

## Village of Elm Grove – 2026 Pathways (2026 & 2028 Highland Drive)

**To:** Tom Harrigan, Village Manager, Village of Elm Grove  
Richard Paul Jr., Public Works Director, Village of Elm Grove

**From:** Travis Brush, Project Leader, KL Engineering

**Date:** November 10, 2025

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KL Engineering is pleased to submit the preliminary plans and estimate for the Highland Drive pathway between Watertown Plank Rd and Gebhardt Rd. This Preliminary Plan Narrative is intended to give an overview of the design intent, items of consideration, items to be addressed, and potential future coordination efforts. This document supplements the provided preliminary plan reviews to give further explanation on KL plan comments noted and provide additional design consideration insight.

### **General Notes**

- Based on contract scoping, the design for the Highland Drive pathway includes the planned 2026 segment from Juneau Blvd to Gebhardt Rd, along with the 2028 segment from Watertown Plank Rd to Juneau Blvd.
- A complete site review was complete on November 6, 2025 which included Richard Paul Jr. (Elm Grove DWP), Travis Brush (KL Eng. – PM), and Arielle Lewien (KL Eng. – Designer).
  - Preliminary linework was loaded within GPS rover and the entire path was walked discussing tree removals, drainage, grading limits, and other pathway features.
  - Notes from this walkthrough are included within the preliminary plan submittal – see plan and profile section.
  - There will be a large effort made to save as many existing trees as possible, but path construction will result in the removal of a large amount of vegetation currently in place.
    - KL team will be making additional survey efforts to better identify tree circumferences and can also review the project with the Elm Grove forester prior to project advertisement.
- In consistency with previously constructed pathways, all driveway aprons within the pathway project limits will be removed and replaced.
  - Assumed to replace all driveway culverts

### **Items of Interest**

- **Private Drain Discharges** – Will private drain pipes discharging within the right of way and project limits need to be addressed by the pathway plans, or will the homeowner be required to cut them back to their property line? Will Elm Grove be notifying property owners either way?
- **Tree Clearing** – While efforts will be made to save as many trees as possible, the final product of this project will result in the removal a large portion of trees and vegetative buffer for properties within the project limits. Tree removals can be reviewed with the Village forester.
- **Traffic Control** – Ensuring the safety of both contractors and motorists will be a critical consideration in selecting appropriate traffic control measures for this project. The corridor is characterized by a narrow roadway, lack of shoulders, and limited sight lines. KL recommends implementing either a “Road Closed to Thru Traffic” operation, restricting access to local residents only - or a one-way traffic configuration, where the southbound lane of Highland Drive would be closed throughout the corridor. KL will seek input from Village Public Safety officials, given their familiarity with local traffic patterns and operational experience in the area.

- **Roadway Easement** – KL has completed property research for the parcels located at 1245 and 1255 Highland Drive. According to the County GIS system, the original property boundaries for both parcels appear to extend to the centerline of Highland Drive. A title search was conducted for each parcel, which did not identify any formal, recorded highway easement. However, there is evidence suggesting the presence of a prescriptive highway easement:
  - KL located a plat of survey for 1255 Highland Drive, situated at the corner of Highland Drive and Victoria Circle (see Attachment A – Pg 1). The survey indicates ownership to the centerline of Highland Drive, with a dashed line shown 35 feet west of the centerline and found iron markers near the north and south property lines. While the statutory width of a highway easement is typically 66 feet (33 feet on each side), the subdivisions to the north and south of these parcels have platted the west half of Highland Drive at 35 feet, rather than the standard 33 feet.
  - Additionally, data from the County parcel viewer shows a discrepancy between the deeded and assessed areas for both parcels. For 1255 Highland Drive, the deeded area is 0.81 acres, while the assessed area is 0.68 acres. The presumed highway easement area (35 feet × 155 feet) equals approximately 0.12 acres, which aligns with the difference and suggests the owner is not being taxed for this portion. Similarly, for 1245 Highland Drive, the deeded area is 0.88 acres and the assessed area is 0.81 acres, with a presumed easement area of 0.07 acres—again consistent with the observed discrepancy.

KL requests that the Village review the provided information to assess whether the evidence of a prescriptive easement is sufficient to proceed, or if they prefer to engage the parcel owners to secure a formal easement or acquire the right-of-way in fee.

**Retaining Wall** – The preliminary design calls for non-structural retaining walls at a height of 4 ft or less between STA 124+25 – 132+00, and 135+00 – 136+75. Retaining walls were indicated due to steep slopes within the right of way which will reduce the impacts to property owners and eliminate the need for easements. There are a number of options to consider for retaining wall styles, starting with typical 8” landscape block style as seen on the existing path at the corner of Highland Drive and Gebhardt Rd (see Attachment B). An alternative option is a large block gravity wall - an example of these walls can be found here ([Gravity Retaining Walls with Large Precast Modular Blocks | Redi-Rock](#)).

Potential advantages of the large block wall are durability, less long-term maintenance, faster installation, lower cost due to less excavation and fewer materials, and a potentially better aesthetic with precast natural stone textures.

Within Attachment B, we’ve included pictures of the existing landscape wall at the corner of Highland Drive and Gebhardt, along with pictures of a recently completed Redi-Rock wall with some product information. Please review and indicate if the Village has a preference on type of wall and aesthetics.

### **Next Steps of Project**

- To maintain proposed project schedule, KL requests comments from Village review to be received no later than **Monday November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**.
- Public Information Meeting would potentially be scheduled for the **week of December 8<sup>th</sup>**.
  - **Please confirm date so notification letters can be issued**
- KL will continue coordination efforts with homeowners and Village to clarify details as we work towards 90% plan submittal (Scheduled for end of February).
- Anticipated bid advertisement is in March of 2026.

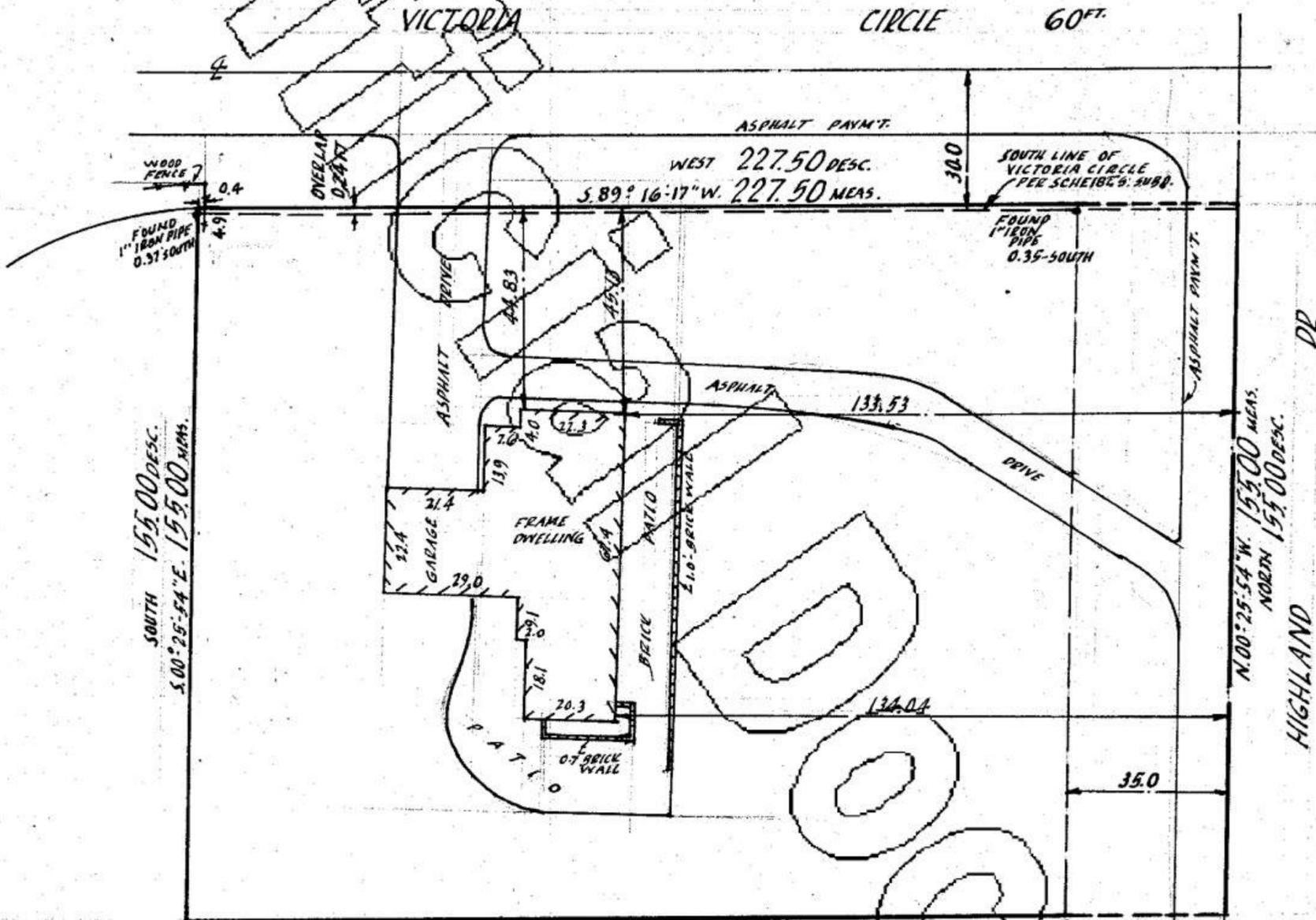
Plat of Survey

KNOWN AS 1255 HIGHLAND DRIVE, IN THE VILLAGE OF ELM GROVE, WISCONSIN. BEING PART OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 23, TOWNSHIP 7 NORTH, RANGE 20 EAST, IN THE VILLAGE OF ELM GROVE, WAUKESHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN, BOUNDED AND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCING IN THE EAST LINE AND 340.00 FEET NORTH OF THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 23, TOWNSHIP 7 NORTH, RANGE 20 EAST; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID EAST LINE 155.00 FEET; THENCE WEST PARALLEL TO THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID 1/4 SECTION 227.50 FEET; THENCE SOUTH PARALLEL TO THE SAID EAST LINE 155.00 FEET; THENCE EAST PARALLEL TO THE SAID SOUTH LINE 227.50 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.

AUGUST 18, 1995

FIRSTAR BANK MILWAUKEE, N.A.

SURVEY NO. 156744



For reference only, not for re-sale.

N. 89°16'17" E. 227.50 MEAS. EAST 227.50 DESC.



I Certify that I have surveyed the above described property (Property), and the above map is a true representation thereof and shows the size and location of the Property, its exterior boundaries, the location and dimensions of all visible structures thereon, boundary fences, apparent easements and roadways and visible encroachments, if any. This survey is made for the exclusive use of the present owners of the Property, and also those who purchase, mortgage, or guarantee the title thereto, within one (1) year from date hereof.

Donald C. Chaput



national survey & engineering

4125 north 124th street • brookfield, wisconsin, 53008-0444 phone 414 / 781-1000



**ATTACHMENT B - RETAINING WALL )**



**HIGHLAND DRIVE/GEBHARDT ROAD**



**HIGHLAND DRIVE/GEBHARDT ROAD**

**ATTACHMENT B - RETAINING WALL )**

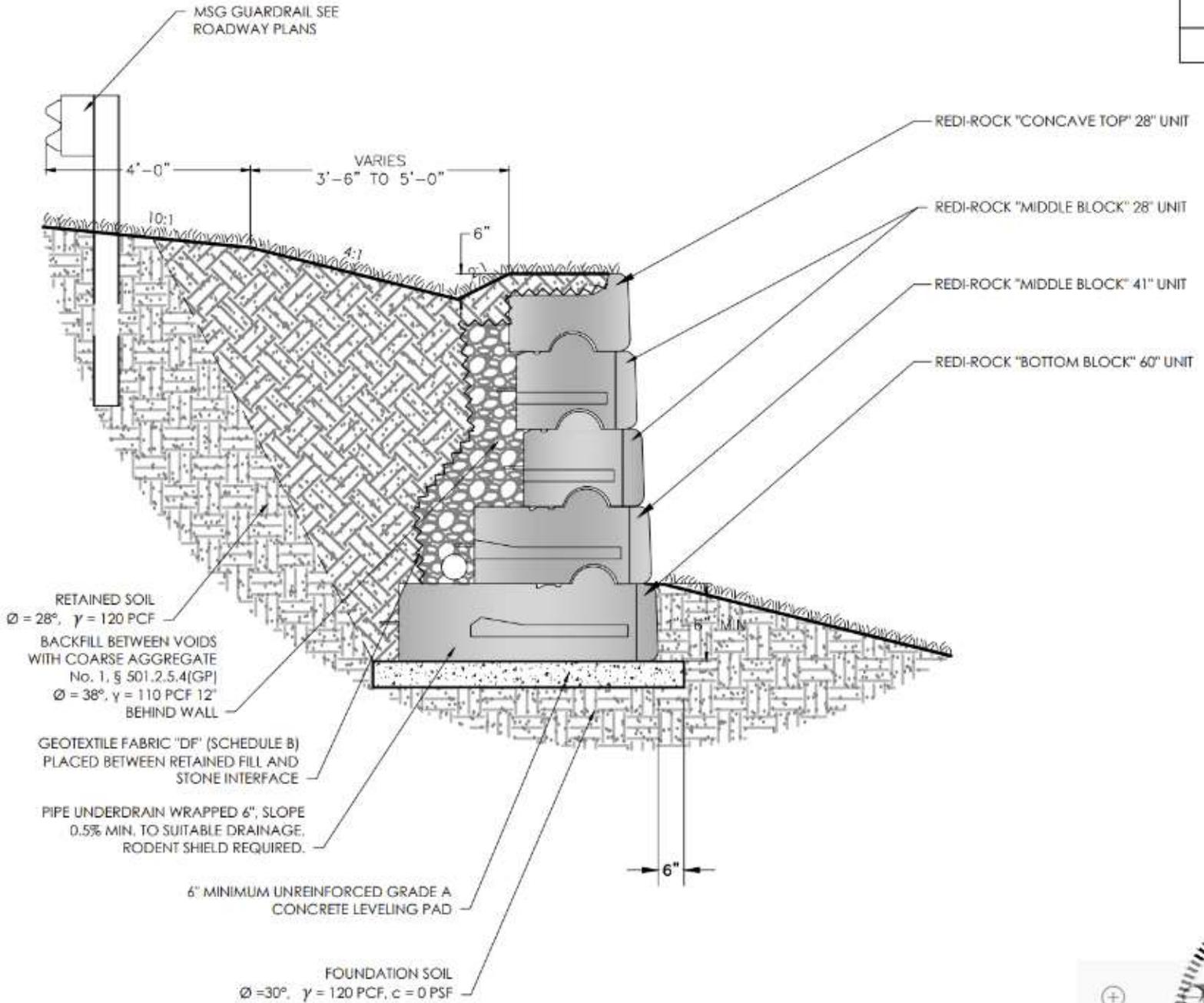


**REDI-ROCK WALL (LEDGESTONE PATTERN)**



**REDI-ROCK WALL (LEDGESTONE PATTERN)**

**ATTACHMENT B - RETAINING WALL )**



## ATTACHMENT B - RETAINING WALL )



### Ledgestone

Ledgestone blocks give retaining walls a random, stacked stone look. Because they're made using architectural-grade precast concrete, the level of detail is outstanding.

[See More Ledgestone](#)



### Cobblestone

Cobblestone blocks have a great quarried stone aesthetic. Each one-ton block features the appearance of six smaller blocks, making it a great look for any size project.

[See More Cobblestone](#)



### Limestone

Limestone blocks have a natural split limestone texture that beautifully mimics real quarried limestone. The massive size of each block face gives walls an impressive scale.

[See More Limestone](#)



### Kingstone

Striking a balance between the scale of Limestone and relief of Ledgestone, Kingstone appears weathered by water and time like the crown of a natural stone outcropping.

[See More Kingstone](#)



### Smooth

When you're looking for something a little more modern, the Redi-Rock Smooth texture with its crisp, clean lines provides the sophistication you're after.

[See More Smooth](#)

<https://www.redi-rock.com/textures/textures-for-retaining-walls/>