

DRAFT

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
THURSDAY, MARCH 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, March 2, 2017.

Chairperson Vionna Adams convened the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairperson Vionna Adams; Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Johanna Slanga

**Absent:** Board Members Vice-Chairperson Andy Lawson, Daniel Rontal, Michael Surnow

**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 (none)**

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MEETING OF FEBRUARY 2, 2017**

**Motion by Ms. Slanga**

**Seconded by Ms. Folberg to approve the Minutes of February 2, 2017 as presented.**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Slanga, Folberg, Adams, Edwards

Nays: None

Absent: Lawson, Rontal, Surnow

**5. SAXON RD. IMPROVEMENTS**  
**Norfolk Dr. to Southfield Rd.**

Mr. O'Meara recalled that at the February Multi-Modal Transportation Board ("MMTB") meeting, the City presented a proposal to install a marked, improved crosswalk at the intersection of Saxon Dr. and Latham Dr./Norchester Rd. This is in the Multi-Modal Master Plan as a suggested improvement for the area. Also, the residents on Saxon are unhappy because there are too many cars and too much speeding.

Last month, staff presented a \$21,000 improvement that both Birmingham and Beverly Hills could pay for out of their general funds. Beverly Hills has already gone on record to say that they will contribute. The ditches would be filled in, storm sewer issues would be re-worked, and concrete sidewalks could be extended across the four corners of the intersection. Pavement markings would be installed on both sides to identify the crossing.

Last month, when the idea was reviewed by the MMTB, the following questions and concerns were raised:

1. Board members were not convinced that the crosswalk improvement would make much difference in addressing the issue of traffic speeds and volumes.
2. Board members felt that other ideas had more merit:
  - Flashing speed indicator signs for both directions if suitable locations can be found.
  - Pavement markings, consisting of a skip or double yellow down the middle, and white edge lines throughout the corridor. However, Mr. Labadie, the Police, and some of the residents do not endorse that suggestion.
  - Installation of a "25" pavement marking legend for westbound traffic, west of Southfield Rd., as weather permits. Mr. O'Meara indicated that idea can be pursued.

Staff initiated conversations with the two neighborhood representatives for Saxon Rd. relative to these ideas. Ms. Susan Randall on the Birmingham side and Mr. Pete Webster on the Beverly Hills side were present to provide their input.

Mr. Pete Webster, 32906 Balmoral, said he is in close communication with the vast majority of the residents from Southfield to the Birmingham Country Club and beyond. They are well aware of the problem and aware of the need to address a number of different issues. Anything that can be done would be helpful, whether it is the flashing speed indicator; a crosswalk to help pedestrians integrate into the pedestrian network; or a raised sidewalk on the east side of the crossing.

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Ms. Slanga observed that putting stripes on the road at the crosswalk doesn't solve the speeding problems or shorten the crossing. Mr. Webster said independent of that, the markings are extremely valuable because they demarcate where people should cross plus they remind drivers where people do cross. He suggested installing a traffic island in the roadway just west of Southfield to calm traffic entering the residential area. It may be beneficial to put in speed humps.

Ms. Susan Randall, 1220 Saxon, said an average of 5,500 cars a day go down their street at speeds up to 60 or 70 mph. She was in favor of the recommendations for a painted crosswalk and to make it slightly raised so that it is a hump, not a bump. She does not like the idea of a flashing light but is in favor of the "25" to be painted east of Southfield. With respect to installing an island, the residents do not want to do a U-turn out of their driveway by turning west to go east. She doesn't know if they will agree to that.

Mr. Tom Randall, 1220 Saxon, was not impressed with the flashing lights. They only work when police are present.

Mr. O'Meara said a little island isn't a bad idea from a cost standpoint, but there is a driveway issue. The idea of a raised crosswalk has not been studied. Mr. Labadie advised that with an island there would not be enough room on either side to make a U-turn.

Ms. Chris Arbor, 18837 Saxon, suggested trying removable speed bumps for a while to see if they work. Mr. O'Meara voiced the concern that this is an unimproved road with gravel shoulders and people that are irritated by the bump would just drive around it. Residents would not want that problem in front of their house.

Mr. Labadie said the speed humps are an effective way to control speed. However, right after going over the hump, people will increase their speed, similar to unwarranted STOP signs. He would like to see current speed and volume data before a decision is made on some of these ideas. He thought the sidewalk and the crosswalk are great ideas and they should be moved forward.

### **Motion by Ms. Edwards**

**Seconded by Ms. Folberg to recommend to the City Commission the approval of the following improvements for Saxon Dr. The installation of crosswalks on the east and west sides of the Latham Dr./Norchester Rd. intersection, in accordance with the Multi-Modal Master Plan.** including pavement markings, to be funded 50% by the City of Birmingham, and 50% by the Village of Beverly Hills.

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Folberg, Adams, Slanga

Nays: None

Absent: Lawson, Rontal, Surnow

Commander Grewe said the Police Dept. has a black box that is a speed monitor/counter and goes on a tree so no one knows what it is and they don't react differently when they see it on the road. It will capture both sides of the road. It can be installed as soon as possible.

Mr. Steve Still, 1190 Saxon, hoped there would be a "Stop for Pedestrians" sign in the crosswalk.

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

Mr. O'Meara noted that the Ad Hoc Rail District Committee finished its work, and submitted a report of recommendations to the City Commission in December 2016. The report dated January 27, 2017, summarizing suggested improvements at Maple Rd. and S. Eton Rd. was reviewed by the MMTB at its meeting of February 2, 2017. At that time, the primary concern was whether the proposed new island was sized appropriately to allow large trucks to make a left turn from Maple Rd. onto southbound Eton Rd. It has been demonstrated that the island leaves sufficient room for a large truck to make the turn.

Ms. Ecker said at the last meeting the board had several concerns that staff has now investigated:

- It works to increase the sidewalk width from 5 ft. to 8 ft. Landscaping can be added to the splitter island at the south end.
- It is not recommended to move the westbound Maple Rd. stop bar west.
- Turn lane hash marks are not needed and they would soon be worn off.
- . Paint the curbs around the new island with something reflective that makes them stand out.

**Motion by Ms. Folberg**

**Seconded by Ms. Edwards to recommend to the City Commission that the City prioritize the Ad Hoc Rail District Committee's recommendations for changes to S. Eton Rd. from Maple Rd. to Yosemite Blvd. including:**

- 1. Landscaped splitter island to improve the S. Eton Rd. south side crosswalk at Maple Rd.**
- 2. Enlarged handicap ramp area at the southeast corner of the intersection.**

**3. Relocation of the west side curb and gutter section to allow for a widened 8 ft. sidewalk on the entire length from Maple Rd. to Yosemite Blvd.**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Folberg, Edwards, Adams, Slanga

Nays: None

Absent: Lawson, Rontal, Surnow

**7. POPPLETON AVE. PAVING  
Knox Ave. to Maple Rd.**

Mr. O'Meara recalled the MMTB discussed the above planned City project at its meeting of December 1, 2016. A recommendation to approve the three-lane cross-section presented at that time was passed. It was noted that this segment is identified as part of a future Neighborhood Connector Route, but that due to the lack of right-of-way, the City will be unable to make improvements to the road that would allow for an improved environment for bicyclists. The MMTB recommended that further study be given to this issue before this Connector Route is finalized in the future.

During further study of this block, it was noted that this is the only available route for trucks to enter and exit the loading dock for the adjacent Kroger store. Due to the narrow right-of-way, the existing pavement at the Maple Rd. and Poppleton Ave. intersection was not constructed to accommodate these large trucks. Due to heavy traffic volumes and the narrow street, trucks have to routinely drive over the curb to exit Poppleton Ave.

Staff's suggested street design shows the new road to be about 18 in. wider, and a standard 25 ft. radius at both corners is recommended (the current radii, particularly on the NW corner, are smaller, and are not recommended on a truck route). To summarize, a minor expansion of the road, particularly to the west, will better accommodate the multiple trucks that need to use this intersection daily, while extending the length of the crosswalk for those crossing Maple Rd. on the west side of the intersection by about 5 ft. Doing so will remove the current ongoing maintenance issue that is present at the northwest corner of this intersection.

To ensure that this is appropriate, F&V will study the traffic signal timing to make sure that there is sufficient green time to allow pedestrians to safely cross Maple Rd. with this new condition.

**Motion by Ms. Edwards**

**Seconded by Ms. Slanga to recommend to the City Commission the modified pavement design for Poppleton Ave. between Knox Ave. and Maple Rd. to better accommodate the frequent truck turning movements at this intersection.**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

ROLLCALL VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Slanga, Adams, Folberg

Nays: None

Absent: Lawson, Rontal, Surnow

**8. HANDICAP PARKING POLICY**

Ms. Chapman noted that in 2016, the City installed over sixty on-street designated accessible parking spaces to comply with new regulations under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). The guidelines require cities to provide reserved, marked accessible parking spaces in all municipal lots and on any public street that has individually marked spaces. This policy does not apply to streets that do not have individually marked spaces.

Staff was asked to explore creating an accessible parking installation policy for areas with unmarked on-street parking.

Should the board wish to recommend the On-Street Accessible Parking Policy, an application process will need to be established to review and evaluate requests for additional on-street accessible parking spaces.

Discussion concluded that the sample Application would state that the requestor needs to provide their handicap parking license plate or placard as well as describe their disability and explain why they would need an accessible parking space in front of their home or place of work. The application will ask whether this is a commercial address or a residential address, and if the requestor has other off-street parking options. Consent of the property owner is needed, even if the tenant is the requestor. An inspector could go out to determine if the request is legitimate.

Approval would only be good for two years, and after that time the requestor needs to re-apply. There should be clarity about how many neighbors need to be notified about the request.

Commander Grewe indicated he does not see the need to get signatures from residents on the whole block. Further, he doesn't see this happening that much

because most houses in Birmingham have driveways and garages. Also, putting a handicap spot in front of someone's house doesn't guarantee they get to use it. Another neighbor with a handicap pass may park there. It was noted that information to this effect should be added to the application.

Ms. Ecker explained the proposed process. The application would come in to the Police Dept. and they would send it around to the different City departments. An inspector would be sent out to survey the situation and then file a report. The report gets put on a MMTB or APC Agenda for a decision.

Mr. Labadie stated that how the space is designated will be important, not just the sign. In other communities the requestor pays for the sign and for the pavement markings that go down. Renewal is not a new cost, but a verification that the space is still needed.

It was concluded that Staff would further investigate other cities to determine their notification requirements. When this matter is brought back the application language will be tightened up and a fee will be added.

## **9. STANLEY AVE. PARKING ISSUE**

Commander Grewe said the City received a letter from Erica and Ben Auslander of 627 Stanley regarding problems they are having entering and exiting their driveway due to vehicles parked across the street. Stanley has no parking on the east side of the street and there is permit parking on the west side.

The Auslanders are asking to have no parking directly across the street. However, Commander Grewe does not want to impose a restriction on a resident who gets no benefit from it. He explained if the City wants to change parking on a street it is typically done by the block so as not to single out any one area or resident. The other issue is many of the residents on the west side of the street have converted their easement into a parking area so their cars are parked as close to the sidewalk as possible. However the resident across from 627 Stanley has a tree in the middle of the easement which causes vehicles to park in front of the tree and pushes them a little further into the roadway.

Mr. Ben Auslander addressed the board and passed around photos that depicted the problem. Ms. Erica Auslander said the neighbors across the street have a four-car garage and a double driveway that could fit six cars. Neighbors on their side are complaining because when the Auslanders pull out, they go onto their lawn.

Ms. Slanga suggested asking the neighbors if they could brick in the mouth of their driveway to make it wider. Ms. Auslander replied the base of their driveway is almost on the neighbor's lawn and a sprinkler head is in the way.

Mr. Auslander went on to say there is easy access to parking down the entire street. There are no other spots on the entire street where there is any conflict.

Commander Grewe suggested to the Auslanders that they could round out their driveway at the approach so they would end up going southbound when backing out. That way it is something they could do to fix their situation versus imposing a restriction on someone else.

Ms. Edwards was not comfortable with starting something new. It opens the board up to every homeowner asking for their own personal restriction. She does not think that is a good precedent to set. The onus is on the requestors to talk to their neighbors and try to get permit parking totally removed so there is no parking on their street, or to fix their driveway. It was discussed if the Auslanders could petition the residents to remove parking just in that section. Commander Grewe did not think this was an option as residents would be signing a petition to impose a restriction on one resident of the street. Currently petitions are used for changes that affect all residents of the block. ~~see why it would be a problem if 75% of the block was okay with removing parking in that one section. Granted, the City has never done that before.~~

The Chairperson observed that at this time the board members are not comfortable with getting rid of the space. She suggested that the requestors see if they can get a petition for no parking across from their driveway signed by 75% of the entire block. Then they can come back for re-evaluation.

Ms. Edwards was not comfortable with making a one spot exemption. The Chairperson concluded that at this time the board could not move forward with eliminating parking across from 627 Stanley.

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

**11. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Folberg noted the board seems to have a very consistent pattern of sacrificing bicycles in place of other considerations which always makes sense at the time. She thought at some point the board needs to revisit its vision of how bicycles will function in Birmingham.



**12. NEXT MEETING APRIL 6, 2017 at 6 p.m.**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

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Jana Ecker, Planning Director

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Paul O'Meara, City Engineer