June 20, 2019

Kevin Aguiar
President of the Portsmouth Town Council
2200 East Main Road
Portsmouth, RI 02871

Re: Town of Portsmouth Resolution #2019-04-08B
Resolution in Support of Sidewalk Modification on East Main Road

Dear Mr. Aguiar:

In reply to the Town of Portsmouth Resolution #2019-04-08B dated April 8th, 2019 ("Resolution"), the State of Rhode Island Department of Transportation ("RIDOT") would like to bring to the Town Council’s attention the following:

The 18-inch area between the curb and the sidewalk is not a dirt strip. The 18-inch area has been loamed and seeded and a green grass area is being established ("Green Grass Area"). Please see photograph attached. This Green Grass Area blends into and matches the majority of the areas that continue past the back of the sidewalks throughout the project and helps to make an aesthetically pleasing appearance on East Main Road.

The Green Grass Area also serves to treat stormwater runoff. The infiltration characteristics of this 18-inch area allows RIDOT to meet DEM stormwater treatment regulations as well as EPA mandated consent decree stipulations. This is part of an overall effort to improve the water quality of nearby bodies of water as well as the Narragansett Bay and Sakonnet River for the benefit of the community, as well as the entire state.

The Resolution proposes a replacement of the Green Grass Area with crushed brick or other similar material ("Hard Scape"). Please note that the Hard Scape material has a much higher runoff coefficient which will result in less stormwater being treated, and, which will eventually lead to adding pollutants to any nearby water body. Additionally, a Hard Scape does not alleviate the trash concerns as noted in the Resolution. Also, a Hard Scape has a potential safety issue as it has the possibility to become dislodged onto the roadway and cause both vehicular damage and personal injury.
RIDOT is committed to maintaining the Green Grass Area and keeping it clean. This same type of grass area is already present on other sections of East Main Road and in other nearby communities. This Green Grass Area blends in with the surroundings and adds to the rural feel of the area.

For the reasons stated above, RIDOT respectfully declines to redesign and reconstruct the Green Grass Area as requested in the Resolution.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

David W. Fish, P.E.
Administrator of Project Management
State of Rhode Island Department of Transportation

enclosure

c: Ms. Jennifer M. West, Town Clerk, file
April 25, 2019

Director Peter Alviti, Jr.
RI Dept. of Transportation
2 Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Director Alviti, Jr.,

The Portsmouth Town Council, at their regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting of April 22, 2019, requests your support of the following Resolutions:

2019-04-08B Resolution in Support of Sidewalk Modification on East Main Road

Very truly yours,

Jennifer M. West
Town Clerk
TOWN OF PORTSMOUTH, RI
RESOLUTION #2019-04-08

WHEREAS: the Rhode Island Department of Transportation ("RIDOT") recently completed a construction project in the Town of Portsmouth which included, among other improvements, the replacement of curbing and sidewalks along a 2.7-mile section of East Main Road between Turnpike Avenue and Boyds Lane; and

WHEREAS: as designed and constructed, there is an 18-inch strip of dirt existing between the new curbing and new sidewalks in many areas of the project, which was intended to allow for drainage of surface water; and

WHEREAS: RIDOT is and will continue to be responsible for the maintenance and care of the areas of dirt in between the new curbing and sidewalks; and

WHEREAS: concerns have been expressed that the areas of dirt adjacent to a busy roadway will inevitably result in an accumulation of sand, weeds, trash and other unsightly conditions throughout the 2.7-mile project area, which will be very difficult for RIDOT to maintain properly; and

WHEREAS: it has been proposed that the areas of dirt in between the new curbing and sidewalks throughout the project area should be redesigned and reconstructed, to excavate several inches of the dirt in order to install a high quality weed mat barrier to be covered by crushed brick or similar material, which would continue to provide an 18-inch-wide pervious surface for drainage of surface water while at the same time reducing the need for frequent and time-consuming maintenance and care of the area by RIDOT personnel or contractors, and thereby reduce the very real prospect of an unsightly streetscape being created throughout this 2.7-mile section of East Main Road;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Portsmouth Town Council hereby urges RIDOT to redesign and reconstruct the areas of dirt in the project area, as described above, at the earliest possible date.

Adopted this 5th day of April, 2019.

Kevin Aguiar, President
Portsmouth Town Council

ATTEST: Jennifer M. West, Town Clerk