

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
THURSDAY, JULY 20, 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, July 20, 2017.

Chairperson Vionna Adams convened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairperson Vionna Adams; Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Vice-Chairman Andy Lawson, Daniel Rontal; Alternate Members Daniel Isaksen, Katie Schaefer

**Absent:** Board Members Johanna Slanga, Michael Surnow

**Administration:** Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer  
Scott Grewe, Operations Commander  
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer

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

**2. INTRODUCTIONS (none)**

**3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MEETING OF JUNE 1, 2017**

Ms. Edwards made the following clarification:

Page 3 - Last paragraph, third line, add "on street" in front of "parking."

Mr. Isaksen added that he and Ms. Schaefer were present as members of the public at the last meeting.

**Motion by Mr. Lawson**

**Seconded by Ms. Folberg to approve the Minutes of June 1, 2017 with the changes.**

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Lawson, Folberg, Adams, Edwards, Rontal, Schaefer, Isaksen

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga, Surnow

**5. S. ETON RD. - MAPLE RD. TO LINCOLN AVE.**

Mr. O'Meara recalled that at the June 1, 2017 MMTB meeting, a public hearing was held to review and discuss the various components of multi-modal improvements now being considered for S. Eton Rd. between Maple Rd. and Eton Rd. The Board was ready to approve the majority of the proposal, outside of the pedestrian island at Maple Rd. However, new information that determined the proposal to build an island that could accommodate 40 ft. truck turning radii may be too small caused the Board to hesitate on this feature. The board asked staff to survey all businesses in the Rail District, and return the issue at the following meeting.

The Police Dept. sent out a survey to a total of 99 businesses requesting input, and 17 responses were received. Only one business responded indicating that they have trucks longer than 60 ft., while that one and another indicated that they receive deliveries from trucks longer than 60 ft. A larger number received deliveries from trucks in the 40 to 60 ft. range (7).

The sample size was disappointingly small. The three Rail District businesses that appeared at the public hearing last time were invited to come back for this meeting as well.

To assist with this discussion, F&V provided additional truck turning radius drawings generated by a computer program. The drawings include:

1. A picture of all three turning movements when driving a truck with a 50 ft. turning radius;
2. A picture of all three turning movements when driving a truck with a 62 ft. turning radius;
3. A picture of the proposed island now modified to allow for a 50 ft. truck turning radius.

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Right turns are not being considered for the trucks leaving the District because most trucks already have to turn left because they cannot fit underneath the existing bridge.

Alternatives for trucks heading west and wanting to enter the Rail District were discussed. Mr. Labadie indicated they can turn around and make a right onto S. Eton from the eastbound lane.

The chairperson opened discussion up to public comments at 6:33 p.m.

Mr. Brian Bolyard, Bolyard Lumber, 777 S. Eton, described the movements that large trucks must make. He agreed that the trucks over 50 ft. are already coming east on Maple Rd. and making a right turn onto S. Eton. It was thought even with the island, those trucks should still be able to make the right turn. It was noted that 62 ft. trucks might swing out from the right lane into the adjoining lane in order to turn.

Ms. Sherry Markus, 1382 Ruffner, asked if the timing of the lights was considered. Mr. Labadie replied the signal will be changed dramatically because of Whole Foods. With the new signal there will be more green time on Maple Rd. and pushbuttons for pedestrians. Left turning traffic has to watch out for pedestrians as in most intersections.

Mr. Larry Bertollini, 1275 Webster, expressed concern about whether trucks can make the turn further south where S. Eton turns mid-block. He received clarification from Mr. O'Meara that the sidewalk will be narrowed so that trucks can make the turn. Mr. Bertollini made the point that even if there aren't businesses that have the larger trucks at this point, things might change and the City should allow for them in this industrial district.

Mr. Brian Bolyard suggested an alternate placement for the crosswalk but was informed that a crosswalk cannot be installed there due to sight distance issues.

Mr. Brian Bolyard noticed the residents in the area are not present who are having difficulty crossing on the long crosswalk.

Mr. Larry Bertollini commented if they cannot get the 62 ft. trucks to work he is completely against the plan. Ms. Edwards clarified they will take the same route they are already taking (eastbound to southbound), but the new configuration will make them go slower. So there is a way in with 62 ft. trucks and there is a way out going westbound.

Ms. Roxanne Nyer, 1407 S. Eton, was concerned that cars are not stopping for pedestrians on S. Eton Rd. Dr. Rontal told her there will be adjustments south that will help to shorten the pedestrian crossing.

**Motion by Dr. Rontal**

**Seconded by Mr. Lawson to recommend to the City Commission the following package of multi-modal transportation improvements for S. Eton Rd. from Maple Rd. to Lincoln Ave.:**

**1. Maple Rd. to Yosemite Blvd.**

- a. Relocation of the west side curb of S. Eton Rd. from Maple Rd. to Yosemite Blvd. 3 ft. closer to the center, allowing the installation of an 8 ft. wide sidewalk behind the relocated curb.**
- b. Installation of a pedestrian island at the Maple Rd. & S. Eton Rd. intersection to improve safety for pedestrians crossing on the south side of Maple Rd.**
- c. Installation of a wider sidewalk adjacent to the handicap ramp at the southeast corner of Maple Rd. & S. Eton Rd.**
- d. Installation of sharrows on green painted squares for both directions.**

**2. Yosemite Blvd. to Villa Ave.**

- a. Removal of the existing parking on the west side of the street.**
- b. Relocation of the curb and gutter on both sides of the street to accommodate 8 ft. wide sidewalks and 4 ft. wide green spaces with new City trees.**
- c. Installation of sharrows on green painted squares for both directions.**

**3. Villa Ave. to Lincoln Ave.**

- a. Removal of the existing parking on the west side of the street, replaced with an 8.5 ft. wide bi-directional bike lane and a 1.5 ft. buffer with raised markers.**
- b. Sidewalk improvements as needed at Villa Ave. and Lincoln Ave. to facilitate the bidirectional bike lane.**
- c. Installation of a 3 ft. wide buffer between the northbound travel lane and 7 ft. parking lane.**
- d. Curbed bumpouts at marked pedestrian crosswalks on the west side of the street, at the intersections of Villa Ave., Hazel Ave., Bowers Ave., Cole Ave., and Lincoln Ave.**

Mr. O'Meara talked about the block between Villa and Yosemite. An error was found in the drawing from last month. If they used those measurements they would be down to 12 ft. and 12.5 ft. wide travel lanes on S. Eton Rd. because there is not enough space for anything more than that. He thought that might not be what the board wants because they are trying to promote bicycle traffic through there. Therefore he drew up an Option B which would provide 15 ft.

wide lanes which leave just enough room for a vehicle to comfortably pass a bicyclist. Option B would give an 8 ft. wide sidewalk in front of the hair salon and a 6.5 ft. wide sidewalk in front of the banquet hall. A 4 ft. wide green space would remain on both sides. Light industrial traffic can also be accommodated by the wider lanes.

**Amended by Dr. Rontal**

**Seconded by Mr. Lawson that 2 (b) should read:**

**Relocation of the curb and gutter on both sides of the street to accommodate a 5 ft. wide sidewalk on one side and a 6.5 ft. wide sidewalk on the other side with 4 ft. wide green spaces with new City trees.**

Discussion was opened to the public at 7:10 p.m.

Mr. Larry Bertollini announced he would not support a bumpout at Lincoln because there might be too much backup at that intense intersection.

Ms. Sherry Markus completely agreed that traffic would definitely back up with the bumpout. She received clarification about the path that the bike lane would take. Heading towards Villa there would be signs encouraging bikers to dismount and walk their bikes across S. Eton Rd. to the widened sidewalk on the other side in order to cross Maple Rd. at the light.

**Amended motion carried, 7-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Rontal, Lawson, Adams, Edwards, Folberg, Isaksen, Schaefer

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga, Surnow

## **6. W. MAPLE RD. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT ROUGE RIVER TRAIL**

Mr. O'Meara reported, as original board members will recall, in 2015 the W. Maple Rd. corridor was discussed extensively, as the question of moving from four lanes to three lanes was studied. During those discussions, it was noted that if W. Maple Rd. was changed to a three lane road, the left turn lane would provide an opportunity to install a center pedestrian island at potential marked crossings.

Recently, the Parks & Recreation Board has expressed interest in improving the Rouge River trail in the area south of Maple Rd. Currently, the south side sidewalk borders the City's property, and there is no hard surfaced connection between the City sidewalk and a pedestrian bridge that allows the public to cross the river and walk along its west side toward Lincoln Ave. Funds have been

authorized to build a porous asphalt walkway from the Maple Rd. sidewalk south to the existing pedestrian bridge. The “missing link” will then be a designated crossing for pedestrians wishing to cross to the north side of Maple Rd.

The best location for a crossing is just to the west of the guard rail sections. On the north side this works well, because it lines up with the existing Rouge River trail as it extends north toward Quarton Lake. On the south side, however, there is a conflict with an existing private driveway for the residence at 123 Hawthorne Rd.

A survey of the area was prepared, and communications held with the homeowner. The plan has been designed in such a way that the homeowner is supportive. Benefits of the proposal include:

- Marked pathway that will align with the trail to the north, and provide a connection to the trail as it extends south of Maple Rd.
- Installation of an island will encourage vehicles to drive slower through the area, and encourage them to watch for pedestrians.
- The island will be large enough to support a green space on the one side.
- The island stops just west of the crossing to allow for space for left turns into the adjacent driveway, which will be relocated.
- The driveway relocation will also require the relocation of an existing street light. Moving the light to the east will allow for better lighting at the crosswalk.

**Motion by Mr. Isaksen**

**Seconded by Ms. Edwards to recommend to the City Commission the design for a pedestrian crosswalk island immediately west of the Rouge River bridge, to provide a connection for pedestrians using the existing trail system to the north and south.**

At 7:21 p.m. there was no discussion from members of the public

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Isaksen, Edwards, Adams, Folberg, Lawson, Rontal, Schaefer

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga, Surnow

**7. 2017 ASPHALT RESURFACING PROGRAM**

Mr. O'Meara advised that typically each year, the City bids an asphalt paving program in an attempt to repair roads in need of maintenance. Such work gives the MMTB an opportunity to review the plan and determine if Multi-Modal

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improvements can be incorporated into the project. This year's program is focusing on shorter, dead-end local streets.

The streets being proposed for maintenance work are:

- Ashford Lane – Quarton Rd. to east end
- Millrace Ct. – Lakeside Dr. to south end
- Hidden Ravines Dr., Trail, and Court – All west of Southfield Rd.

All of these streets are unique for Birmingham in that they do not provide a vehicular connection at each end. Further, none of them presently have sidewalks. A review of the Master Plan confirms that there are no suggested improvements of a multi-modal nature for any of these streets.

Ashford Lane is a dead-end street that supports 11 condominiums. It was not designed to connect with anything else.

Millrace Ct. was built in 1960. It serves as the access for five single-family homes, and its west side is directly contiguous to the City property adjacent to Quarton Lake. The existing Rouge River Trail runs within 10 ft. of the Millrace Ct. pavement, but there is no official connection. The trail was last improved about 15 years ago.

If the board considers it is appropriate to build a designated connection at this time, it is recommended that a standard handicap ramp with concrete be installed (rather than crushed limestone, similar to the path) to ensure that ADA requirements are being met, and to reduce the amount of stone dragged out on the street surface.

Board members did not see Millrace Ct. as a natural entrance point for the general public. The crossover would be built essentially for the four or five homes on this street. It was noted that there is an entrance to the street system further north on Lakeside Dr.

Hidden Ravines Dr. has no sidewalks so there is no opportunity to connect with other neighborhoods.

### **Motion by Ms. Folberg**

**Seconded by Mr. Rontal that after reviewing the Multi-Modal Master Plan with respect to the 2017 Asphalt Resurfacing Program, the MMTB has confirmed that no multi-modal improvements are proposed for any of those streets in the Multi-Modal Master Plan. Due to their lack of connectivity to other streets, and due to their lack of sidewalks, no multi-modal improvements are recommended at this time.**

No one from the public wished to comment at 7:30 p.m.

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Folberg, Rontal, Adams, Edwards, Isaksen, Lawson Schaefer

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga, Surnow

## **8. F&V CONTRACT RENEWAL**

Mr. O'Meara said that in 2014 the City solicited traffic engineering firms to work with the MMTB and Mr. Labadie's firm was one of responders. Three companies were interviewed and since Mr. Labadie's firm had a lot of history in the City the MMTB elected to stay with his firm. A contract was signed but it has now expired. The City Commission will make the final decision of whether to extend the contract or to solicit bids

Mr. Lawson indicated he enjoys working with Mr. Labadie. He goes above and beyond at every meeting.

Ms. Edwards said he is tireless and has been a great asset to the board.

## **9. WOODWARD AVE. RESURFACING UPDATE, 2017 - 2018 QUARTON RD. TO FOURTEEN MILE RD.**

Mr. O'Meara updated the group on substantial multi-modal improvements that are being planned for the above segment of Woodward Ave. Since this road is a state highway under the jurisdiction of the MI Dept. of Transportation ("MDOT"), the City historically does not have much input on what is done when changes are made. However, MDOT is making an effort to listen and work with local cities, and the changes that are proposed for the Woodward Ave. corridor are encouraging. The planning for this project has been fast tracked, and MDOT now plans to let two separate contracts for Woodward Ave. designed to work around the City's Old Woodward Ave. project, as well as the annual Dream Cruise event, as best it can.

### *Fall 2017 Project*

MDOT is currently bidding a concrete repair project to be conducted from Labor Day to the end of October. The work will require lane closures, especially on week-ends.

### *Spring/Summer 2018 Project*



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Due to funding, the extent of the work is proposed before the annual Dream Cruise, and finally the need to complete the work prior to 2019, forced MDOT to continue with its plans to conduct this work during the months of mid-April to mid-August, 2018.

### a. Scheduling

Here is what is planned:

- No lane closures will be allowed during the work week, with the exception of a maximum of one lane during the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the day, and multiple lane closures during the hours of 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. only.

- Longer multiple lane closure hours will be allowed on weekends, during these hours:

Friday nights/Saturday mornings 9 p.m. to 9 a.m.

Saturday nights/Sunday mornings 9 p.m. to 10 a.m.

Woodward Ave. will remain fully open during peak traffic times, and the majority of the work will occur when traffic demands are typically low.

### b. Proposed Improvements

All eight lanes of Woodward Ave. will have the top 1.5 in. of asphalt removed and replaced.

In addition to the concrete patching that will have occurred on the fall 2017 project, additional joint repairs will be completed. MDOT will be improving all ramps that need work throughout the corridor. Birmingham requested that MDOT implement Birmingham's recently finalized crosswalk standards in the design of these ramps. The project will be a major improvement in pedestrian accessibility from what currently exists. The following is what is being planned:

All existing crosswalks will be reconstructed where needed to meet current ADA requirements (if they are not already). Where pavement markings are present, they will be 6 ft. wide outside of the designated commercial zones referenced in our crosswalk policy, with 5 ft. wide ramps. Within the designated commercial zones, MDOT will install 10 ft. wide pavement markings with 8 ft. wide ramps. All markings will be 24 in. wide white bars with a 24 in. wide spacing.

The Maple Rd. and 14 Mile Rd. intersections will not be included in this effort, because a separate funding source was already planned to replace the entire traffic signal systems at these intersections, which is budgeted for 2019.

Finally, it is recalled that Birmingham applied for a Transportation Alternatives Program ("TAP") grant last year to install a new traffic signal at the Oak St. intersection, thereby allowing the installation of a signalized, marked pedestrian

crosswalk. The TAP grant was approved, and MDOT has agreed to include this work in their 2018 project.

The following summarizes the new improved crosswalks that will be installed on this project;

**Oak St.** – New 10 ft. wide crosswalk on the south side of the intersection, using a completely new traffic signal (as suggested in the Master Plan).

**Oakland Ave.** – New 10 ft. wide crosswalk relocated on the northbound lanes so that pedestrians do not conflict with eastbound Oakland Ave. right turns (as suggested in the Master Plan).

**Brown St./Forest Ave.** – New 10 ft. wide crosswalks will be installed in the present location. (The lack of a signal on the northbound side of this intersection has been an issue that has been identified for many years, however, it has not been funded by MDOT. Recent discussions have identified that this issue is not resolved, and the traffic safety staff at MDOT have committed to reviewing it again.)

**Bowers St.** – New 10 ft. wide crosswalks on both sides of the intersection.

**Lincoln Ave.** – New 10 ft. wide crosswalks on both sides of the intersection.

**South of Chapin Ave.** – New 6 ft. wide crosswalks at the existing traffic signal.

Overall, the 2018 project represents a significant improvement for pedestrian mobility for those wishing to cross Woodward Ave. Both the corridors of Woodward Ave. and Old Woodward Ave. are expected to be completed by Dream Cruise next year.

Mr. O'Meara noted that MDOT has been asked if they would approve re-opening the tunnel that crosses Woodward Ave. at Oakland. Woodward Ave. divides Birmingham in half.

## **10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Ms. Folberg asked if the packets could be organized so the agenda may be used as a link to the different items.

Mr. O'Meara discussed with the Board proper protocol for communications prior to a meeting. Members . Communications relating to MMTB business should be directed to staff so they can be added to the agenda packet.

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Mr. Labadie informed everyone there would not be a problem if board members wanted to call or e-mail him with a question.

**11. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS (none)**

**12. NEXT MEETING AUGUST 3, 2017 at 6 p.m.**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

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Paul O'Meara, City Engineer