

City Of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board
Thursday, June 3, 2021
Held Virtually Via Zoom and Telephone Access

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, June 3, 2021.

Acting Vice-Chair Katie Schafer convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

1. Rollcall

Present: Acting Vice-Chair Katie Schafer; Board Members Andrew Haig, David Hocker, David Lurie, Tom Peard, Doug White; Alternate Board Member Joe Zane; Student Representative Alex Walters

All located in Birmingham, MI unless otherwise noted.

Absent: Chair Johanna Slanga; Student Representatives Lauren Morris, Justin Schoener

Administration: Jim Surhigh, Consulting City Engineer ("CCE")
Brooks Cowan, City Planner ("CP")
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist
Scott Grewe, Police Operations Commander
Scott Zielinski, Assistant City Engineer

Fleis & Vandenbrink (F&V):
Julie Kroll

MKSK: Matt Manda, Brad Strader, Haley Wolfe

2. Introductions

3. Review Agenda

4. Approval of MMTB Minutes of May 6, 2021

Motion by Mr. Lurie

Seconded by Mr. Haig to approve the MMTB Minutes of May 6, 2021 as submitted.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Lurie, Haig, Peard, Hocker, White, Schafer, Zane

Nays: None

5. Phase III – S. Old Woodward (Brown to Landon)

CCE Surhigh and Mr. Strader introduced the item.

Ms. Wolfe, Mr. Manda, and Mr. Strader presented the item.

Mr. Haig expressed concern that the proposed loss of spaces could steer drivers into parking in the residential areas. He said that upcoming business developments in the area might increase the demand on parking, making the loss of spaces even more noticeable.

Acting Vice-Chair Schafer agreed with Mr. Haig, noting that many of the parking spaces being removed are largely used by drivers visiting a specific business and not by drivers parking and walking to downtown.

Mr. Manda stated that the parking currently located at the terminuses of Frank, Hazel and Bowers was not safe either for pedestrians or drivers and must be removed. He noted that there is ample off-street parking in the area.

CCE Surhigh assured the Board members that their concerns would be considered as the plans evolve.

A few Board members expressed appreciation for the green spaces as proposed in Concept B, the proposed benches, and street activation areas.

Ms. Wolfe said she would provide documentation to the Board outlining the number of spaces proposed for removal in each location.

Mr. Manda noted that some of the spaces proposed for removal could be retained if it was determined that was most appropriate for the area.

Two members disagreed as to whether there should be more or fewer crosswalks at Haynes.

Mr. Strader said crosswalks at Haynes were still being evaluated and that traffic counts would be used to help determine the appropriate number.

Two Board members recommended that options for muffling the sound from Woodward be explored for the street activation areas.

It was noted that Staff and consultants would also be meeting with business owners in the area and the public to get feedback on the designs as the process moves forward.

Mr. Strader reminded the MMTB that spaces were removed on N. Old Woodward and Maple and that while businesses were concerned about the potential impact there have been no real adverse effects. He stated that the Commission has emphasized green spaces and pedestrian safety as priorities and that both of the concepts presented move towards those goals.

In reply to comment from Mr. Haig, Mr. Manda agreed that pollinators would be appropriate on the green median if it is installed as proposed in Concept B.

Mr. Manda and Ms. Wolfe added that plants on the median would need to withstand road salt and should likely include some evergreens as well to maintain aesthetics during the winter.

Ms. Kroll noted that EV charging stations were under review with the Advisory Parking Committee (APC).

Mr. Strader recommended that if members of the MMTB had any feedback regarding potential EV charging stations that they submit it to the APC.

Mr. Haig requested that the MMTB be provided a copy of the proposed concept plan for S. Old Woodward showing the number and location of any parking spaces that may be removed.

Public Comment

Paul Reagan stated he lives near Landon and Old Woodward, and that he is the President of the Homeowners Association there. He agreed that the City should explore ways of minimizing the sound from Old Woodward in order to benefit businesses in the area. He added that Staff and consultants should solicit feedback from the public before the plans get too far along.

6. Oak Street Pedestrian Improvements

CCE Surhigh introduced the item.

Mr. Strader, CCE Surhigh and Ms. Kroll summarized the item.

Student Rep. Walters said that having an active pedestrian warning beacon in the area could be useful.

Mr. Haig agreed and said solar activated warning beacons should be considered.

The Board concurred it would be useful to indicate that the sidewalk ended with the use of barriers, plantings, signage or some combination.

Mr. Peard and Acting Vice-Chair Schafer both noted pedestrians would need advance notice that the sidewalk ends.

Ms. Kroll agreed, and said installing signage at the point where pedestrians should use the crosswalk might be appropriate.

Mr. Strader said he would consult with Ms. Wolfe to get suggestions for aggregate and plantings that could be used on the south side of Oak to deter pedestrian traffic.

Echoing a previous comment from Acting Vice-Chair Schafer, Mr. Lurie said that in making the motion he would want to review the impact of the short term improvements somewhere between the end of the summer and six months from the present discussion.

Motion by Mr. Lurie

Seconded by Mr. Haig to approve the following short term improvements to encourage safer pedestrian travel on Oak Avenue between Lakeside and Lakeview:

- 1. The installation of R1-6 signs on the east side of the Lakeside Drive and Oak intersection and the west side of the Lakeview and Oak intersection;**
- 2. Installation of additional "Sidewalk ends" signs where sidewalk terminates; and**
- 3. Installation of grass and landscaping on the south side of Oak between Lakeside and Lakeview.**

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Lurie, Haig, Peard, Hocker, White, Schafer, Zane

Nays: None

7. Sidewalk Network & Prioritization

Acting Vice-Chair Schafer introduced the item.

CP Cowan presented the item.

Mr. Lurie, Mr. Peard, Mr. Haig and Acting Vice-Chair Schafer said that adding sidewalks in residential areas where none currently exist should be the highest priority.

Asst. City Engineer Zielinski noted that currently many of the residential areas without sidewalks are unimproved, and that adding sidewalks would occur in those cases as part of the improvement process.

CP Cowan said he would add a layer to the map to show which roads are unimproved.

The Board thanked CP Cowan.

8. Neighborhood Connector Bicycle Map

Acting Vice-Chair Schafer introduced the item.

CP Cowan presented the item.

In reply to Board discussion, he said he would add information regarding how the regional bike network connects to Birmingham, locations of bike parking, and locations of bike amenity bays. He said he would also try to make the cycle track stand out a bit more in the map and would try and find a way to indicate that cyclists must share the road with vehicles in the downtown area. He acknowledged that adding the information might make the map visually cluttered, but it was also discussed that the information could be separated out into a few different maps since they would be available online.

CP Cowan said he would return the item for the next MMTB meeting. In reply to Board comment, he said that the finished map could be posted to the City's social media and provided to hotels as a guide for guests staying in Birmingham.

The Board thanked CP Cowan for his work on the map.

9. Meeting Open to the Public for items not on the Agenda

None.

10. Miscellaneous Communications

11. Next Meeting – July 1, 2021

12. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

APPROVED