

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 2018**

**City Commission Room  
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, April 5, 2018.

Chairperson Vionna Adams convened the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairperson Vionna Adams; Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Daniel Isaksen, Katie Schafer

**Also**

**Present:** Alternate Board Member

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

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

**Also Present:** Brad Strader from MKSK

Mr. O'Meara announced that Andy Lawson has retired from the board. Katie Schafer volunteered to take his position and was appointed as the pedestrian advocate.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS** (none)

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MMTB MEETING OF MARCH 1, 2018**

**Motion by Ms. Folberg**

**Seconded by Mr. Isaksen to accept the MMTB Minutes of March 1, 2018 as presented.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

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## VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Folberg, Isaksen, Adams, Edwards, Schafer

Nays: None

Absent: Rontal, Slanga, Surnow

## 5. RESIDENTIAL STREET WIDTHS

Mr. O'Meara recalled the Multi-Modal Transportation Board ("MMTB") recently reviewed conceptual designs for three local streets planned for reconstruction in 2018. A public hearing was held, and a final recommendation for the streets was passed on to the City Commission on a vote of 4-3. At the public hearing, several residents appeared before the board asking that Bennaville Ave. not be reduced in width (as proposed). A smaller number of residents appeared asking that the block of Chapin Ave. east of Cummings St. also not be reduced in width.

When the City Commission reviewed the issue at their meeting of January 22, 2018, after much discussion they endorsed the recommendations of the MMTB, also on a vote of 4-3. As a part of the discussion, the Commission expressed confusion as to what the City's policy is for determining the width of a new street. As a result, the MMTB was asked to study the issue in further detail, and to send information and policy direction back to the Commission.

At the MMTB meeting on March 1, 2018, the board identified the goals for identifying a standard road width for residential roads, which include:

- Functionality;
- Consistency;
- Accident reduction;
- Traffic calming;
- Expediency in planning and engineering; and/or
- Infrastructure costs.

MKSK and F & V reviewed the national standards and best practices from a variety of sources regarding the recommended residential street width. The board directed staff to draft general standards for residential street widths, and to present criteria that could be used to determine if an exception should be granted. Accordingly, three options have been prepared for the board's consideration.

Mr. Strader said the options are about 85% similar. Hopefully the items the board is looking for have been captured in one or more of the options. Option 1 that was prepared by MKSK states that the design standard shall be 26 ft. wide. It describes what a "Yield" or "Courtesy Street" is and then the factors for a variation from that.

Mr. O'Meara explained that Option 2 came from Ms. Ecker. She created a hybrid based on taking his ideas and Mr. Strader's ideas and adding separate categories for a new street that hasn't existed yet; rebuilding a previously paved street; and an existing street

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that has never had curbs. The one big difference is if a street is 26 to 28 ft. it wouldn't have to be changed to be 26 ft.

Option 3 was summarized by Mr. O'Meara. If a street is 26 or 28 ft., the recommendation is to put it back to the same width. Mr. Strader noted there really isn't that much difference between 28 and 26 ft. If the street is already built to one of those standards, just replace that standard. ~~After comments from Ms. Folberg~~ **commented that 24' is too narrow for**, ~~it was agreed to remove the standard that cul-de-sacs and~~ **and** ~~or~~ ~~dead-end streets be reduced to 24 ft. in width.~~ There were also questions relative to the distinction for a long block vs. shorter blocks. If a change from existing or other than 26 ft. is proposed, a survey to all property owners to comment to the MMTB is required before the public hearing.

Instances where streets have a lot of people parking versus those where there is almost no parking demand were considered. Ms. Folberg suggested if the street is between 26 and 28 ft., move forward with that unless there have been complaints about traffic or speeding.

Ms. Schafer talked about the phenomenon of people creating parking spaces within the right-of-way on unimproved streets. Mr. O'Meara thought that people feel it is dangerous to park in the actual pavement because it is usually only 20 ft. wide. This is allowed in the City if the street is uncurbed. He added that when streets get rebuilt with curbs, those parking areas are required to be removed.

In terms of notification to the residents, the board liked the idea of putting up a sandwich board at the entrance/exit to the neighborhood.

With regard to rebuilding a street, Ms. Folberg said she would tend to go with what people want except when those decisions are not based on urban planning practices and engineering standards and guidelines. Mr. O'Meara added it would help to have initial conversation with the board to identify where they want to go. Data could then be collected from the survey and outreach conducted in a second meeting prior to the public hearing in order to be well prepared.

Ms. Folberg said as part of the public survey, people should be educated about the reason for the proposal. Mr. Strader added maybe they ought to insert a preamble to the proposal saying the City understands all of the residents' concerns but the standards are based on nationally accepted design manuals; the fire code; consideration of safety for pedestrians and bicyclists; reducing crashes and appropriate speeds; and emergency exits. That would form the intent and basis for the proposal.

Mr. O'Meara confirmed that Ms. Ecker, Mr. Strader and he would sit down and consolidate the three options into one document.

## 6. BICYCLE RACK PLACEMENT - PHASE 4

### *Overview of Program*

Ms. Chapman recalled that on April 9, 2012, the City Commission approved the Downtown Bicycle Parking Plan. The plan consists of three phases that call for the installation of 101 bike racks at 80 different locations. Nearly all of the racks that the City Commission approved in the Downtown Bicycle Parking Plan have been installed. Nine of the Phase 3 racks are proposed to be located within the boundaries of the Old Woodward reconstruction project area. The board will review those locations closer to the end of the construction.

### *Phase 4*

In the 2017-2018 budget the City Commission approved allocating \$15,000 for the installation of additional bike racks. City staff has identified locations for 36 bike racks throughout the City. Thirty-six racks were ordered from the approved vendor and one has already been installed. The total cost of the racks was \$5,805. At this time, staff is requesting location approval for this round of bike racks. Several of the locations proposed are in the Triangle District.

The MMTB recommended the Loop bike rack to be standard for the Triangle District. Four of the locations are on the west side of S Adams. The west side of the street is outside of the official boundaries of the Triangle District. City staff recommends that the same racks be used on both sides of the road. Presented is a list and a map of proposed locations for new racks.

Ms. Edwards thought the Rail District would be an opportunity to do something that stands out as a totally different aesthetic. She would be comfortable with the racks in Kenning Park being postponed and the ones in front of business to be different.

### **Motion by Mr. Isaksen**

**Seconded by Ms. Edwards to recommend approval of the installation of 17 permanent bike racks to the City Commission as proposed on the attached chart excluding the sites to the east of Eton and the site at E. Maple Rd. and Eton. as part of Phase 4 of the City's Bicycle Parking Plan.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

### VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Isaksen, Edwards, Adams, Folberg, Schafer

Nays: None

Absent: Rontal, Slanga, Surnow

Ms. Chapman noted this matter will not go to the City Commission until it is completed.

## 7. BICYCLE MAINTENANCE STATIONS

Ms. Chapman advised the City Commission has allocated \$15,000 for bicycle parking in the FY 17-18 budget. City staff identified locations for 36 new bike racks, and the total cost of the racks for two different models was \$9,655. This leaves \$5,345 in the budget to spend.

City staff would like the MMTB to consider using some of the remaining funds for bicycle maintenance stations. The Multi-Modal Transportation Plan recommends the City provide active transportation hubs at key locations around town such as Booth Park, Quarton Lake Park, City Hall, and in the Rail District. Ms. Chapman thought the stations could be placed in Shain Park near City Hall and in Kenning Park in the Rail District as well as in Booth Park and Quarton Lake Park. There is one maintenance station in the Rail District already and it is at Griffin Claw, installed by them. It is the Fixit style in a dark green color along with an air pump.

Active transportation hubs assist people who are already walking and/or bicycling to find community resources and introduce people to new walking and bicycling opportunities. The Multi-Modal Transportation Plan describes Active Transportation Hubs as including among other amenities a bicycle maintenance station with air pump. City staff believes that installing bicycle maintenance stations would be an important step in encouraging and accommodating bikes as a transportation mode and establishing active transportation hubs.

Ms. Chapman reported on the features and pricing of four different models of bike maintenance stations. They all include commonly used tools for simple bike maintenance.

Board members agreed that a sign on the maintenance station would create some public awareness about its purpose.

She recommended the Fixit and the Air Kit 2 due to the products' low costs, previous use in the City, and simple and clean aesthetics. If the board chooses the recommended products, the total cost of four of each of the products plus shipping and taxes would be \$4,642, bringing the total for bike racks (Triangle and City standard), bicycle maintenance stations, concrete pads, and air pumps to \$13,830. This leaves \$541 available to spend on additional accessories, racks, or signage.

**Motion by Ms. Edwards**

**Seconded by Ms. Folberg to recommend to the City Commission that the Fixit bicycle maintenance stand with a Hunter Green powder coat finish be the new standard bicycle maintenance stand for the City.**

**AND**

**To recommend to the City Commission that the Air Kit 2 public bike pump with a Hunter Green powder coat finish be the new standard public bike pump for the City.**

**AND**

**To recommend to the City Commission approval of the purchase and installation of four bicycle repair stations, four air pumps and 4 Dero bike repair signs at: Booth Park, Quarton Lake Park, Shain Park, and Kenning Park.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Folberg, Adams, Isaksen, Schafer

Nays: None

Absent: Rontal, Slanga, Surnow

### **8. ELM ST. PARKING SPACE**

Mr. O'Meara recalled that in December, 2016, the Multi-Modal Transportation Board (MMTB) reviewed a request from a resident of the adjacent All Seasons senior living facility to remove the first marked parking space on Elm St. south of Maple Rd. The resident referenced that the location of the space made it difficult for vehicles to drive southbound off of Maple Rd. when northbound vehicles are in the same area waiting for the signal to turn green.

Staff and F&V reviewed the issue and agreed that the parking space was making it difficult for vehicles to turn safely off of Maple Rd. and proceed south during times of high traffic demand. The board made a recommendation to remove the space, which was approved by the City Commission.

Staff has now received a request from a different resident within the All Seasons property asking that the City consider removing the second parking space south of Maple Rd. The space is located directly across the street from the main entrance to the All Seasons parking lot. The resident is indicating that it is difficult to turn in and out of the facility due to the parking space.

After review internally by all three City departments, staff agrees that the removal of this parking space may be problematic. It is clear that there is a demand for the ability to park here, as street parking is often occupied in this neighborhood. Further, there are other areas where private driveways meet the street and parking is legal on the opposite side of the street. Removal of the parking space here may lead to additional such requests in the future. If the board agrees, it is suggested that a public hearing be scheduled for the next meeting of the MMTB and that all owners and tenants within a 300 ft. radius of the parking space be notified about the discussion. Getting input from

the stakeholders in the area will help determine the best direction to pursue on this issue.

Mr. Isaksen wondered if this even warrants the trouble and expense of contacting the neighborhood and holding a public hearing. Commander Grewe said he is looking for direction from the board to go forward or to just deny the one request. Several board members expressed that they are not hugely sympathetic to it. Commander Grewe said an important thing to note when they talked about driveways in the past is that there has always been a concern about backing out of the driveway and having a car directly behind. No one will be backing out of the main entrance to All Seasons.

**Motion by Ms. Edwards**

**Seconded by Ms. Folberg to respectfully reject the request for removal of the parking place at 160 Elm St.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Folberg, Adams, Isaksen, Schafer

Nays: No

Absent: Rontal, Slanga, Surnow

**9. MAPLE AND COOLIDGE CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. O'Meara reported that every year, the Engineering Dept. conducts an inspection of all City sidewalks within a certain residential area of the City, as well as one-fourth of the Central Business District. Once defects are located, staff then assembles a contract bidding document, and solicits bids to address the defects.

For 2018, the residential area being inspected is north of Maple Rd., extending from Adams Rd. to Coolidge Hwy. During the inspection, defects were noted in the area of the handicap ramp located at the intersection of Maple Rd. and Coolidge Hwy. Once a defect has been noted in a handicap ramp area, the City is required by federal law to remove and replace the ramps to ensure that they meet current code requirements within the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA").

The current crosswalks have several issues; therefore, a major change is proposed. Problems noted (other than the defective concrete) include the diagonal angle of the crosswalks, and the misalignment of the north leg crosswalk in relation to the adjacent median island. The intent is to work with the Telecom provider to get their fiber optic obstacles out of the way so the ramp can be installed where it should be.

With respect to the intersection as a whole, only 25% of it is located within the City of Birmingham, with the remainder being in the City of Troy. In the case of both of the adjacent segments of both streets, Birmingham has joint jurisdiction with Troy. After reviewing the issue with Troy, it was confirmed that they have no current plans for changes or improvements to the intersection.

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A plan has been prepared that improves the condition of the crosswalks extending across the north and west legs of the intersection. Improvements include:

1. Installing two separate handicap ramps, and removing the current joint ramp, so that both crosswalks can be remarked at a straight right angle to the streets. This will reduce the total length of time that a pedestrian needs to be in the street when crossing either of these streets.
2. Reconstructing the south end of the median island to ensure that it is ADA compliant, and to allow it to be better used for a refuge in the event a pedestrian is required to wait in the middle between signal cycles.
3. Improving crosswalk pavement markings using the City's current crosswalk marking standards. These changes will be implemented by the sidewalk contractor hired by the City sometime during the 2018 construction season. All work will be done in accordance with current ADA and City of Birmingham standards.

**10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**  
(no public was present)

**11. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS** (none)

**12. NEXT MEETING MAY 3, 2018 at 6 p.m.**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

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Jana Ecker, Planning Director

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Paul O'Meara, City Engineer