

## Danielle Delaney

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**From:** Danielle Delaney  
**Sent:** Friday, June 3, 2022 11:31 AM  
**To:** Danielle Delaney  
**Subject:** FW: #60-22 & #69-22PS&T and PF joint meeting 06/08 FW: Sidewalk questions

### **Referred to Public Facilities and Public Safety & Transportation Committees**

**#69-22**      **Requesting a discussion regarding snow clearing, operations and enforcement**  
COUNCILORS DOWNS, BOWMAN, MARKIEWICZ, GROSSMAN, MALAKIE, WRIGHT, KELLEY AND NOEL  
requesting a discussion with the Department of Public Works and the Police Department regarding residential and commercial sidewalk snow clearing, operations and enforcement.

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**From:** Andreae Downs <[adowns@newtonma.gov](mailto:adowns@newtonma.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 1, 2022 8:30 PM  
**To:** Cassidy Flynn <[cflynn@newtonma.gov](mailto:cflynn@newtonma.gov)>; Alison M. Leary <[aleary@newtonma.gov](mailto:aleary@newtonma.gov)>; Alicia Bowman <[abowman@newtonma.gov](mailto:abowman@newtonma.gov)>  
**Cc:** Michael Halle <[m@halle.us](mailto:m@halle.us)>; Jenn Martin <[jennmartin.srts@gmail.com](mailto:jennmartin.srts@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Sidewalk questions

Snow:

- I am still hearing complaints that corners are being dumped on, making clearing sidewalks impossible for residents. How can we do better? Is there a plan to track repeatedly violated corners?
- Can we get snow priority routes labeled, where enforcement and spot touchup should happen first?
- How soon can DPW get these repeat violations, priority rankings and priority spot touchup areas in its new GIS system?

From Jenn Martin:

Snow concerns can be divided into two buckets: 1) managing expectations/communicating protocols, and 2) the protocols themselves. The former seemed to have gone better this winter, and it seemed like many more residents were removing snow from their sidewalks than in the past.

#### **Protocols:**

-We simply need more staff out with sidewalk plows. This winter a handful of people did the routes constantly for the heavy snowfalls. This was likely a staffing challenge specific to the last two winters, but it should be acknowledged and addressed going forward.

-We need to think about how to clear snow from bike lanes as we get more bike lanes.

-What can be done (training?) so that more flexposts can stay in the ground in the winter, and portable speed cushions/ speed humps can stay in place?

-I never got a firm answer on whether the Senior Center maintained a list of snow shovelers. Some residents said yes, a list compiled by Newton Neighbors Helping Neighbors, but Jonathan Yeo said no. I followed up several times with the person who was said to have compiled the list but did not hear back from her.

- With back-to-back storms, 311 requests were cleared out between storms, even though the snow accumulated so the concern was still there from the first storm. It was frustrating that you had to go out to report the concern a second time.
- Shawna mentioned what seemed like a high number of tickets that were unpaid/taken to court. We should confirm what happens if they simply don't pay, or what happens if they go to court (just dropped?).
- Agree that priority maps would be helpful, or a shared protocol about what is cleared when and by whom. One item that seemed to be missed this winter were the new crosswalks along City routes.
- In an ideally staffed winter, there would be more coordination between the sidewalk team and the street team so they aren't undoing each other's work.

## **SIDEWALKS**

- Please clarify the protocol for residential sidewalks being blocked. My understanding is that the sidewalk can be closed during the day indefinitely (months) if the contractor has the right permit, and just needs to be reopened and packed stone dust in the evening. If that is the case, the ordinance/protocol needs to be changed. It seems like the ordinance/protocol was created assuming no one would be out walking during the day.
- Someone needs to be enforcing keeping construction vehicles/worker cars from parking on the sidewalk and the berm and, increasingly, in bike lanes. I think this falls under the jurisdiction of Newton Police/Parking Control, in which case it should simply be enforced every day as part of their routes. Can a fine or other penalty also be added to the construction permit? The vehicles damage the sidewalk and berm, take out street trees, and block access to the sidewalk/bike lane for users. It also makes our sidewalks feel unsafe when a vehicle is pulling up onto it while someone is walking along. Vehicles park on the sidewalks not just of the house under construction but also adjoining sidewalks.
- Construction detail officers. What is their role specific to pedestrians and pedestrian detours? See the incident at Lowell/the Carriageway where the police officer watched the pedestrians continue along the sidewalk and go into the work site (and then one was hit by a truck).
- City street and sidewalk work needs walking/biking detours set up as basic setup for the work. I'm seeing some good examples of this with utility work, including an excellent example today on Beacon near Cold Spring Park.

Andreae Downs

Newton City Council