

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
THURSDAY, MAY 4, 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, May 4, 2017.

Vice Chairman Andy Lawson convened the meeting at 6 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Vice Chairman Andy Lawson; Board Members Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Daniel Rontal, Michael Surnow; Alternate Member Katie Schaefer

Absent: Chairperson Vionna Adams; Board Member Johanna Slanga

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

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

2. INTRODUCTIONS

3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MEETING OF APRIL 13, 2017

Motion by Mr. Rontal

Seconded by Mr Surnow to approve the Minutes of April 13, 2017 as presented.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Rontal, Surnow, Edwards, Folberg, Lawson, Schaefer

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Slanga

5. LAWDALE AVE. RECONSTRUCTION

Mr. O'Meara recalled that last month the board discussed a parking restriction on the block of Lawndale Ave. north of Oakland Blvd. This discussion pertains to the block south of Oakland Blvd., which operates as a one-way street (northbound only), and is currently signed for No Parking. Funds were budgeted for spot concrete patching. Upon close review this past month, it appeared that most of the street should be replaced and staff concluded that a change in width may be appropriate.

In the 1970's, the crossover at Oakland Blvd. was closed, making it more difficult to use Oakland Blvd. from downtown and traffic demand on Lawndale Ave. likely was cut by over 50%. Currently it is only a benefit to residential traffic headed to the immediate neighborhood. With the reduced traffic demand, the one-way traffic configuration, and no parking, the 24 ft. width seemsexcessive.

Presently, large trucks sit on Lawndale Ave. adjacent to the Holiday Inn Express to unload packages. When this occurs, there needs to be enough width to drive past the truck to enter the neighborhood. With that in mind, a 20 ft. width pavement would be sufficient.

A review of the Multi-Modal Master Plan confirmed that there is a proposal to add a sidewalk along the south side of Oakland Blvd. between Lawndale and Woodward Ave. and relocate the crosswalk. The existing handicap ramps at the corner of Oakland Blvd. will be updated to meet current standards as a part of this project. In terms of adding landscaping in the median, it was discussed that street trees could be added along Lawndale that would be tall enough to see underneath. A permit from MDOT will be needed to complete a portion of the landscaping.

Given that the purpose for this street has changed over the years, and since other modes of traffic such as bikes would have a difficult time accessing this street from Woodward Ave., staff sees this as a good opportunity to reduce the amount of pavement and to save some money.

Motion by Mr Rontal

Seconded by Ms. Folberg to recommend to the City Commission the approval of the plan for a 20 ft. wide road on Lawndale Ave. between Oakland Ave. and Woodward Ave., and to encourage staff to work with MDOT to improve the Woodward Ave. crosswalk in conjunction with their project, and also explore the possibility of landscaping with trees on the eastern side of the triangular island.

Ms. Folberg thought that Parks and Recreation should be informed of this change.

At 6:15 there were no comments from the public.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Rontal, Folberg, Edwards, Lawson, Schaefer, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Slanga

6. S. ETON RD. - MAPLE RD. TO LINCOLN AVE.

Ms. Ecker recalled that at the March and April meetings, the MMTB discussed the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Rail District Committee. A recommendation was also passed on to the City Commission focused on changes to the intersection of S. Eton and Maple Rd.

Maple Rd. to Yosemite Blvd.

The Commission expressed concern relative to certain design elements, and encouraged the board to consider a larger bumpout at the southwest corner of the Maple Rd. intersection.

Other concerns expressed by the Commission included:

- The acute turn for vehicles from eastbound Maple Rd. to S. Eton Rd. is problematic.
- The white stop bars may be ignored, causing problems for both motorists and pedestrians.
- The Board should consider the inclusion of a multi-directional bike lane.

Ms. Julie Kroll indicated as far as the stop bar location F&V looked at a couple of options. The first option was the addition of a splitter island. By proposing the splitter island they were able to move the stop bars closer to the intersection than they currently are. That adds two more spaces for vehicle queuing and also improves sight distance for the intersection.

The other option they looked at was a bumpout. That increased the crosswalk distance and reduced queuing space for vehicles, compared to the splitter island proposal. It was noted that it is not possible to do both the splitter island and the bumpout.

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Ms. Ecker thought the splitter island is the best way to go. More people will be legally stopping where they are supposed to. The intersection is not perfect because it is at an odd angle.

Mr. O'Meara recalled that board members agreed previously that the design does not provide any enhancement for bike traffic because of the narrow right-of-way in this area, plus the clear need for three lanes of traffic at this intersection.

Moving south of Villa Ave., Ms. Kroll demonstrated how a bi-directional bike lane on the west side of S. Eton Rd. would work along with some additional signage. Board members expressed some concerns about the ingress/egress of a biker and discussed a protected bike lane along with the possibility of walking bikes across S. Eton Rd. at the Yosemite or Villa intersection in order to continue north in the bike lane.

Everyone liked the bi-directional bike lane except it would have to cut off at the most needed point where the road narrows.. The bike lane should go all the way north to Maple Rd. on the west side where people can walk across Maple Rd. in the crosswalk and then continue on N. Eton Rd. where there are bike lanes on each side.

The board wanted staff to go back and look at the option, regardless of how much it costs, of keeping the bi-directional bike lane all the way up to Maple Rd. The Board would like to see what is involved in acquiring land, installing a retaining wall, how much it would cost, and then coming back. This would be Plan A to take to the public and then send to the Commission.

Discussion continued regarding Plan B if land acquisition is not possible. Plan B is as shown from Lincoln to Villa, with a bi-directional bike lane on the west side of the street, currently as shown 5 ft. in each direction. Bumpouts on the east side of the street could be installed at several of the intersections with enhanced crossings. From Villa to Yosemite, add enhanced sharrows with a green background, eliminate the on-street parking for the businesses on the west side, and all the way down to Lincoln.

After much discussion, the Board favored the elimination of the northbound bike lane, adding 3 ft. to the sidewalks on either side (8 ft. sidewalks), and a 4 ft. landscaped grass area with street trees on the east and west sides from Villa to Yosemite. From Yosemite to Maple Rd. the proposal would stay as before with an 8' wide expanded sidewalk on the west side of S. Eton.

Commander Grewe suggested that maybe the alternative in that area is to encourage bikers to get on the sidewalk and walk their bikes.

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Board members went on to explore various buffers that would protect the bike lanes. It was concluded that the center line in the bi-directional bike lanes could be eliminated. If that doesn't work, a centerline can always be added later. Low profile barriers were preferred within 1.5 ft., such as turtle bumps, oblong low bumps, and linear barriers.

It was suggested that a public hearing wherein all owners within 300 ft. of the corridor be invited to the next MMTB meeting to provide input before a final recommendation is made. It is planned to delay the connector route work in this area until a final design is approved by the Commission, with the hope that the pavement markings and sidewalk changes can still be implemented during the 2017 construction. The more extensive bumpout work at several intersections involves more work that will have to be budgeted in a future budget cycle.

Motion by Dr. Rontal

Seconded by Ms. Folberg to set a public hearing regarding the S. Eton Rd. corridor bi-directional bike lane proposal as amended this evening for the regular Multi-Modal Transportation Board meeting of June 1, 2017 at 6 p.m.

Modifications made tonight are from Villa to Yosemite to add enhanced sharrows, eliminate parking on the west side, and eliminate the northbound bike lane on the east side as shown on the plans and make both sidewalks on the east and west side an additional 3 ft. wide (8 ft.) plus a 4 ft. green boulevard with street trees up to Yosemite. Then from Yosemite to Maple Rd., continue with the plans as shown which are enhanced sharrows and a widened sidewalk to 8 ft. on the west side of the street. The bi-directional bike lane will be 8.5 ft. plus 1.5 ft. for a buffer of some sort, whether it be turtle bumps, oblong low, or linear barriers.

No one from the public wished to discuss the motion at 8:10 p.m.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Rontal, Folberg, Edwards, Lawson, Schaefer, Surnow

Nays: None

Absent: Adams, Slanga

The Vice-Chairman asked board members to travel this route on their bikes before the public meeting next month.

7. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

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Mr. Dan Isaksen, 1386 Yorkshire, stated that he appreciates all the work and deliberation that the board has gone through on this project.

8. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS (none)

9. NEXT MEETING JUNE 1, 2017 at 6 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer