

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2016
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, February 2, 2016.

In the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, it was agreed that Ms. Slanga would take over the chair.

Chairperson Johanna Slanga convened the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Daniel Rontal, Johanna Slanga, Michael Surnow

Absent: Chairperson Vionna Adams; Vice-Chairperson Andy Lawson

Administration: Lauren Chapman, Asst. City Planner
Jana Ecker, Planning Director
Scott Grewe, Operations Commander
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

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

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Lauren Chapman, Asst. Planner for the City, was introduced.

3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MEETING OF DECEMBER 1, 2016

Motion by Mr. Surnow

Seconded by Mr. Rontal to approve the Minutes of December 1, 2016 as presented.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Surnow, Rontal, Edwards, Folberg, Slanga

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Lawson

**5. SAXON DR. AND LATHAM RD.
Crosswalk Installation**

Mr. O'Meara recalled that in 2015, the Police Dept. was approached with complaints about traffic volumes and speeds on Saxon Rd., located in the southwest corner of Birmingham. Residents expressed concerns with the amount of traffic as well as the speeds that occur in that area. It is a wide right-of-way, and the street acts as an extension of Fourteen Mile Rd. so it tends to lend itself to speeds faster than the 25 mph speed limit.

Saxon Dr. is a border street, with Beverly Hills sharing jurisdiction of this road. Working with representatives from both sides of the street, the City of Birmingham took the lead in discussing the various options with the interested residents. By the middle of 2015, various issues and ideas were explored, and it was decided that the residents would petition the City for a complete road reconstruction. Over 50% of the owners on both sides endorsed the idea, and after receiving an information booklet a neighborhood meeting was held in the summer of 2016. After the meeting, enough residents changed their minds, and decided to no longer support the project. Cost was a major factor.

Currently, there is no sidewalk connection for pedestrians to cross Saxon Dr., other than at Southfield Rd. The intersection is noted in the Master Plan as a location within Phase 3. It is provided as a suggested improvement, as Latham Rd. is listed as part of a Phase 3 neighborhood connector route. Not only would the improvement help improve the crossing for pedestrians, the pavement markings should help encourage more responsible speeds on Saxon Dr. from motorists passing through the area.

The Beverly Hills Village Board has already signed an agreement approving this project, and their commitment to 50% of the cost, based on the cost estimate of about \$21,000.. Staff recommends making some storm sewer changes where needed and adding painted crosswalks that would encourage drivers to watch for pedestrians and potentially slow down.

If the Multi-Modal Board endorses this project, it will be forwarded to the City Commission for final approval of the funds. The Engineering Dept. will then add it

to the 2017 Concrete Sidewalk program contract documents, and oversee the construction of this improvement during the 2017 construction season.

Dr. Rontal did not necessarily think the crosswalk lines would slow cars down. Mr. O'Meara said the residents originally asked for a stop sign but it wasn't warranted by traffic volume. If residents aren't able to help pay for more substantial improvements, this is what can be recommended. A crosswalk is an attempt to show that cars should slow down for pedestrians at this intersection. Ms. Edwards suggested adding two white lines and a middle yellow dotted line in order to get cars into a more narrow space on Saxon. However, it was noted that at 22 ft. the road is already narrow, and additionally residents have often said a line down the middle would make the road feel like a major street.

Mr. O'Meara indicated that the residents felt a crosswalk would help to calm traffic. He noted the Master Plan calls for a crossing improvement at that intersection.

Board members were in agreement that installing crosswalks would not slow the traffic and alleviate the residents' concerns. Mr. Labadie did not think painting the road would help too much. As an inexpensive solution he suggested adding a couple of flashing speed limit signs. Commander Grewe said one sign could be budgeted for this stretch of road, but only for westbound traffic.

Consensus was to go back to Beverly Hills and the residents and offer at least a speed sign for the westbound traffic and see if that helps. Perhaps Beverly Hills would be willing to split the cost of a speed sign for eastbound traffic. Staff was encouraged to discuss the speed sign, paint markings, etc., with both Beverly Hills and the residents.

6. MAPLE RD. AND S. ETON RD. Crosswalk Improvements

Ms. Ecker offered background. The Ad Hoc Rail District Committee was set up by the City Commission to look at a number of issues in the Rail District. They spent a year studying what is going on in that area. Tonight the board will specifically focus on the intersection of Maple Rd. and Eton Rd. The recommendations provide a way to shorten the entire width to cross Eton Rd.. A splitter island in the middle between the right and left turn lanes is suggested along with enhanced crosswalk markings, expanding the sidewalk, and changing the lane configuration. Board members agreed they don't want to encourage people to stand on the splitter island in the middle of Eton Rd.. Ms. Ecker thought that the island calms traffic, and she doesn't imagine too many pedestrians will stand on it because they can get across because of all of the

green time on Maple Rd. She likes the idea of dotted lines to direct cars coming off of westbound Maple Rd. and going south on Eton Rd.

Commander Grewe said for westbound traffic stopped on the east side of the intersection he would suggest moving the stop line further west so when a vehicle makes a left turn to go south on Eton Rd. the radius isn't so sharp. Mr. Labadie noted the stop bar needs to be located so that drivers can see the signal. Chairperson Slanga cautioned that signage should be placed far enough back so people will know which lane to be in to make their turn.

Board members recommended that Mr. Labadie should study this further to ensure large trucks can make a nice clean turn; look at adding dotted lines to show the left track turning radius coming from westbound Maple Rd. south on Eton Rd.; also study moving the westbound Maple Rd. stop bar location and possibly extending the median at that same location. Additionally, study how to accommodate bikes through that intersection. The recommendation from the Ad Hoc Rail District Study Committee was to widen the sidewalks from 5 ft. to 8 ft. on the whole block of Eton Rd. going south. The board was in agreement.

7. MAPLE RD. AND SOUTHFIELD RD. Crosswalk Improvements

Mr. O'Meara recounted some safety issues that have occurred over the years at this intersection. In 2015 safety issues at the Maple Rd. & Southfield Rd. intersection were studied by the City's traffic consulting firm, Fleis & Vandenbrink ("F&V"). Lane configuration changes to Maple Rd. were approved, and subsequently put into place in October as a trial, and later approved for permanent status in June, 2016. During the studies, it became clear that the crash patterns at this intersection are such that safety could be improved if the intersection was relocated further west, allowing for the creation of a 90° intersection.

In 2016, it was determined that the relocation of this intersection may qualify for federal funding. Further, it was decided that since Maple Rd. is planned for reconstruction further east (in downtown), if safety funding was awarded, it would be an appropriate time to address both areas within the same construction project. The City directed F&V to apply for federal funding for this potential safety improvement. The application is currently pending, and should be announced in May of 2017.

In December, Commissioner DeWeese expressed concerns about the crosswalk that appear similar to those that have been raised in the past. The speed of northbound right turning vehicles continues to be an issue. The matter was referred to F&V in preparation for a review by the MMTB. Since a major change will require significant spending, and since a federal funding application is currently pending, F&V suggested a change in

signing as a possible small step while awaiting the status of the intersection. The suggested newer signage should alert drivers better than the current sign.

Ms. Folberg suggested changing the signal so that pedestrians cannot cross when people are allowed to turn right. Also, the "WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS" sign blocks the view of pedestrians. He was not in favor of creating delays that would back up traffic.

Motion by Ms. Edwards

Seconded by Ms. Folberg to direct staff to change the existing WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS WHILE TURNING at the Maple Rd. and Southfield Rd. intersection to updated R10-15 signs (TURNING VEHICLES YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS) for eastbound Maple Rd. and northbound Southfield Rd. Reposition the new sign so it does not block the view of pedestrians. Also, add reflector material around the sign so it will stand out.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Folberg, Rontal, Slanga, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Lawson

8. CROSSWALK STANDARDS UPDATE

Mr. O'Meara recalled the MMTB discussed the above topic three times in 2016. A suggested recommendation was agreed to at the meeting of November 2, 2016, and forwarded to the City Commission for approval at their meeting of November 21, 2016. After discussing the matter, the Commission referred it back to the MMTB for further study.

The comments from the commissioners can be summarized as follows:

- Definitions for various road types and conditions need to be very clear so that the outcome is clear.
- The suggested variance for spacing between the bars was too great.
- Information about how much the City pays to maintain crosswalks was requested.
- The use of 24 in. wide bars (instead of 12 in.) was preferred. It was noted that other cities such as Royal Oak and Ferndale are making more use of the 24 in. bars.

Mr. O'Meara said it is important to note that if 24 in. wide bars become the standard, generally existing painted markings will remain as-is until the pavement in the intersection is being replaced or resurfaced.,. Moving to a 24 in. wide bar as the standard in all locations would translate into a slow, gradual increase as crosswalk markings are removed and replaced.

Since the Commission (and some MMTB members) prefer the 24 in. wide painted bars, and since increased costs are not significant, the new standard recommends the use of 24 in. wide bars at all new crosswalk locations. Spacing is also suggested at 24 in. wide, similar to what is being done in other local jurisdictions.

The width of the walking surface remains an area that needs to be adjusted depending on the local street conditions. The National Assoc. of City Transportation Officials ("NACTO") suggests that the crosswalk width should be as wide or wider than the adjacent sidewalks so that groups of pedestrians can comfortably pass each other in the provided area. With the above standards in mind, a guideline is provided for total crosswalk width.

It was discussed that 24 in. space between the bars can only be adjusted slightly.

Motion by Dr. Rontal

Seconded by Ms. Edwards to recommend that the City Commission adopt the following standard policy for the design of all future crosswalk pavement markings in the City of Birmingham, as recommended by the Multi-Modal Transportation Board:

All new painted crosswalks installed shall be of the continental style, as outlined on MDOT Detail Sheet PAVE-945-C, Sheet 3 of 3, with the exception that all painted bars shall be 24 in. wide spaced as close to 24 in. apart as possible. Crosswalk widths shall be installed as follows:

On Major Streets within the Central Business District, Triangle District, Rail District, or Adjacent to Schools:

Total width of the crosswalk shall be 12 to 14 feet wide. Crosswalks at the upper width limit may be installed when traffic signals are present.

On Local Streets within the Central Business District, Triangle District, Rail District, or Adjacent to Schools:

Total width of the crosswalk shall be 8 ft. wide, unless the adjacent sidewalk main walking path is wider, at which point it shall be widened to match the main walking path width.

At All Other Locations:

Total width of the crosswalk shall be 6 ft. wide.

The following shall be considered Major Streets (within the specific districts noted) for the purposes of this standard:

Woodward Ave.

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Old Woodward Ave.
Maple Rd.
Southfield Rd.
Adams Rd.
Willits St.
Oakland Blvd.
Chester St.
Brown St.
S. Eton Rd.
E. Lincoln Ave.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Rontal, Edwards, Folberg, Slanga, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Lawson

9. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA
(no audience present)

10. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Ecker said an update will be provided to the board at the next meeting as to what materials will be used on Old Woodward Ave., the turn lane, and what the crosswalks will look like.

11. NEXT MEETING MARCH 2, 2017 at 6 p.m.

12. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer

