found at wsprings.com/sidewalks
What factors help determine the priority for sidewalk placement?	4	The alternative proposal in the feasibility study looked at areas with existing sidewalks that could most cost effectively be built out.
How long do you predict the project to run?	1	A specific project timeline has not yet been determined, but due to the potential scope Village staff anticipates both alternatives in the feasibility study would require multiple years to complete.

Question:	Frequency:	Response:
Will utilities be affected by sidewalk installation?	3	Potential Utility conflicts are identified in Table 2-1 (page 2) of the feasibility report. Specific impacts and proposed adjustments would be determined under Phase II (Design Engineering)
Why would mature trees be removed instead of altering the location of the sidewalk installation?	5	Due to available space in the public right of way, and adjacent driveways, utilities, or other conflicts an adjustment to the sidewalk location may not be feasible in all cases. Phase II (Design Engineering) would determine the specific sidewalk layout. However, standard sidewalk installations are typically ~1' inside the right of way boundary. A typical cross section is included in the feasibility report under exhibit 4 (page 24).
If sidewalks are put in will the Village pay for the damage and repair to our lawns and other plants?	4	Restoration costs for the project would be included in the final design.
If a tree parkway tree is removed, will the Village replace it?	8	The Village would coordinate as part of the sidewalk installation, a tree replacement program. However, a 1-1 tree replacement cannot be guaranteed and would need to be assessed based upon the available space in each project area.
If my side of the street does not receive sidewalks, will I be paying?	3	Specific participation would need to be determine once project boundary areas are identified along with the project funding mechanism.
Will homeowner have an option to contract individually for sidewalk?	1	Residents can currently contract privately to install sidewalks in front of their home, and they may utilize a Special Service Area for larger improvements under the Village's existing sidewalk policy.

Question:	Frequency:	Response:
What is a Special Service Area?	3	<p>Special Service Areas (SSAs) are special taxing districts in municipalities that are established by ordinance, in order to pass on the costs of capital improvements or additional services, often the streets, landscaping, water lines, and sewer systems to homeowners who reside within the SSA. The SSA assessments pay off the municipal bonds that are issued to pay for the infrastructure. A Special Service Area can include a neighborhood, an entire subdivision, or an entire village.</p> <p>The SSA must be contiguous, and the mechanism does have a public hearing process which may allow for residents within the SSA to vote down the SSA if 51% or greater vote “nay” in the SSA creation. If the SSA is voted down, the SSA cannot be proposed again for two years. SSA’s are commonly used in Illinois to pay for the repairs and maintenance of existing infrastructure, to pay for new infrastructure, or to be in place in the event a homeowner’s association dissolves and no longer maintains the infrastructure (these SSAs are also known as “fall back” SSAs).</p> <p>A Special Service Area assessment is a tax lien on the property, and the assessment will appear on a homeowner’s property tax bill as a line item that says “Special Service Area Number X: “. The assessment is typically determined by equalized assessed value (EAV) of the property in question and is not based upon frontage or other means.</p>
Are sidewalks required for a municipality to be ADA compliant?	1	No. Chapter 4 of the ADA standards does not typically mandate residential areas adhere to accessible routes requirements unless publicly accessible facilities, transportation stops or other public space is present.