

October 22, 2014

Historic Preservation Board  
Room 209 City Hall  
Portland, ME 04101

**RE:**  
DEERING STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Dear staff and members of the Board,

Thank you for your feedback at the workshop on June 18<sup>th</sup> regarding the Deering Street Reconstruction Project. The purpose of this letter is to update the Board on the project development since our meeting and to set the stage for the Board review in early November.

As previously described, the City Public Services Department is in the design and engineering phase for the Deering Street Reconstruction Project. The project budget is approximately \$1.4 million dollars, with City Capital Improvement Program funds for street and sewer reconstruction. The primary focus of the project is to replace the failing sewer system while providing a separated, parallel storm drain system. The Portland Water District (PWD) and Unitil also plan to replace their water and natural gas infrastructure, respectively. Because there will be multiple utility trenches in the roadway, the City plans to fully replace the pavement and gravel (across the full road width) to meet current City Standards. There will be limited improvements within the streetscape.

**PLAN UPDATES**  
**GRANITE CURBING**

In response to Board comments, the Public Services Department has authorized the use of “straight-backs” or “bugs” at driveway corners rather than the standard tip-downs used for other neighborhoods. Existing bugs that are in acceptable condition will be reset. In light of feedback from the Board, the Public Services Department is amenable to resetting the existing granite curbing along the existing street edge. Replacement curbing, if necessary, will be sourced to match the width and coloration of the existing curb. New granite curbing meeting the standards outlined in the Technical Manual will be used for proposed curb extensions. Curbing will be specified with a beveled edge to minimize chipping.

**CARRIAGE STEPS**

The easterly portion of the State to High Street block includes several historic carriage steps, which will be reset six inches from the back of curb to minimize damage from snow plowing activities.

**STORMWATER TREATMENT**

The Public Services Department is committed to a City-wide integration of “green” storm water components to pretreat and minimize runoff. In response to Board comments that the proposed treatment seemed lop-sided, the Department investigated the feasibility of adding curb extensions on the southern side of Deering Street. While these areas would not provide any storm water function, they would mirror the curb line on the opposite side of the street, particularly at key intersections. The City’s traffic engineer reviewed the turning movements and determined that narrowing the travel lane further is not feasible in these locations, particularly in consideration of snow loading. For this reason, the Department is moving forward with the locations originally proposed. As requested by the Board, the design team has prepared photo renderings showing several views of the planted curb extensions. Please reference the enclosed images.

**STREET TREES & ESPLANADE**

As described to the Board, the project proposes minimal changes to the established street trees and esplanade areas. On the eastern side of the State-to-High Street block where the sidewalk currently extends sixteen feet to the edge of street, the esplanade areas will be reestablished. Street trees will be added and existing spacing adjusted to achieve conformity with established esplanade areas. At this time, the plan does not include any tree removals. Because this project is coordinated with utility upgrades by Unitil and PWD, there may be

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additional tree removals required. All removals will be supervised and approved by the City's Arborist. Where impacts cannot be avoided, new street trees will be planted.

As described to the Board, most street trees along the length of Deering Street have been planted six inches above the sidewalk grade. At one time, this change in grade was mitigated by concrete edging at the esplanade. Much of this edging has been removed in conjunction with past sidewalk reconstruction efforts. It is our understanding that the Board would like to preserve the remaining concrete edging where possible. This will be noted on the plans.

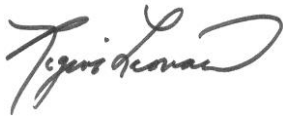
#### ACTIVITIES & SCHEDULE

The Public Services Department met with Deering Street residents on June 19<sup>th</sup> to review the utility improvements, construction activities and timeline. The majority of the meeting discussion focused upon utility coordination and potential traffic impacts.

The project schedule will be phased to coordinate improvements by the PWD and Utilil. Utilil's natural gas upgrades and Public Services' / PWD's roadway, sewer and water improvements are anticipated to begin in spring 2015. The Public Services Department intends to finalize plans in the coming month and issue bid documents in 2014 for start of work in spring 2015.

Thank you again for your time in providing input to the Deering Street Reconstruction Project. We look forward to discussing the project with you next month.

Sincerely and on behalf of our project team,



Regina S. Leonard  
*Maine Licensed Landscape Architect*

Woodard & Curran, Prime Consultant