







West Roxbury seniors look for clear sidewalks

By **Dan Atkinson / Staff Writer**

GateHouse News Service

Posted Dec 09, 2010 @ 04:33 AM


 Be the first of your friends to recommend this.
 




West Roxbury — The Parkway’s walkways will soon be covered in snow, and two groups are teaming up to make sure sidewalks are properly cleared.

“Everyone is concerned about snow clearance as an issue that impacts their lives,” said Rosa Carson of WalkBoston, a non-profit group that promotes improved walking conditions. “Folks are concerned the business district is not always well-cleared in winter.”

WalkBoston and AgeWell West Roxbury held a meeting last weekend to discuss sidewalk clearing and about 20 people showed up, Carson said. Janice Williams, of AgeWell, said she wanted to get the word out about helping elderly residents navigate their sidewalks.

“We want to motivate neighborhoods to look out for seniors in the neighborhood,” she said.

Carson said seniors at Saturday’s meeting were interested in creating a list of people willing to shovel their walks for pay. While they could afford someone shoveling, finding that person in the first place is difficult, Carson said.

“In the past, neighborhood teens would walk around and offer to shovel on the fly, that doesn’t happen anymore,” she said. “We’re trying to create a community resource for shoveling if you don’t have a niece or nephew.”

AgeWell and its parent agency Ethos would maintain the shoveling list.

For city sidewalks, Boston has specific shoveling requirements that not everyone follows, Carson said. Shovelers need to leave a 42-inch path, not just a person-wide area.

“If you have a walker or cane or don’t have good balance, then a narrow area is no good,” Carson said.

For similar reasons, uncleared curbs are also a “huge issue” for seniors, she said. Even if people have shoveled their sidewalks, they’ll ignore curb crossings. And not everyone shovels their sidewalks in the first place, Williams said.

“There are trouble spots where you have to walk down the street for three stores to get to one path that’s shoveled,” she said.

Massachusetts law used to distinguish between natural and unnatural accumulation of snow – businesses were not liable if someone fell down in snow that had fallen and was unshoveled. But in July, the Supreme Judicial Court removed that distinction and said people are liable for snow- and ice-related accidents in front of their properties.

Carson said she was unsure if that ruling would affect shoveling this winter, though. The ruling hasn’t been cited yet in any liability cases and no precedent has been set.






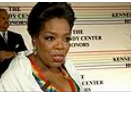
“None of the lawyers I’ve talked to are totally sure how it will play out,” Carson said. “It probably has some implications for liability, but no one seems to know what those implications are.”

The City of Boston will remind residents of shoveling requirements during its robocalls before snow emergencies, Carson said. It’s a start for what Carson said usually takes more than just one winter to improve.

“From our perspective, this kind of program to increase snow clearing is a multiyear effort,” she said.

Copyright 2010 West Roxbury Transcript. Some rights reserved

Popular Videos

					
Beware: Asian Carp Invasion	Ronni Chasen Murder: Similar Crime Investigated	What Do Americans Think About Tax Cuts?	Angelina Jolie plays tourist in NY	Bodies of US balloonists recovered	Kennedy Center salutes Oprah

Comments (0)
 Login or register to post a comment:
 Login
 Username:

Password:

[Forgot password](#)

[Register](#)

Email:

First Name:

Last Name:

I agree to the terms of use

I am over 13 years of age

NOTE: Your inbox must accept emails from "no-reply@gatehousemedia.com"



CREATE YOUR OWN BUDGET FRIENDLY BUNDLE
DIGITAL TV INTERNET PHONE

Now available  Check rates in **BOSTON**

[Contact us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) |

West Roxbury Transcript | 254 Second Ave., Needham, MA 02494 Roslindale, MA 02131

Copyright © 2006-2010 GateHouse Media, Inc. Some Rights Reserved.

Original content available for non-commercial use under a Creative Commons license, except where noted.

SEO by eLocalListing | Advertiser profiles | Cherrp Local | Roslindale Real estate | Find your Wicked Local Town