

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM MULTI-MODAL
TRANSPORTATION BOARD THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 7, 2019
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 7, 2019.

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

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Johanna Slanga, Vice-Chairperson Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Daniel Rontal, Katie Schafer (arrived 6:10 p.m.), Joe Zane (arrived 6:06 p.m.); Alternate Board Member Daniel Isaksen

Absent: Board Member Doug White; Student Representative Alex Lindstrom

Administration: Jana Ecker, Planning Director
Scott Grewe, Police Commander
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer
Laura Eichenhorn, Transcriptionist

Fleis & Vanderbrink ("F&V"):

Julie Kroll

2. INTRODUCTIONS (none)

3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MMTB MEETING OF JANUARY 3, 2019

Motion by Mr. Isaksen

Seconded by Ms. Folberg to approve the MMTB Minutes of January 3, 2019 as presented.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Isaksen, Folberg, Rontal, Slanga, Edwards
Abstain: None
Nays: None
Absent: Zane, Schafer, White

5. MAPLE ROAD / N. ETON – SIGNAL TIMING

Planning Director Ecker reviewed the previous information and discussion on the item.

City Engineer O'Meara then invited Ms. Kroll from F&V to continue with the item.

Ms. Kroll explained F&V did some additional field investigation at the intersection, creating two different timing plans: one for the period between 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., and one outside the period of 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. She continued:

- At this signal there is a 130-second cycle length, whereas the cycle length at the intersections to the east is 120 seconds. The intersections to the west run a 90-second cycle length. With the 130-second cycle length the timing was not going to work. A 90-second cycle length was too short for the offset intersections, so the option of running a 120-second cycle length was recommended.
- Outside of the 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. time period, there were significant queues on S. Eton, particularly around 3:30 p.m.

Vice-Chairperson Edwards noted that school lets out at 3:30 p.m.

Ms. Kroll continued her presentation, adding:

- The long queues on S. Eton around 3:30 p.m. were caused by the protected left turn going into the Whole Foods parking lot. F&V looked at the possibility of eliminating the protected left turn and replacing it with permissive left turns which operate between 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Southbound right turns on N. Eton have a green arrow during two periods each cycle: once as an overlap phase with adjacent signals when S. Eton is running, and once during the 17 seconds the intersection allows for the Whole Foods approach. The right-turn arrow times ended up totalling approximately seventy seconds per cycle. Eliminating the 17 second leg still left about 50 seconds of southbound right turns, allowing for the clearance of southbound right turns.
- As a result, F&V recommends turning off the southbound right-turns at the same time the northbound lefts are exiting the Whole Foods approach. This eliminates the conflict beneath the bridge.

Chairperson Slanga reminded the Board that at the N. Eton intersection the only concerns were the two turning lanes. The table of alternatives shared at the Board's January 3, 2019 meeting had Alternatives 1 & 2 with permissive turns which feature flashing lights that allowed both lanes to turn together. Alternative 3 would allow each lane an opportunity to turn. The change being proposed is a revised cost and a recommendation to look at Alternative 3.

Ms. Kroll explained to Chairperson Slanga that Alternative 2 is only different from Alternative 1 in that it provides a short amount of time for protected turns. Alternative 3, in contrast, turns off the southbound right turns because F&V found the right-turn lane already had enough time during the 120-second cycle length to clear. The northbound left turns only have

17 seconds, so F&V wanted to make sure that all 17 seconds were given to the Whole Foods approach in order to allow the Whole Foods approach to clear those vehicles and to avoid the southbound turns filling up the queue space under the bridge.

Ms. Kroll confirmed for Mr. Rontal there will be a red right arrow shown to the southbound right turn lane during the 17 seconds allotted for northbound right turns.

Vice-Chairperson Edwards said Alternative 3 would not improve the efficiency of the traffic flow at the intersection, but would make the intersection safer. She said drivers heading southbound into the intersection and attempting to turn right encounter a lower level of service. She also confirmed that she understood why Alternative 3 was being suggested, but that some people driving the intersection might be displeased with the change.

Mr. Isaksen pointed out that the level of service for the southbound right turn is still one of the highest on the table, and suggested that as a result the southbound right turns will be least negatively impacted by a small loss in level of service.

Vice-Chairperson Edwards agreed with Mr. Isaksen, just saying that some of the neighbors of the intersection are grumbling about the possible change.

Ms. Kroll noted the southbound right turns are still ranked 'C' for level of service in Alternative 3, which is adequate and only causes an additional 10-12 second wait for the turn. She also explained she used the recommendations from Alternative 3 as the baseline conditions to evaluate all the alternatives listed for Maple Road / S. Eton – Pedestrian Improvements, in order to clarify their compatibility.

The Board was then shown modelling of the existing conditions as well as Alternative 3.

Dr. Rontal explained that the westbound left-turn out of Whole Foods would be synchronized with the eastbound left-hand turn out of N. Eton. The southbound N. Eton traffic turning left to go eastbound onto Maple is synchronized with northbound left-turn going westbound into Whole Foods.

Ms. Kroll confirmed, adding the southbound left is permissive between 4:00 - 6:00 p.m., causing cars to yield to any traffic leaving the Whole Foods driveway.

Vice-Chairperson Edwards expressed concern that when parents go to pick up their children from Pembroke School around 3:50 p.m. the intersection gets overwhelmed with cars heading south and trying to make a left.

Mr. Isaksen suggested that maybe there should be another time of day where the signal operation is different to address the school traffic.

Ms. Kroll said that during school drop-offs northbound right turns back up under the bridge due to a westbound protected left turn occurring at the same time. Alternative 3 proposes to create a permissive westbound left turn outside the hours of 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in order to allow the northbound right turns to flow more freely.

Motion by Mr. Isaksen

Seconded by Mr. Rontal to recommend approval of Alternate 3 referenced in the F&V report dated January 26, 2019, creating a protected left turn phase for northbound vehicles turning left from the Whole Foods approach, at an estimated cost of \$8,550.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

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

Nays: None

Absent: White

6. MAPLE ROAD / S. ETON – PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

City Engineer O'Meara introduced the item and Ms. Kroll presented the item.

Ms. Kroll clarified that the largest truck going through this intersection regularly is a 53' semi-trailer, also known as a WB 65. No alternatives are being offered as part of this item that require trucks to drive over parts of the pedestrian islands. The schematics do not include trucks making the northbound-to-eastbound right turn because the trucks would hit the bridge.

City Engineer O'Meara noted F&V recommended Alternatives 1 or 6, and said it would be worth inviting an outside safety expert to review Alternative 6 if it was chosen to make sure pedestrians would be sufficiently visible to motorists even if a pedestrian crossed at the wrong time.

Dr. Rontal said Alternative 6 could feel like a daunting cross for a pedestrian.

Ms. Schafer said there may be impeded sightlines for westbound motorists, as well.

Planning Director Ecker acknowledged the difficulties, confirming it is just an overall difficult intersection for crossing. She also explained that the City Commission had previously turned down the Board's recommendation because they wanted to wait until Whole Foods was opened and the patterns of traffic and crossing at this intersection were more established.

City Engineer O'Meara confirmed the west sidewalk is to be widened to 8', per a City Commission decision from 2018. He added that the proposed pedestrian island in both Alternatives 1 and 6 would be landscaped with a small green space.

Ms. Kroll confirmed and said the current drawing is concept, whereas a final plan would be surveyed and to scale with inclusion of the 8' width of the west sidewalk.

Vice-Chairperson Edwards said Alternative 5 seemed like it would feel the safest to a pedestrian even though the option is likely cost-prohibitive. She noted that people cross north-south frequently at this intersection because narrower east-west crossings are possible at various points along Eton.

Planning Director Ecker said Alternative 5 makes the intersection much larger than it is today, even though the pedestrian island is also much larger. As a result, it is unlikely a pedestrian would

necessarily feel any safer with the island as proposed in Alternative 5. In addition the City would have to go to a property owner for the right-of-way and add in a retaining wall because of the grade for Alternative 5. With Alternative 6, the crosswalk is significantly reduced in length versus the current length, likely allowing for increased feelings of pedestrian safety.

Mr. Zane said there are two issues: does it feel safe to cross east-west, and should the City move the crosswalk.

Planning Director Ecker said the east-west crosswalk is an improvement, and the Board can decide whether to keep the north-south crosswalk where it is or move it over, noting the north-south crosswalk will be technically safer if relocated to the east side of the intersection. That said, she also acknowledged there are other factors to consider including sight issues caused by the hill and the bridge, and having to cross in order to go north.

Mr. Isaksen said he was uncomfortable with the possibility in Alternative 6 that a car coming westbound under the bridge may not see a pedestrian in time to stop if the pedestrian was going northbound and jaywalking against the light.

Dr. Rontal said Alternatives 1 & 6 seem to be the best options, acknowledging that there seemed to be no perfect option.

Ms. Kroll said the only tables included in the report were ones reflecting a change in operations of the intersection.

Vice-Chairperson Edwards said the proposed alternatives could give more definition to the intersection, make the intersection feel safer, and encourage cars to move slower.

Chairperson Slanga noted people who avoid the back-up on S. Eton and intend to turn right sometimes move over into the actual turn lane. A splitter island would, in contrast, force those drivers into one lane and encourage turns that stay closer to the corner.

Chairperson Slanga asked the Board to recommend moving forward with discussion of Alternatives 1 and 6, with the understanding that Alternative 6 would require further discussion of the location of the north-south crosswalk and an evaluation by an outside safety consultant.

The Board confirmed.

Ms. Kroll told Chairperson Slanga that the cost difference between Alternatives 1 and 6 reflect the necessity of moving the traffic signal and the pedestrian push button if the crosswalk is moved.

7. WIMBLETON NEIGHBORHOOD INTERSECTION EVALUATION

Police Commander Grewe presented the item.

In response to Board questions, Police Commander Grewe added:

- A 'traffic control device' is anything that affects the flow of traffic, such as a stop sign, yield sign, or traffic light.
- The red areas in the images provided were inserted to highlight objects which obstructed

the field of view.

- Two four-way intersections on Henley had no traffic control devices. Those were the most complained about intersections, and the rest were T-intersections with some problems, but fewer.
- Warwick and Oxford would be the non-yielding traffic streets.
- This resolution only includes proposed yield signs, not the yield signs already existing throughout the neighborhood.
- This is a minor enough change that a public hearing would not be necessary.

Planning Director Ecker confirmed for Dr. Rontal that the neighborhood residents have been in touch with Police Commander Grewe requesting traffic control devices for some time now.

City Engineer O'Meara confirmed that #6 in the resolution should have listed a stop sign and not a yield sign due to visibility issues.

Motion by Mr. Rontal

Seconded by Vice-Chairperson Edwards to install YIELD signs at the following intersections:

- 1. On Henley at Abbey**
- 2. On Henley at Oxford**
- 3. On Henley at Warwick**
- 4. On Henley at Tottenham**
- 5. On Tottenham at Warwick**

And a STOP sign on Oakdale at Rivenoak.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

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

Nays: None

Absent: White

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

(no public)

9. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS (none)

10. NEXT MEETING MARCH 7, 2019 at 6 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director Paul O'Meara, City Engineer