

**Draft Minutes  
Advisory Traffic and Safety Board  
September 8, 2009**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairperson Moore called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Thomas Blackstone  
Paul Franklin  
Scott Hunter  
Carl Moore, Vice Chairperson  
Allan Schneck  
Michael Webber, City Council Representative

**Absent:** Frank Cardimen  
Ernest Colling, Chairperson

**Non-voting members present:**

Janice Dearing, Recording Secretary  
Paul Shumejko, Transportation Engineer

Chairperson Moore stated that a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Vice Chairperson Moore asked if there were any additions or subtractions to the minutes from the regular Advisory Traffic and Safety Board meeting of March 10, 2009. Hearing none, he said he would take a motion to approve them. A motion to approve them as presented was made by Hunter, and seconded by Blackstone.

Ayes: All  
Nays: None  
Absent: Frank Cardimen  
Ernest Colling

**MOTION CARRIED**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Shumejko explained a late addition had been handed out at the meeting regarding a traffic study they are doing at West Middle School. When the Oakland County Sheriff's Office presented their budget during the City Council sessions there was some concern expressed about

the congestion or confusion at the entrance to the school. We met with the Sheriff's Department, and also brought in the Traffic Improvement Association (TIA) to do a site study. What we have done out there is install NO LEFT TURN signs for only the morning hours for southbound Old Perch Road. We installed NO LEFT TURN from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. signs on Ansal Drive. That will be in effect for a couple of weeks, and then we will do an analysis to see if it alleviates the situation. Possibly other measures will be taken out there as well.

The Sheriff has been out there to provide an extra presence today. A few years back we had the same issue with a lot of traffic from pick ups and drop offs by parents on Ansal Drive. At that time we signed the street as NO PARKING. However he was not aware if the enforcement is out there on a routine basis. They are going to be doing some additional reinforcement of the parking restrictions. They will then do an analysis and bring it back to the Board at such time as the study is completed, in conjunction with the Oakland County Sheriff and TIA.

Mr. Franklin remarked that the Advisory Traffic and Safety Board has not met for six months, and asked if issues such as this normally would be brought before the Board prior to the study being done. Mr. Shumejko said typically they would, but in this case the Sheriff and the City wanted the signs in place for the first day of school. This matter was brought to the Sheriff's attention at the City Council budget meeting of August 18, so the Sheriff contacted us and wanted the signs in place prior to today. Mr. Franklin observed that even if the Board had met in August this would have taken place after the meeting, which Mr. Shumejko said was correct.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Vice Chairperson Moore asked Mr. Shumejko about the items listed on the agenda under Road Project Status. Mr. Shumejko said there were a lot of ongoing or proposed major road widening projects, and he wanted to provide a brief update and bring some projects that are in the works to their attention. The current one that is ongoing is **the Hamlin Road widening from Crooks to Livernois**. The north half of the boulevard or the westbound lanes have been completed. The eastbound and westbound traffic is running on the north half of the boulevard. Right now they are constructing the south half or the eastbound traffic lanes of the boulevard.

The contract for this project was set up so that in the first week of September a decision would be made on whether to proceed with the roundabout this year or hold off until next spring. Due to some of the issues we've had with Edison and relocating the utility poles, and tying that in with the removal of the traffic signal, the first week of September was the drop dead date to decide if it would be a go or not. If we decided to remove the pole and the signal and the work didn't get done we would be left with a situation where Hamlin Road would either be closed at Livernois for the entire winter, or it would have to be a four-way stop. So the decision was made to finish the boulevard between Crooks and Livernois this year, then do the roundabout in the spring. Mr. Franklin asked how long it will take to build the roundabout, and Mr. Shumejko responded two months. The west half will be done first and they will close Hamlin west of Livernois, and still run traffic north and south on Livernois. Then they will flip it and construct the east half of the roundabout and close Hamlin east of Livernois. Mr. Franklin asked for clarification that if it is done in the spring they are talking about the months of April and May. Mr. Shumejko said that typically per Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) specs

April 15<sup>th</sup> is the starting date of construction. It also depends on the weather. Mr. Franklin asked if they would need to coordinate with the Rochester Schools, and Mr. Shumejko said they would keep them apprised of everything, and meet with them periodically. They have their transportation service building off of Hamlin, and also Hamlin schools. When they indicated to them that the roundabout was going to be deferred they were pleased that the road would be open through this fall. In April a lot of the storm sewer work can start east of Livernois and Hamlin, and roadwork will probably not start until at least mid May when things are a little drier.

- 2. M-59 widening from Crooks to Ryan.** That project started in full force several weeks ago. This fall MDOT is trying to complete all of the bridge rehabilitations, which includes bridges on Livernois, Auburn, Rochester, Dequindre, John R, and Ryan Road in Macomb County. They have paved temporary widening lanes and are working on the bridge structures right now. Early next year they will get into reconstructing the roadway itself and adding the third lane. The project is moving forward, and the completion date is projected to be October 2010. Livernois has a temporary traffic signal and is allowing one lane of traffic to cross at a time. Once that work is completed the same process with a temporary signal will be done on Auburn Road while they repair that bridge.

Mr. Blackstone asked how long the Livernois Bridge would be in this one-lane situation, and Mr. Shumejko responded until the first week of October. Mr. Blackstone inquired whether they were widening it, and Mr. Shumejko said they were not, but were replacing the decking, doing substructure repairs, and maybe redoing some of the concrete supports for the railings. Mr. Blackstone asked about the Rochester Bridge over M-59. Mr. Shumejko said that was down to one lane right now in each direction. Mr. Blackstone said he drove over it quite frequently, and it looked to him like they were done. He asked what the next step was there. Mr. Shumejko said he thought they had done the inside lanes. Mr. Blackstone said then they flip-flopped it. They have had them both closed. Mr. Shumejko said he was by there last week, but was not sure. Based on their schedule it was also due to be completed by the first week of October.

- 3. Crooks Road interchange.** This project has been discussed quite a bit in the past. It was deferred in past MDOT programs. When MDOT was reviewing the bridge structures for the M-59 widening project they decided that rather than put a lot of money into just rehabbing the bridge it made sense to do a complete replacement and upgrade. Right now they are working on a design to replace the overpass with a four-lane road structure, and also to improve Crooks Road from where the Road Commission left off south of the interchange, and carry it as a five-lane road from that point up to Star Batt Drive. With that there are two different alternatives that Orchard, Hiltz and McCliment (OHM) has developed. He didn't think that MDOT had made a final determination yet, but one of the alternatives was to have roundabouts at the north and south ends of the bridge which would act as the on and off ramps for the expressway. This would be similar to what was recently constructed and opened at 26 Mile and M-53. The other suggested alternative was a more traditional interchange utilizing a partial cloverleaf at two of the quadrants. Essentially it would eliminate any left-hand turns to get onto the expressway, so all movements on the freeway would be right-hand turns. There would

still be a signal when you are exiting M-59 onto Crooks Road. He had brought maps if they wanted to take a look at them later. He was not aware if a final determination had been made, and thought they were waiting for the City to provide some feedback on the two options. The project is planned to be bid out in October 2010 for the 2011 construction season.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked why the project would stop at Star Batt Drive and not go all the way to Hamlin Road. Mr. Shumejko said because of the right of way limits. Basically MDOT's right of way stops a little bit south of the bridge. As part of their project they are willing to complete it south to where the Road Commission left off, even though some of it is technically in the right of way for the Road Commission. They are willing to take it north up to Star Batt, but that is the limit they've set as far as what they will fund utilizing MDOT dollars. Funding to complete that last piece from Star Batt to Hamlin would have to be worked out between the City and the Road Commission.

We are making efforts to have something in place so it could be constructed with the same program, but there are challenges with the funding issues that the Road Commission is facing. The Tri-Party Program has been scaled back for 2010. That was the program where the County contributed a third of the funds, along with the Road Commission and the local city. The Oakland County government was threatening to eliminate it altogether, but at the last second they came back and offered to contribute one million dollars to the program to be used county-wide. In the past they had put in 2.25 million annually, so in 2010 there will be less than half of the money they have traditionally put in. We are looking for funding mechanisms, and there also might be an opportunity as that segment of Crooks Road is within the City's Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA), a zone where taxes can be captured and utilized for infrastructure within their boundaries. We are trying to approach them to see if they would be willing to contribute toward the costs as it would benefit them. It would be the last tie-in piece to complete this whole network of Crooks Road, M-59 interchange, Hamlin. We are working towards that, and hopefully something can be resolved.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked what the approximate costs would be to take it from Star Batt to Hamlin. Mr. Shumejko replied that just for construction they were estimating 1.2 to 1.5 million, but there is also some right of way needed on the east side, and of course the design costs.

- 4. Tienken Bridge Replacement at Stony Creek:** Mr. Shumejko said they were almost at a final plan to take to the Historic Districts Commission (HDC). Because it is within their boundaries they have a say or approval authority for the bridge. The last meeting they had with the HDC was the third one that the Road Commission attended, and he thought everyone was in agreement with what they presented. It does include a pedestrian bridge attached to the structure on the south side of Tienken Road. The Road Commission is incorporating the pathway construction where it ends at Millstream Village to the west to carry it through the bridge and take it to the parking lot of the Museum. We would be left to complete it to Van Hoosen. We have had a lot of

complaints in the past because there is no pathway facility there, especially with the high school in the area. We worked with the County to provide a mid-block crossing for pedestrians. It will be west of the bridge and will take you from the south side of Tienken to Clear Creek to provide a crossing for the school.

Mr. Franklin asked what had been decided about the number of lanes on the Tienken Road Bridge. Mr. Shumejko responded that the proposal has always been for two lanes. There has been a lot of misinformation out there that they are putting in two lanes with wide shoulders so they can turn it into a four-lane structure. Mr. Franklin asked if he was talking about two lanes in total or two lanes each way. Mr. Shumejko clarified that it was one lane each way, and the final resolution was that it would be a 12 foot lane in each direction, a two foot shoulder, with concrete barriers and guardrails. The pedestrian facility will be about eight feet, so the total bridge width is 40 feet. Mr. Blackstone asked what the bridge width is now, and Mr. Shumejko responded that he believed it was 29 or 30 feet, so essentially it is the pedestrian facility that is causing the increase in width.

Mr. Hunter opined that a major thoroughfare should never been put through the historic village, and was asked what the alternative was. Mr. Shumejko replied that the Road Commission had classified it as an arterial road for years. Mr. Hunter said in comparing it to Bloomfield Hills, Long Lake was a two-lane road right through their village which should be a major road but it is not. It adds to the ambience of Bloomfield Hills, and he didn't think anyone was going to change it.

Mr. Shumejko said there were a lot of challenges involved, and the district was requesting that the road be signed NO THROUGH TRUCKS, but then where is a viable alternative? You would have to send them all the way down to Avon Road. They also want to make the request to lower the speed limit there, but the Road Commission has to follow guidelines and the Michigan State Police have a say in it too. There is a Stony Creek Advisory Committee that was formed under the Mayor's administration, and they are looking at a lot of these issues and will have a final plan to enhance the character and look of the historic village. Some of the issues of speeding may be resolved with the installation of a pedestrian island, which may have a traffic calming effect there. This project is being planned for next summer.

- 5. Tienken Road Corridor Improvement, from Livernois to Sheldon Road.** This project is still a bit up in the air, and they are working on the environmental assessment. Vice Chairperson Moore offered that they were still having quite a few meetings with the residents. Mr. Shumejko said the last one they had was sometime in July, but since then the Road Commission has had to go back to the drawing board with some of the different alternatives that they are trying to incorporate in the environmental assessment.

Mr. Blackstone said he had a question or two. Getting back to the Hamlin Road widening, we all recall that several years ago the residents on Hamlin between Livernois and Rochester Road really resisted any kind of widening in their area, and now we're bringing a four lane boulevard right up to them. Is that going to be the end of it, or in the future are we going to try to widen the

next stretch? Mr. Shumejko responded that currently the only plan in place for Hamlin east of there is to build a three lane section, and as you get closer to Rochester Road to widen it out to five lanes to get more through put to the intersection, but then neck it back down to three lanes. In our last Major Thoroughfare Plan the recommendation was to widen Livernois from Hamlin up to Avon, and then widen Avon to five lanes out to Rochester Road. This would create that link in order to preserve Hamlin. Avon is a more commercial corridor. Hamlin is just proposed as three lanes east of the roundabout up until you get to Rochester Road.

Mr. Blackstone clarified that he was talking about adding a left turn lane, and asked if there was a left turn lane there now. Mr. Shumejko said it would be adding a center left turn lane, and then flaring out to five lanes as you get to the intersection. Mr. Blackstone asked when that might happen. Mr. Shumejko said it was in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) at one point to begin the design next year, however now with some of the budget issues, and now we are doing a two-year budget analysis or forecast, it didn't make it for 2010 or 2011. 2012 would be the earliest for the design. Mr. Blackstone asked if the residents were open to that, and Mr. Shumejko responded that he thought that they were always fine with a three lane road in that area. Mr. Franklin said that he had been part of the protest. To put in a five-lane road or four-lane boulevard was the equivalent of putting Rochester Road right through there, and that area is just not designed for it. There are houses and schools and many old trees, so it just isn't large enough for that kind of road. A three lane road to allow emergency vehicles down the middle if necessary was acceptable though.

Mr. Blackstone offered that the widening of M-59 might alleviate some of the congestion and traffic also. Now that Chrysler and some of the other employers along there have shed many employees, is there less traffic on Hamlin? Mr. Shumejko opined that there is probably less traffic throughout the City as a whole because of the economy, but some of it is hard to gauge because over the last couple of years we have had road projects under construction, like the bridge at Tienken, Rochester Road at University, and now we have Hamlin Road. It is hard to factor in these issues as well, but he thought that overall it is pretty apparent that volumes are down. Mr. Blackstone said there are fewer people working in Auburn Hills which fed into Hamlin Road.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked if there was any more discussion of the Road Project Status, and hearing none moved on to Traffic Calming.

## **Traffic Calming**

Mr. Shumejko said this dealt with traffic concerns in subdivisions that had each been brought to the Board twice. He was proud to say it was their first true success with speed humps and traffic calming. Both of these subdivisions have gotten approvals, their homeowners' associations have gotten petitions signed by the property owners that about the speed hump locations, their funding is approved, and both these subdivision are included in the contract bids for the City's asphalt program. It looks like within the next month or so we will be able to implement the speed humps in both these areas.

Mr. Franklin asked if the roads in the subdivisions were concrete. Mr. Shumejko said the speed humps would be done in asphalt, but there would be some concrete repair because in some places the underlying concrete where the speed humps were proposed is shot. In those areas it will first be reconstructed so the speed hump won't fail. The Arcadia Park roads are asphalt. They have some existing speed humps from when the subdivision was built, and they are requesting two more. Mr. Franklin said he was pretty sure that the Cumberland Hills Subdivision would be requesting speed humps also. Mr. Shumejko said they had been working with them but hadn't heard any official feedback.

Mr. Hunter asked how the speed humps held up with the snowplows. Mr. Shumejko replied that they found with the ones that were built on Brewster two years ago that the pavement markings get ground down or worn off over the winter, but thought it was a minor issue. He explained that chevrons are placed for each direction. They had not received any complaints from the plow truck drivers; they had not any complaints from emergency vehicle drivers, or even gotten complaints from any residents. He thought they were a success, and said we have been meaning to send a follow-up survey to the residents along Powderhorn and the rest of the Shadow Woods Subdivision to get some feedback on whether they have seen a difference in traffic. Usually you hear the complaints more than the compliments, but we have not received any complaints.

Vice Chairperson Moore has if anyone had more remarks regarding Traffic Calming, and hearing none moved on to the next item on the agenda: Rochester Road Speed Limit Study and Citywide Speed Limits.

## **Speed Limits**

Mr. Shumejko said MDOT along with the State Police had recently made a state-wide effort to reevaluate the speed limits on the major roads. They did review Rochester Road (M-150). He thought that the only changes were that Rochester Road north of Tienken was going to be increased from 45 mph to 50 mph, and they also narrowed up the 35 mph speed limit stretch of the road when you are going towards downtown Rochester. He thought it was shifted further north.

Mr. Shumejko had another issue he wanted to bring to the Board's attention. It would probably be a yearlong project and he wanted their input to see if they were interested in having staff pursue it. Technically it is stated in the Michigan Vehicle Code that we are required to review the City's speed limits every ten years, however he didn't believe it had been done in more than ten years. At the Board's behest he would propose that staff begin to do a cursory review of speed limits throughout the City. This would include roads like Old Perch, Brewster, John R and Hamlin; basically the section line major roads. It wouldn't necessarily apply to the collector-type streets like Cumberland within a residential area. It would be a large scale project and time intensive.

Mr. Franklin stated there are some significant mile roads in the City that are posted 45 mph and others that are 40 mph, and he thought that they should all be consistent. He felt it would be a lot safer if they were posted at the same speed so that people would know that if they are on a major east/west or north/south road what the speed limit is. Mr. Shumejko explained that speed limits

are set by using traffic studies, and are based on the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed. A lot of it has to do with the condition of the road and the speed drivers feel safe doing on that road. If you post them artificially low you get a lot of tailgating and driver frustration. We use a consistent method where we put out the traffic counters and calculate the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed, and basically that is the recommended speed limit.

Mr. Franklin responded that he still felt the speed limits should be consistent. If a driver is stopped by a police officer and they ask what the speed limit is, major streets should be consistent throughout the City. He was not saying that Rochester Road should be posted 35, but Hamlin should be posted the same speed as Avon, which should be the same as Walton. Mr. Shumejko explained that each road has its unique features. Walton Boulevard is basically a five-lane road that is a straight shot without any curves or visual obstructions that would restrict a driver. Typically you do your speed study on the straightaway and post advisory plaques on curves, but still keep the speed limit at what the study indicates.

Mr. Schneck asked whether after doing a study and having that knowledge you have to post the speed based on the results of the study. A lot of times we've had requests and agree to do a study, but are you sure you want to do a study because sometimes the speed limits go up and the people wanted the speed limit to go down? Mr. Shumejko said that ultimately it is a City Council decision. As staff we can do our study and make our recommendation, but ultimately it goes to the City Council. They may decide to go with staff's recommendation, or they may go outside that. He was not sure if there were liability issues if a road is posted other than what the study recommends, which might be something to ask the City attorney. In the case of the Road Commission, the Michigan State Police have to support their speed limits also, and they are basically on the hook for whatever the study says.

Mr. Schneck asked if he knew what the relation of the speed study was to the design speed of a road. Typically you design roads for five mph above the posted speed limit. If a road has not had a major rehab done, in your experience have you ever had a speed study come in over and above the design speed? Mr. Shumejko replied generally no, because a lot of the City roads were designed for 45 or 50 mph, the County standard. Steve Dearing, the former City traffic engineer was in the audience, and he asked him if he had any insight on the issue.

Mr. Dearing said unless there is some particular reason why they would choose to do otherwise, the Road Commission almost always designs their arterial roads for 50 mph. The thought is they are going to post them at either 40 or 45. But the reality is that even if you nominally design a road for 35, if it's straight and it's flat and relatively open for sight distance, it can still be driven at 40 or 45. He said he knew of a lot of roads that were technically designed low and are every day driven at a much faster speed than the design was based on. But it is a reflection of the fact that they are straight, flat roads with good sight qualities. Because of that the drivers feel comfortable driving at a higher speed than the politicians and traffic engineers would like to see them.

Mr. Shumejko said that he went to a couple of seminars provided by the Michigan State Police, and one of the things they pointed out when one of the consulting engineers asked, "We design



the road at 40, you come out here now, drive it, and say it should be posted 45. Does that open us to liability?" The Michigan State Police said in reality there are a lot of safety factors involved as far as friction factors and other criteria. Even though you may have designed it at 40, that is such a conservative 40 that they are still going to view the speed limit as what people actually feel safe at while driving it.

When the speed limit issue on gravel roads came out, the Road Commission had some questions about some of the postings. Lt. Gary Megge of the State Police and Chuck Keller of the Road Commission went out in an unmarked vehicle and started driving down some of these roads. They were driving down Livernois on the gravel section north of Tienken at 50 mph saying that speed was comfortable. Then they drove down Dequindre and it was the same thing, and they stated it should be unposted. It was asked if they took the curves at 50 mph. Mr. Shumejko said they look at the straightaway, and if there is an issue with a curve they would say you sign the curve with a warning plaque and an advisory speed. Don't limit the entire road because you have one or two curves.

Mr. Shumejko explained that design speeds do not necessarily equate directly with posted speeds. Design speeds have a lot to do with the sight lines and crests in the road. In the previous discussion, which may not apply to us because most if not all of our speed limits have TCOs, they have run into cases where the police pull someone over and find drugs or other incriminating evidence in the vehicle. Then an astute lawyer comes along, digs in and finds that these speed limits were inaccurately posted. There have been more than a couple of court cases where it was ruled that the initial stop or arrest was unlawful because it wasn't a legitimate speed limit.

Vice Chairperson Moore said before they go any further there was a handout they had been given at the beginning of the meeting in regard to the bridge on Avon Road just east of Livernois. Mr. Shumejko said this bridge has been suspect for quite a while, but the Road Commission noticed in their last bridge inspection that the beams were deteriorating pretty significantly. Actually some of the steel bars were exposed underneath it. They did further analysis, and at their next board meeting which he believed was Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup> They are going to approve a TCO to reduce the weight loading crossing this bridge. It will be 17 tons for a single axle. Mr. Matich and he looked at a County map, and this will actually be the lowest posted bridge in the entire county. By comparison, the bridge at Stony Creek had a 42 ton load restriction for a single axle, and it was in pretty rough shape. They got with the Building Department, and it appears that even the Allied Waste garbage haulers will not be able to cross the bridge when fully loaded.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked how the signs would be done there, because he sees a lot of commercial vehicles going across. Mr. Shumejko said they would probably put a sign on eastbound Avon right at Livernois, forcing you south or north on Livernois. The one thing that hasn't been determined is the detour route. Basically there are two viable options: one would be Hamlin Road, and the other would be Auburn Road. We have not had discussions with the County on how that will shake down. They are also going to do a reinspection on a six month basis because of the condition of the bridge. These will determine if further restrictions are needed or even possible closure at some point.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked when this would take affect, and Mr. Shumejko said they would probably decide soon after discussing it at their next County Board Commission meeting. The typical avenue for funding for bridge replacement used to be the Critical Bridge Program, which he thought was now called the Local Bridge Program. Unfortunately as far as funding for this bridge, the next call for funding is for fiscal year 2013. At best it will be under load restrictions for at least four years. That would be the case outside of any other grants they could pull together to help speed things up. Mr. Webber said at the Council level they were talking with the administration about seeing what we can do to possibly chip in and pay for some of it, or pay for all of it. Obviously the City has its own budget challenges, but the time frame suggested by the Road Commission is not seen as very reasonable by most of the Council. We are trying to work through it right now.

Mr. Schneck said an alternative that Mr. Shumejko was probably aware of is that if the City applies for and is awarded critical or local bridge funding for 2013, you could advance construct the project by fronting the money. Come 2013 they would be reimbursed 95% of the construction costs. Mr. Shumejko said he was not sure, and asked if that applied to the bridge program as well, or just the regular funding through the Federal Aid Task Force. Mr. Schneck said he didn't believe that the Michigan Department of Transportation would take issue with it, because the City is taking on the burden of funding the cost for the advance construct. They would just have to come out and do a funding agreement that City Council would have to act upon. Then come 2013, the City would have to ask for the money. He suggested it might be a viable alternative.

Mr. Shumejko said he knew it had been discussed whether the City would be in a position to do this. He explained there is the Catch-22 with the stimulus money. Essentially to be eligible for it you need the design of the project to be nearly complete so the project is ready to go. The City could decide to fund the design to have on hand so if monies become available we would be ready to jump on it. But the risk is that we may fund the design and not get the stimulus money, and be sitting out four years until the project actually gets constructed. We've learned that it has to be a "shovel ready" project to get awarded the stimulus money. There have been discussions with the Road Commission and Gary Peter's office to look at possible funding, but we haven't had anything concrete come across our desks yet.

Mr. Schneck said that the bridge was under the jurisdiction of the Road Commission for Oakland County, and it was his understanding that they are active participants in the Local Bridge Program, so they probably have bridges slated for 2010, 2011, 2012, and so on. If the City was successful in applying for funding, just as the Federal Aid Task Force does sometimes, he wondered if there was any latitude in shifting projects. If that bridge came up as a higher priority, could they move it in front of another project?

Mr. Shumejko said it was possible, but they had a meeting with the Road Commission on another issue and they have a high level of concern that this is just the tip of the iceberg with many bridges having to be posted for lower ratings because of their condition. A lot of them were built around the same time, so there is a big unknown in what is yet to come. They are

doing further analysis of the Livernois Bridge south of Avon because it is the same style and was built the same year. There are some legitimate concerns that it may be deteriorating at a rapid rate as well. We are looking at all the opportunities, and if we can advance construct and were guaranteed the money would be reimbursed, he thought the City would consider it a definite possibility. The County is struggling with the tri-party monies being almost wiped out, as it was a big component of getting a lot of County work done in local communities, especially passing improvements and right turn and center turn lanes. This issue arose not too long ago, so there will be a lot of upcoming discussion about it.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Cone Avenue / Avondale Middle School Gated Access Status Update**

Mr. Shumejko said they were still following up with the school on this. In their last discussion there they are continuing the status quo and keeping the gates manned and open only for the periods in the morning and afternoon. Mr. Franklin said he thought the gates were gong to remain closed and the buses rerouted this fall. Mr. Shumejko said they have to confirm that and that they had not gotten the latest bus schedule from Avondale Schools yet. Mr. Franklin asked at the present time was the gate opened or closed. Mr. Hunter said he had driven by it at 4:30 today and it was closed, but that was after the school itself was closed. Mr. Franklin said he thought the Board had decided that this school year the gate was to remain closed. Mr. Shumejko said at end of the last school year they were just gong to have it open for one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. He thought they were going to continue to do that, but they may have decided to close it altogether. Mr. Hunter said he had stopped by there several times during the summer and the gate was closed each time. Mr. Shumejko said he hadn't had any recent complaints from residents.

They did look at the issue of turning it into a public roadway, but the road is in a lot worse condition than they had thought. It would not be in the City's best interest to take it over until it was upgraded to City standards. They would continue to look at the possibility of putting in street lighting at the approach to provide better lighting for the students. He explained that everyone is in a budget crisis right now including the schools, so they were trying to lay out plans so that when monies did become available they would be able to jump on them. He said they were continuing to work with George Heitsch, superintendent of Avondale Schools.

### **Hollywood Market**

Mr. Shumejko said they had several discussions with the Road Commission for Oakland County. Those approaches are being evaluated with the safety audit for the Tienken Road Corridor project. He was not sure what recommendations would come out of it, but probably the easiest thing to do would be at some point to restrict some of the turning movements into or out of the driveways. He thought that restricting the turns out would require the consensus of the business owner of the shopping plaza, but the Road Commission, based on traffic crashes, would be able to post NO LEFT TURN off Tienken into the site. That will be evaluated in the environmental assessment, and when they get into the actual design on Tienken we will get a better handle on where things stand.

## NEW BUSINESS, TCOS

### Review of Yield Signs in Easthampton Subdivision

Mr. Franklin asked if there was any signage there now. Mr. Shumejko responded that there were two YIELD signs there. He explained that in June they got a traffic request from the homeowners' association president, Larry Mercer, to review two of the intersections for possibly changing the signage from YIELD signs to STOP signs. They were at two intersections with Norcross Drive; one with its intersection with Wentworth, and the other at its intersection with Hillsborough. Mr. Shumejko then read the staff report.

On June 10, 2009 the Traffic Engineering Department received a Traffic Information Survey submitted by Mr. Larry Mercer with the Easthampton Homeowners Association citing that there were traffic conflicts and several near traffic crashes at the intersections of Norcross Drive / Hillsborough Drive and Norcross Drive / Wentworth Drive.

A traffic field study was performed to determine if a change in the type of regulatory controls is warranted for the above two intersections to change them from YIELD to STOP signs as warranted by the latest edition of Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD). Traffic crash history was reviewed with TIA TCATS for a three (3) year period from 2006-2008 (attached) and no traffic crashes were found at either of the above intersections.

Based upon the review, the following is the recommendation for the type of regulatory traffic control device (STOP/YIELD sign) for each intersection with recorded available safe sight distance:

#### 1) **Intersection of Norcross Drive at Hillsborough Drive:**

Intersection safe sight distance was measured for 131' westerly (as restricted by parked vehicles within roadway and driveway fronting 997 Hillsborough Drive) and 364' easterly (as restricted by horizontal curvature).

Note: Several sight inspections were made to review the conditions within the field, and found parked vehicles to be a common occurrence at the intersection. No other sight obstructions exist at either of the intersection quadrants that adversely impact the intersection safe approach speeds.

**Recommend: Norcross Drive to stop for Hillsborough Drive as a result of limited sight visibility caused by parked vehicles within the roadway and driveway fronting 997 Hillsborough Drive.**

Mr. Shumejko clarified that there were two issues: the limited sight distance with the vehicles parked in the roadway, but also due to the location of the home at the corner, the vehicles parked in the driveway also restricted the sight distance. We didn't want to recommend posting NO

PARKING signs up and down that entire street because number one, then you are just chasing the problem and people are going to park further down the street. Secondly, the bigger issue was that we felt that there was no realistic way to restrict the driver from parking within his own driveway. For that reason we recommend that this signage be switched from a YIELD sign to a STOP sign.

**2) Intersection of Norcross Drive at Wentworth Drive:**

The safe intersection sight distance was measured for 245'+ northerly and 400'+ southerly. At this time, no permanent sight obstructions exist at the intersection quadrants that would adversely impact the intersection safe approach speeds.

**Recommend: No change in regulatory traffic control at this intersection.**

Mr. Shumejko summarized that essentially they are recommending the sign at Hillsborough be switched out from a YIELD to a STOP sign, and the sign at Wentworth to remain the same.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked if there were any discussion of the matter. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

MOTION by Franklin, seconded Hunter, that the Board supports having TCO No. SS-136 issued, and recommends the City Council approve the TCO until rescinded or superseded.

Ayes: All  
Nays: None  
Absent: Frank Cardimen  
Ernest Colling

**MOTION CARRIED**

**3) Austin Avenue and Devondale Road**

Mr. Shumejko gave background on the matter, and read from the staff report. A traffic study was recently performed to determine the type of regulatory traffic control warranted as outlined in the MMUTCD for the newly constructed extension of Austin Avenue into Devondale. This study was initiated by the July completion of the City's project to extend Austin into Devondale. The road was extended as part of a development project within the Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA).

Mr. Shumejko summarized that basically at this location Austin Avenue previously terminated at its westerly limit and was a dead end, but now it connects into Devondale and is a through street. He pointed out that Austin Avenue is a major road, making it a different classification than a typical residential street. At the intersection of Austin Avenue and Devondale the intersection corner distance was reviewed to determine whether a YIELD or STOP sign control is warranted. When traveling westbound on Austin at its intersection approach with Devondale, the following available sight distances were observed:

- Looking northerly there was 372 feet (restricted by a horizontal curve and a slight crest in the road).
- Looking southerly there was 645 feet (only restricted by the curvature in the roadway).

For this type of road, per the Road Commission’s outline, the recommended safe sight distance is about 280 feet for a 25 mph collector road, and 335 feet for a 30 mph road. We evaluated it against both criteria to be certain, and it met the criteria for both. At this location we are recommending that a YIELD sign be placed for Austin to yield at Devondale.

Prior to this project being initiated there were some concerns because Devondale primarily south of Austin has a lot of residential that has been grandfathered in until the sites are redeveloped and become commercial. Because of the residential nature of Devondale between Auburn and Austin they didn’t want Devondale to be the main road for trucks deliveries to Rayconnect, which is the commercial building that was just built at Austin and Devondale. So before the whole project was constructed we assured the residents that we would sign Devondale as NO THROUGH TRUCKS 8,000 GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT from Auburn to Austin, which would require all deliveries to made to made out to Crooks Road.

This signage is proposed to be in place until such time as that portion of the street is redeveloped or rezoned. Another big issue is because Devondale will remain gravel we didn’t want the heavy vehicles utilizing Devondale because that creates a lot more maintenance headaches, requiring more frequent grading and application of chloride. So it is a twofold issue, to minimize hardship for the residents and reduce the dust and the maintenance of the roadway itself.

MOTION by Franklin, seconded Hunter that the Board supports having TCO numbers YS-136 and WT-38 issued, and recommends the City Council approves the TCOs until rescinded or superseded.

Ayes: All  
 Nays: None  
 Absent: Frank Cardimen  
 Ernest Colling

MOTION CARRIED

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Franklin said he would like to make a motion that the Advisory Traffic and Safety Board meet at a minimum of once every three months. A member responded that we had gone too long between meetings and lost momentum. Vice Chairperson Moore said he was planning to bring something similar to that up. He explained that the members plan their month and allow travel time be at the meetings on the second Tuesday of the month. He didn’t feel they received notices of cancellation in time to change their plans. If there is not the need for as many meetings now as there was years back when they used to meet almost every month, perhaps we should change our schedule and meet every three months. This would be, of course, unless something important comes up. That way you would know that in January and February we are not going to have a meeting, so you can make your plans.

Mr. Webber added that he thought that was a good idea. He did agree that the Board had gone too long without a meeting. He thought they should look at that when they set the 2010 schedule. Perhaps we should meet six times, every other month. If there really isn't anything going on, he suggested that they cancel further in advance as he also planned his schedule around the meetings.

Mr. Shumejko said he concurred. He explained that this summer things had gotten a little out of hand with all the road projects being very time consuming. He liked the idea of meeting six times a year. It seemed like the Board never met in December or January because of the holidays, so perhaps those two months get removed right away, and perhaps the July meeting as well.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked if he saw anything for the near future, anything coming in the next three months, October, November, or December. Mr. Webber asked about the Old Perch study for West Middle School, saying it looked like there was a trigger there to bring it back to the Board within the next three months. Mr. Shumejko said that realistically he didn't think there would be a meeting in October. Mr. Webber suggested that there be a November meeting to consider the Old Perch issue. Mr. Shumejko agreed that the Board meet in November, and Chairperson Moore suggested that they also meet in February. He asked if that sounded feasible to the members. He stipulated that of course if something came up they would schedule a meeting. He said they could go from there and decide the schedule from that point, but at least we would know the schedule for the next few months.

Mr. Shumejko suggested that at each meeting staff could apprise them of what was on the horizon, and set the meeting dates two months in advance. That way they would not necessarily stay two consecutive months ahead, but two consecutive meetings ahead. Mr. Franklin said that this would not be abnormal in terms of other committees at the City. The Planning Commission used to meet twice a month, and now they are only scheduled once a month, because our city is at a different stage than it was.

Vice Chairperson Moore suggested that having an informational meeting might work as well. If there was not a lot for the agenda in November, perhaps Mr. Schneck, Mr. Cardimen, or Mr. Dearing could make a presentation to the Board. Mr. Shumejko suggested the possibility of having TIA come in also. Mr. Cardimen has retired from TIA so now there is a new president, Jerry Walker. It would be a good opportunity to have him come in and introduce himself to the Board and provide the latest from their end.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked the members for their opinions, and Mr. Hunter expressed his agreement. Mr. Shumejko opined that more of the meetings would be informational, and he was not sure if it was because they were not building as many roads in new subdivisions any more, so there haven't been a lot of traffic control orders coming in from new subs, or maybe because traffic volumes are down due to the economy and people are worrying about other things. We are not getting as many complaints to review for cut-through traffic or speeding.

Mr. Schneck said another thing he would like to see is information on the advent of technology in the industry. For a while we started moving towards changing all the signal heads to LEDs, and the LED technology is also moving into street lighting. He wasn't sure if there was anything on the horizon for pavement markings, but they do talk about wet reflective type pavement markings. As Mr. Shumejko indicated, traffic volumes are down. The Road Commission for Oakland County still endorses the SCATS System. He thought techniques in cost-cutting reductions would be beneficial with the way the economy is going. Our revenues do not seem to be increasing; our property taxes are gone, State revenue sharing is down, the Act 51 money is going down, and so the term, "you've got to work smarter" applies. If in your travels and in what we do here at the City there is anything on the horizon that you are aware of, you could also bring that to the Board.

Mr. Shumejko thought that pavement markings and striping would be a good topic. We are always looking at different alternatives. One of the challenges with that is we always try to add a rider onto the Road Commission's contract because they go out to bid with a two million dollar program, while ours is around \$40,000. We get them to support a letter to hold the unit prices that the Road Commission got. By doing that it does limit us as far as the type of material, because MDOT and the Road Commission use the cold plastic for the legends, and the sprayable thermo for the striping, but it gives us the cost benefit.

Mr. Schneck said the technology has also changed for the raised pavement markers. There was a time when the little reflectors were all getting smashed down because of the snowplows, but he thought there was a way now that the snowplows were not damaging them. He explained that raised pavement markers are installed in areas without street lighting, and they use the automobile headlights to illuminate reflectors along the roadway to help drivers navigate through a difficult stretch. Another area with new technology is signing. 3M continues to change the sheeting grade material. Mr. Shumejko said that recently the City had utilized a grant through 3M where they bought a higher grade material at the same cost as the lower grade material. The grant was for around \$2,500, and they had been using it on the City's warning series signs and school zone signs in fluorescent yellow and lime green. The sheeting material is called DG Cubed, and especially on Old Perch, you may notice we put strips, and at night that light is reflected back at you with almost 100% retro-reflectivity. We found it to be too bright for guide signs because the white is so bright that the lettering blurs. MDOT has starting using it for highway applications, but we have been using it for warning signs. For that we get MDOT's quoted price through 3M.

A Member asked if they had definitely resolved the Board's next meeting date. Vice Chairperson Moore said it was the second Tuesday in November, the tenth. At that meeting we will decide the date of the next meeting, but it will definitely be in 2010. Mr. Shumejko thought at this point they could say they would not meet in December and January.

Vice Chairperson Moore suggested for those who were interested in serving the City, perhaps there were other boards and commissions they could sit in on and help out. Mr. Shumejko said he was not sure of their flexibility, but if they had the time and were interested they might like to attend some of the Oakland Federal Aid Committee Meetings to see what that whole process is.



They are normally held during the day, and there is typically one in October or February. He thought that would be a great thing to give insight and to see what is involved in trying to get funding for road projects. Vice Chairperson Moore suggested that he email the members with dates and times.

Mr. Shumejko added that SEMCOG (Southeast Michigan Council of Governments) always offers free seminars for government employees. He tries to attend the ones on traffic safety when he can. He could also notify the Members of things like that if they are available to attend outside of the normal meeting hours.

Mr. Hunter asked who was responsible for the signage in the parks, such as NO PARKING, FIRE LANE. Mr. Shumejko said that the City fabricated them at the request of the Parks or Fire Department. The City installs some of them, but a lot of them are installed by park employees. Mr. Hunter explained at Borden Park in the parking area for the east soccer fields there are NO PARKING FIRE LANE signs all along the tree line. People are parking there, and also parking on the other side on the grass. They used to put up saw horses to block it, but lately he noticed that they went out and purchased what look like rubber curbs to put all along there. People are still parking there, driving right over them. Why didn't they just get the Sheriff out there to enforce the no parking zone? Why did the City have to spend that money?

Mr. Shumejko said it was his understanding that some park attendants are authorized under ordinance to issue tickets within the parks themselves, like some of our building inspectors can issue parking tickets. Because of resources the Oakland County Sheriff Officers tend to shy away from enforcing issues within the parks, so it is left up to those few parking attendants that are allowed to issue tickets to do the enforcement. He knew that the issue of people parking on the lawns has been a contentious one for a while, and there had been discussion about putting up a split rail fence so there is something above ground that people are not just riding over. Ultimately those matters are decided through the Parks Department in conjunction with the Fire Department.

Mr. Hunter thought it was funny because there was a soccer tournament at Borden Park a month or so ago and the sawhorses were up again, right on top of the rubber curbs they had put in. Mr. Shumejko said they also get complaints when someone does get a ticket, saying it wasn't that clear not to park in lawn areas. Essentially we fabricate the signs for them and will install them in certain situations, but primarily the parks do it themselves.

Mr. Schneck said not to belabor the point, but with roads in the parks that are not conveyed to the jurisdiction of the City of Rochester Hills, when you do place regulatory devices, who enforces those? Is the enforcing agency the Oakland County Sheriff and are they empowered to enforce those regulatory devices? Mr. Shumejko said that in all cases whether a road is on public or private property like a shopping mall, the Sheriff is authorized to enforce handicap parking and fire lanes. Outside of that, for example on-site STOP signs at a mall, they don't have the authority unless, according to our ordinance, if the management company of a building site sees a chronic problem they can come to the City and request that an ordinance is adopted. We have several of them in our code; the Winchester Mall is one of them, where they authorize

the Oakland County Sheriff to issue tickets on site for blowing STOP signs or speeding. But even for those that do authorize this, the County Sheriff won't go out there unless they get calls for a specific complaint. Basically it is the fire lanes and the handicapped issues that are enforced at any place that is open to the public.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked if anyone had anything else they wished to discuss. Mr. Schneck asked Mr. Shumejko if he knew if the Rochester Road signals were timed to facilitate north/south traffic. Does the timing change throughout the day? Mr. Shumejko said they were on SCATS (Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System), through the Road Commission. They have told the City that there is so much volume on that road that any little fluctuation that occurs sets the system out of whack. We get a lot of calls, not so much for Rochester Road but a lot of the side streets like Hamlin or Avon Road. People will complain that they had to wait forever to cross Rochester Road. He thought that the County oversees those, not MDOT.

Mr. Schneck said it was correct that the Road Commission for Oakland County was the maintaining agency, but it was his understanding that when you get into those peak hours the system, he did not want to say defaults, but goes to a typical cycle. In his opinion SCATS is a perfect system to operate on off-peak times. A car pulls up to a signal, the camera recognizes it is there; it adjusts the timing and allows the vehicle to move through. As you have indicated where things get challenging is when we are at capacity. You can have the best signal timing in the world, but when it gets to capacity issues you need lanes to move traffic. It was his understanding that during those peak times the system to a certain degree defaults to a set timing, and you get into the progressions and offsets for the way that you would like to see traffic move. He also thought the system picks a priority route, for example it knows Rochester Road is higher on the hierarchy of road systems so it is given the benefit of the doubt for more green time. The cameras can only go back so far from an intersection to see the amount of traffic that is queued up.

Mr. Schneck thought there were other things that the State had done, such as hardwiring signals so they actually act as one signal. While he was with the State one of the things they did was if there was a signal at an intersection with two turnarounds in close proximity of that signal, they hardwired all the signals to act as one.

Mr. Shumejko said they talked with MDOT when the signal went in on Rochester Road at Lowes about doing that with the signal on Auburn, but he didn't believe that they did. Another issue is that Rochester Hills was one of the first cities to have SCATS installed, so it is probably first generation equipment, and perhaps some of it is not detecting as well as it used to.

Vice Chairperson Moore recognized Mr. Dearing. Mr. Dearing said that Mr. Schneck was right that SCATS works its best with off-peak traffic. When you get to capacity flows it is literally driven by whatever pavement you have available to move the vehicles. The other thing you need to recognize about SCATS, if you look at all the things SCATS tries to do, the single most important thing to that system is not progression through a corridor. It really doesn't care if you get green after green as you drive a route like Rochester Road. The mathematics of its algorithms is such that it tries to minimize stops and delays, which is a slightly different way of

looking at the world than progression through corridors. When it is looking at stops and delays it is looking at all of the approaches, not just what you would consider the major road, like a Rochester Road.

Mr. Shumejko was right that Rochester Hills got SCATS early on. Troy was the first installation of SCATS basically in the United States, and Rochester Hills was the second. It is older equipment. As far as the software, or as it is called firmware, they have actually been keeping up with changes to the algorithms and that sort of thing, so although they are older computers they try to upgrade the operating system on a regular basis. It gets too confusing for them to have different operating systems in different controllers scattered all over their system. So while they will not necessarily replace the controller just because it is old, they try to make sure that everybody is running in the same version of software, which makes their life a whole lot simpler.

That is just the SCATS component; the second part is the detection or the cameras. There is no question that some of these auto-scope cameras are really showing their age. He didn't know what the Road Commission's program was for replacing the cameras. Mr. Shumejko thought that they had CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) money, but was not sure how far that goes any more. Mr. Dearing said they are still spending a lot of money on the signal system that they run that is not SCATS, which needs to be optimized on a regular basis. They use "stupid" controllers that are just time-of-day, pre-timed systems. You can get special funding, the so-called CMAQ monies, to upgrade hardware, but usually you don't score particularly well if you're trying to use the money for that purpose. They are more likely to give CMAQ money to optimize fixed time control systems rather than for trying to go back and upgrade a SCATS actuated system.

Mr. Shumejko said he had spoken with Chuck Keller from the Road Commission, and another challenge they are facing in their overall budget is that in the past they had money to do ten signal upgrades to box spans. But because of the ADA compliance requirements that they upgrade all of the pathway ramps, for what they could build ten before now they are only able to build six or seven.

Mr. Schneck said what brought this question up in the first place is in traveling Rochester Road as much as he did, it seems like you get stopped at every one of the major east/west streets. When you catch one green you are not going to be able to catch the next signal green. It seemed to him that you want to make Rochester Road move as quickly as possible. It is the only good north/south road around in the area to get to I-75 going south. He said it was his pet peeve.

Vice Chairperson Moore said he knew where he was coming from, because on M-59 over by the Lakeside Mall if you drive at 45 mph you will hit green at every traffic signal and never have to stop. On Rochester Road that is never going to happen. Mr. Shumejko said that road was a lot wider too. Mr. Schneck brought up Mound Road as an example, saying it had been engineered to have turning islands and all that, and he realized that Rochester Road is not a Mound Road or an M-59. He related that if he drove 50 mph he could ride Mound for almost ten miles and not get stopped by a traffic signal once. Mr. Shumejko explained that Mound Road is your perfect, boulevarded roadway. You've got the nice wide right-of-way and long cross overs. Mr.

Schneck said he thought one of the things that compounded the problem was what they called access management. If you look at Rochester Road and look at all the access points, people can turn into shopping centers, they can turn left. There is a lot of starting and stopping. Every time someone pulls out or decelerates you are slowing traffic, where if you look at a Mound or you look at a Telegraph Road, there are not a lot of access points along those corridors. They are somewhat strategically placed, and that has a large bearing on how traffic flows. When you have a lot of starting and stopping, people pulling into traffic, people getting out of traffic, it has an adverse effect.

Mr. Shumejko mentioned that one of the recommendations of the Master Thoroughfare Plan was to do a further analysis of Rochester Road. Recently MDOT contacted the City, because every year they put so much money aside for doing a traffic safety audit, and this year they were able to secure \$25,000 for that purpose. They asked if the City would also be willing to contribute \$25,000 as the cost of the entire study is \$50,000, and they would analyze the whole Rochester Road corridor from just south of M-59 where their jurisdiction starts, all the way up to Avon Road. They would look at access management as part of this, and see if there are areas where driveways can be consolidated as sites get redeveloped, so there is common access among multiple adjacent business users. They would also look at other signal issues along the entire corridor. We recently got an agreement for that, and it is forthcoming to take it to City Council. He said it has been a long time coming, and we have been trying to get a safety audit done on Rochester Road for a number of years.

Vice Chairperson Moore asked if anyone else had anything to come before the Board. Before he adjourned the meeting he wanted to confirm that they all knew the next meeting would be on November 10. He asked Staff to notify the members that were absent, Chairperson Colling and Mr. Cardimen.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Hunter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded, and Vice Chairperson Moore adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.