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**From:** Deby DeWeese <[vcscna@gmail.com](mailto:vcscna@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 6, 2019 4:02 PM

**To:** CouncilAll <[councilall@bendoregon.gov](mailto:councilall@bendoregon.gov)>

**Cc:** Pauline Hardie <[phardie@bendoregon.gov](mailto:phardie@bendoregon.gov)>; Karen Swirsky <[kswirsky@bendoregon.gov](mailto:kswirsky@bendoregon.gov)>; Karin Morris <[kmorris@bendoregon.gov](mailto:kmorris@bendoregon.gov)>

**Subject:** PZ-19-0352 - neighbors in my NA tell me they do NOT want a sidewalks exception

Dear Council and others,

I am the Vice Chair/Land Use Coordinator for the Southern Crossing Neighborhood Association. I am getting bombarded with phone calls and in-person visits from members of our NA who do NOT want an exception to City Code around sidewalks to be built in Woodriver Village per PZ-19-0352. They seem to be particularly upset after today's Bulletin editorial backing the exception (the second editorial the Bulletin has written about this).

The main concerns I am hearing are around safety. Many of the folks in my NA walk and bicycle to and from Woodriver Park, the Old Mill, Farewell Bend Park, and the Deschutes River Trail using streets that are part of Woodriver Village. They have shared harrowing stories of how they have been nearly hit by cars while walking alone, walking with their dogs, walking their children who are still in strollers, and also while bicycling. As you no doubt know, many people cut from Reed Market to Brookwood Blvd and vice versa through Woodriver Village and, thus, this area is a main thruway. It's not just commuters either. Big trucks driven for businesses use this shortcut also during the day and sometimes at night. There a lot of traffic on ALL the streets leading to the 4 areas I mentioned above - not just on Woodriver Road. Unfortunately, this is very dangerous to the members of my NA.

I know the Bend Planning Commission reviewed this issue and they ruled that allowing this exception would set a bad precedent. I agree - based on the overwhelming feedback I am getting. In fact, only 1 person has told me they want this exception - and that is because he is trying to build a home in Woodriver Village and doesn't want to have to pay the City for a sidewalk. He also doesn't want to have to pay an "access fee." 100% of the other people who have contacted me (somewhere close to 100 now and since the Bulletin's first editorial!) do not want this exception to pass.

Another argument I am hearing is that people believe City Codes are there for very good reasons - and they have asked me why our City Council would even consider bypassing City Code, especially when we all know that sidewalks are desperately needed all over town. What am I to tell them if you do this?

My understanding is that the Bend Transportation System Plan included bike lanes and sidewalks on the major roads in Woodriver Village. I've attached the map the City Planning office sent me regarding this - the roads are the ones in blue. I know a lot of work has gone into the TSP, including community input, and it just seems well, crazy, to go against the TSP because

of an argument that Woodriver Village is a unique neighborhood with a special "rural character." One only has to look at the large homes being built in Woodriver Village to see the fallacy of this argument - not to mention ALL neighborhoods are special and it's unfair to everyone in the City to grant an exception to just one area of town. Sidewalks are desperately needed in Bend - why would you do anything to stop sidewalks, especially when the voters and your own Planning teams are trying to create more sidewalks in Bend?

Another argument I am hearing is regarding disability access. I know Bend has a terrible record at providing wheelchair and other disability access, but has been working to try to improve this. Again, why do something that limits access to our disabled neighbors? I've cc'd Karin Morris as I hope you will discuss this with her before making your decision.

Especially after reading the Bulletin editorial, the folks in my NA believe this is all a concerted effort on the part of developers to set a precedent around not having to pay for sidewalks in future developments - to use the precedent set in Woodriver Villlage as a means to fight having to provide sidewalks elsewhere in town. Perhaps this is so or perhaps it is not, but, as the Planning Commission said, this is absolutely setting a "bad precedent" and things like this do tend to be the beginning of a slippery slope.

I know the Council has considered the idea of having builders pay an "access fee" instead of building "sidewalks to nowhere." But the members of my NA have made it clear to me that sidewalks (and bike routes) are what is needed! Eventually, over time, those beginning sidewalks will get connected to others and then to others and then to others - and now you have a safety and accessibility issue solved. The true solution is to follow City Code as it stands and also the TSP, which will provide sidewalks and bike lanes where they are desperately needed.

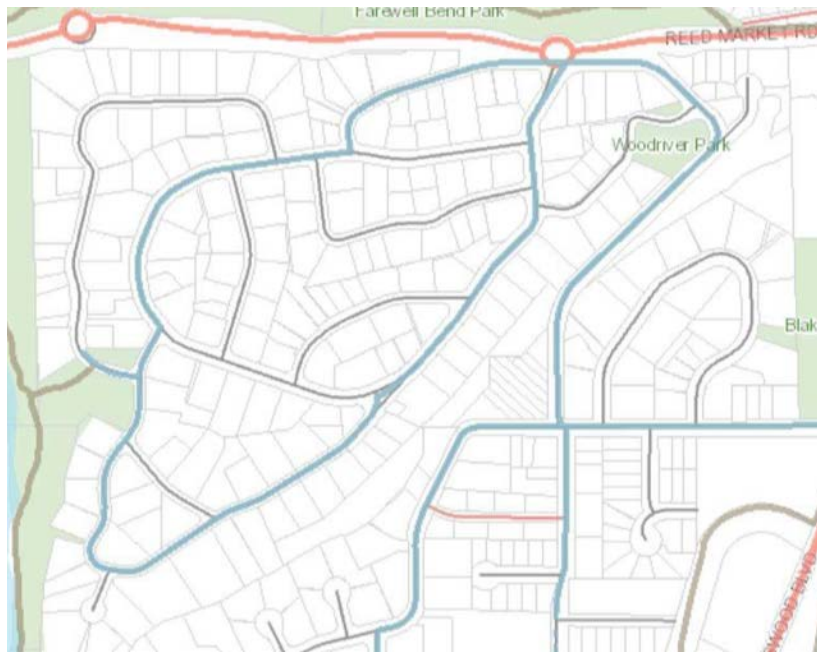
I am not going to be able to attend your 7pm meeting tomorrow and so I wanted to make certain you heard from my neighbors. I am sharing exactly what I am hearing from them. They were all hoping I would be able to speak up for them at the meeting, but, unfortunately, I have a long standing commitment and can't make it. I feel badly about this, but it's an unavoidable scheduling issue. So, I'm concerned their voices will not be heard - and, thus, this email to you - as they are making it very clear to me that they are very upset that an exception might be made when you vote on August 7.

Please listen to the voters in my NA. They want their City Council to follow code and not set a bad precedent around safety and accessibility, especially for just one neighborhood.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Deby DeWeese  
(TSP map below)



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