

CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS

Received: June 16, 2022 (after 9:00 a.m.) – June 21, 2022 (before 5:00 p.m.)

June 21, 2022 Council Meeting

ADDENDUM

**New content:**

**Submitted on Fri, 06/17/2022 - 08:38**

**Full Name**

Kate Hatem

**Email**

[katemph@gmail.com](mailto:katemph@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Covid vaccine clinic for under 5 year olds

**Address**

1 Ash St

**Message**

Hello City Council Members,

I am writing anticipation of the FDA and CDC authorizing the Covid vaccines for children under 5 in the next few days.

I am hoping the City of Portsmouth is proactively setting up a mobile vaccination clinic for these young children. It's my understanding that most pharmacies are not going to be able to vaccinate this young population. My son's pediatrician's office is also not offering to administer this shot either.

I'm hoping that we will have an option other than an urgent care where most sick people are now going to get tested.

Can the Council assist in this matter? Can we organize a clinic for the families of young children in our city?

Thanks so much for your attention to this matter!

Kate Hatem

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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**Submitted on Fri, 06/17/2022 - 10:29**

**Full Name**

Diana Carpinone

**Email**

[d.carpinone@gmail.com](mailto:d.carpinone@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Athletic Field PFAS Testing Results

**Address**

16 Governor Sawyer Lane

Dover, New Hampshire. 03820

**Message**

Dear Mayor McEachern and City Council,

I have just read a report in the Portsmouth Herald with quotes from Public Works Director Peter Rice and Mayor McEachern. I've noted their comments are based solely on the TRC report paid for by taxpayer dollars.

This risk assessment is VERY NARROW and looks at only ONE endpoint - dermal exposure.

I must caution that you don't rely on this as a pronouncement of safety! No exposure studies have been done to date on synthetic turf fields. There are THREE routes of exposure to players: dermal, inhalation, and accidental ingestion. Two of these three were not assessed in the report.

As you know, the EPA has just released new Health advisory limits for drinking water that are a magnitude of order lower, down to parts per quadrillion (ppq). This is a level that can't even be measured by current testing! As Mindy Mesmer is quoted as saying, "the EPA is basically saying there's no safe level for exposure to PFAS in drinking water."

Why is the city not taking care to assure that the PFAS in the field is leaching out? There is a simple lab procedure that can mimic natural rainfall on solid samples and then test the leachate coming off of it. It is called and SPLP and only costs around 4-500 dollars. Weston & Sampson included this in their "testing matrix" prepared for the City last year. They describe it as, "Industry and regulatory accepted, "natural" conditions extraction."

Wasn't the purpose of going out to bid for a "PFAS – free" field so that we would not be adding more PFAS to Portsmouth's environment and water? Mayor McEachern himself confirmed this with staff and consultants before a vote. He and the Council at the time were assured that the field would not contain PFAS.

But now we know it does!

What does the Council plan to do about this? We just spent \$18,000 of taxpayer money to do this testing and it came back with proof that we have a clear breach of contract and a real reason to be concerned about leaching of highly toxic PFAS compounds into Sagamore creek. You are opening up the City to great liability here. Please hold accountable those responsible for this situation. Please get our money back, and pursue damages.

Surely the city does not plan to ignore this???

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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**Submitted on Fri, 06/17/2022 - 12:28**

**Full Name**

Rebekah Thomson

**Email**

[rebekahjthomson@gmail.com](mailto:rebekahjthomson@gmail.com)

**Subject**

PFAS in plastic turf field

**Address**

35 Luce Farm Rd  
West Tisbury, Massachusetts. 02575

**Message**

To Portsmouth City Council,

Greetings from Martha's Vineyard. We have been following Portsmouth's plastic turf field situation and understand that recent testing indicated the presence of PFAS in your newly installed field.

So you are aware, the application to install a plastic turf field here on Martha's Vineyard was recently denied due to the contamination threat posed by the proposed field. Specifically, it was denied because the proposed field components tested positive for a number of PFAS and out of concern that those PFAS would leach into our water supply.

You can read the 32-page decision here:

<https://www.oakbluffsma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8471/MVRHS-Special-Permit-Decision----signed-May-16-2022>

Further, the Board of Health is considering a moratorium on plastic turf fields containing PFAS (which would essentially mean all plastic fields as every one tested so far has tested positive for PFAS).

You can read the draft moratorium language here:

<https://www.mvtimes.com/mvt/uploads/2022/05/5-24-obmoratorium-draft-4.docx.pdf?x75555>

Please don't hesitate to contact me for additional information.

Best,

Rebekah Thomson

Martha's Vineyard

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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**Submitted on Mon, 06/20/2022 - 09:36**

**Full Name**

Bennett Travers

**Email**

[bennett.travers1@gmail.com](mailto:bennett.travers1@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Maintain Historic State Street's Sidewalks

**Address**

809 State Street

**Message**

Hello,

My significant other and I bought 809 State Street in December. One of the things that drew us to Portsmouth, and to this home in particular, is the historic charm of the neighborhood. One of those essential details lending that charm are the beautiful brick sidewalks just out front our home.

We walk to local businesses in town everyday, as many other residents and tourists do, and love the beauty and uniqueness the bricks add to our city. When I explain to friends back home in the South where I've moved to, I often describe Portsmouth as an old charming coastal city with brick sidewalks, amazing restaurants, and plenty to do while still feeling like a local.

So now, as a local, it's distressing to hear these sidewalks may be going away for the sake of "improvements". Just because we are (barely) outside the designated historic district doesn't mean the history and charm end one street over or contribute less to the overall feel of the city.

My heart sinks every time I walk down Columbia Street and see the new concrete sidewalks. That could be any street or town in New England. But Bill and I didn't choose to live on any street or in any town. We choose State Street and hope to live and grow our family here as tax payers for a long time.

While I can't say the replacement of the beautiful bricks outside our front steps with concrete would be enough to cause us to move, it will have a domino effect drastically impacting how we and other residents view Portsmouth, it's government and their true intentions when it comes to the people who visit and live here.

As a resident who has done my best to "adopt" and maintain the sidewalks outside my home myself, from edging to sweeping, I can vouch that the bricks outside my home are neither dangerous nor in disarray. Please show you care as much about the charm of this city as I do by rethinking this shortsighted decision.

Usually the vibe of a city is made up of many intangible elements. But today one very tangible element are our brick sidewalks. Please make the decision to maintain rather than replace these. The future of Portsmouth should still include some of our past.

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes**

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**Submitted on Mon, 06/20/2022 - 11:38**

**Full Name**

Trevor Ristow

**Email**

[trevor@gkwfilmworks.com](mailto:trevor@gkwfilmworks.com)

**Subject**

State Street's bricks

**Address**

757 State St

**Message**

Dear Councilors,

My name is Trevor Ristow. My wife Caroline and I organized the petition to save State Street's bricks, and I'd like, first of all, to thank you all for taking our petition into account, the work you've done to solicit bids, and for opening this discussion.

My beloved Uncle Billy, my mother's brother, and my godfather, moved to Portsmouth with his wife Sara in 1975. He ran a small business out of the basement of what is now Portsmouth Fabric Co. on Penhallow and later out of the Button Factory. Sadly my Uncle Billy passed early in the pandemic but his two children and my aunt Sara still live on the Seacoast -- in Dover and on Langdon Street. I also chose to live in Portsmouth at the first moment I was able, having visited it often throughout my life. Now I live on State St. with my wife and two young sons.

The overwhelming majority of my neighbors whom I have spoken with — now well over 150 people on just a few blocks — do not support the concreting of our neighborhood. There are approximately 450 feet of brick sidewalk left on the part of State St. currently scheduled for "improvement." That's 450 feet total — on both sides of the street. The remaining brick sidewalks on State Street are protected by the Historic District. Only 450 feet are threatened with destruction under the current policy. Our petition asks simply for this 450 feet of brick to be preserved, replaced or repaired as necessary.

I don't know exactly when the West End lost its original brick sidewalks, but they can still be seen in photos at the Athenaeum dating as early as 1873. Bricks are part of the neighborhood, part of its history, its beauty, and its character. Another Portsmouth City Council, about 40 years ago from what I understand, voted to lay the current brick sidewalks on State St. in order to restore a little bit of beauty that had been destroyed by the poor decisions of other people in the past. I respectfully ask you please to maintain these 450 feet of our city's beauty and history.

Thank you very kindly for your time and work on this matter to date!

Trevor Ristow

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes**

**Submitted on Mon, 06/20/2022 - 18:26**

**Full Name**

Thomas Schladenhauffen

**Email**

[Thomas.Schladenhauffen@gmail.com](mailto:Thomas.Schladenhauffen@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Lower State Street Sidewalk Replacement

**Address**

708 State Street

**Message**

Dear Members of the Portsmouth City Council:

My name is Thomas Schladenhauffen and I have lived at 708 State Street for the past 27 years. I attended the information session put on by the department of public works and expressed my wish that the city not replace the sidewalks with concrete as recommended but with brick between Cabot Street and Summer Street. The west side of the street has brick that was replaced approximately 10 years ago and I was informed that it would not be removed, which I support. The older brick sidewalks that run in front of my house I was informed will be replaced with concrete. This is not acceptable to me, our house was built in 1852 and we have done a number of restoration projects to retain its historic appearance. For this section of State Street, which all of the homes were built during the same time period, I feel its only appropriate to keep the sidewalks brick to celebrate the neighborhoods history. For many years I have asked public works for a date in which the old brick sidewalks would be replaced and was told that it was in the plans for the future but those plans were subject to other plans that took priority over this project, but the brick would be replaced in the near future.

I respectfully request that the City Council approve an appropriation to replace the brick sidewalks in need of repair between Summer Street and Cabot Street.

Thank you,

Thomas Schladenhauffen

Property Owner - 708 State Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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**Submitted on Mon, 06/20/2022 - 23:53**

**Full Name**

Caroline McCaughey

**Email**

[carolinekmcc@gmail.com](mailto:carolinekmcc@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Brick sidewalks on State Street

**Address**

757 State Street

**Message**

Dear City Council,

I live at 757 State Street and oppose the city's plan to rip up the beautiful, historic brick sidewalk outside my home and replace it with concrete. Many of my neighbors also oppose this plan.

We live in a section of State Street with many historic homes, but we are just outside the official Historic District. The border of the Historic District literally runs along the side of my house.

Everyone can agree that brick sidewalks are more beautiful than concrete. That's why the city maintains them downtown and in the South End. The issue before us now is one of cost. Putting in new concrete sidewalks is cheaper. But it is also shortsighted. It is akin to urban "improvement" projects of the past that razed historic buildings only to replace them with eyesores. If you browse any of the Portsmouth Facebook groups you will see posts lamenting such projects.

The city is investing a lot of money and work in improving the Islington corridor to connect downtown to the West End. The brick sidewalks help to visually unify our neighborhood with downtown and the historic character and charm of our city. Even Islington Commons, the new development, has brick sidewalks, as I'm sure the developers knew that this is an integral part of what makes Portsmouth unique.

Our section of State Street is only one block outside the Historic District, and we pay the same tax rate as people in the South End, where the city invests in maintaining the brick. Our stretch of brick is, by comparison, quite small. We just want to preserve the brick where it currently exists. And if the city is paying so much to upgrade this neighborhood, shouldn't maintaining its history and beauty be part of that plan?

I want to thank Mayor McEachern and the City Council for taking our petition seriously and for soliciting bids for brick as well as concrete. We are hoping you will reverse the current policy and preserve our brick sidewalks.

Many thanks,

Caroline McCaughey

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

**Submitted on Tue, 06/21/2022 - 07:13**

**Full Name**

Robert Lambert

**Email**

[lambert03801@gmail.com](mailto:lambert03801@gmail.com)

**Subject**

State Street Brick Sidewalks

**Address**

115 South St

**Message**

Hello councilors, on behalf of myself and my wife Nicole, I would like to share our support of maintaining (and/or expanding) the brick sidewalks on State St. I understand there is discussion on this matter scheduled during tonight's meeting. It is our opinion that an update to the HDC mapping - or drafting of a more specific subset of sidewalk policies therein - is in order, given the nature and aesthetic of State St from the intersection of Middle St to Cass St... and at least so far as Columbia St to encompass the children's park at that corner. If you can see a civil war memorial from your front step (in goodwin park) i think that should signify you are in a historic part of our city. I believe State St serves as an important connection alongside islington St from the heart of downtown to the newly developed west end of the city. Whereas islington has greater commercial spaces abutting the street and sees greater vehicle traffic, State St is primarily residential in nature and therefore will benefit through investing in more welcoming pedestrian centric sidewalks to deepen the fabric of our shared walkable city. I realize this issue may come down to a cost benefit analysis, but please ask yourselves what the price of our shared history and sense of place is to those residents who live adjacent to downtown, or to those walking between the cultural hubs of the west end and downtown areas. Updating the old HDC policies on sidewalks to encompass a broader more inclusive and accurate mapping is a reasonable, rational, and ultimately beneficial step for our community. The discussion tonight provides the council a great opportunity to improve our sidewalk planning criteria, through both historic preservation of existing brick sidewalks and via a thoughtful expanded future use of brick sidewalks. Thank you

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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**Submitted on Tue, 06/21/2022 - 16:59**

**Full Name**

Suzanne Laurent

**Email**

[srlaurent@gmail.com](mailto:srlaurent@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Cabot Streer

**Address**

380 Ocean Road Unit 22

**Message**

Please keep the bricks on Cabot Street sidewalk to retain its character.

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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