

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2015  
City Commission Room  
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, November 5, 2015.

**Moved and seconded to nominate Vionna Adams as temporary chairperson.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

Temporary Chairperson Vionna Adams convened the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Temporary Chairperson Vionna Adams; Board Members Stuart Bordman, Lara Edwards, Andy Lawson (arrived at 6:25 p.m.), Michael Surnow, Amanda Warner (left at 7:25 p.m.); Student Representative Daniel Evans

**Absent:** Chairperson Johanna Slanga; Student Representative Rebecca Mendel

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

**Also Present:** Mike Labadie and Julie Kroll from Fleis & Vandenbrink ("F&V"), Transportation Engineering Consultants

**2. INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Ecker introduced Oren Brandvain, new Asst. City Planner.

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MEETING OF OCTOBER 1, 2015**

**Moved and seconded to approve the Minutes of October 1, 2015 as presented.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

## **5. S. ETON RD. MULTI-MODAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. O'Meara recalled the MMTB has discussed the above topic several times over the past six months. At the meeting of September 2, a recommendation was finalized and placed on the City Commission agenda of September 28. The item was postponed. However, prior to returning this item to the City Commission, the city manager directed the study of S. Eton Rd. to include a discussion and review of the bumpouts along this corridor and develop a comprehensive plan that can be considered during future road improvements. There appears to be a desire to have the City identify a complete plan for the construction of pedestrian improvements on this corridor, even if they are not scheduled in the immediate future.

The Master Plan proposes pedestrian improvements at five out of the existing eight intersections:

- Yosemite Blvd.
- Villa Ave.
- Bowers St.
- Holland Ave.
- Cole Ave.

Yosemite Blvd.: Bumpouts are installed in areas where parking is legal on the street. Installing bumpouts on the east side of the street would obstruct an important queuing area needed during the p.m. peak hour when northbound vehicles are waiting to enter Maple Rd. While parking is present southwest of the intersection, installing bumpouts on the west side of the street is not recommended because sight distance is poor for southbound vehicles.

Holland Ave.: Dozens of school busses turn from Eton Rd. to Holland Ave., and back again on a daily basis. The corner is already not large enough for the many large vehicle turns made here. Making it smaller with a curb bumpout would just exacerbate the problem. There are no clear pedestrian traffic generators in the immediate area of this intersection. While traffic would be slowed by bumpouts on the west side of the intersection, it is unclear if pedestrian demand would warrant this improvement.

Aside from the above, the Villa Ave., Bowers St., and Cole Ave. intersections remain viable candidates for bumpouts in the future. All three intersections have clear commercial pedestrian destinations in the immediate area, especially as the adjacent properties continue to develop in the future.

Given the above, the Engineering Dept. recommends that the previous MMTB recommendation for improvements to S. Eton Rd. be amended to include that the City budget for bumpouts at the Villa Ave., Bowers St., and Cole Ave. intersections as future opportunities arise.

Sight Distance Issues Around Bowers St.: Given the timing of this effort, should the MMTB make a recommendation at this time, it will then be moved forward to the City Commission at their meeting of November 23. Given the weather conditions at that time, the other improvements being suggested for S. Eton Rd. will have to wait for the spring of 2016. Given the relatively minor nature of the sight distance improvements that were recommended in the area of Bowers St., the Police Dept. decided to move forward with the expansion of the No Parking zones at the four locations discussed previously, as a trial. The signing and striping changes previously studied and recommended by the MMTB are being implemented this week, so that the residents of that area can benefit from this change through the coming winter months.

It was discussed that Cole Ave. will be resurfaced within the next five years and there is no immediate proposal for Villa Ave. and Bowers St.

Ms. Edwards suggested as an interim measure installing signage at the three intersections that says *Pedestrian Crossing* and reminding drivers that it is State law to ~~stop~~ **yield** for pedestrians. Rapid flashing beacons were considered but Ms. Ecker cautioned those are not in the budget.

Temporary Chairperson Adams called for public comments at 6:20 p.m.

Mr. Larry Bertollini, 1275 Webster, went through a letter he had written to the board. He plans to ask the City Commission to eliminate the parking on the west side of Eton. A bike lane is a natural for that area. He pointed out that bumpouts are not just to help pedestrians crossing; they also serve to calm the traffic. Additionally, he doesn't think it is the responsibility of residents to provide parking for businesses.

Ms. Efrin Grey asked the board to make some decision before someone gets killed.

Ms. Peggy Maham, 1996 Webster, described the problems she has getting out of her driveway which fronts on Eton Rd. This is very much a safety concern and should be dealt with sooner than five years.

Ms. Andrea Maham, 1996 Webster, said they don't mind giving up the parking spot right in front of their house. Her big problem is visibility when traveling on Eton. She feels there is no reason not to add a bike lane and it would increase the visibility of the entire street and maybe make people slow down a little.

Mr. O'Meara reminded the board that the Police Dept. has made the decision to increase the no parking areas at Hazel Ave., Bowers St., and Haynes Ave. as the board had recommended. So that site distance area has been improved as of today. This is being considered a test. The white line that makes the street feel narrower should help reduce speeds. Sharrows will also be installed.

Ms. Edwards wondered if no parking could also be increased on the west side of Eton Rd. Mr. O'Meara noted the big demand for parking is in the Bowers St. area.

**Motion by Ms. Edwards**

**Seconded by Mr. Bordman to recommend to the City Commission increasing the no parking zones on the west side of Eton Rd. at all of the local streets from Villa Ave. to Cole Ave. to improve visibility. Striping would be 40 ft. from the intersection.**

It was discussed this allows people coming into and out of the side streets onto Eton Rd. to see further and it sacrifices one or two parking spaces at each side street.

Comments from members of the public were heard at 6:45 p.m.

Mr. Larry Bertollini said he feels the board is still neglecting the issue of visibility. Therefore he is not in favor of the motion.

Ms. Efrin Grey indicated she too is against the motion and asked the board to consider the bike lane.

Ms. Peggy Maham also disagreed with the motion. There should be no parking on the west side of Eton Rd. Think about the residents along there. She is willing to give up her parking place for safety. A bicycle path would be great.

Ms. Andrea Maham stated her opposition to the motion and thinks that a bike lane is needed so that residents can use bikes rather than cars to do their shopping. Then there wouldn't be a parking problem and kids would be safer.

Mr. Larry Bertollini added that people prefer to park on Eton Rd. even when there are spaces in the Griffin Claw parking lot.

Ms. Ecker then read a letter into the record that endorsed no parking on the west side of Eton Rd. and adding crosswalk bumpouts which will narrow Eton Rd. and reduce speeds.

Ms. Warner reminded everyone that the motion on the table only concerns parking.

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

ROLLCALL VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Bordman, Adams, Lawson, Surnow, Warner

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga

**Motion by Mr. Bordman**

**Seconded by Ms. Warner to recommend to the City Commission that signs be placed in the middle of Eton Rd. at Cole Ave., Villa Ave, and Bowers St.**

There was no public comment on the motion at 7:04 p.m.

Ms. Adams indicated she opposes the motion because the middle of the road is a really hectic part of the street.

**Motion carried, 5-1.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Bordman, Warner, Adams, Lawson, Surnow

Nays: Edwards

Absent: Slanga

**Motion by Mr. Bordman**

**Seconded by Ms. Warner that the Multi-Modal Transportation Board recommends that the City Commission authorize the following improvements for S. Eton Rd. between Villa Ave. and Lincoln Ave.:**

- 1. Maintain the current parallel parking on both sides of the street.**
- 2. Install Sharrows for both north and southbound traffic.**
- 3. Provide a demarcated parking lane for both directions using a solid white line pavement marking.**
- 4. Budget for pedestrian curb extensions (bumpouts) at the intersections of Villa Ave., Bowers St., and Cole Ave., as future construction project opportunities in the immediate area arise.**

**Finally, to also to endorse the recent sight distance clearance changes made to install No Parking zones measuring 40 ft. from the local street curb line for the following S. Eton Rd. corners:**

**SW corner of Hazel St.**

**NW corner of Bowers St.**

**SW corner of Bowers St.**

**NW corner of Haynes St.**

Discussion from the audience was opened at 7:06 p.m.

Mr. Larry Bertollini received confirmation that the 40 ft. No Parking zones replace one to two parking spaces at each corner.

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Bordman, Warner, Adams, Edwards, Lawson, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga

## **6. NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR ROUTE, PHASE 1**

Mr. O'Meara recalled that at the meeting of October 1 the MMTB was introduced to a conceptual plan for the first phase of a neighborhood connector route. The following points of interest are offered:

Willits St., Baldwin Rd. to Greenwood Ave. - This short block has bad sight distance due to two 90° turns. It is also signed for one way traffic. A viable alternative would be to have bikes use Harmon St. and Greenwood Ave. instead. Staff recommends that the route be changed in this area to eliminate the westerly block of Willits St.

Woodward Ave. crossing at Oakland Ave. - Under the current scenario, bikes can benefit from this signalized intersection, using an existing marked pedestrian crosswalk on the north side of the intersection. Eastbound bikes traveling on the south side of Oakland Ave. may be confused if they are not familiar with the intersection, unless directional signs are provided. D11-1a (bike symbol) signs can be used in conjunction with an arrow to assist in this regard. For eastbound bikes, two signs would direct bikes to use the west side Woodward Ave. sidewalk to get to the northwest corner of the intersection. A second sign would be installed there to encourage use of the marked crosswalk. The route is more direct for westbound bikes, so just one D11-1a sign with an "up" arrow could be installed at the east end of the crosswalk.

Woodward Ave. crossing at Lincoln Ave. - The Master Plan had recommended the use of a wide green pavement marking in the two right lanes of Lincoln Ave. (one in both directions) to help encourage Lincoln Ave. motorists to share the road with bikes. Woodward Ave. is under the jurisdiction of MDOT. If the City was providing a designated bike lane on Lincoln Ave. as it crosses Woodward Ave., it likely would be approved across the intersection as well. However, since the City is only installing sharrows (not designated bike lanes), MDOT cannot approve the use of the green pavement markings in this area. As a result, this feature will be removed as being a part of the neighborhood connector route proposal.

W. Maple Rd. between Larchlea Dr. and Chesterfield Ave. - Since the City is finalizing the construction plans for the 2016 resurfacing work on W. Maple Rd., draft plans are now prepared detailing the two-way bike path proposed for the south side of Maple Rd., between Larchlea Dr. and Chesterfield Ave. It is believed this will be a nice feature that will encourage the use of the connector route on this side of town, while keeping bike traffic out of the vehicle travel lanes of Maple Rd.

Finally, since there currently is not an official sign that encourages drivers to SHARE THE ROAD, it is recommended that at the locations shown on the map, a D11-1a (bike symbol) sign be installed with a separate sign below it that says SHARE THE ROAD.

Other than the minor issues noted above, staff believes the Neighborhood Connector Route Phase 1 can be finalized and forwarded to the City Commission. Funding for this work will come from the Major and Local Street Fund current fiscal year budget, where funds for work such as this have been identified.

Mr. Surnow thought that Lincoln Ave. would be a great street to have a protected bike lane using linear barriers. Ms. Edwards felt the new bumpouts on Lincoln Ave. between Southfield Rd. and Woodward Ave. would make a bike lane almost impossible. Mr. O'Meara noted the former Steering Committee for the Multi-Modal Master Plan decided that bike lanes would not be an element of that segment of Lincoln Ave. Mr. Surnow added that the worst part on the Neighborhood Connector Route to share is S. Eton Rd. with everyone backing out of their driveways.

Ms. Warner left the meeting at this time.

The temporary chairperson called for public comment at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Larry Bertollini asked that a sentence be added to the suggested motion that the City Commission should look further into whether or not parking should be the priority on S. Eton Rd. or a nice bike lane.

**Motion by Ms. Edwards**

**Seconded by Mr. Bordman that the Multi-Modal Transportation Board recommends that the City Commission authorize the creation of the Neighborhood Connector Route, Phase 1, in the spring of 2016, in accordance with the attached map as it is updated. Upon completion of the physical improvements, the route shall be forwarded to websites such as Mapmyride and Strava, as well as the City's website, to encourage its use. The one change is that the bike route be re-routed in the area of one direction of Willits St. to use Harmon St. and Greenwood Ave. instead.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

**VOICE VOTE**

Yeas: Edwards, Bordman, Adams, Lawson, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga, Warner

**7. BATES ST. RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PARKING PROPOSAL  
BROWN ST. TO FRANK ST.**

Commander Grewe advised the Police Dept. received a petition with signatures from 11 addresses on S. Bates St. between Brown St. and Frank St., requesting permit parking on S. Bates St. from Brown St. to Frank St.

According to Police Dept. records, S. Bates St. from Brown St. to Frank St. has been a two-hour time limit, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. except Sundays and Holidays zone, since 1964.

The current issue per the petition is that local business' employees are parking in this area starting around 3 p.m. Ms. Jane Synnestvedt, 551 S. Bates, started the petition and stated the street is typically full of parked vehicles when they arrive home at night. Ms.

Synnestvedt states residents are unable to park in front of or near their homes due to employees of local businesses using this area.

The petition requests the area be "Parking Permit Required" which is the same parking restriction in effect on all neighboring streets including S. Bates St. south of Frank St.

The petition submitted to the Police Dept. has 16 signers. There are 11 addresses represented out of the 14 addresses on that block; according to the petition one home is vacant.

Ms. Jane Synnestvedt, 551 S. Bates, described how that end of Bates St. has turned into a parking lot. It has become difficult for residents to park their own cars there. It is the only street in that neighborhood that doesn't have residential permit parking. Everyone along the street was incredibly positive about signing the petition and no one was opposed.

**Motion by Mr. Bordman**

**Seconded by Mr. Lawson to recommend to the City Commission that there be residential permit parking on Bates St. between Brown and Frank.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

ROLLCALL VOTE

Yeas: Bordman, Lawson, Adams, Edwards, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Slanga, Warner

**8. BUMPOUT (CURB EXTENSION) POLICY**

Mr. O'Meara explained that bumpouts are typically installed in areas of high pedestrian demand to reduce the width of the street at a crosswalk. Curb bumpouts can increase pedestrian safety and reduce average vehicle traffic speeds. While the majority of bumpouts installed in Birmingham have been designed according to internal policy developed several years ago, it has never been formally discussed or endorsed by any board or the City Commission. Now that there is a board focusing on multi-modal use of the public streets, it would be helpful for this matter to be reviewed so that a policy can be finalized and endorsed by both the MMTB and the City Commission.

Beginning with the 2014 projects that included new features such as bike lanes and sharrows, the Engineering Dept. started referring to two publications prepared by the national authority for these matters, the American Assoc. of State Highway and Transportation Officials ("AASHTO"). Both documents contain excellent ideas and directives that help ensure that our facilities will be



standardized and follow accepted national practices wherever possible. As Birmingham implements its own official policy on the design of bumpouts, it is important that the policy does not conflict with the directives of the AASHTO guidelines.

Ms. Edwards and Mr. Lawson thought bumpouts should be made as wide as possible. Mr. O'Meara noted the AASHTO guidelines recommend an average 6 ft. wide bumpout, although factors such as bicycles and snow removal are referenced as factors to be considered.

To summarize, a list of criteria was suggested to finalize a bumpout policy for the City of Birmingham.

**Motion by Ms. Edwards**

**Seconded by Mr. Bordman to accept the City of Birmingham Bumpout (Curb Extension) Policy with the change of increasing 2 (a) from 4 to 6 ft.:**

**Curb bumpouts should be considered under the following conditions:**

- 1. When a City street is being reconstructed.**
- 2. When a commercial or multi-family residential building is being built.**
- 3. When a specific crosswalk has been identified as having high pedestrian demand.**
- 4. When a City street has been measured with the 85th percentile speed 5 mph or more above the signed speed limit.**

**Curb bumpouts shall be designed with the following features:**

- 1. The bumpout shall be located on streets where parking is legal and wide enough to accommodate a road narrowing.**
- 2. Bumpouts shall be designed with the following widths:**
  - a. 6 ft. wide on streets with parallel parking.**
  - b. 12 ft. wide on streets with 45° angled on-street parking, provided the drive lane is the standard minimum of 16 ft. wide.**
  - c. 8 ft. wide on streets with parallel parking where a contiguous full width bike lane has been provided in addition to the full vehicle drive lanes.**
- 3. Bumpouts shall be eliminated or reduced in width if the existing street widths, combined with frequent turns from large vehicles, will result in large vehicles conflicting with oncoming traffic or pulling over the top of curbs on a regular basis. This standard can be relaxed if the corner is identified as one that will not have vehicles above a certain size turning on a regular basis.**
- 4. The length of the bumpout shall be as long as practical, but not so long that it would eliminate a parking place (except in areas where on-street parking is in low demand).**
- 5. The transition from the bumpout back to the normal curb alignment shall be at a 45° angle to accommodate easier, efficient street sweeping and snow plowing.**

**6. When a bumpout interrupts the gutter line drainage course, a new catch basin shall be installed at the point where the normal curb line intersects with the 45° angled curb referenced above.**

Public comments on the motion were taken at 8 p.m.

Mr. Larry Bertollini thought the small bumpouts for bikers makes some sense.

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Bordman, Adams, Lawson, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Warner, Slanga

**9. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

- Mr. Bordman noted the only problem he has seen on W. Maple Rd. is that east of Cranbrook people don't recognize they have to merge down from two lanes into one. Mr. O'Meara replied that was changed about two weeks ago so that the right lane officially ends and turns into the new alignment.
- Mr. Bordman asked if the bike lane on Oak could go one block east across the bridge to Lakeside. Mr. O'Meara indicated he would check on that.

**G. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS** (items in the packet)

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

No further business being evident, the temporary chairperson adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

---

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

---

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer