

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2015
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, July 9, 2015. Chairperson Johanna Slanga convened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

A. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Johanna Slanga; Board Members Stuart Bordman, Andy Lawson, Michael Surnow, Amanda Warner; Student Representative Daniel Evans

Absent: Board Members Vionna Adams, Lara Edwards; Student Representative Rebecca Mendel

Administration: Mark Clemence, Deputy Chief of Police
Jana Ecker, Planning Director
Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

Also Present: Mike Labadie from Fleis & Vandenbrink ("F&V"),
Transportation Engineering Consultants

B. INTRODUCTIONS (none)

C. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MEETING OF MAY 7, 2015

Moved and seconded to approve the Minutes of May 7, 2015 as presented.

Motion carried, 5-0.

E. BOWERS ST. RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PARKING

Mr. Clemence informed the group that Mr. Brian Renner and Ms. Barbara McIntosh, on behalf of the residents of Bowers St. between Columbia St. and S. Eton St., request Residential Permit Parking on both sides of the street.

There are 26 residences on Bowers St. between Columbia St. and S. Eton St. According to Mr. Renner, 24 of the residences are occupied. All 24 occupied residences were contacted in an attempt to examine a petition requesting Residential Permit Parking. Of the 24, three could not be reached (13%), one resident did not want Residential Permit Parking (4%) and 20 were in favor of Residential Permit Parking (83%).

The residents' petition is for Residential Permit Parking on both sides of Bowers St. between Columbia St. and S. Eton St. (1800-1900 block) at all times.

The residents' request is within City ordinance and City guidelines for Residential Permit Parking.

Mr. Clemence said in response to Chairperson Slanga's concern about making a decision on Bowers as an independent street that City policy is each street is independent if they present a petition signed by 75% of the residents. The MMTB makes a recommendation to the City Commission and the Commission has the final vote.

The chairperson opened discussion to the public at 6:12 p.m.

Mr. Brian Renner, 1971 Bowers, presented photos of cars parked all along his street. He stated the problem has continuously become worse. It is extremely difficult for emergency vehicles to get through plus visitors to the residences have no place to go.

Ms. Barbara McIntosh, 1945 Bowers, said residents have started to notice that parking on the street has escalated. Cars begin to park on her street at 8 a.m. and it is difficult for residents to get in and out of their driveways. Most of the parkers are employees of the Robot Garage and Griffin Claw Brewery.

Mr. Larry Bertollini, 1275 Webster, spoke in support of permit parking on Bowers. The residential streets should not be a parking lot for businesses.

It was discussed there is no plan at this time to add public parking to the Rail District. Ms. Ecker said Griffin Claw employees are required as a condition of their Special Land Use Permit to have their employees park in the Big Rock parking deck. Management is in the process of dealing with employees who are not following that direction.

Ms. Warner thought the board should honor the residents' needs, but it should be recognized by the City Commission there is a parking issue that needs to be addressed.

Motion by Ms. Warner

Seconded by Mr. Bordman to approve Residential Permit Parking on Bowers St. between Columbia St. and S. Eton St. (1800-1900 block) for all hours of the day.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Warner, Bordman, Lawson, Slanga, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Edwards

Mr. Larry Bertollini made one last comment. Restaurants are allowed to have outdoor dining and no off-street parking is required. He hopes that will be brought up in front of the City Commission.

F. COLE ST. TRAFFIC ISSUES

Mr. Clemence said that on June 12, 2015, Mr. Romel Llarena wrote a letter to Mayor Sherman outlining his concern over traffic safety issues on Cole St. The letter was forwarded to the Police Dept. for a response.

The Police Dept. conducted a speed/volume count on Cole St. from June 23, 2015 to June 26, 2015. The speed/volume count took place on Cole St., between Torry and S. Eton and was as accurate as possible in relation to Mr. Llarena's address on Cole St. (1808 Cole). An analysis of the speed volume count showed that the 85th percentile was 27 mph for both WB and EB traffic. The volume also showed that the count was less than 1,000 cars per day. There are approximately sixty residences on Cole St. between S. Eton and Torry alone. Common engineering practice is to assume two cars per residence that drive at least twice a day, up to five trips a day.

In his letter, Mr. Llarena brings up several ideas which the Police Dept. opposes on how to address his traffic safety issue. The Police Dept. is committed to the safety and welfare of all citizens in the City and will continue to work radar/deploy speed board on Cole St. to address the issue of speeding vehicles.

Mr. Llanena said the area is experiencing extreme prosperity and the businesses are doing quite well. The problem is that people use Cole St. as a cut-through to

the commercial district and some of them have no respect for the speed limits. Mr. Clemence noted that the Police Dept. has conducted speed data by radar and the overall result shows 27 mph. In this case for the four days 14 cars were going between 36 and 40 mph and one car was going between 41 and 45 mph out of 2,747 cars. Mr. Labadie observed that from his perspective right now this is working great.

Public comments were taken at 6:45 p.m.

Mr. Llarena said he does not agree with when the data was collected. His biggest concerns are when he is home and the children are out playing; for instance on a weekend. He pointed out that Cole St. is a straight shot from Adams Rd. right to the commercial area.

Mr. Clemence agreed to provide Mr. Llarena with his report so that he has the documentation for future reference. Also, Mr. Llarena's letter will be sent to the City Commission.

**G. S. ETON RD. VILLA AVE. TO LINCOLN AVE.
MULTI-MODAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. O'Meara recalled that at their May meeting the MMTB discussed the above corridor. City staff had conducted a study regarding the high demand for parking in the area of the Griffin Claw Brewery located at Bowers St. After reviewing three potential options, the board had agreed that leaving the parking as it is currently appears to be the best option.

Staff was asked to study the corridor closer to consider possible pedestrian improvements, improving sight distance at corners, and installing white lines to delineate a parking lane. Below is the information that has been assembled to date:

Crosswalk Improvements

Pedestrian and bicycle counts were taken. By far the most significant count was the Bowers St. intersection on Friday evening from 6 to 9 p.m. The counts imply that there could be a large number of people patronizing the Griffin Claw that are either walking from the neighborhood, or parking on Bowers St. or further south.

Counts taken of the other intersections were substantially lower. The next most significant count was taken at Hazel St. from 4 to 6 p.m. This count may also be a result of traffic headed to the Griffin Claw.

Pedestrian traffic at this time, while present, is relatively small. While the Bowers St. location may have sufficient numbers to justify an improvement such as a

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bump-out, given the parking situation in this area, staff believes such a decision would be premature and not recommended. Ms. Ecker thought they may want to look at the pedestrian counts again after the residential permit parking on Bowers goes in.

The Multi-Modal Transportation Plan suggested that sharrows be added to S. Eton Rd. in areas where a bike lane could not be added. Since no bike lanes are being suggested at this time, the plan being prepared by F&V will include sharrows.

Ms. Warner felt the recommendations that are made now should be lower cost. Perhaps the board should be looking towards a long-term solution with incremental changes.

Corner Sight Distance Improvements

The City has received comments that it is difficult to enter S. Eton Rd. from certain streets due to sight distance problems around parked cars. One way to assist in this regard is to enlarge the existing No Parking zones near key intersections. Typically, no vehicles should park within 20 ft. of a crosswalk. To expand that area further, the City could paint curbs yellow and install No Parking signs (Here to Corner) to a point 40 ft. from the crosswalks at key locations.

It is recommended that expanded No Parking zones be installed at:

Hazel St. – SW Corner

Bowers St. – NW and SW corners

Haynes St. – NW corner

To help visibility at the intersections by installing yellow lines the consensus was to use the American Assoc. of State Highway and Transportation Officials determination number for residential streets when setting the length of the yellow zones.

Demarcated Parking Lanes

Providing a white line on higher volume roads has proven successful in reducing overall speeds. The white line helps make the road feel narrower. However, since most of the blocks have asphalt lanes surrounded by right lanes made of concrete, the road already has a demarcation in this area. The white line may not make much difference in these areas. From Webster Ave. to Lincoln Ave. (two blocks), the entire width of S. Eton Rd. has been resurfaced with asphalt. On these two blocks, marking the parking lanes could be beneficial. It is recommended that the white solid parking lane lines be added to S. Eton Rd. from Webster Ave. to Lincoln Ave.

At 7:16 p.m. the chairperson opened up public discussion.

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Ms. Alice Cole, 1974 Hazel, noted that delivery trucks to Griffin Claw block the street and three times they have stopped ambulances from going by.

Mr. Mike Kopner, 1351 Bennaville, commented that he fully supports keeping parking on both sides of the street. He is troubled with having a bike lane on only one side of the street. One thing that can be done to slow things down on S. Eton is to put in more stop signs. He suggested Hanes, Hazel, and Holland. Also, make pedestrian crossings much more conspicuous and do everything possible to make it more comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists to travel the city.

Mr. Larry Bertollini brought in a letter from a resident on E. Melton who is in favor of the bike lane and the curb bump-outs. He would like to see a better solution with regard to pulling out on Eton Rd. from Bowers with the cars parked there on both sides. He is not completely sold they should give up a dedicated bike lane on the west side.

Mr. Mike Kopner disagreed with Mr. Bertollini. In his view the only good bike lane is a protected bike lane between the cyclist and the road. He thinks managing traffic speeds and flow is the key to safety.

Ms. Pat Dobosenski, 1769 Bowers, said having the yellow line at intersections is a great idea even though it takes away some parking spots. She noticed that at the Robot Garage where it is supposed to be shared parking the sign says Lego Parking Only and it doesn't indicate there is evening parking for Griffin Claw.

Mr. Romel Llarena, 1809 Cole, commented it is very difficult to cross Eton St. at Cole. Maybe the board is not seeing the amount of pedestrian flow because people don't want to cross in that area.

Mr. Brian Renner did not understand why no parking is allowed in front of Griffin Claw. No Parking signs along Eton St. are key especially in the winter because the yellow lines disappear. Mr. O'Meara explained the City requested no parking in front of Griffin Claw because it is an intersection and they don't want parked cars right next to a crosswalk.

In response to Mr. Bordman, Mr. O'Meara said he is not sure where the right spot would be to implement flashing signals at the pedestrian crossings.

Ms. Warner observed the board doesn't know what future growth will dictate, but for now they can implement some painting and signage as a first step. Discussion considered whether bump-outs and flashing signals are the correct approach right now.

Motion by Ms. Warner

Seconded by Mr. Bordman that the Multi-Modal Transportation Board, having studied the S. Eton Rd. corridor from Villa Ave. to Lincoln Ave., recommends the following at this time:

- 1. To provide the largest capacity, as well as create a consistent, predictable driving environment, on-street parking should remain as is.**
- 2. Sharrows should be installed for both directions, to encourage motorists to share the road with bicyclists.**
- 3. Extended yellow curbed No Parking zones and signs should be installed at the following locations:**
 - SW Corner of Hazel St.**
 - NW and SW corners of Bowers St.**
 - NW corner of Haynes St.**
- 4. Paint white solid parking lines on S. Eton from Villa to Lincoln.**

At 7:55 p.m. Chairperson Slanga called for input on the motion from members of the public.

Mr. Larry Bertollini thought the motion should include that this matter will be revisited in the near future. He questioned why bump-outs are not important here. Further he reiterated that restaurants should be required to provide off-street parking for their outdoor dining. Lastly, no parking signs should not be put up everywhere.

Mr. Brian Renner disagreed about not putting up signage. Some people don't know what the yellow lines mean.

Motion carried, 4-1.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Warner, Bordman, Lawson, Surnow

Nays: Slanga

Absent: Adams, Edwards

Chairperson Slanga added a comment to the City Commission that the MMTB intends to revisit S. Eton Rd. at a later time in regards to the bump-outs.

H. W. MAPLE RD. RESURFACING PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. O'Meara reported there is a petitioning process going on now by people who would like to see this question put on the ballot in March. It is the City's intent to wait for Oak St. to be finished so the traffic patterns on the west side of the City are back to normal as much as possible. By about October 1 they will have

finished the counting that measures the conditions as they exist with the four-lane road. Then they will change to a three-lane road in early October. People will have a chance to acclimate to that for the winter and the same type of counting will be done in Spring. Then a comparison will be made between the two.

I. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mr. Mike Kopner asked the board to consider the following matters:

- He cannot understand why the intersection of Elm and Bowers is not a four-way stop.
- A three-way stop sign is needed at Adams and Ruffner.
- There is a need to connect Whole Foods Market for pedestrians and cyclists. Find a way to construct a tunnel under Maple Rd. from Villa.
- The area next to the railroad tracks should not be used for automobile traffic, but reserved for pedestrians.
- Widen the crosswalk at N. Eton where it crosses Maple Rd. so that it is more conspicuous.
- Consider a long-term plan to brick some of the residential streets. Brick would have a lot of advantages because it slows traffic and lasts longer.

Mr. Labadie introduced Ms. Julie Kroll, a senior traffic engineer who is a new employee with his company.

J. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS (none)

K. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the chairperson adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer