

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2017
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, November 2, 2017.

Johanna Slanga convened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Daniel Rontal, Johanna Slanga, Michael Surnow; Alternate Board Members Daniel Isaksen, Katie Schafer

Absent: Chairperson Vionna Adams, Vice-Chairperson Andy Lawson

Administration: Lauren Chapman, Asst. Planner
Jana Ecker, Planning Director
Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer
Commander Scott Grewe, Police Dept.
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer

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

**Motion by Mr. Surnow
Seconded by Mr. Isaksen to elect Johanna Slanga as temporary chairperson.**

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Surnow, Isaksen, Edwards, Folberg, Rontal, Schafer, Slanga

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Lawson

2. INTRODUCTIONS (none)

3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, Multi-Modal Transportation Board ("MMTB") MEETING OF OCTOBER 19, 2017

Motion by Ms. Folberg

Seconded by Dr. Rontal to approve the MMTB Minutes of October 19, 2017 as presented.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Folberg, Rontal, Edwards, Isaksen, Schafer, Slanga, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Lawson

5. PUBLIC HEARING

**S. Eton Rd. Corridor Multi-Modal Options
Lincoln Ave. to 14 Mile Rd.**

The public hearing opened at 6:05 p.m.

Ms. Ecker gave an overview. On October 19, 2017, the MMTB reviewed and discussed a total of 12 different conceptual options prepared by F&V for the MMTB to consider for the S. Eton corridor between Lincoln Ave. and 14 Mile Rd.

After much discussion, the MMTB reached consensus and voted unanimously to recommend conceptual option B-2 to move forward to a public hearing on November 2, 2017. Option B-2 includes maintaining the existing roadway width at 28 ft. It would shift the center line to the east to create two travel lanes and use a portion of the public right-of-way between the curb and the sidewalk to add an 8 ft. bi-directional bike lane and 2 ft. of landscaped area on the west side, buffered from moving traffic by a striped on-street parking lane. On-street parking is a convenience for the residents but it is also a traffic calming measure.

The board's other recommendations include curb bump-outs at side street intersections that make the crosswalks shorter so they are safer for pedestrians; new ADA ramps at all street crossings; and green marked areas for bikes to cross the street. All of the existing trees will remain.

A public hearing invitation was mailed to all property owners located along the S. Eton corridor to allow for review and comment by adjacent owners.

Ms. Kroll discussed how the bikes and pedestrians will navigate the 14 Mile Rd. transition into Royal Oak. Bikers will queue up at the bike box which is located at the light in front of the stop bar.

Mr. O'Meara explained for Ms. Edwards that the turning radii were studied at all of the corners with the side streets. The bumpouts vary in size because each of the intersections comes in at a different angle. Additionally, he clarified that presently it is not legal to park on S. Eton Rd. from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. However if this option is constructed that rule could be removed for the west side parking.

Chairperson Slanga opened up discussion to the public.

Ms. Cindy Chiara, 1622 S. Eton Rd., said she was a member of the Ad Hoc Rail District Study Committee. She indicated that she is extremely disappointed that what happened in the Ad Hoc Committee is not what is now proposed. The Ad Hoc Committee considered traffic, safety and walkability. Now everything is about bike lanes for maybe five bikes that come down that road.

Ms. Edwards assured her that some ideas from the Ad Hoc Committee have been adopted. Bumpouts will remain on the major cross streets. The idea of slowing traffic is included in this design because the travel lanes are narrowed. Chairperson Slanga noted that going forward it is a balance of everything.

Mr. Thomas Giddeon said he lives on Humphrey and is an avid bicyclist. He likes what is being proposed.

Mr. Brian Chiara, 1622 S. Eton Rd., noticed that there has been no count of how many bicycles travel on S. Eton Rd. in a day. He described how when he pulls in and out of his driveway he must go around a parked car, around a 2 ft. barrier, then there is a blind spot for bikers and pedestrians. He concluded that he loves everything except the bike path.

Mr. Morris Sunday, 1668 S. Eton Rd. said he agrees. It seems like a lot of money to spend for a bike path. To Mr. Chiara's point, how many bikes are actually going up and down S. Eton Rd. that this will benefit? He was not in favor of anything that will bring traffic closer to his house. He also noted all of the things to be aware of just backing out of his driveway.

Mr. Bob Mitchum, 1713 Mansfield, indicated his dislike of bumpouts. A driver almost has to pull into the oncoming lane to make a turn.

Mr. Florian Dutke, 1608 S. Eton Rd., thought defining the travel lanes into 10 ft. sections may cause problems. People will have trouble navigating the road. Backing down his driveway, he must look past the blind spot of his neighbor, plus the sidewalk, and then another blind spot caused by a tree in order to get past a bike lane behind that. Also the apron is shortened and he will lose the ability to park his car there when he needs to. Additionally he expressed concern about who will be responsible for plowing the bike lane in the winter.

Ms. Schafer commented part of the reason the board came to this conclusion is because they wanted to accommodate bikers since that is part of the Multi-Modal Board's objective. They only have a 28 ft. wide road to work with so they looked at 12 options. They felt that on-street parking actually slows the traffic. So their goal was to keep the cars on the street in the designated parking lane, not to make it harder for anyone to back out of their driveway.

Dr. Rontal commented this is part of the designated regional bike route through the City. The mandate of this board is to try and balance between pedestrians, vehicles, and bikes.

Ms. Shirley Lebrems, 1779 Mansfield, said that Eton Rd. is not safe to bicycle on. So it is better to have the bicyclists in a safe area rather than on the road in harm's way.

Mr. Surnow felt that while a lot of people don't like the bike path, it is the only place people can ride down a street like Eton Rd. He doesn't think it is safe to ride there the way it is presently constructed.

Chairperson Slanga requested they make sure not to introduce parking so close to people's driveways that they can't pull out or see around the bike path.

Ms. Edwards noted the constraint the board is working under is not being able to change the curb-to-curb width of the existing road, which is 28 ft. That is how the bike path got pushed to the easement because it is really wide on S. Eton Rd.

Ms. Folberg thought they should find out who will be responsible for snow removal on the bike path.

Mr. O'Meara noted for the record the two emails sent to the Board earlier this week. One was opposed to the plan, and the other was neutral once they realized that the bike path was not on their side of the street. He also said that he received a phone call from resident Betty Shinaberry on Mansfield, who was against the proposal because she thinks the traffic lanes need the width that is there presently.

Mr. Isaksen observed that residents on the west side of Eton Rd. have not bought into the project yet. Before he could vote comfortably for it he would need more of a consensus from those residents who are most directly affected.

Mr. Surnow said if they are going to have a bike lane along Eton Rd., Option B-2 is the safest and most practical way to achieve it. Ms. Schafer added the board was confined by a number of constraints and this was the marriage of all of the

considerations to make the road safer for everyone who uses it; walkers, bikers, and cars.

Chairperson Slanga stated she would always want to increase the site distance backing out from driveways, even if that means taking out some parking.

Motion by Mr. Surnow

Seconded by Ms. Schafer that the Multi-Modal Transportation Board recommends the following improvements to S. Eton Rd. from Lincoln to 14 Mile Rd.:

- 1. Maintain the existing curb-to-curb road width of 28 ft.;**
- 2. Install an 8 ft. wide on-street parking lane on the west side of the street, separated from traffic with a solid line, and recommend 24-hour parking be permitted. Conduct an engineering study to make certain that the sight distance is appropriate for anyone backing out of their driveway. If it is not, parking should be eliminated to accommodate the proper sight distance;**
- 3. Shift the center line of S. Eton to the east to create two 10 ft. wide travel lanes for vehicles;**
- 4. Install an 8 ft. wide bidirectional bike lane 2 ft. from the back of curb on the west side of S. Eton;**
- 5. Maintain a 2 ft. wide landscaped buffer between the on-street parking lane and the bike lane;**
- 6. Install curb bumpouts and crosswalks at the intersections of S. Eton and Bradford, Sheffield, Humphrey, Melton and Lincoln as noted on the B-2 plan;**
- 7. Install new ADA ramps at all street crossings from Lincoln to 14 Mile Rd.;**
- 8. Install green marked bicycle crossings on the western leg of the intersections of S. Eton and Bradford, Sheffield, Humphrey, Melton and Lincoln as noted on the B-2 plan.**
- 9. The City and not the residents assumes responsibility for the maintenance of the 8 ft. bike lane; and**
- 10. The center line will be striped.**

Comments on the motion were taken from the audience at 7:20 p.m.

Ms. Cindy Chiara said that having bikers cross over to the east side of N. Eton is confusing to her. Also she did not like giving up parking on the driveway apron and having to put her car in the street where it might get hit.

Mr. Florian Dutke indicated he is disappointed there isn't more data on the number of bicycles. He was in favor of mocking up a section of the road with plastic bollard bumpouts to give an idea if traffic speed is reduced.

Mr. Bob Mitchum noted that police are always at the intersection of Eton Rd. and Sheffield watching people go through the stop sign.

Ms. Shirley Lebrems spoke in favor of adding strategically placed speed bumps. Chairperson Slanga responded the challenge is the maintenance of them. Basically they do the same thing as a stop sign where people will rush up to them, slow down, go over, and then rush off.

Motion carried, 6-1.

ROLLCALL VOTE

Yeas: Surnow, Schafer, Edwards, Folberg, Rontal, Slanga

Nays: Isaksen

Absent: Adams, Lawson

The public hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

6. W. MAPLE RD. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ISLANDS
Review of pedestrian crossing island locations and designs

Mr. O'Meara offered background. The W. Maple Rd. corridor was studied extensively by the MMTB in preparation for the resurfacing of this road from Cranbrook Rd. to Southfield Rd. in 2015. Now that the paving has been completed, and a continuous left turn lane has been installed, the City has the opportunity to consider the installation of pedestrian refuge islands along this corridor, as referenced in the Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan.

Since the road construction has been completed, staff has studied the potential for crosswalk islands. Detailed plans were prepared for the potential islands at the following locations:

1. Chesterfield Ave.
 2. Lakepark Ave.
 3. East of Hawthorne Rd. (just east of the recommended Baldwin Ave. location).
- These three island locations have received the most attention to date because they are either located at a traffic signal, which improves safety for pedestrians, or in the case of the one east of Hawthorne Rd., represent an important link in the City's River Rouge Trail system.

Chesterfield Ave.: The drawback of this location is the adjacency of the City's Chesterfield Ave. Fire Station. The improved fire station has been designed to accommodate one of the department's larger engines. Truck turning requirements were studied for right turns from the new driveway to Maple Rd. and conflicts were found to exist. After review with the Fire Dept., it was decided that installation of a pedestrian island at this location could cause potential

conflicts with emergency vehicles, thereby increasing response time for Fire Dept. personnel. The construction of an island is not recommended at this location.

Lakepark Ave.: Given that a traffic signal operates here, a marked crosswalk on the east leg of the intersection already exists. The plan indicates that a raised pedestrian island can be installed at the current marked crosswalk location, and still allow room for left turning trucks out of Lakepark Ave. The suggested location for a pedestrian island appears to work well, and is recommended at this time.

East of Hawthorne Ave.: The Master Plan recommends the installation of a pedestrian island and improved crosswalk at Baldwin Ave. However, further study of this location indicated that sight distance for vehicles traveling Maple Rd., given the curvature of the road and hill in this area is such that it is not a good location to encourage pedestrian crossings. Further study of the area revealed similar concerns along most of this section.. However, just west of the existing Rouge River bridge, a location with suitable sight distance from both directions does exist. Further, the location would line up with the existing Rouge River trail as it extends north toward Quarton Lake. The drawback of this location is that it would conflict with an existing residential driveway for the home located at 123 Hawthorne Rd. If the driveway for this house was not relocated, safety for left turns into the driveway would be compromised, as the left turn lane would not be available for this movement. A modified plan was presented to the homeowner, and they have indicated their support for the changes. Moving the driveway to the west would allow sufficient space for a sidewalk connection to the existing Maple Rd. sidewalk (which then leads to the continuation of the Rouge River trail to the south), and it allows for left turning movements into the driveway. The Master Plan recommended the installation of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon ("RRFB") at this location, The RRFB would be actuated by a pushbutton installed at the crossing, and is an effective means of alerting motorists to the fact that a pedestrian is crossing the road. The pedestrian island, along with the RRFB, is recommended at this location.

Ms. Ecker noted now that the Chesterfield Ave. location is not being considered, staff requests input from the MMTB as to whether the suggested location between Suffield Ave. and Pilgrim Ave. (mid-block crossing) as recommended in the Multi-Modal Master Plan should be explored further at this time. There are no apparent obstacles at this location; however, there is little activity as well. If installed, it would be located about 980 ft. to the west of the new Lakepark Ave. island, or less than 0.2 mile. If there is agreement on the preferred locations and direction, a public hearing would be appropriate before a final recommendation is forwarded to the City Commission.

Dr. Rontal observed the crossing would connect to the Arlington neighborhood which connects down to Lincoln. Chairperson Slanga stated the use is small at that location. Residents on the northern side can be contacted for feedback.

Motion by Ms. Edwards

Seconded by Dr. Rontal to recommend the installation of pedestrian islands on the W. Maple Rd. corridor at the following locations:

- **Lakepark Ave.**
- **East of Hawthorne Ave.**

The Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon is recommended at the Hawthorne Ave. location only.

Further, to conduct a public hearing to solicit input for this proposal at the regular meeting of the Multi-Modal Transportation Board, scheduled for Thursday, December 7th at 6 p.m.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Rontal, Folberg, Isaksen, Schafer, Slanga, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Lawson

7. 2018 PAVING PROJECTS

Mr. O'Meara advised the Engineering Dept. plans to issue plans for bids on two paving contracts during the 2018 construction season:

1. Old Woodward Ave. Paving Project;
2. 2018 Local Street Paving Project.

The first project was designed last year, and reviewed previously by the MMTB. The design has not changed with respect to Multi-Modal criteria, so no further review is needed. The second project involves the complete reconstruction of the following streets:

- Bennaville Ave. – Edgewood Ave. to Grant St.;
- Ruffner Ave. – Grant St. to Woodward Ave.;
- Chapin Ave. – Grant St. to Woodward Ave.

The Multi-Modal Master Plan has no comments for these streets.

Bennaville Ave.: The existing pavement on this block was installed at 33 ft. wide in 1948. The road width is wider than the current 27 ft. standard width the City installs on unimproved streets today. Typically, when streets are being reconstructed due to age, the City would replace the pavement to match the current condition. A new concrete pavement with curbs is proposed.

The options for this pavement include the following:

1. Replace the street at 33 ft. wide. Doing so would maintain the current good conditions for bicycles, but would provide no improvements for pedestrians.
 2. Replace the street at a reduced width of 27 ft. wide. Doing so would allow for parking to remain legal on both sides of the street. Available street width would be reduced for bicycles, but would improve conditions for pedestrians.
- Maneuvering in and out of driveways will become more difficult if the road is narrowed, particularly at times when parked cars are prevalent.

Ruffner Ave.: The existing pavement was installed at 29 ft. for the residential section (west of the Woodward Ave. alley) in 1947. Between the alley and Woodward Ave. next to the business section on Woodward Ave. the pavement is 33 ft. wide. The recommendation is to rebuild Ruffner to 27 ft. wide or else there would be conflicts with several mature street trees are currently growing very close or even on top of the curb and gutter. The width adjacent to Woodward Ave. would be matched with the idea that bumpouts could be built at the Woodward Ave. intersection to make the road smaller when first driving into the neighborhood but still support the parking demand from the commercial section. Three ft. bumpouts are recommended on both sides.

Board members recommended that the turning radii be further studied in order to clarify that it is doable. Since this is adjacent to Woodward Ave., this design feature would be subject to approval by the Michigan Dept. of Transportation.

Chapin Ave.: The existing pavement from Grant St. to Cummings St. was installed at 27 ft. in 1946 and then widened to 29 ft. between Cummings St. and Woodward Ave. It is recommended that the new street be constructed at 27 ft. wide (matching the City standard) in order to maintain the mature trees, and widening to 29 ft. at the Woodward Ave. commercial section.

The board thought that the options should be studied for turning radii and bumpouts to make sure they will work.

It was noted that ADA ramps will be installed at all of the crosswalks when new sidewalks go in.

Board members expressed the desire to see the drawings back from staff so they can review the three streets.

8. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
(no comments)

9. **MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS** (none)

10. **NEXT MEETING DECEMBER 7, 2017 at 6 p.m.**

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer