

*MILFORD CITY COUNCIL*  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
June 28, 2011

A Meeting of the Public Works Committee of Milford City Council was held in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers of Milford City Hall, 201 South Walnut Street, Milford, Delaware on Tuesday, June 28, 2011.

PRESIDING: Chairman Owen Brooks

IN ATTENDANCE: Committee Member: Councilman Dirk Gleysteen

City Manager David Baird and City Clerk/Recorder Terri Hudson

ALSO: Public Works Director Brad Dennehy and City Engineer Mark Mallamo

Erik Retzlaff and Randy Duplechain of Davis, Bowen and Friedel, Incorporated

Chairman Brooks called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.

*Southeast Front Street Project*

City Manager Baird said the intent of the meeting is to define the scope of this project and to provide the committee with some recommendations.

Erik Retzlaff of Davis, Bowen and Friedel, Incorporated then presented photos of the current conditions of sidewalks and curbing (see attached). He noted that many of the road and sidewalk areas have been patched but in a number of locations the curbing is almost nonexistent.

He reported that during the evaluations over the past couple of years, certain areas were selected for replacement. A decision is needed whether to do patchwork repairs or a full sidewalk replacement. Renderings were also presented showing the project with partial replacements and with the full replacement. If a partial replacement is done, the current sidewalks with different widths will need to be considered.

A drawing of the area with utilities buried was also provided. Mr. Duplechain noted the transformers and telephone pedestals on the poles that will remain above ground for environmental and maintenance reasons.

Mr. Brooks questioned the costs of moving the utilities underground; Mr. Retzlaff stated they are projecting adding an additional \$2.5 to \$3 million. Mr. Baird emphasized that is only an option though city council could make that decision.

Mr. Gleysteen feels that though it is expensive, the electric poles and lines are very sightly. His preference would be to bury the utilities and repair the sidewalks starting at the center of town and extending out approximately one-quarter mile. This could be accomplished over a period of time.

Mr. Retzlaff advised there a main feed for city electric, cable and telephone service that runs the length of Southeast Front Street. He explained that if the utilities are buried, services would need to be rerouted to every house and easements obtained. Also, once the new city utilities are in place, there is concern about potential damage to the roadways and sidewalks when the telecommunication services are tied in.

Mr. Baird stated that burying utilities from Walnut Street to the Columbia Street area has been discussed. He added that was the purpose of this meeting though it will also have to be presented to city council. A scope must be developed and costs determined which should include any easement acquisitions from private property owners.

The city manager pointed out the city does not have \$3 million and if council approves this project, it will need to go to a referendum.

When asked for a funding overview, Mr. Retzlaff advised that DeIDOT budgeted approximately \$890,000 for resurfacing

the street, installing ADA-compliant handicapped ramps and replacing specific curbs and sidewalks. The DeIDOT funds will not cover all the recommended repairs and will only cover the areas they feel are necessary. The city will need to pick up the balance.

Prior to repairing the streets, Mr. Retzlaff recommends the city correct any sewer, water and stormwater issues. Preliminary cost estimates for those improvements are \$690,000. The sewer work was included in the URS I&I study but removed because it needs to be incorporated into the entire project.

In response to Mr. Gleysteen's question, Mr. Retzlaff advised the sidewalk and curb repairs would occur along Southeast Front Street from Walnut Street over to Rehoboth Boulevard. However, not all the sidewalks are in need of replacement. Partial replacements will occur at locations identified on the map; full replacements are planned on the north side of the street from Montgomery east to Rehoboth Boulevard and along the south side from South Washington Street east to Rehoboth Boulevard.

Mr. Baird concurred noting they are in good shape from Charles Street out.

Mr. Retzlaff said at one point they were considering placing brick in the Southeast Front Street area, though a lot of the sidewalks are new. That would require them to tear up the new sidewalks to install brick sidewalks.

Mr. Brooks then referenced the brick sidewalk on the left side of Fisher and Charles that is overgrown with grass and weeds. He feels it would be advantageous to replace it with concrete because no one maintains it. Mr. Retzlaff pointed out a lot of property owners who have a small section of brick will more than likely want to keep their brick sidewalk which will be costly to replace. He also feels that continuity is needed to improve the overall appearance and uniformity in that area.

Mr. Brooks noted the parking problems in that area where vehicles frequently park on the sidewalk in the McColley/Marshall Street area. Mr. Baird suggests that prohibited parking be considered when the new sidewalks are installed.

Mr. Duplechain explained that currently, there is a great deal of broken curbing that is flush with the paving and allows vehicles to park on the sidewalk. The new curbing should prevent that from occurring.

Mr. Brooks recalled a meeting when this was discussed. The general consensus of the residents/property owners at that time was to make that area no parking.

Mr. Retzlaff then reported the preliminary cost estimates to resurface the road, new curb and sidewalks as designated and underground utility repairs are \$1.85 million. Utility repairs are for existing systems including sewer, water and stormwater systems.

The DeIDOT contribution will make up a portion though the scope still needs to be determined.

To cover the costs, Mr. Baird stated that city council is able to put in a special assessment for improvements to roads, sidewalks, curbs, etc. The special assessment would apply only to those properties impacted.

Mr. Retzlaff added the additional cost for a full replacement is \$375,000 which would take the project from \$1.85 million to \$2.225 million.

In regard to burying the overhead utilities, he noted that all costs were not included in the estimate; for example any costs associated with transformer relocations, etc. However, he anticipates it to be in the \$5 million to \$6 million range.

Mr. Duplechain advised that is a rough estimate and is based on preliminary discussions with Electric Department Superintendent Rick Carmean a year ago. The estimate includes burying city electric and some additional costs for telephone and cable. Some is the result of the main line running through that street. In addition, the homes along that street will cause the number to multiply.

Mr. Brooks confirmed the city will absorb the cost of placing the cable and phone lines underground.

When asked if any funds are available to assist in this project, Mr. Baird said that is possible though we cannot count on a lot of grant dollars. However, we will qualify for a low-interest government loan possibly thru USDA or some similar source.

Mr. Brooks feels the Washington Street project needs to be done and he would not want to include this project for fear it would fail. Mr. Baird explained the referendum could be all inclusive or on a per-project basis.

Mr. Brooks verified the Washington Street project will save the city \$400,000 and prevent any increases in our water fees. However, he is not confident a referendum will pass citywide that would bury utilities on Southeast Front Street and could create a possible increase of some sort.

Mr. Brooks said his problem is the \$3 million though he agrees that visually, the area would be much more appealing. Mr. Retzlaff then explained that if DeIDOT contributes the \$890,000 and agrees with the entire scope of the work the city is proposing, as a minimum, a partial replacement will cost the city \$960,000. A full replacement of the curb and sidewalks will be \$1.335 million.

Mr. Duplechain said those number include \$690,000 of utility improvements.

When asked where the \$1.335 could be obtained, Mr. Baird noted that \$330,000 is already being paid as part of the sewer project which would require another \$360,000 in other utility costs. Preliminary cost estimates are \$330,000 for sewer repairs, \$225,000 for water repairs and \$135,000 for storm drainage repairs. That leaves over \$.5 million in needed revenues in the general fund. Some of the municipal street aid money could be used and some legislative dollars though it will be tight.

Mr. Brooks said that the governor is planning to put another \$1 million into infrastructure and asked if that would be available; Mr. Baird said there is a possibility at the state level though the general assembly has not given the go-ahead.

Mr. Retzlaff reiterated there may be some problems with sidewalks that are currently wider than five feet they will be replaced with. Mr. Duplechain reported that a grass strip will be placed between those sidewalks and the curbing mainly for utility placement.

According to Mr. Retzlaff, some of the larger trees along the street will also need to be removed.

He then noted that from Charles Street back into town, the road is not wide enough to allow for parking on both sides of the street and two lanes of travel. Therefore, parking will have to be prohibited on one side of the street to prevent cars from parking on the sidewalks.

Mr. Baird advised that one of option being considered is to use the DeIDOT money to perform the scope of the work they planned. This includes curb depressions on each of the corners and street resurfacing. He noted the sections that are without sidewalks and wonder if it is worth installing new curbs that basically go no where.

He asked Councilman Brooks and Councilman Gleysteen if they felt it was worth the additional investment in this area or if the money could be better spent elsewhere.

Mr. Brooks pointed out this is a main artery into town and feels that completing the entire job will make a big impression; partial replacements will not be as appealing. Mr. Gleysteen agreed that if the street is dug up for water and sewer repairs, then resurfaced, he believes it would be worth burying the utilities. The guide to him is that this is in the middle of the city and major work is already scheduled. That part of town would get a big facelift and increase overall property values. This could encourage property owners to take better care of their properties. Mr. Brooks pointed out that most of the properties in this area of town are rentals and are not typically maintained.

Mr. Duplechain asked if the underground utility project should be restricted to a few of the blocks and not the entire street. Mr. Gleysteen asked if the costs included the area from Columbia to Walnut. Mr. Duplechain explained it was entire length of Southeast Front Street to Rehoboth Boulevard. Anything less would come at a lower price.

Mr. Baird recommends we continue to use the \$5 million number because we may encounter some unknowns.

Mr. Brooks is unsure if it would pass in a referendum though he agrees it would be the best option. Mr. Gleysteen said on the other hand, as a homeowner, he knows he is responsible for the sidewalks in front of his house which could also be considered.

Mr. Retzlaff then noted if you go beyond the five feet beyond the right-of-way into a property, an easement will be needed from the property owners. In order for the street to be widened, it should be widened to the width of the street from Charles to Rehoboth Boulevard. Mr. Brooks had initially asked the grass strip area be considered, though Mr. Baird pointed out that is needed to place the relocated utilities for pedestals and transformers.

Mr. Baird then asked for confirmation the committee agrees that full replacement of sidewalks (with the exception of the new sidewalks) down to Charles Street, address the utilities in the street and bury overhead utilities from Walnut Street to Columbia or beyond Calvary Church.

Public Works Director Dennehy expressed concern about the lack of uniformity of the sidewalks which is a safety and appearance issue. He would prefer the city take over the maintenance of the sidewalks to allow continuity.

Mr. Brooks confirmed the city has a sidewalk fund. Several funding options, including a special assessment for property owners, was also considered.

Mr. Baird said we will move forward with refining the project with a full sidewalk replacement, with the exception of the new sidewalks already in place and burying overhead utilities from Walnut Street to Columbia Street.

Mr. Mallamo confirmed the cost of curbing is relatively the same cost as sidewalk replacement per lineal foot.

#### *Washington Street Water Plant & Billing Office*

Mr. Retzlaff then advised we have an offer from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to provide 35% of the \$2.7 million budget in what is called principal forgiveness and is in the form of a \$1 million grant. The remainder is available at 1% interest. This would prevent a referendum and the reason the drinking water fund was considered. Under this scenario, the funding would be classified as short term borrowing which is based on the city tax assessments and is in the range of the \$2.7 million. The city could move forward without public involvement though the loan would need to be paid back in five years.

There is also an option to take the 1% interest rate on a thirty-year term. There are no significant costs if we went with the thirty-year term.

Mr. Baird reported the finance committee is presently reviewing that possibility. He explained that with the 1% interest, why pay the note off for the short term if we can hold onto the low interest and pay off some of the higher interest rate loans.

He reported the Washington Street site will be completely rehabilitated with the possibility of a complete demolition with the exception of the wet well and wells that currently exist. A new building will be constructed to house our billing staff. It will most likely be a two-story facility that will compliment the design of the library and the riverwalk. DBF Architect Mike Wheedleton was hired to work with our billing staff on the review and conceptual design from a space needs standpoint. It has been determined we will need between 3,500 and 4,000 square feet to accommodate the billing staff.

He advised that Downtown Milford and the Chamber of Commerce are currently leasing the space from the city in that building. He asked if the city has an obligation to house them and if so, a two-story building will be needed and their offices placed on the second floor. That would also provide growth potential to meet our future needs.

The city manager said it appears the building could be built on the same location as the current building. It would allow plenty of room for the utility improvements of the water system that are needed.

He pointed out the property is within the flood plain and the new building will need to be elevated. Any renovations will have to meet the building standards within the flood plain.

We have the cost for the water plant and for a portion of the building, but worked into that we need to determine what will be needed and we need to refine the cost and is holding us up from proceeding with the referendum proposal.

He wanted to provide a quick update so the committee was aware of its status.

Mr. Brooks said he does not believe there will be a problem with a referendum for this project because there is no cost to the citizens and it will save the city \$400,000. Mr. Baird agreed stating we need to make sure we have the correct amount for the referendum.

When asked approximately how large the building would be, Mr. Baird said that Mr. Wheedleton has estimated the first floor to be 3,500 to 4,000 square feet. When asked the dimensions, Mr. Duplechain believes it is a 50 x 80 building. Mr. Baird said a second floor will be considered in the future.

#### *Status of Public Works Projects*

Mr. Dennehy reported the city has hired Davis, Bowen and Friedel to handle the Water Facilities Plan and Sewer Facilities Plan. With the water plan, he reported that DBF is presenting evaluating the current water production and treatment processing. The aim is to create an operating plan that can be utilized by city personnel. That plan is almost complete and a draft is being prepared.

He added the funding for the Sewer Facilities Plan was also approved during the past couple months.

Mr. Retzlaff advised a model of the system is being built to determine where the bottlenecks are. The model is 75% completed; upon completion, they will go out to the facilities for inspections and check the utility services, conditions of the pump, conditions of the piping and make recommendations on repairs and improvements.

Mr. Dennehy stated there is a well at Seabury Avenue which has basically run dry. There has been some debate about whether to install a new well, rebuild the pump though it will depend on how much water is being produced and how much is needed. The cost of drilling a new well is approximately \$150,000.

With input from the installers and Mr. Retzlaff's recommendation, it was decided to rebuild the pump and re-drill the well at a cost of around \$50,000. This should bring the well back to the same capacity it was operating at before. This should buy enough time for a new well to be installed south of town.

Mr. Retzlaff clarified that instead of being re-drilled, it is being redeveloped which means we will use the same casing and a jet for a cleanout. That cost is approximately \$18,000 compared to the cost of \$100,000 to drill a new well. He feels this is a five to seven-year fix during which time the well can be re-evaluated.

Mr. Dennehy then reported they are addressing the standing water issue on Northeast Front Street across from Milford Fertilizer and trying to determine if it is a small leak or ground water. City staff tested the water and found chlorine and fluoride which leads them to believe it is drinking water and the result of a leak. Several older services were capped off and three old meter pits were removed. Currently, we are waiting for the results of an independent lab to see what is in the water. There are concerns of some potential contaminants because of the close proximity to the old city dump.

Mr. Mallamo advised that three bids are due Friday on the I&I Project. The three contracts are open cut sewer repair/replacement, sewer main liner installation and sewer lateral installation. The project was bid in the past and the sole bid came in higher than the estimate. Thereby, the bid was rejected.

He advised there are some issues with DeIDOT, particularly on Marshall Street, who are requiring we work 24 hours to speed up the replacement so the street can reopen. Mr. Mallamo is concerned with the associated noise and disruption to the area residents should that occur in addition to the potential increase in overall costs.

Mr. Mallamo anticipates some cost savings because the bid was split into three projects with more competition than the first bid.

The contract on the Water Tower maintenance was just finalized with a clause added for termination by the city as recommended by the city solicitor. It has since been approved by the city solicitor with the intent to get signatures so the water tower maintenance work can begin most likely in the fall.

The Washington Street Bridge is in its final stages of design by DeIDOT. It will be 80% funded by the federal government with city funds set aside for the balance. Plans started with precast concrete beams to reduce the long term maintenance costs. Due to the Verizon's duct bank of fiber optics that run beneath the bridge, we could not get it through the box beams. Therefore, steel girders will be installed which will increase the long term maintenance costs with painting required at some point in the future. The cost of the construction currently is the same or less.

He reported that bidding is planned for early spring with the award of the contract and notice to proceed immediately following the Bug N' Bud Festival. The time span of 180 days allows enough time for construction between that festival and the Riverfest.

Mr. Mallamo emphasized there will be a major disruption to traffic in the area, both pedestrian and vehicular. Upcoming paving projects include Church Street with the bid package being finalized now that the utility work is completed.

He explained that Columbia Street will tie into the contract awarded by Parks and Recreation Director Gary Emory for the riverwalk extension from Columbia Street Extended along the river and over to Goat Island. He also expressed concern about a rough section of Columbia Street that will be left unpaved though they are working on funding to address that as well.

Should additional funding become available, he hopes more streets can be scheduled.

With no further business, Mr. Brooks adjourned the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa K. Hudson, CMC  
City Clerk/Recorder

Attachment: Southeast Front Street Photos



**Existing Condition**



**Partial Replacement**



**Existing Condition**



**Partial Replacement**



**Full Replacement**



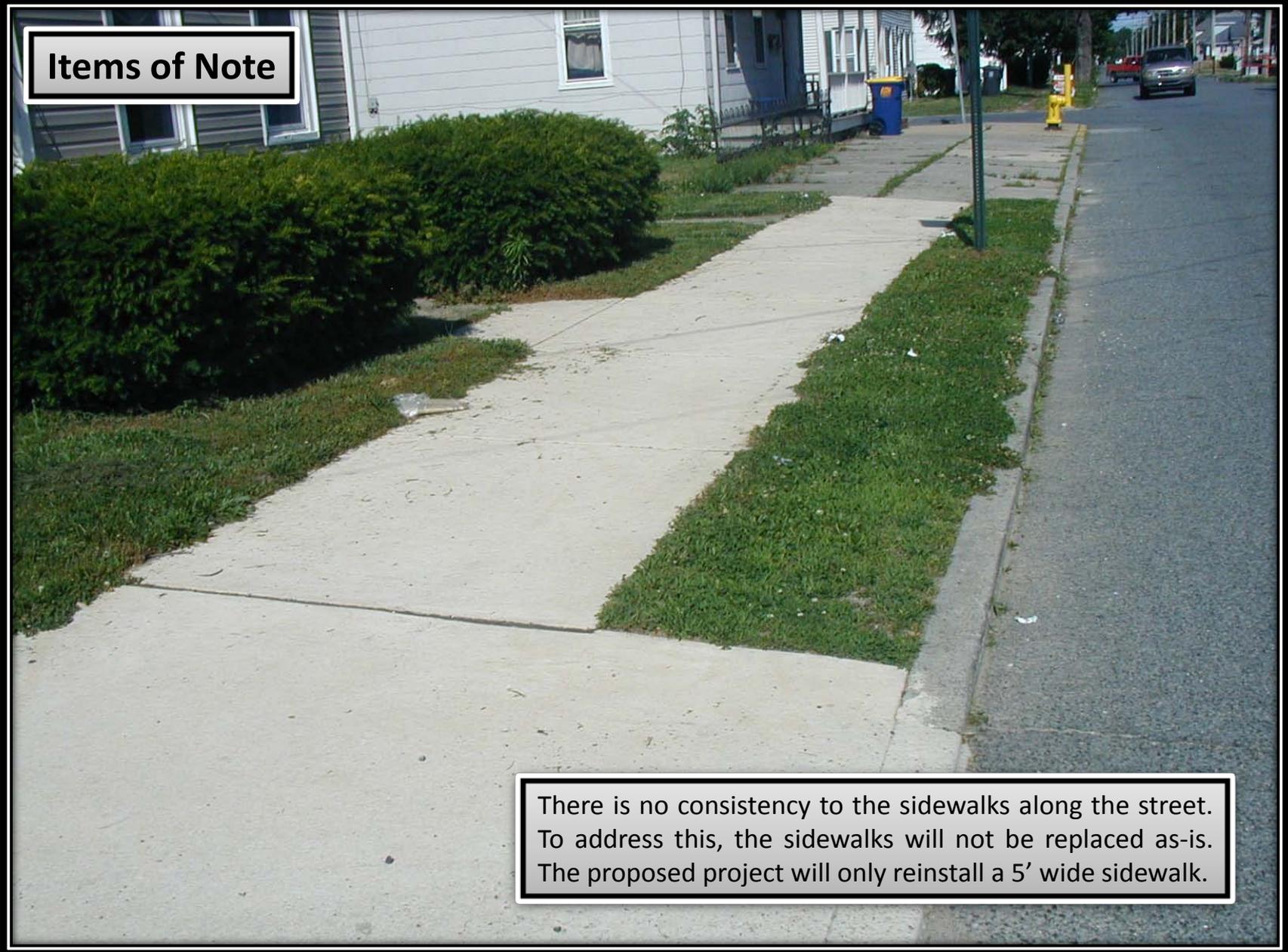
**Full Replacement with Utilities Buried**



**Existing Condition**

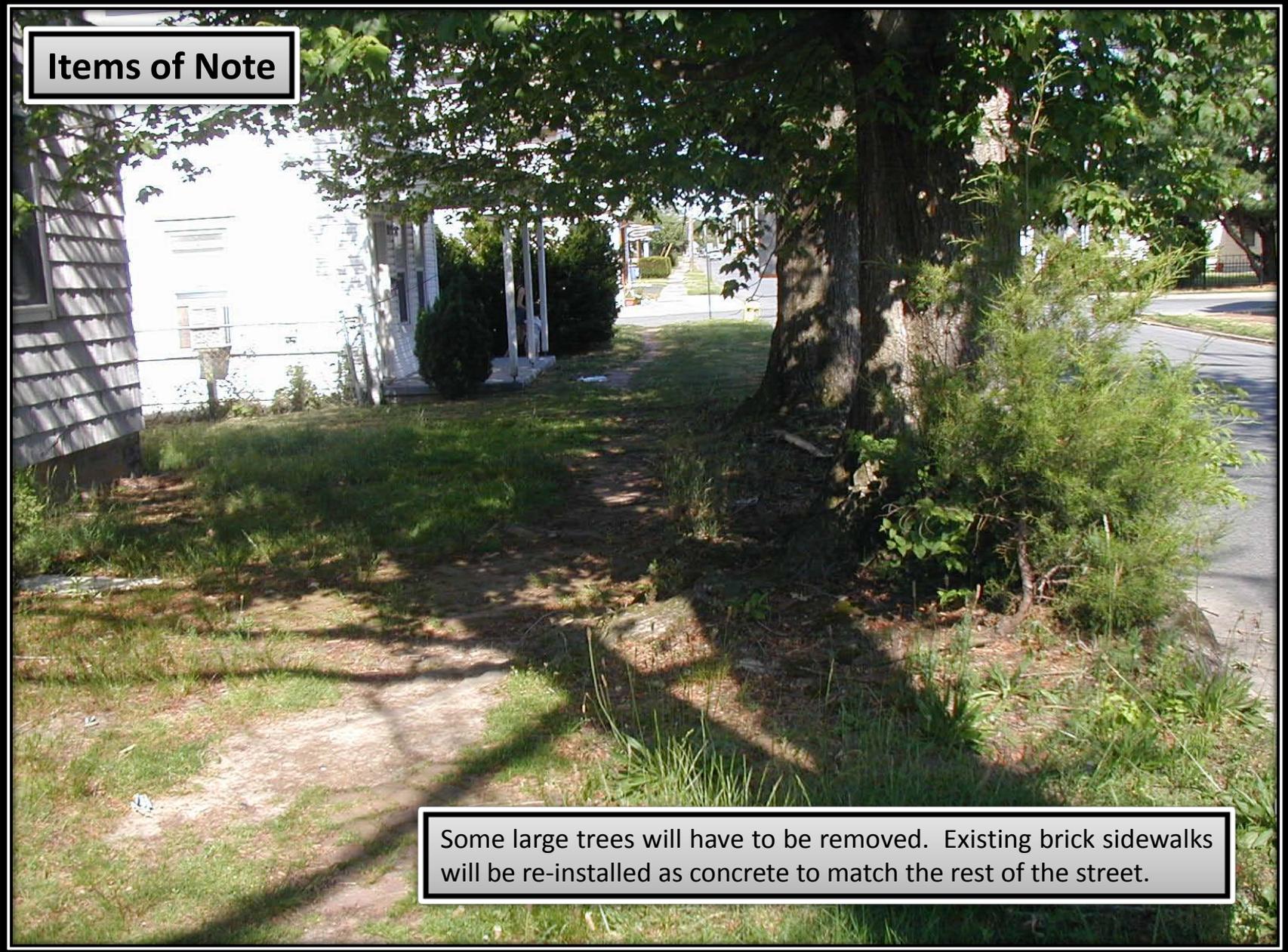


**Full Replacement**



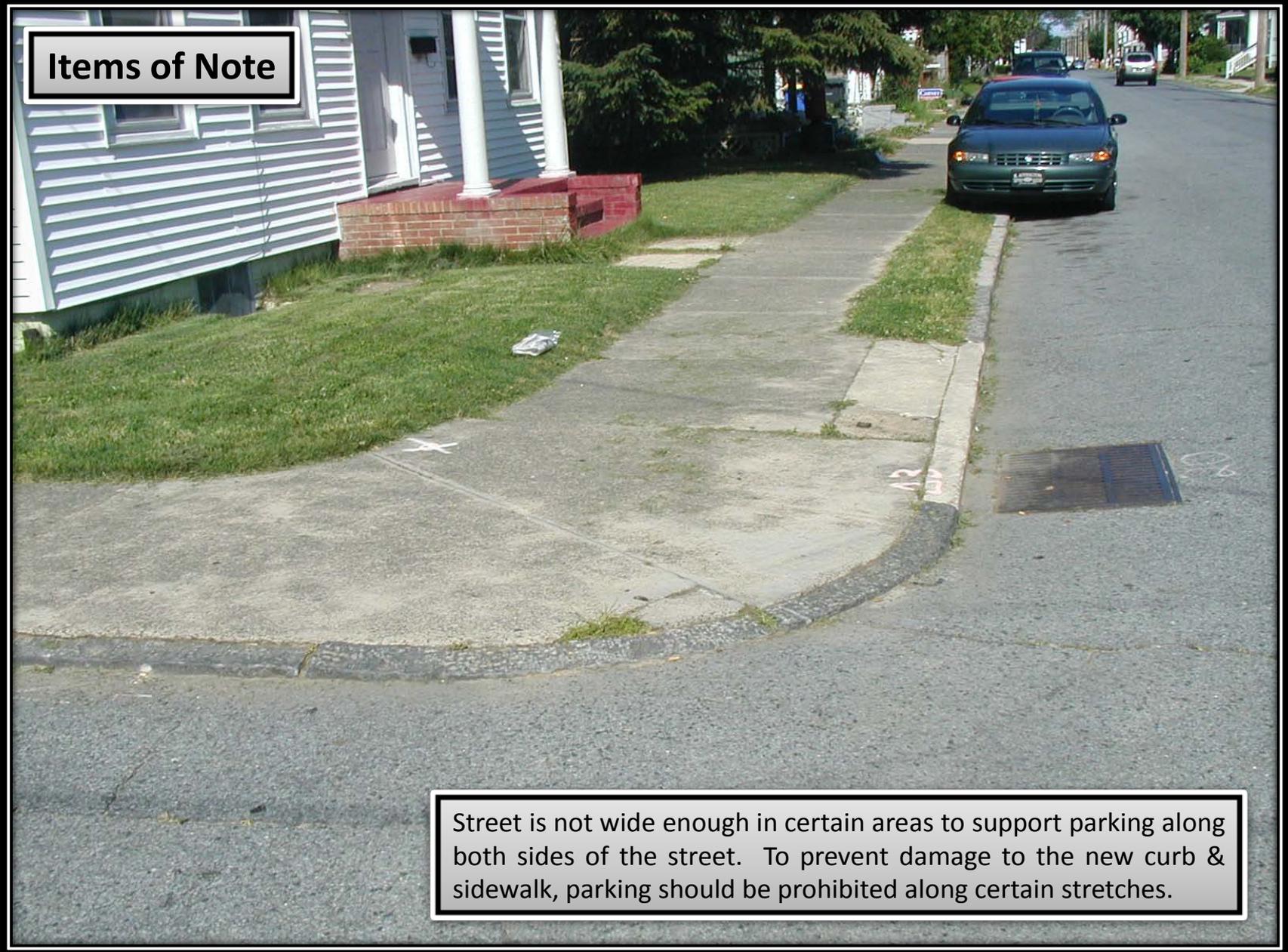
## Items of Note

There is no consistency to the sidewalks along the street. To address this, the sidewalks will not be replaced as-is. The proposed project will only reinstall a 5' wide sidewalk.



**Items of Note**

Some large trees will have to be removed. Existing brick sidewalks will be re-installed as concrete to match the rest of the street.



Items of Note

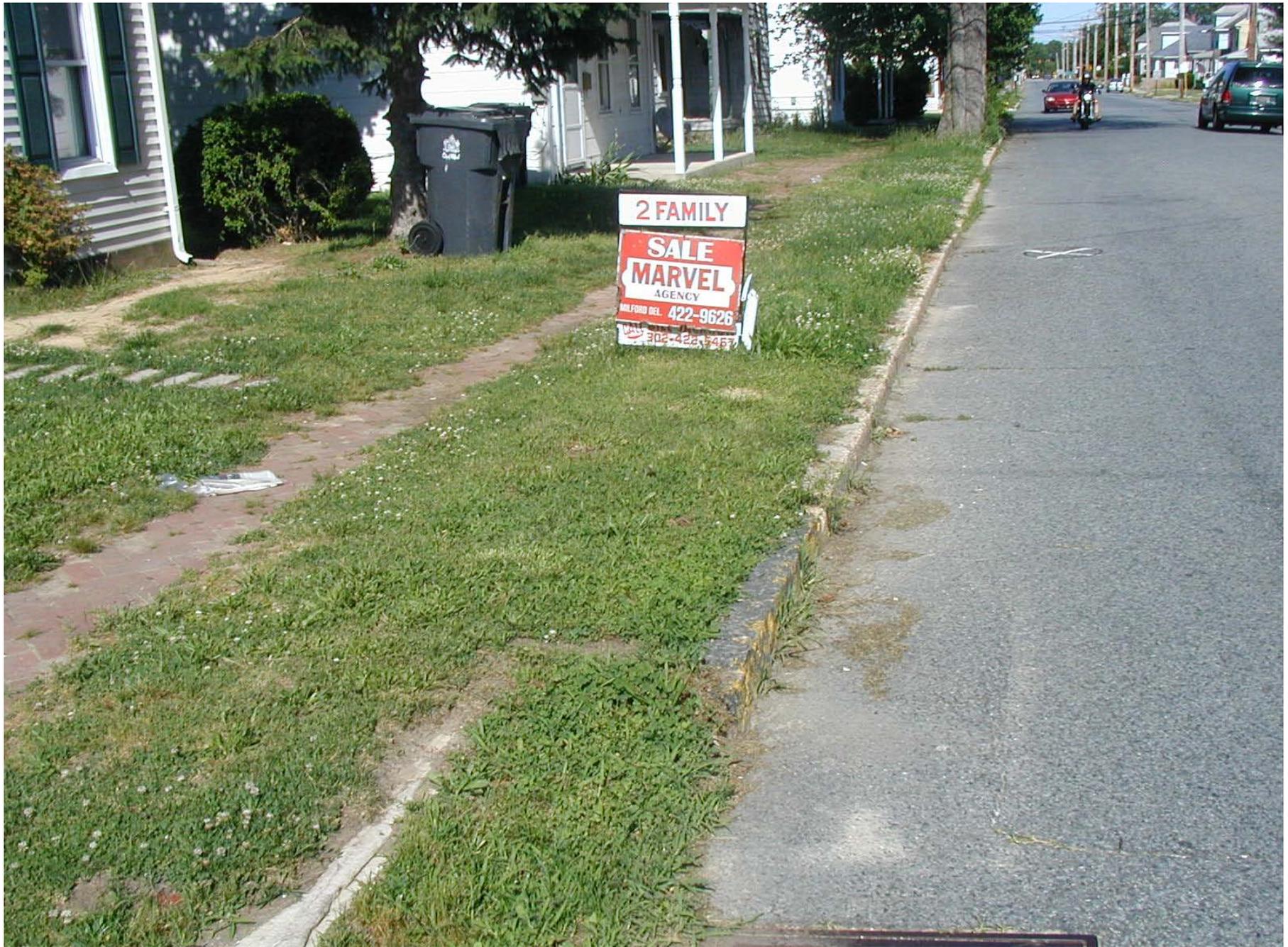
Street is not wide enough in certain areas to support parking along both sides of the street. To prevent damage to the new curb & sidewalk, parking should be prohibited along certain stretches.











2 FAMILY

SALE  
MARVEL  
AGENCY

MALFORD DEL. 422-9626

302-428-7457



