

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2018**

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

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

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Johanna Slanga; Board Members Amy Folberg, Daniel Rontal, Katie Schafer, Doug White

Absent: Board Member Vice Chairperson Lara Edwards; Alternate Board Member Daniel Isaksen; Student Representative Alex Lindstrom

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

Fleis & Vanderbrink ("F&V"):
Julie Kroll

2. INTRODUCTIONS (none)

3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MMTB MEETING OF AUGUST 2, 2018

Ms. Folberg made the following changes:

Page 2 - Second line from the end, insert "not" in front of "so much."

Page 6 - Second sentence, replace "MPR" with "NPR."

Motion by Ms. Folberg

Seconded by Mr. White to approve the MMTB Minutes of August 2, 2018 with the changes.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

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Yeas: Folberg, White, Rontal, Slanga, Schafer

Abstain: None

Nays: None

Absent: Edwards, Isaksen

5. PUBLIC HEARING

2019 Local Streets Program - Paving Street Widths

- a) **N. Glenhurst (Oak to Raynale)**
- b) **Raynale (Glenhurst to Chesterfield)**
- c) **Brookwood**
- d) **Kenwood (western portion only)**

The public hearing opened at 6:05 p.m.

Chairperson Slanga asked members of the audience to share their feedback. She established that nothing is set in stone at this time and changes can always be made as they go along.

Ms. Ecker offered a little history. About six months ago the City Commission asked the MMTB to come up with some residential street width guidelines. As a result, a policy statement for residential design standards was prepared by the traffic consultant and planners. They looked at the American Assoc. of State Highway and Traffic Officials Guidelines for Residential Streets; the Institute of Transportation Engineers; the Urban Land Institute; the Congress for New Urbanism; and the National Assoc. of City Transportation Officials. Also they investigated other peer cities to Birmingham in order to decide on the policy statement which was recently approved by the City Commission.

Under the new guidelines, a street that is unimproved or brand new would follow one set of guidelines and a street that is already improved and looking to be reconstructed or resurfaced would follow another set of rules. Unimproved means no curb and gutter and improved has a curb, gutter, sidewalk, etc.

The City Commission's newly adopted policy basically looks at what the street width is to start with. If the existing width is 28 ft. or less, then the street would be rebuilt at the same width. If the street is more than 28 ft. in width it would be reconstructed at 26 ft.. Streets that are less than 28 ft. would be rebuilt as-is. The goal is to make all streets consistent at 26 ft. in width. The whole purpose is to reduce the number and severity of accidents, increase public safety, provide traffic calming, storm water runoff management, and to reduce infrastructure costs.

The policy says that public input will be considered in the process, but in order to change the standard there has to be public input that wants to change it along with one of the safety and traffic engineering issues including but not limited to:

- High traffic speed;

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- Excessive or low amount of on-street parking;
- Daily traffic volume exceeding 1,500 vehicles;
- The street is a published school bus or frequent emergency response route;
- Also, the presence of street trees that need to be taken out for narrowing or widening the road.

The guidelines do not allow a street to be rebuilt at 32 ft. in width. Even after meeting one of the exceptions the widest would be 30 ft.

Mr. O'Meara highlighted a map that showed the streets that are improved but haven't been worked on in quite a while that are scheduled to be reconstructed next year, following the City's new street width guidelines:

- Currently Glenhurst and Raynale are 32 ft. wide and are being recommended at 26 ft.;
- Portions of Brookwood and Kenwood will be rebuilt as-is at 24 ft.

At this time members of the public were invited to speak.

- Ms. Suzanne Lasser, 1120 N. Glenhurst, said the residences along Glenhurst are on the outskirts of town and not in an urban area. That is part of the appeal of Glenhurst. She is against the narrowing of her street
- Mr. Matthew McCardell, 940 N. Glenhurst, was present with his wife, Nicole. He explained they chose Glenhurst specifically to live on because it is wide. They feel that is a selling feature. Because they are close to the school they see a lot of traffic and parking including over their driveway. Construction and maintenance trucks park everywhere. If the City decides to narrow the street, only residents should be allowed to park there. Further, he pointed out that the survey that was done on parking along Glenhurst was completed on July 23rd which is before school started. It is nowhere close to what happens during the school year. He suggested installing a four-way stop at Glenhurst and Raynale.
- Mr. Joel Egelman, 1060 N. Glenhurst, came forward with his wife, Judy. He indicated they are opposed to the proposal for the same reasons that the prior speakers indicated. They have walked down every street between Glenhurst and Lake Park and Maple Rd. to Quarton. Those are all unimproved streets and they have noticed that about 50% of the residents on those streets have paved over a good portion of the green space for parking area, That indicates that they don't value the green area and that there is not enough room to park on the street. So, the Egelmans are opposed to the narrowing.
- Ms. Debby Green who lives at 1888 Kenwood Ct. appeared with her husband, John. She stated they are absolutely opposed to what is being suggested. This is a beautiful street and a beautiful neighborhood. The City plans to spend a lot of money to fix

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something that doesn't need fixing. Part of what they love is the width of that street. At Quarton School it is a nightmare because it is impossible to see to cross the street.

- Mr. Dan Reddy at 1235 N. Glenhurst was there with his wife, Dianne DeAngelo. He agreed with much that was already said. He showed pictures of the next street over that is narrowed. They depict how unsafe a narrow street is and how there is a lot of demand for on-street parking. He agreed with the four-way stop sign suggestion and that the value of their house would be diminished by narrowing his street. He has heard no one speak in favor of this project. There is no reason that every street has to be the same.
- Mr. Timothy Cooper, 1179 N. Glenhurst, came forward along with his wife, Suzanne. He said one of the things they like about their street is the width. It allows a lot of reactionary time if kids should pop out between parked cars. Further, he agreed the home values would be reduced with the narrowing.
- Ms. Judy Egelman, 1060 N. Glenhurst, also a walker, stated they have always been thrilled that their street has curbs. All of the streets they walk on have mud and because of that people park on their lawns and it looks terrible. Do something about that and make Birmingham look wonderful.
- Mr. Steve Hall, 1120 Lyonhurst, was present with his wife, Susan. He noted he is the first to speak about Raynale this evening. They haven't found anyone on Raynale that is in favor of the narrowing. They feel Raynale is totally functional as it is today. A lot of contractors, construction vehicles and delivery trucks park on the street, but it still handles that. Also, Raynale is a school bus route and it is the street that parents come across in order to drop their kids off at Quarton School. Garbage trucks and emergency vehicles can get through fine. So, it is nice to have a wide street. He cannot imagine how he would get out of his driveway and not hit someone with a 26 ft. wide street.
- Mr. John Green, who lives at 1888 Kenwood Ct., noted his wife Debby spoke earlier. He added that spending taxpayers' money for people who don't want anything done doesn't make sense to him. Kenwood Ct. is 24 ft. in width and very often vehicles are parked on both sides of the street and there have been times when they have not been able to get to their driveway. There has not been one comment that this is good for the neighborhood.
- Mr. Alan Lasser, 1120 N. Glenhurst, noted that his wife, Suzanne, led off the comments. If speed is a concern, a four-way stop sign could be put in at the corner of Raynale and Glenhurst and maybe a couple of speed bumps. In Winter when the streets are plowed they end up with a snow berm which narrows the street even more. Also, the fact that vehicles are getting bigger hasn't been taken into consideration.
- Ms. Elizabeth Moore, 967 N. Glenhurst, said she also has issues with school parking and traffic. She barely can get out of her driveway when leaving for work in the

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morning. She cannot turn right out of her driveway, go down Glenhurst and make a left onto Oak because the traffic is so backed up. She also bought her house because of the width of the street.

- Mr. Chris Rath, 1266 N. Glenhurst, added from his observation that 26 ft. width streets don't stop people from driving at high speeds through the neighborhoods. He also thought that four-way stop signs at Raynale and Oak would make a huge impact in terms of safety. Therefore, he is adamantly opposed to the narrowing.
- Mr. Will Fogel, 1025 N. Glenhurst, said he also moved onto Glenhurst because of the wide street and was opposed to the narrowing.
- Mr. Jack Burkett, 1011 N. Glenhurst, noted he agrees with everything that has been said and is strongly against narrowing the street. A four-way stop at Oak would be a big help as it is a dangerous intersection. In answer to Mr. Burkett's question, Mr. O'Meara said the original motivation to rebuild the street is not about the width; it is about the fact that the street needs to be replaced. There might be a nominal savings in reducing the width, but that is not the motivating factor.
- Ms. Dianne DeAngelo, at 1235 N. Glenhurst, whose husband spoke earlier, reported that a friend in another community whose street was narrowed said it has been a nightmare since. There are still plenty of people parking on the street and vehicles cannot get by. The school busses have to stop and that ties up everybody. So, their neighborhood ended up putting in stop signs. She added that she is opposed, as most people are.
- Mike Kell, 1851 Raynale, said he has not seen the consultant's report that made the recommendation to narrow his street. He doesn't know of a pedestrian accident on Raynale for 43 years and he thinks that a collision is fairly rare. He feels the residents have earned the right to know why this is being done. Everyone living on these streets has said "no."
- Mr. Matthew McCardell listed the common themes that have come out to this point:
 - People don't want the street narrowed;
 - They are okay with the road being improved with new curbs, new utilities, so long as it stays at the same width, or whatever they can get - 30 or 32 ft.

Chairperson Slanga closed the public comments for the moment and opened up discussion from board members. She recalled the City Commission came to the MMTB and asked how to adjust street sizes appropriately and they requested a standard. The board deliberated on this for a very long time over many months. There is an exception in the standards which is if the street is adjacent to a school, a religious institution, a city park, or multiple-family resident development with other uses or accesses generally indicating higher traffic volumes. She has heard that this evening and it will be taken into consideration as part of the discussion.

Further, she noted that stop signs generally make people drive faster. They are not installed without a very specific set of criteria being present.

Dr. Rontal said one of the most glaring things he heard is that the parking assessment was done while school was not in session. That probably needs to be re-evaluated to determine what the real parking load is at maximum time.

Chairperson Slanga asked to have a look primarily at Oak and Glenhurst with regard to parking, stop signs, backing out of driveways. Additionally she noted that Pierce is another elementary school that should have similar challenges and has a 28 ft. entrance.

Ms. Fogel said anything they can do to make their infrastructure more friendly to bicycles is something the board should be considering.

The Chairperson opened audience discussion back up for new comments only,

It was noted there is no problem at Pierce School because they have a huge parking lot.

Mr. Jack Burkett received clarification that at the next meeting the Board will understand the limitations and what they need to recommend on the 30 ft. maximum width limitation.

Ms. Ecker told Mr. Matthew McCardell that ultimately the final decision will be from the City Commission. Mr. McCardell added that over the years Quarton School has accepted a lot of people that are out of the proper neighborhood. This means that the amount of traffic and parking has been exasperated significantly.

Barbara and Roger Trunski at 1220 N. Glenhurst indicated they do not want the roads narrowed.

At 7:17 p.m. the public hearing was postponed to October 4, 2018.

6. REQUEST FOR REMOVAL ON ON-STREET PARKING SPACE FOR ELM SOUTH OF MAPLE RD. (not discussed)

7. MAPLE RD. AND PIERCE ST. CROSSWALK SIGNING (not discussed)

8. MOPED/SCOOTER PARKING DOWNTOWN (not discussed)

9. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA
(no discussion)

10. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS (none)

11. NEXT MEETING OCTOBER 4, 2018 at 6 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer

APPROVED