



Town of Middletown Planning Department

350 East Main Rd., Middletown RI 02842 (401) 849-4027

MEMORANDUM

To: Paul A. Croce, Chairman
Planning Board Members

From: Ron Wolanski, Town Planner

Date: June 1, 2021

Re: Town Council request that the Planning Board research adopting an ordinance requiring esplanade-style sidewalks

During a recent meeting the Town Council referred a request to the Planning Board to investigate potential ordinance amendments to implement a requirement to install esplanade-style sidewalks whenever possible when new sidewalks are proposed. Such design includes a planting strip to be included between the edge of the sidewalk and the curb to provide more distance between pedestrians and vehicles resulting in a more pleasant and safer pedestrian experience.

As requested by the Planning Board, I have consulted with the Town Solicitor on potential ordinance language as follows:

“All new streets and significant reconstruction of existing streets shall incorporate provisions to serve bicyclists and pedestrians to the extent possible, including but not limited to the installation of sidewalks. Where sufficient road right-of-way exists, and where site conditions allow, a grass strip at least four feet in width shall be installed between the edge of sidewalk and the curb or edge of the paved street when new streets and sidewalks are installed, or when significant reconstruction of existing streets or sidewalks is conducted.”

If this language is acceptable, a determination must be made as to where in the Town Code it should be inserted. Two potential options include: Town Code: Title V – Public Works, or Title IX, Chapt. 94 - Streets, sidewalks, public places.

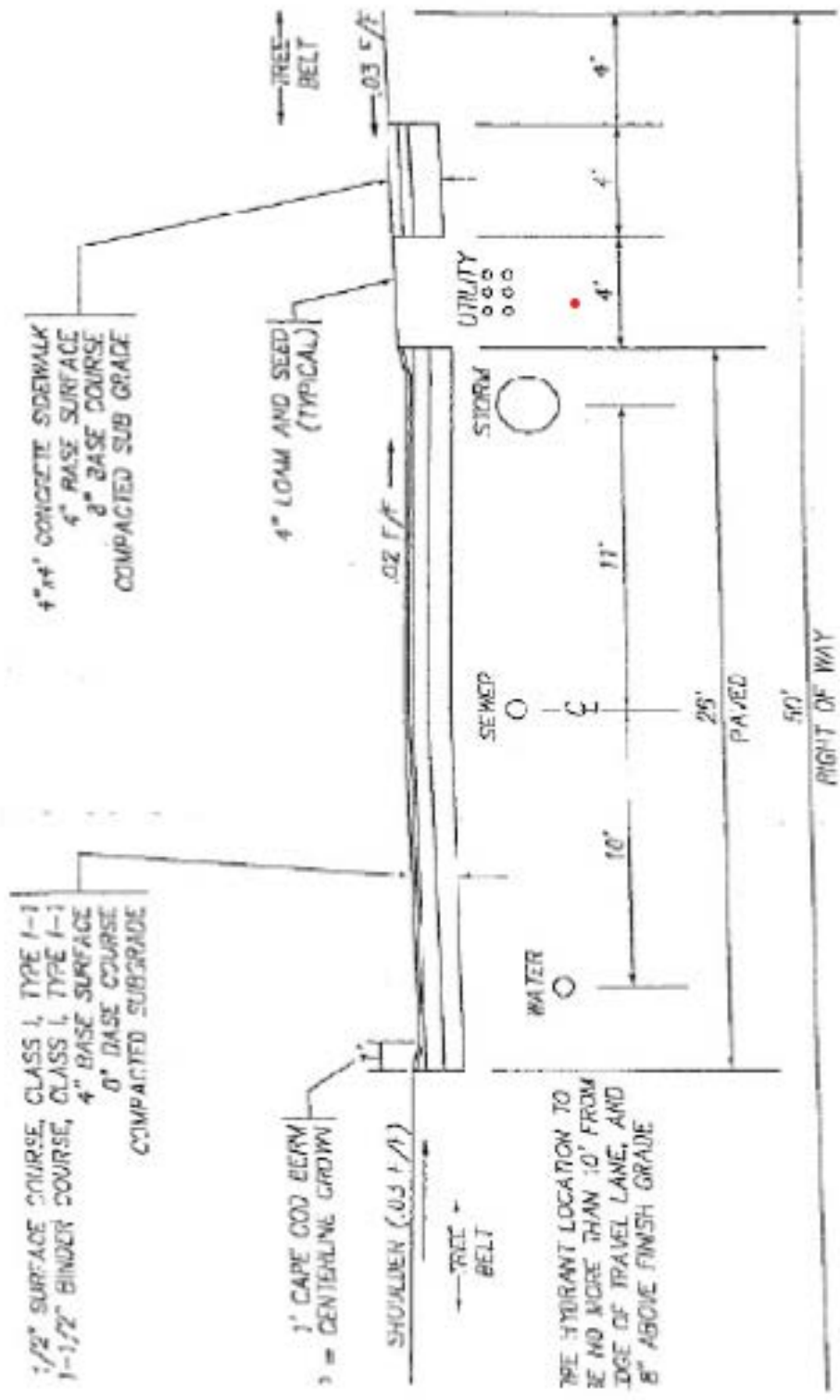
If an ordinance amendment is drafted, and once the Board is satisfied with the final draft, it should be forwarded to the Town Council for consideration. If the proposal is an amendment to the zoning ordinance, the Town Council must then hold a formal public hearing before amendments are adopted. In support of its recommendation to the Town Council on a zoning ordinance amendment the Planning Board must make the following findings in accordance with the requirements of Section 45-24-52 of the Rhode Island General Laws:

(1) The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the Middletown Comprehensive Community Plan, including the goals and policies statement, the implementation program, and all other applicable elements of the comprehensive plan; and

(2) This recommendation is made in recognition and consideration of each of the applicable purposes of zoning, as presented in § 45-24-30 RIGL

Please contact me with any questions.

cc. Town Solicitor



TYPICAL ROAD CROSS SECTION