

City Of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board
Thursday, May 5, 2022

151 Martin Street, City Commission Room 205, Birmingham, MI

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, May 5, 2022. Chair Doug White convened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

A. Rollcall

Present: Chair Doug White; Board Members David Hocker, Anthony Long, Tom Peard, Victoria Policicchio, Michael St. Germain; Alternate Board Member Amanda Fishburn; Student Representative Ben Rosenfield

Absent: Board Member Joe Zane; Alternate Board Member Mark Doolittle; Student Representative Isabela Betanzos

Administration:

Brooks Cowan, Senior Planner
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist
Scott Grewe, Operations Commander
Jim Surhigh, Consulting City Engineer

F&V: Julie Kroll

MKSK: Brad Strader

B. Approval of MMTB Minutes of April 7, 2022

Mr. Hocker asked that, under 'G. Meeting Open to the Public for Items not on the Agenda' on page three, the following be added:

- "Mr. Hocker also suggested paving the former walkway along Oak in lieu of the existing grass to at least accommodate a safe footing in the event of an errant walker."
- "Mr. Hocker noted that excessive overflow ponding on the south side of Raynale between Suffield and Fairfax should be investigated in tandem with the improvements to Westwood Street."

Motion by Mr. Peard

Seconded by Mr. Long to approve the MMTB Minutes of April 7, 2022 as amended.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: White, Peard, Hocker, Long, Policicchio, St. Germain, Fishburn

Nays: None

C. Introductions & Chair Comments

D. Review of the Agenda

E. New Business

1. Public Hearing: Westwood Rd Improvements, Raynale to Oak

Motion by Mr. Hocker

Seconded by Mr. Long to receive and file the email from Kristen Reece dated May 3, 2022.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: White, Peard, Hocker, Long, Policicchio, St. Germain, Fishburn

Nays: None

SP Cowan reviewed the purview of the Multi-Modal Transportation Board for both the Board and the public. He asked both the Board and the public to restrict their comments and discussion to the focus of the present discussion, which was street width recommendations.

Mr. Strader presented the item.

In reply to the Board, Mr. Strader stated:

- The City developed a street width standard of 26 feet in order to calm traffic, reduce flooding and stormwater runoff, and reduce pedestrian crossing distances;
- Reducing a road from 31 feet to 26 feet would reduce stormwater runoff by about 16%;
- The use of bump outs have also reduced pedestrian crossing distances; and,
- If the Board considers a deviation from the 26 foot width, they should explore parking on the street, traffic speeds, resident input, and other potential factors.

In reply to the Board, CCE Surhigh explained:

- A 26 foot wide street with parked vehicles on both sides would generally require an oncoming vehicle to yield to another oncoming vehicle in order to continue down the street;
- Glenhurst was not recommended for narrowing by the Commission in response to resident comment that the wider street was not causing issues in the area; and,
- This area of Raynale was ranked by the City as one of the streets most presently in need of infrastructure updates.

Mr. Peard complimented Staff on the report for this item.

Public Comment

Corey Holter, resident of Westwood, said the street has no speeding or flooding problems. He noted there is also a school bus route on Westwood, which could allow for a deviation from the width standards according to section 4C of the street design standards. He said he would like Westwood's width maintained and no bump outs added.

George Stern, Dan Lemont, Melissa Miller Farr, Beverly Prior, Gerald Van Wyke, Terry Matlen,

Kimberly Romanosky, Brock Rooney, Joe Hoegler, Denis Zimmer, and David Glass, residents of Westwood, also spoke in favor of maintaining Westwood's width.

A number of residents commented that the aesthetic of the wider street was a significant part of Westwood's appeal.

Messrs. Stern and Rooney added they were against adding bump outs.

Ms. Miller Farr said Westwood residents could provide a petition against the project if that would be helpful for the City to see.

Ms. Prior said making it so that oncoming traffic has to yield on Westwood would make the street less safe.

Mr. Van Wyke said Westwood and Glenhurst would remain 31 feet at Maple since they begin outside Birmingham and said that was a reason to maintain the width at 31 feet. He also concurred with Ms. Prior.

Ms. Romanosky noted that Westwood dead-ends at Redding, meaning there is limited pass-through traffic on the street.

Mr. Rooney noted that the sewer updates would be separating the storm and sanitary sewers, likely resulting in even less run-off concerns.

Mr. Glass asked whether the 16% reduction in run-off would be enough to reduce flooding in other areas of the City. He also asked whether there are any pedestrian safety issues on Westwood that necessitate its narrowing or the addition of bump-outs. He said that if the narrowing of Westwood would benefit residents in other areas of the City, those residents should help pay for the assessments for the project.

Seeing no further comment, Chair White returned discussion to the Board.

Mr. Long noted that the City developed criteria for ranking streets in need of infrastructure updates, and said residents could watch or read the presentation to gain more information about the process.

Ms. Policicchio noted that different neighborhoods in Birmingham have different characteristics, and said that maintaining the width of Westwood would help the area retain its particular character.

Ms. Fishburn said the stated lack of a flooding issue or a traffic issue were strong arguments against narrowing Westwood.

A number of Board members thanked the public for providing comment.

At the prompting of Mr. Peard, there was brief discussion of potentially recommended bump outs without recommending a narrowing of Westwood.

Mr. Peard noted that the non-verbal response from the public in the room indicated that they were not in favor of adding bump outs.

Motion by Mr. Peard

Seconded by Mr. Long to make a motion for the Multi-Modal Transportation Board to provide recommendations to the City Commission that the following streets be reconstructed with ADA compliant sidewalk ramps at each intersection, updated crosswalks meeting City standards, and further, to construct the new streets at the proposed widths as noted for each:

- A. Reconstructing Raynale Street at 31 feet wide (matching existing) between N. Glenhurst Drive and the western City limits;**
- B. Reconstructing Westwood Drive at 31 feet wide (matching existing) between Raynale Street and Oak Street; and,**
- C. Reconstructing Oak Street at 38 feet wide between N. Glenhurst Drive and Westwood Street, and at 31 feet wide between Westwood Street and the western City limits.**

Public Comment

John Prior, resident of Westwood, said he was against both narrowing Westwood and adding bump outs.

SP Cowan clarified that bump outs were not addressed in the motion.

In reply to Ms. Policicchio, CCE Surhigh clarified that City-standard crosswalks do not automatically include bump outs.

In reply to Ms. Miller Farr, SP Cowan confirmed that this motion, if passed, would recommend the Commission maintain Westwood's current width.

Mr. Rooney said the section of Oak address in the motion should not be narrowed.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: White, Peard, Hocker, Long, Policicchio, St. Germain, Fishburn

Nays: None

F. Unfinished Business

1. Crosswalk Markings and Location Standards

SP Cowan and Mr. Strader introduced the item.

Mr. St. Germain said he wanted to see the City taking a proactive approach to repairing or adding crosswalks in presently unsafe areas, and said he did not see that adequately captured in this document.

In reply, Mr. Strader said the document was intended to prescribe a proactive approach to adding

or repairing crosswalks. He said that intent could be emphasized when the standards are presented to the Commission. He said recommending the addition of crosswalks to areas near parks or schools could also be included as part of the Multi-Modal plan review.

OC Grewe stated that faded neighborhood crosswalks are repainted once a year, and that this year's round should be complete by the end of June.

Mr. Hocker stated 'public schools' should be changed to 'schools' on page 43 of the flowchart.

Motion by Ms. Policicchio

Seconded by Mr. Long to recommend to City Commission that the City of Birmingham adopt the Birmingham MI Crosswalk Installation Flow Chart as indicated on Exhibit A in the packet to serve as a guideline for determining the location of crosswalk installations, with the integration of the changes recommended by the Multi-Modal Transportation Board at its May 5, 2022 meeting.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: White, Peard, Hocker, Long, Policicchio, St. Germain, Fishburn

Nays: None

2. S. Eton Bike Lane Study Session

SP Cowan introduced the item. Ms. Kroll presented the item.

In reply to Ms. Fishburn, Ms. Kroll confirmed that implementing these recommendations would also result in traffic calming along Eton.

In reply to Ms. Fishburn, SP Cowan said that a prior presentation on traffic calming measures could be included with this item moving forward to help the public understand the topic.

Mr. St. Germain spoke in favor of pylons or other physical barriers along the bike lane on S. Eton, saying he believed they have been instrumental in increasing use of the bike lane.

SP Cowan said the item would be brought back for further review.

3. Multi-Modal Transportation Day

SP Cowan summarized the item.

Motion by Mr. St. Germain

Seconded by Mr. Peard to schedule a special meeting of the Multi-Modal Transportation Board at 12 p.m. on May 19, 2022.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: White, Peard, Hocker, Long, Policicchio, St. Germain, Fishburn

Nays: None

G. Meeting Open to the Public for Items not on the Agenda

H. Miscellaneous Communications

I. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the Board adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Brooks Cowan, Senior Planner



Laura Eichenhorn
City Transcriptionist

APPROVED