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Acpd

Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities

Chuck Benagh, Chair
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November 12, 2013

The Honorable William D. Euille
Members of City Council
City Hall, 301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Dear Mayor Euille and Councilmembers:

The Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) appreciates all of the work the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) has done, and its interaction with our commission, to improve accessibility and walkability in our City and would like to take this opportunity to endorse the proposed new standards for sidewalks currently proposed.

The ACPD has been a proponent of avoidance and reduction of brick sidewalks for many years. Brick paving that heaves, buckles, settles unevenly, or is disrupted by tree roots is a discomfort and hazard not only to the aged and people with disabilities, but other members of the public as well. Even when in perfect condition, the closely spaced joints in a brick sidewalk create a disturbing vibration for wheelchair users.

The proposed standards are a significant improvement in a number of ways. The proliferation of brick sidewalks will be reduced by restrictions for those outside of the Old and Historic District and creation of new design standard requirements for different neighborhoods. These design standards offer an alternative to the "all or nothing" approach of brick or concrete. The improved construction standards and engineered substrate will reduce the risks posed by brick sidewalks where they are installed.

The ACPD is requesting your support of the new standards for brick sidewalks. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chuck Benagh, Chair

cc: Richard J. Baier, PE, LEED AP, Director, T&ES
Jean Kelleher, Director, Office of Human Rights
Hillary Poole, LEED Green Associate, Complete Streets Coordinator, T&ES
Jackie Henderson, City Clerk and Clerk of Council