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From: Judy Casteel <fairydogmom12@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 3:57 PM

To: Aldermen <Aldermen@jonesboro.org>

Cc: Donna Jackson <DJackson@jonesboro.org>; April Leggett <ALeggett@jonesboro.org>

Subject: Sidewalks in Industrial Park

Dear Council Members,

I write to ask you to vote not to change the current sidewalk ordinance but to keep it as currently written. Imperfect as it may be, it is at least a step in the right direction. Once again, it's about people, pride & progress.

The sidewalk committee, of which I was part, was formed because MAPC was being criticized by some citizens & council members for granting too many waivers as far back as 2015—yet here we are again, same premise, different folks. Please understand, I respect Mark Young & his work with the Chamber as well as understand the importance of industry, but I can't help but feel this is an attempted end run around what the sidewalk committee thoroughly discussed & approved by a majority vote in the spring of 2017.

The American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials states: "Providing safe places for people to walk is an essential responsibility of all government entities involved in constructing or regulating the construction of public right-of-way." We have that responsibility & need to take it seriously.

Sidewalks in the industrial park are very necessary. Not everyone chooses to use or has access to a vehicle. Many are increasingly bicycle riders as well as JETs riders who will be let out on the side of a busy highway with high rates of speed & already known for several bad accidents. Then they're expected to traverse ditches, marshy ground, railroad tracks, etc. to get to their jobs. That's just wrong & not a face I'd want to present to potential newcomers, industry or families.

We have a responsibility not only to think of the present but the future, laying plans for an ever increasing population & development. We are no longer a small community but a thriving city with huge growth potential.

We are aware we are already woefully behind in the sidewalk department as in several other quality of life areas. We must continue to move relentlessly forward on these matters or that, in fact, is what will make people as well as industry look elsewhere. Not the fact that we care for our populace enough to insist on their safety.

Once again, I see this as a common sense issue. Common sense would indicate there should be mutual respect between government & it's citizens, working together on issues & acting in their best interests of both, in order to not only survive but thrive. Please do not exempt industry from this important responsibility. In my humble opinion, it is not in the best interest of our city or our citizens.

Thank you all, not only for your time on this matter but always for your service to our city.

Warmly,
Judy Casteel

PS. As a side note: Every time something like this comes up & an attempt is made to circumvent a committee's work, people notice, I hear it often. This is the sort of thing that makes citizens hesitate to give of their time & effort to serve on a committee. Please just always keep that in the back of your minds.