

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
THURSDAY, MAY 3, 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, May 3, 2018.

The meeting convened at 6:04 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Daniel Rontal, Katie Schafer, Alternate Board Member Daniel Isaksen

**Absent:** Board Member Johanna Slanga

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

**Also Present:** Brad Strader from MKSK

**Motion by Ms. Folberg  
Seconded by Mr. Isaksen to nominate Daniel Rontal as temporary chair for tonight.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Folberg, Isaksen, Edwards, Rontal, Schafer

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga

Ms. Edwards recommended that Johanna Slanga become that permanent chairperson unless someone else wants the job. A vote on this matter will be postponed until Ms. Slanga is present.

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### 2. INTRODUCTIONS (none)

Chairman Rontal advised that Vionna Adams, Andy Lawson, and Michael Surnow have resigned. The board thanks them for their service.

### 3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

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

Ms. Edwards made the following change:

Page 3 - Option 3, fourth line, remove the fourth sentence and replace with "Ms. Folberg commented that 24 ft. is too narrow."

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

**Seconded by Mr. Isaksen to accept the MMTB Minutes of May 3, 2018 with the change.**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

#### VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Isaksen, Folberg, Schafer

Abstain: Rontal

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga

### 5. RESIDENTIAL STREET WIDTHS

Chairman Rontal 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, they endorsed after much discussion 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;

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

Ms. Ecker advised that on April 5, 2018, the MMTB discussed three different options for residential street width standards. After much discussion, the MMTB directed staff to consolidate the options into a final version. The consolidated draft of the proposed standards and criteria for variance from the standards is presented this evening. There are two portions of the draft; one is a cross-section that shows how wide the lanes would be, and it is written out. A flow chart is proposed as well so it is easy to understand how and why decisions are made. In addition, an intent section talks about the different standards that were referenced when coming up with the plan, and design standards are described for new, existing, and unimproved streets.

Ms. Folberg received confirmation that re-doing a street such as Wakefield which is not paved and doesn't have a curb requires a consensus of existing homeowners because an assessment is involved. The property owners only pay an assessment when their street goes from gravel or chip seal to fully built out.

Talking about improved streets, Ms. Ecker explained that sidewalks are treated separately from the pavement. Mr. O'Meara continued that an improved street must have permanent pavement along with a curb and gutter system.

### STREET DESIGN STANDARDS:

**1. New And Existing, Unimproved Residential Streets that are Being Improved:** When streets are improved or newly constructed, the standards below shall be strictly applied:

- a. Standard Streets: 26 ft. in width from curb to curb.
- b. If the right-of-way is less than 50 ft., the street width shall be a minimum of 20 ft. with parking allowed on one side only (generally the side without fire hydrants).

**2. Existing, Improved Residential Streets:** When previously built streets are reconstructed, this standard shall generally be applied. Exceptions may be considered when factors, such as those described in Section 4 below, are evident.

- a. Standard Streets: 26 ft. in width from curb to curb.
- b. Existing Street is 28 ft. or less in width: Street shall generally be reconstructed at the existing width.

**3. Public Notice And Public Hearing:** Whenever there is a street project where a change in the existing width is being considered, the MMTB shall have a public hearing to inform residents of the project and provide an opportunity for comment. If residents express a desire for a non-standard street width at a public meeting or through a public survey of street residents, those preferences shall be considered. However, engineering

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or safety factors listed in Section 4 below must also be present to support a design exception.

**4. Exceptions and Modifications to the Width Standards:** Any modification must be consistent with the Intent of these standards and the engineering publications upon which they are based. Street width exceptions may only be approved to a minimum of 20 ft. and a maximum of 30 ft. Modifications to street widths may only be considered under certain specified conditions.

Board members made changes to the specified conditions as follows:

- Condition 4 (d) should read - "Street is adjacent to a school, religious institution, City park, multiple-family residential development, or other use with access that generates higher traffic volumes."
- Condition 4 (e) should read - "Presence of street trees, especially healthy, mature trees such that rebuilding the road as proposed would result in the removal of two or more trees in any given block."
- Condition 4 (g) reads - "Street may be as narrow as 20 ft. with parking on one side only if right-of-way is less than 50 ft."

5. Boulevard Streets: Reconstruction of streets with a boulevard, median, or other unique design feature shall be reconstructed to match the current configuration unless geometric changes are needed based on safety or engineering analysis.

The chairman voiced concern that a street's effective width gets narrower in the winter with snow plowing. There is no way a 10 ft. fire truck can get down his street in the winter. He thought the board should study effective widths of streets and decide whether emergency vehicles can get through streets under a certain width in the winter. If not, the side designated for parking can be alternated every other year. Ms. Ecker said the Fire Dept. has indicated there are really only a couple of streets where they have difficulty.

The discussion concluded that with this document the board is not boxed into one particular solution, but guidelines are given. Documented factors for an exception must exist.

The board agreed to add a seventh goal for identifying a standard road width for residential streets: Storm Water Runoff Management.

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

**Seconded by Ms. Folberg to recommend approval to the City Commission of the revised Residential Street Width Standards with the inclusion of seven additional goals where the seventh is "Storm Water Runoff Management." Also, in section 4 (d) change "church" to "religious institution." In section 4 (e) add at the end of the sentence "on any given block." Finally, in section 4 (g) remove the typo at the end.**

There were no comments on the motion from members of the public at 6:35 p.m.

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Folberg, Rontal, Isaksen, Schafer

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga

## **6. RAIL DISTRICT STANDARD BIKE RACK AND LOCATIONS**

Chairman Rontal noted there is not a standard bike rack standard for the Rail District. Tonight the board has been given choices for bike racks along with their prices.

Ms. Chapman recalled the design suggestions for the Rail District streetscape were that it be hip and edgy, have clean lines, potentially use black wrought iron and/or brushed steel elements and a graphic that represents ties to the railroad.

U-racks (the City standard) have been installed in the Rail District by developers. City staff has identified 18 locations for bike racks within the District. City Staff recommends that bike racks be embedded into the surface rather than mounted onto the surface. Embedded racks tend to be more secure and more stable than surface mounted racks.

Board members were enthused by the logo for the Rail District and thought it might be installed on black U racks in highly visible places in the District, if it is not cost prohibitive. Ms. Ecker thought that staff could get some quotes for that and bring them back to the board. Also staff will come back at the next meeting with a map for the board's consideration that includes some suggested locations for placement of the racks.

It was thought that racks on Eton should be priorities and maybe one in front of Kenning Park.

## **7. BUS SHELTER LOCATION PRIORITIES**

Ms. Chapman advised that over the past several years, the City has implemented a bus shelter installation program.

FAST is a new service powered by SMART, which offers limited stops to connect people throughout the region quickly and easily. The new high-frequency service travels along three of metro Detroit's busiest corridors, Gratiot, Woodward Ave., and Michigan, and only stops at designated FAST stops. In addition to the City's ongoing shelter installation program, SMART plans to install 20 enhanced shelters this summer along each corridor at FAST stops. SMART staff is considering installing shelters in Birmingham on

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Woodward Ave. northbound at 14 Mile Rd., and northbound and southbound at Maple Rd.

There is a standard Birmingham shelter on northbound Woodward Ave. at 14 Mile Rd. If SMART installed a FAST style shelter at that stop, the City could relocate the shelter to another bus stop. The City can install standard Birmingham shelters, but SMART would only be willing to do the concrete work. If the City accepts SMART's FAST style shelters, they will provide all the funding and work.

Some aspects of the shelters are still under design and may change. City staff believes that the SMART FAST style shelters are a good choice because they look similar to the standard Birmingham shelters, have valuable enhancements, and contribute to a regional identity.

Ms. Ecker said the question is whether to allow SMART to do their branded bus shelters throughout the Birmingham section of their route. SMART would pay for them and they would have many more amenities, however they would have red accents. Mr. Isaksen said he would like Birmingham's shelters to look like every single other bus shelter on the entire length of Woodward Ave. This is a metro wide effort and Birmingham should be part of that effort.

Ms. Ecker advised that SMART would be responsible for maintaining the SMART standard shelters if they install them. It is staff's understanding that DPS would maintain the grounds.

**Motion by Mr. Isaksen**

**Seconded by Ms. Edwards to recommend to the City Commission that the attached list of priority locations for bus shelters be used as a guide when new bus shelters are considered for installation.**

**AND**

**To recommend to the City Commission that City staff work with SMART to install three SMART enhanced FAST style shelters at SMART FAST bus stops on Woodward Ave. northbound at 14 Mile Rd. and northbound and southbound at Maple Rd.**

**AND**

**To relocate the existing standard Birmingham shelter on northbound Woodward Ave. at 14 Mile Rd. to westbound 14 Mile Rd. at Woodward Ave. in order to facilitate the installation of a SMART enhanced FAST style shelter at the existing bus stop.**

**AND**

**To recommend to the City Commission approval of the location of the next bus shelter at westbound E. Maple Rd. and Coolidge.**

The Chairman called for public comment at 6:55 p.m.

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Mr. Strader confirmed that Mr. Robert Kramer at SMART told him if the MMTB approves the red shelter, SMART will take care of all the cost of installation and repairs, including cracked windows, and look to the City or business sponsor for trash pickup and any landscaping maintenance.

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Isaksen, Edwards, Folberg, Rontal, Shafer

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga

### 8. COMPLETE STREETS TRAINING SESSION

Mr. Strader explained that his presentation focuses mostly on pedestrians and bikes and not so much on autos. The training objective is to provide a basic understanding of what complete streets are and what they mean to your community. The Michigan Complete Streets Coalition came up with a definition for Michigan that was enacted in Michigan Public Act 135 of 2010. A system of streets. . . "planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate access to all legal users in a manner that promotes safe and efficient movement of people and goods whether by car, truck, transit, assistive device, foot or bicycle." That is when Complete Streets got its big push in Michigan that has changed the way streets are designed.

Also in 2010 one of the laws that was changed in Michigan was to acknowledge Complete Streets in Act 33 of 2010 (Planning Act). The Birmingham Planning Board follows the Planning Act in terms of a Master Plan that directs land uses and infrastructure and is a guide for capital improvements.

In Michigan, State funding for roads is called Act 51 of 2010 (Michigan Transportation Fund). It classifies roads into major and minor streets and provides the formula for how the City gets its funds funneled through the State. MDOT may work with communities or municipalities to look at Complete Streets design changes on a trunk line such as Woodward Ave. MDOT has an undefined amount that is supposed to go for maintaining pedestrian and bicycle ways and in the Upper Peninsula maintaining snow mobile trails.

Nationally and in Michigan there are ten Complete Street principles:

1. Set the vision.
2. Accommodate all legal roadway users.
3. Emphasize interconnected networks.
4. Address all roadways and inter-jurisdictional issues to have consistency where possible.
5. Define process for exceptions based on criteria.
7. Integrate best practices.
8. Context sensitive design to fit the characteristics of that part of the city.

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9. Establish performance standards.

10. Develop an implementation plan which is the role of the MMTB in Birmingham.

### Benefits:

- Increased safety - slower traffic speeds reduce crash severity.
- Reduce the risk of crashes by 28% by Installing pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Improved public health - reduces obesity, heart disease, diabetes. Increase in physical activity reduces stress.
- A 30% reduction in sick-leave absenteeism, health care use, and worker's comp and disability for businesses that provide walk/bike opportunities for employees.
- Reduction in health care costs and insurance premiums.
- Cleaner environment because of reduced greenhouses gas emissions: fewer and shorter car trips.
- Reduced oil dependence.

### Multi-Modal quality of service:

- Procedures in the new 2010 Highway Capacity Manual were amended to add Multi-Modal Transportation.
- Considers the quality of service for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

Traffic impact studies have turned into transportation impact studies that evaluate all modes - autos, biking, walking, transit. They set minimum level of service standards for each.

### Options for multi-modal travel along streets:

- Sidewalks with sheltered bike parking;
- Protected or buffered bike lanes;
- Parking separated bike lanes;
- Roadside multi-use paths or two-way cycle tracks;
- Shared roadways (sharrows);
- One-way or two-way cycle tracks.

### How transit fits into complete streets:

- Good shelters;
- Good sidewalk connections;
- Bus stops are located where people can cross at a signal;
- Align the door of a building at a corner where there is a pedestrian crossing.

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

- The Chairman recalled that he asked last fall about possibly studying the crosswalks at Grant and Bird because they are pretty worn out. People speed up and it is hard for them to slow down one block from the school when the crosswalks are worn and

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not very visible. Commander Grewe stated their painting program should be starting soon and they will make sure that crosswalk gets done.

**10. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS**

- Ms. Chapman announced that SEMCOG is having their Commuter Challenge 2018 for the entire month of May. The "challenge" is for single-passenger drivers to travel to work in some way other than driving alone (carpool, bus, vanpool, bike, walk, or work from home).
- Mr. O'Meara updated the board on one of their past initiatives. The City Commission approved leading pedestrian interval that was talked about a few months ago. Four intersections have now been implemented with the leading pedestrian interval. Also, he noted there will be a mural contest for the wood boarding around the Old Woodward Ave. construction area.

**11. NEXT MEETING JUNE 7, 2018 at 6 p.m.**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

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Jana Ecker, Planning Director

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Paul O'Meara, City Engineer