

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 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, June 7, 2018.

Ms. Folberg convened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Katie Schafer, Johanna Slanga, Doug White; Alternate Board Member Daniel Isaksen

Absent: Board Member Daniel Rontal

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

Also Present: Julie Kroll and Mohamed Ajud from Fleis & Vandenbrink ("F&V"), Transportation Engineering Consultants

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. White introduced himself and offered a little about his background. Then everyone introduced themselves to him.

3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MMTB MEETING OF MAY 3, 2018

With regard to the revised residential street width standards that were covered in the minutes, it was noted that the public would have to work with the agenda and the minutes together to see what changes were made to the original standards.

Ms. Folberg was concerned there is no one place where all of the language is together. Ms. Ecker advised that the complete package comes together when the standards go before the City Commission for final approval.

Motion by Ms. Edwards

Seconded by Ms. Schafer to accept the MMTB Minutes of May 3, 2018 as presented.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Schafer, Folberg, Slanga, Isaksen, White

Abstain: None

Nays: None

Absent: Rontal

5. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Motion by Ms. Edwards to nominate Johanna Slanga as Chair.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Folberg, Slanga, Schafer, Isaksen, White

Nays: None

Absent: Rontal

Motion by Ms. Schafer to nominate Lara Edwards as Vice-Chair.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Schafer, Edwards, Folberg, Slanga, Isaksen, White

Nays: None

Absent: Rontal

6. RAIL DISTRICT STANDARD BIKE RACK AND LOCATIONS

Ms. Ecker recalled at April's MMTB meeting, members requested that City staff research CycleSafe's custom Bike U Racks. Ms. Chapman has provided information about the Custom U Racks and pricing information on previously considered bike rack models, in order to serve as a point of comparison. She also included 18 proposed locations in the Rail District for bike racks.

The Rail District's logo may be too intricate for CycleSafe's laser cutter. Laser Cut custom racks start at \$850 each. The cost increases depending on the intricacy of the design. Since the Rail District logo is an intricate design, the price will probably be more than \$850. For the Insignia Rack, CycleSafe would provide the rack and the City would have to supply logos that could be affixed to the rack. The Insignia is \$341 per rack. For either the Laser Cut or the Insignia models there must be a minimum order of six.

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There is \$650 left in the budget for this fiscal year, so if the U Rack is chosen they could go ahead with the first couple of priority locations. If the Custom Rack is chosen, it would have to wait until next year. The City Commission would have to determine whether they would approve the purchase of Custom Racks, given their cost. Internally, it is felt that it is a lot easier to have a standard rack so they can be kept in stock and put out as needed.

Mr. Isaksen thought the board could approve some of the Classic U Rack locations and postpone the more prominent locations for the Custom Racks. Then decide next fiscal year whether to order Custom Racks or to install Classic U Racks in those locations. Ms. Ecker advised that the City's fiscal year ends at the end of the month.

Ms. Edwards said the bike racks have a dual purpose. They are not just a bike rack; they are also signage. They give people a sense of place. Ms. Schafer thought maybe leave this open to see what the new City logo looks like and how does the City ultimately want to thrust that upon the community. Ms. Edwards said that a City logo rack could be used anywhere. Ms. Ecker thought the City logo will be coming up on the City Commission agenda in the near future.

Consensus was to go ahead and purchase as many Classic U Racks as possible with the current fiscal year's money, and state the top locations are for the U Racks only.

Chairperson Slangs suggested sending a note to the Commission saying when they are deliberating on the Birmingham logo, the MMTB is considering a little more expensive advertising and an uplift to the bike rack in specific locations.

Motion by Ms. Folberg

Seconded by Mr. Isaksen that the MMTB take the money available to them in this fiscal year and purchase as many City standard U Racks as they can and place them at the east cluster and the west cluster of Kenning Park.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Folberg, Isaksen, Edwards, Schafer, Slanga, White

Nays: None

Absent: Rontal

7. SPEED BOARD REQUEST ON WOODWARD AVE.

Commander Grewe recalled that in March the City received a request from a resident to have a speed monitoring/display board on northbound and southbound Woodward Ave. north of Oakland. The resident expressed concerns regarding the speed of vehicles southbound on Woodward Ave. north of Birmingham, as they enter the City from a less congested area, and vehicles speeding on northbound Woodward Ave. from Oakland

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due to entering a less congested area. The resident is concerned due to pedestrian crossings at Oakland and Oak. Woodward (M-1) is an M-DOT roadway. The resident stated he had already contacted M-DOT whose safety engineer advised the request would have to come from the City.

There must be a formal speed study on file less than two years old. M-DOT was contacted and advised there was no recent speed study available. M-DOT stated if a speed study was requested the City must agree that changes in speed limits may occur based on the 85th percentile speed prior to a test being completed. After the test is completed and the speed limit is deemed appropriate, the City can complete a permit application for the placement of a changeable "YOUR SPEED" sign. The City would be responsible for all associated costs of a sign. The city must also agree to follow-up speed studies conducted by M-DOT at six and twelve months. If the studies do not show a significant decrease in speed of more than 5 MPH, M-DOT reserves the right to remove the sign.

The resident was contacted and made aware of the formal process required through M-DOT. The resident asked that no speed study be conducted out of concern the speed limit may be increased; however suggested the "YOUR SPEED" sign still be installed. The installation of such a sign must go through the M-DOT process.

M-DOT indicated they were not aware of an area like Woodward Ave. where this type of speed display board is in use. They expressed concern of not being able to provide accurate information and stated when multiple vehicles are going in the same direction the drivers would have no way of knowing whose speed is being displayed. Staff shares the same concerns as the resident, a speed study with the M-DOT terms is something the City would not want to participate in at this time. Staff also believes that posting a speed board may cause confusion to drivers (not knowing whose speed is being displayed) would not be appropriate.

Commander Grewe explained for Ms. Folberg that the 85th percentile is deemed to be the reasonable speed that people can travel safely. When a traffic complaint is received what they typically do is provide extra enforcement to the area so that officers are visible. Mr. Isaksen noted the City's options are somewhat limited because of the fact that Woodward Ave. is M-DOT's road.

Ms. Ecker advised Ms. Edwards that DPS is currently working with M-DOT to get money for more trees in the median so that people will be encouraged to slow down. The trees should be planted in the Fall.

The board's consensus was to take no action on the speed board matter.

8. BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

Ms. Ecker advised that the City of Birmingham is currently exploring the possibility of implementing a bike share program. At the Long-Range Planning Meeting with the City Commission there was consensus that it would be a good idea to look into. At this point there is no funding for it. There are different ways these programs can be funded. The benefits are:

- Provides an additional mode of travel for people;
- Decreases reliance on automobiles;
- Provides that last mile link for commuters when they get off and their destination is still far.
- Helps circulation between Downtown and Triangle District, Rail District, and commercial areas throughout town;
- Provides the means for a pleasurable tour around town.

There are all kinds of urban bike sharing systems catering to visitors as well as local residents. All are based on one or more of the following systems:

Unregulated

Bicycles are simply released into a city or given area for use by anyone. Bikes are found by GPS. Users are expected to leave the bike unlocked in a public area once they reach their destination. Because users are not required to return a bike to a centralized station, ready availability of such bicycles is rare. Bike sharing programs without locks, user identification, and security deposits have historically suffered large loss rates from theft and vandalism.

Deposit

A small cash deposit releases the bike from a locked terminal and can only be refunded by returning it. Since the deposit is a fraction of the bike's cost, this does little to deter theft. Other bike sharing programs have required users to provide a valid credit card, substantial security deposits and mandatory security locks.

Docked

Bicycles are kept either at volunteer-run hubs or at self-service terminals. Individuals registered with the program identify themselves with a membership card or other methods at any of the hubs to check out a bicycle for a short period. The individual is responsible for any damage or loss until the bike is returned to another hub and checked in. The operator withdraws money from the user's credit card account if user does not return the bike within the subscription period, or damages the bike.

Dockless

Dockless bike shares are designed whereby a user need not return the bike to a station; rather, the next user can find it by GPS. Riders may have to find an alternative mode for return trips, as another user could have checked out the bike they initially rode.

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Long-Term Checkout

Bicycles may be lent for free, a refundable deposit, or a small fee. A user checks out a bike and typically keeps it for days. A disadvantage of this system is a lower usage frequency per day.

Partnership with other Transportation Providers

Some bike share programs collaborate with other transportation providers, such as bus and rail systems.

Bikes

Many bike share programs paint their bicycles in a bright solid color; this helps to advertise the program and deter theft. Many large-scale bike sharing programs have designed bikes using specialized frame designs and other parts to prevent disassembly and resale of stolen parts. When users can return bicycles to any station in the system, they are more likely to use a bike for one-way rides. Thus, one bike may take ten to fifteen rides a day with different users and can be ridden up to 6,200 miles a year.

Most bike shares use traditional two-wheeled bikes. However, other bikes can accommodate users who struggle to or cannot use traditional bikes. Adaptive bikes are designed to be inclusive of riders with disabilities, although they are not exclusively for special needs individuals.

Next Steps

A feasibility study can provide the information necessary to determine if bike sharing makes sense for the City, and if so, how to move forward with implementation. A feasibility study should last for at least a year; two to three years is ideal. Less than a year does not allow for riders and potential riders the opportunity to gain familiarity with the system or for the system to gain momentum. The estimated cost for a feasibility study is \$100 thousand; however, Zagster offers a free feasibility study.

If the City decides to implement a bike share, the following options are available:

- Manage own bike share;
- Contract with a bike share agency which includes a joint venture with another city.

The nearest Southfield bike share station is located on Evergreen just south of Eleven Mile Rd. Birmingham's border at Fourteen Mile Rd. is approximately a 20-minute bike ride from that station. This close proximity could open the possibility for a partnership between the two cities.

Mr. Isaksen pointed out that if Detroit can get 100 thousand rides on their system in the first five months, surely it would be worth Birmingham's time on a smaller scale to look

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into this. He would like to know what Southfield's ridership is and what their opinion is of Zagster.

Ms. Schafer said if she were to use a bike she would need one near to her neighborhood or near her office. Bike share sounds really cool, but is Birmingham the place to implement it.

Ms. Edwards announced she has very little appetite for this because Birmingham is less than five square miles and the residents have plenty of access to bikes. First she would like to see the City improve the biking infrastructure and make it safe.

Ms. Folberg thought it is pleasant to be downtown on foot. She wouldn't dream of riding a bike there.

Ms. Ecker suggested they could call Huntington, IN, which is a suburb of Indianapolis, to see how bike share is working there. She noted that City employees say they don't want to go out for lunch because they are afraid of not being able to find a parking spot when they return.

Commander Grewe commented that if the use of bikes Downtown is pushed people will end up biking on the sidewalk. After reconstruction, Old Woodward Ave. will not end up with bike lanes, only sharrows.

It was discussed that the Neighborhood Connector Route is in pieces and can't be used the way it is intended. Maybe the priority should be to finish the Connector Route and then invite people to use it. Finish it in large swaths, not just segment by segment when a street is being re-paved.

Board members agreed that they need to understand the financials behind the implementation of bike share and whether it will be a major expense for the City.

Mr. Isaksen wondered in terms of usage and the last mile, whether there would be a fair amount of usage from the FAST bus stop as the SW corner of Woodward Ave. and Maple Rd. He thought the way to promote bicycling in the City is to try everything they can think of and see if it works.

Chairperson Slanga said she would like to hear more from transit riders as to the last mile problem. Mr. Isaksen replied that Transit Riders United ("TRU") is the place to go for that information.

Ms. Schafer said the group needs to explore the ways that a bike share program can be used and the limitations with which it can be used. Right now Old Woodward Ave. is being constructed without bike lanes. A feasibility study would provide demand and usage information.

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The board was lukewarm on exactly how the City would use bike sharing.

Ms. Ecker summed up the discussion so far as to what the board would like to see:

- Usage data;
- More information about Southfield's experience;
- A reference on Zagster;
- A City Bike contact;
- Contact Huntington, IN, and other cities that are more comparable to Birmingham;
- Financial details of how other cities work out their programs and what the cost to the City can be;
- Some key areas for locations of bike stations;
- Transit input on commuters' destinations after getting off - talk to TRU;
- See what type of bike structure other cities with bike share have;
- Public feedback from people who work in Birmingham on how they might use bike sharing and what their reservations might be.

Mr. O'Meara added that Zagster could look into setting up bike stations at the shuttle lots for employee parking (the last mile).

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

10. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

- Ms. Ecker informed the group that the City Commission has approved the temporary striping plan for S. Eton. They also approved the crosswalk material standards. However, the residential street standards will be coming back to this board at the next meeting. The City Commission wanted the verbiage changed to cover some additional areas, including more language on the goals of the standards.
- The Planning Dept. is getting ready to update the city-wide Master Plan and part of their consultant selection process is to create an Ad Hoc Master Plan Selection Committee. A MMTB member is needed to join the representatives from other City Boards along with residents that will form the Committee. Ms. Folberg volunteered her services.

Motion by Mr. Isaksen

Seconded by Ms. Edwards to appoint Amy Folberg as the MMTB representative to the Ad Hoc Master Plan Selection Committee.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Isaksen, Edwards, Folberg, Schafer, Slanga, White

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Nays: None

Absent: Rontal

11. NEXT MEETING JULY 12, 2018 at 6 p.m.

12. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer

APPROVED