All-University Traffic and Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes

October 15, 2009

PRESENT: BASWELL, BOWMAR, BUCKWALTER, DENEAU, FASHBAUGH, GALEZEWSKI, KACOS, LADUCA, LAND, LEE, MARTENIUK, MCCONNELL, PEDRAZA, POTTER, RICE, SHAMASS, SILVER, SOFFIN, WEINER

ABSENT: BIDWELL, POLZIN, RHODES

GUESTS: Stephanie Fox: MSU graduate student traffic engineer
Dr. Tom Maleck: Asc Professor, Civil & Environ. Engineering
Lou Sutfin: AFSCME, 1585/999, 457 O.E.

CALL TO ORDER: 1400

ROUNDTABLE INTROS: No

LAST MEETING MINUTES: MCCONNELL stated that he wanted the minutes on page 2 to include Dr. Poston’s having mentioned CATA contract negations in the future. POTTER noted that under MSU BIKES, page 7, regarding the AOP program, it should be noted that MSU BIKES worked with a group of Communication Arts and Science students and created a bike safety video that RHA was running before movies. POTTER also stated that on the last paragraph under MSU BIKES, that it should read that East Lansing was developing a new non-motorized transportation plan for its city and suggested why MSU should interface with them. MCCONNELL stated that if there were no more amendments or objections, that the minutes be taken as amended.

There were no more amendments or objections. The September 2009 minutes were accepted.

PRESENTATION: MCCONNELL introduced Dr. Maleck who would be reporting to the committee about safety in parking lots and the improvements that had been made throughout the years.
Dr. Maleck stated that graduate students that worked for him were given the responsibility of collecting data and running studies as he wanted them to gain practical experience. He then introduced MSU engineering graduate student and student traffic engineer, Stephanie Fox.

Ms. Fox state that she would be speaking about what had been done and what could continue to be done to improve traffic safety on campus.

Dr. Maleck interjected and stated that in his field, a 5% reduction in traffic accidents was considered profound; however, that from 1995 to mid-2009, there had been a 90% reduction.

PEDRAZA asked what determined a hit-and-run.

RICE replied that it was a criminal offense to property and rarely a vehicle-to-person accident.

PEDRAZA questioned why ramps would have fewer accidents.

Ms. Fox replied it may be due to a reduction of speed.

Dr. Maleck added that he believed there were fewer accidents in ramps because people are not crossing over aisles to get to rows of vehicle as in a parking lot.

SOFFIN asked if the time of day affected the number of accidents.

POTTER asked if it was seasonal.

Lou Sutfin stated that it may be contributed to less snow in the ramps during the winter than on the roads.

Dr. Maleck stated that plowing lots was a factor.

DENEAU asked if accidents occurred at the mouth of the entrance/exits of lots.

Ms. Fox replied that they did.

POTTER asked if the bicycle and pedestrian accident information could be split.

Ms. Fox stated that it could be compiled.

PEDRAZA asked if there was a specific problematic area on the roadways.

Ms. Fox replied that the Shaw Lane and Bogue Street intersection (traffic circle) was problematic.

Dr. Maleck agreed, but did not know the specifics regarding the four accidents that had occurred there.

Dr. Maleck stated that when Lot 83 was last reconfigured, MSU insisted on space being incorporated into the lot where snow could be placed.
during removal; and, angle parking implemented leading to smaller aisles, slower vehicle traffic.

MCCONNELL asked how many spaces were lost when it was reconfigured.

Dr. Maleck replied about 35-40 spaces.

RICE stated that speed tables were added as well.

RICE stated that the reconstruction of Lot 83 cost $4.3 million.

Dr. Maleck commented that Lot 83 was the first lot that had significant focus on the engineering aspect of the lot which included considering shorter aisles, speed tables, snow removal, angle parking and the drainage system.

Dr. Maleck stated with the changes in Lot 83, a 59% reduction of accidents followed. He stated that as of this year, the reduction was at 87%.

Dr. Maleck stated that bike lanes had been painted on Farm Lane.

He stated that there was a retrofit bike lane at the Trowbridge junket.

Dr. Maleck reported that at the intersection of Farm Lane and Mt. Hope Roads, the southbound portion of Farm Lane was configured with a left hand turn lane, a through lane, a right turn only lane and a bicycle lane. He added that the bicyclist would likely be aware that the person in the right turn only lane would be turning right and would be cautious when traveling through the intersection.

Dr. Maleck stated that in 2013, Farm Lane, south of Mt. Hope, would become four lanes.

LADUCA asked what happened when the bike lane ends.

POTTER responded and stated that bicyclists were to act as a vehicle and merge with traffic.

Dr. Maleck stated that pedestrian laws were changing. He continued that each of the pedestrian don’t walk, red-phase and the walk, green-phase signals at crosswalks were required to be 21 seconds minimum.

Dr. Maleck reported that the crosswalk from Lot 53, across Farm Lane was an awkward design due to the width and time of the intersection, signal timing and vehicle back-ups. He added that the pedestrian crossings were established by law.

MCCONNELL asked about the complaint regarding a flashing red traffic signal at the exit of Lot 53 at Farm Lane.

MALECK replied that it was too dangerous and controversial.
MCCONNELL commented that there were many considerations to be made and that it was appreciated that time and work put into handling them.

MCCONNELL asked Dr. Maleck if he would speak of synchronized timing of traffic signals on Farm Lane.

Dr. Maleck stated that based on past experience, he had learned to consider situations more intensely versus automatically implementing the standard. He stated that if the traffic signals were synchronized, them needing to be on the same cycle (80 seconds based on the MDOT signal) would need to be considered. Dr. Maleck added that other factors in the Farm Lane signal synchronization review would include pedestrian walk signals, traffic signal timing and the progression of traffic during peak use (morning and night). He stated that his staff would be monitoring Farm Lane and likely the count would be later in fall and in the spring.

PEDRAZA asked if there were statistics online regarding accessible parking accidents, particularly in the Old Horticulture Building area.

Ms. Fox stated that she could find out.

PEDRAZA stated that he was on the committee for the new museum and questioned why on-street accessible parking could not be maintained if it was not deemed dangerous.

Dr. Maleck stated that on-street parking was not good. He stated that sight lines were bettered when street parking was removed.

WEINER asked if flashing red traffic signals were no longer legal.

Dr. Maleck replied that the national standard for a left turn at a traffic signal was now indicated by a green arrow. He continued that the signals on campus that still were protective permissive and allowed the left turn on a blinking red or on the green arrow were being replaced with the standard.

Mr. Sutfin stated that there was still time to comply to the standard.

Dr. Maleck stated that the University used autoscope cameras at intersections for time as there were more reliable than loops on the ground.

POTTER asked if a bicycle would register under the autoscope.

Dr. Maleck replied he was not certain.

MCCONNELL thanked Dr. Maleck and Ms. Fox for their time and presentation.
PUBLIC COMMENT: PEDRAZA reported that there were no curb cuts from the parking lot of Lot 89 to the sidewalks along Farm Lane.

RICE stated he would contact the project manager in regards.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES: Campus Planning and Administration – None

Department of Police and Public Safety – None

Transit (CATA) – None

MSU Bikes

POTTER reported that MSU BIKES participated in a bicycle parade for the grand opening of Farm lane.

Environmental Stewardship Transportation Technical Team (ESTTT)

MARTENIUK announced that Oct. 20 – 24, 2009 was Campus Sustainability Week.

MCCONNELL stated that he wanted the AUTTC to work with the ESTTT so as not to duplicate work.

OLD BUSINESS: MCCONNELL asked that subcommittees summarize AUTTC data needs and forward them on to BUCKWALTER. He requested that the summary include how the information would relate to AUTTC goals.

MCCONNELL asked for the subcommittees to report on their progress.

MARTENIUK reported that the Outreach/Education Subcommittee had not met since the last meeting. She stated that at the previous meeting, items of focus discussed were:

1) Working w/student groups and CATA
2) Where motor scooters fit into the campus
3) Requesting the AUTTC website be shown at some time during the Physical Plant’s Construction Junction meetings
4) Obtaining information from Cathleen Edgarly of CATA regarding car pool alternatives
5) Selling bicycle permits during welcome week
6) RHA show bicycle information video

LAND stated he had asked that ASMSU expound on the video and put in its AOP session.
POTTER reported that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee discussed the following:

1) Exploring new devices for crossing areas (lights/motion sensors)
2) Encouraging proper riding instead of making it a police issue
   a. Rewards for riding properly
   b. Wearing helmets

Dr. Maleck added that POTTER and he had participated in a class conducted by the Office of Highway Safety Planning, run by the State Police last Saturday and commented that it was a good class. He stated that grants through the State of Michigan may be available for bicycle classes.

FASHBAUGH reported that the Vehicular Traffic Subcommittee discussed the following at the last meeting:

1) Individual lease parking spaces
2) MSU College of Law parking

MCCONNELL encouraged members to use the Powerpoints from Construction Junction meetings as a resource. He added that they were available online about a week after the Construction Junction meetings.

POTTER stated that he had heard that the Beal Street construction project did not yet meet the funds needed to start it.

KACOS replied that the project was on hold until funding was available for it.

MCCONNELL asked the status of East Circle Drive.

RICE replied that East Circle Drive would be closed over the winter break to pull lines and then would reopen. He continued that the University would try breaking ground at the museum site in February. RICE added that once construction started, East Circle Drive would be closed for about 1.5 years.

BOWMAR asked if it would be possible to post that it was easier for persons heading to north campus to take Service Road to Farm Lane versus Harrison to Trowbridge.

RICE stated that he would relay that message to construction personnel.

Dr. Maleck reported that Harrison Road was to be reconstructed in the next year or two. He stated that he would be lending his services to the project.

FASHBAUGH stated that in the past a four-way stop had been used at the intersection of Harrison and Trowbridge Roads during construction and it seemed to have worked well.

Dr. Maleck stated that he would be helping out in engineering the area.
POTTER asked if there was a public input stage for the Harrison Road project.

Dr. Maleck stated that he believed the area was planned already and that bicycle lanes may be incorporated into the project.

MARTENIUK asked members to remind their constituents to slow down on Farm Lane.

RICE stated that Farm Lane was running well, both daily and during football game days. He added that the bus route was now regular.

POTTER commented that Farm Lane worked well for bicyclists and that the 7-feet wide bicycle lanes were comfortable to travel in.

PEDRAZA observed that the speed limit was 30 versus 25 as on most areas of campus.

Dr. Maleck stated that there were no unsignaled drives or pedestrian crossings along Farm Lane in that area and a 30 speed limit was deemed more reasonable than a 25 limit. He stated that it would be monitored for a couple of months.

POTTER questioned the spacing between speed limit signs.

RICE replied that the University was currently in compliance at this time. He added that police would be monitoring and writing tickets along Farm Lane.

PEDRAZA asked what came of the artwork planned for under the Farm Lane bridges.

KACOS replied that there was no artwork due to budget issues.

RICE stated that the parking trucks that were reported on the sidewalks along Farm Lane were to help keep persons from marring the underpasses with graffiti.

Dr. Maleck stated that he thought that Farm Lane was a beautiful road and that it was making a significant positive difference in traffic flow.

The meeting was adjourned.