

RALPH J. STEPHENSON
CONSULTING ENGINEER

October 19, 1970

Meeting #1

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, October 14, 1970

Attending: Don Swets, Bob Carroll, Bruce Watts and Ralph Stephenson

The ad hoc committee was appointed by City Manager Jim Caplinger to act as a study and advisory group in respect to present and future thoroughfare planning for the Kalamazoo region. The chairman of the group is Bob Carroll, traffic engineer for the City of Kalamazoo. It was agreed that Ralph Stephenson will take notes and provide Mr. Carroll with a rough draft committee activity report. The draft will be rewritten in final form if necessary for distribution to members of the committee and Mr. Caplinger by Mr. Bob Carroll. Distribution will be limited to those attending the meeting and Mr. Caplinger. Further distribution will be at Mr. Caplinger's discretion.

Ralph Stephenson mentioned he will also prepare a separate report of each meeting for distribution to his client. These reports will not normally be sent to members of the ad hoc committee, but if any specific information in them was needed it would be available upon request.

The group first decided that regular meetings should be scheduled. The next meeting is to be on Wednesday, October 14, 1970, at 10:00 A.M., in the Public Works Department conference room, kindly provided by Don Swets. At this meeting we will begin discussions of specific proposals as they relate to the thoroughfare plan and as are prepared and brought to the meeting by each committee member. It was further decided that for our first phase planning scheduled for completion January 31, 1971, we will concentrate efforts on the district bounded roughly by the universities on the west, the Kalamazoo River on the east, Cross Town Parkway on the south and Paterson Street on the north. This does not mean we will exclude from our study thoroughfare considerations for all other parts of the City. It merely means that in considering the total thoroughfare plan our early detailed analysis will be concentrated in this area. The in-principle written report with schematic graphic material for the Phase One study is due January 31, 1971.

An important discussion element in our first meeting was to define the kinds of traffic and transport systems we should be considering. For defining kinds of traffic it was suggested that we use a level of service concept described in the publication by Northwestern University,

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"Capacity Analysis Procedures for Signalized Intersections", and couple it with a scalar value system suggested by Ralph Stephenson. The level of service concept recognizes six conditions of traffic flow on any artery as follows:

<u>Level of Service</u>	<u>Condition of traffic flow</u>
A	Free flow
B	Stable flow ranging on low density side
C	Stable flow ranging on high density side
D	Approaching unstable flow
E	Unstable flow - street at capacity
F	Forced flow

The scalar value to be used in conjunction with the level of service is as follows:

<u>Scale of Traffic</u>	<u>Physical design of facility permits safe speeds of:</u>
1	65 to 80 MPH (Inter urban traffic) between cities
2	50 to 65 MPH (Intra urban traffic) within the city
3	35 to 50 MPH (Intra urban traffic)
4	15 to 35 MPH (Intra urban traffic)
5	0 to 15 MPH (Intra urban traffic - includes parked traffic in lots, on streets, in structures or in any facility devoted to storage of vehicles.

As an example of the use of this classification technique, a street or other thoroughfare area rated 3A would consist of an intra urban artery designed for traffic speeds of 35 to 50 MPH and currently operating at a high level of efficiency, corresponding to free flow of traffic. A rating of 4E indicates a street designed for vehicular traffic speeds from

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15 to 35 MPH and operating currently with unstable flow at total capacity limit.

After deciding on the basic work area and terminology, the committee next turned their attention to objectives. It was agreed our purpose is to set in motion the forces necessary to prepare and have adopted an official thoroughfare plan for the Kalamazoo area. It was decided that this committee should be available to the State Highway Department for guidance in their transportation planning in Kalamazoo.

Presently major work on the area transportation study is being done by the State Highway Department, a policy committee and a technical advisory committee. The State Highway Department has regular staff members working on a full time basis on the project and are currently negotiating contracts with consultants to do the detailed thoroughfare planning. The policy committee is composed of elected officials in the affected area and has a fundamental decision making responsibility. The technical advisory committee consists of engineers, safety consultants, State Highway representatives, university representatives, and surveyors all from the various affected communities who provide technical advice to the policy committee.

Because the Highway Department is currently negotiating a consultant contract these groups are presently not active. However, when the State Highway Department retains their consultant there will be considerable work for the various groups. In addition, there probably will be a need for a permanent committee composed of members having wide spread community interests.

Next the ad hoc committee reviewed several concepts of a thoroughfare plan particularly as it relates to downtown Kalamazoo. Various points were brought up and evaluated with the concensus being that the guidelines for downtown goals contained in the Kalamazoo 1980 Plan would be reviewed by the members for pertinence and applicability. Generally it is felt presently that this plan still represents a solid and applicable guideline for a thoroughfare study. It was further considered that the rationale for the existence of downtown as outlined in the Kalamazoo 1980 Study would form the basis of approach insofar as the objectives of a thoroughfare plan are concerned. An example is the importance of downtown properties to a good tax base. When the 1980 study was prepared it was found that 7% of the total tax base of the City of Kalamazoo was provided by the downtown area, while it occupied only 8/10 of one percent of the total ground coverage of Kalamazoo. It was further pointed out that the high density of other-than-retail-uses in downtown makes it urgent that the central business district not be considered merely a retail area. The very sizable concentration of City and County Governmental facilities placed around Bronson Park certainly give additional texture and character to downtown land use. The continued development of the medical complex

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to the east is another major factor in considering the need for a healthy, vital central city area. In addition, downtown is blessed with a singularly large concentration of facilities that serve the cultural requirements of Kalamazoo.

Thus, a brief study of current land use indicates that downtown is still a very live heart of the Kalamazoo County community. Its complexion and internal make up has changed over the years, but its role in relationship to the service it gives to the City remains relatively unchanged.

After discussing this general philosophy of approach we moved to specific consideration of elements that make up the thoroughfare plan. One of the more important of these was a discussion of Arcadia and Portage Creeks. Insofar as the thoroughfare plan is concerned it is important that any consideration of improvement to the thoroughfare system in the downtown and surrounding areas over to the universities and out to the Kalamazoo River take into careful consideration improvement of the flow characteristics of Arcadia Creek. Each year additional impervious land is added to the drainage basin in Arcadia Creek and causes a continued increase in the flow of water in this drain. Since it is a relatively clean facility, and since it does flow through a particularly significant part of downtown, it is entirely possible that the stream can be incorporated as an architectural and planning feature of the northern sector of downtown. It also, of course, will be expected to provide improved drainage for any thoroughfare system decided upon. Consideration must also be given of Portage Creek in an evaluation of the thoroughfare system since it too drains a relatively large basin and is an important geographical feature of downtown. It was decided that any recommendations for improvement of Arcadia Creek would wait on in-principle decisions for the thoroughfare plan around and in downtown.

As a final item on the committee agenda, we discussed the various kinds of transportation we should be concerned with. It was considered important with particular respect to the corridors that connect the north side neighborhoods with downtown and the universities areas with downtown. These corridors provide excellent opportunities for development of safe, convenient and pleasant transportation to and from the respective areas. They also provide desirable business and other urban land use potential along the routes.

Types of transportation to consider not only for the corridor areas, but for other elements of the thoroughfare plan include:

- Automobile
- Pedestrian
- Rail - Elevated, surface and underground
- Air
- Bus
- Truck
- Moving sidewalks
- Conveyor systems
- Any combination of the above.

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CONSULTING ENGINEER

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For instance, in our thoroughfare planning, we might want to evaluate a program to reduce the amount of truck service traffic to individual downtown stores. As a possibility we might further consider locating two or three central receiving, shipping and warehousing facilities servicing the downtown area through underground tunnels, (built of, say, seven or eight foot water pipe) in which a conveyor system would be provided to and from the various stores or grouping of stores. This technique gives the opportunity for establishing central operations such as marking, warehousing and other activities common to many types of downtown facility retail and other. Since this would materially reduce the flow of in-close traffic to various facilities it could well become an important element in our planning of required street capacity. This discussion is only to illustrate various kinds of thinking and approaches, along with the variety of considerations that must be given our thoroughfare study over the next few months.



Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/dv

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October 30, 1970

Meeting #2

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, October 28, 1970

Attending: Don Swets
Robert B. Carroll
Bruce Watts
Ralph Stephenson
Tim Kuether
Dave Hunt
Jim Wichman

Bob Carroll began the meeting by reviewing the history of the Ad Hoc Committee, bringing those new to the group, Mr. Kuether, Mr. Hunt and Mr. Wichman, into the discussion. The session today revolved around the concept of traffic movement in various sectors of the city.

Ralph Stephenson then presented some graphic studies he has made of the central city area which illustrate the transition pattern of traffic as it approaches downtown and enters the central city area ultimately coming to a rest in parking areas. It was emphasized that the scale of traffic concept as outlined in Report #1 was to be used in conjunction with the level of service, (also outlined in Report #1), so that intermingling of traffic, pedestrian and vehicular, would be accomplished on a safe and interesting basis. Thus, traffic might enter the boundary of any area at scale 3 (35 - 50 MPH) and would gradually, on a system of well designed thoroughfares, slow through scale 4 (15 - 35 MPH) ultimately entering a scale 5

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area (0 - 15 MPH). The techniques by which these various scales of traffic are arranged in a thoroughfare plan structure provided the key element of the discussion.

Some basic concepts of how a thoroughfare plan designed in this fashion might work was reviewed extensively by all members of the committee present. It was agreed that the concept of utilizing various thoroughfares for different scales of traffic, particularly as it relates to the central city, was a valid one to use in preliminary discussions. We also considered how various land use patterns generated by such a traffic design might be best accommodated within the total land use plan of the city. With these thoughts on the table, committee members agreed that their work over the next two and one half weeks will be aimed at reviewing basic ideas and preparing comments for discussion at future meetings.

At the next Ad Hoc committee meeting, Don Swets will review the Transportation Need Study that has been prepared and we will carry our discussions further insofar as the approach to be used in establishing major thoroughfare routings.

Next meeting 9:30 A.M., November 13, 1970 at Public Works Conference Room.


Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/m

Xerox copies sent to all members and City Manager.

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RALPH J. STEPHENSON
CONSULTING ENGINEER
November 17, 1970

Meeting #3

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, November 13, 1970

Attending: Don Swets
Robert Carroll
Bruce Watts
Ralph Stephenson
Tim Kuether
Jim Wichman

A major share of this meeting was devoted to a discussion of the highway needs study being conducted by the State Highway Department. It was reported that the highway department is about to enter into a contract for the needs study and that active work should begin within three weeks.

Don Swets and Jim Wichman reviewed the material they had provided the highway department insofar as the Kalamazoo long range thoroughfare plan was concerned. This material has been reviewed several times by the Kalamazoo technical staff and at this point represents a fair statement as to their general feelings about general locations and characteristics ^{of} and major thoroughfares in Kalamazoo. The study is conceptual in nature and the locations currently are merely general lines within a total system.

The purpose of the needs study is to set a base highway plan to allow federal, state and local planning over the next several years for financing, tax allocation and community needs. In reviewing the suggested thoroughfare pattern set by the Kalamazoo staff, few, if any, dissenting comments were made. However, to study the matter more fully and properly, Don Swets will distribute to each member of the committee the proposed road pattern in

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and around the central city area as defined by our area of work (see meeting Minutes #1). This schematic map will be used by members of the committee to further prepare plans of areas within the major routes.

A brief discussion was held on the possibility of using railroad right-of-ways and on the amount of traffic now using these. There is some thought that certain of the lightly used rail thoroughfares might possibly be converted to combination rail and automobile use. The rail pattern in Kalamazoo is somewhat of a disruptive force to vehicular traffic and a part of the long range study will be to better relate the two.

Bob Carroll said the Rose Street - Water Street parking deck will open November 27, 1970 with 200 spaces being available. It will remain open until after Christmas when it will close down for resumption of construction.

Our next meeting of the committee is for the morning and afternoon of Friday, December 4th, starting at 9:30 A.M. At this meeting we will decide the format of our recommendations due on January 31, 1971 and also discuss those specific plans that have been prepared by members of the committee.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/m

RALPH J. STEPHENSON

CONSULTING ENGINEER

December 7, 1970

Meeting #4

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, December 4, 1970

Attending: Don Swets
Robert Carroll
Bruce Watts (part time)
Ralph Stephenson
Tim Keuther (part time)
Jim Wichman

Bob Carroll introduced the meeting by reviewing the agenda and describing an abstract he had made from the Voorhees study showing traffic desire lines in the city of Kalamazoo. These desire lines have been transcribed onto a map of the central city area of Kalamazoo and reflect, to some extent, desired destination patterns of vehicular passenger traffic. To some extent the road pattern should reflect routings paralleling densest desire line.

After a brief discussion of this abstract, Bob suggested we review specific plans that had been prepared for discussion. Ralph Stephenson presented a sequence of planning steps he had taken to produce a preliminary study plan for the central core of the city. In the study the thoroughfare plan distributed by Don Swets from our last meeting was used as a basis and the downtown area was divided into approximately 24 major land groupings. These were lettered for ease in reference. Within these land groupings Ralph Stephenson had selected the largest, an area bounded by Eleanor on the north, Rose on the west, Lovell on the south and Pitcher on the east, to illustrate the principles of scalar traffic, penetrator low scale routes and the inter-relationship of parking and pedestrian areas. A good discussion ensued about the approach and it was generally agreed that the technique by which the study evolved was valid. Each member of the committee expressed a desire to further study the specifics

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of this particular plan and preliminary-study-only prints were made for use by the committee over the next two weeks. We shall continue to refine the inter-relations between specific land areas and the proposed thoroughfare plan so as to show in as definitive a manner as possible the alternate solutions. Next, the committee considered the format of the report scheduled for submission on January 31st. It was agreed that Bob Carroll would write most of the report with other members of the committee submitting special texts and graphics where needed. The report will be schematic in nature and as has been stated, present in-principle solutions. It appears we will be able to meet the January 31st date, although there is a possibility of delay if certain pieces of information do not fall into place readily.

The report format will take an outline form as follows:

- Introduction
- Purposes of Committee
- Actions taken
- Discussion of ultimate thoroughfare plan
- Staging steps to be taken

It was emphasized our planning should seriously consider the application of a mass transit or public transit system into and away from downtown, as well as a shuttle service internally within pedestrian areas. The desire by those on the committee to provide adequate traffic penetration is great and uniform. Every effort will be made to allow scale one traffic (0 - 15 MPH) to approach as near as possible the ultimate pedestrian destination.

Another point of importance was the desirability of a grade separation at railroads on the north and east sides. This problem is one that should come in for additional attention at subsequent meetings. We also reviewed improve-

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ments to the one way pairings presently under consideration. Good technical combination of one way pairs in and around downtown will be critical to the success of the thoroughfare program.

The next meeting of the ad hoc thoroughfare committee will be on Thursday, December 17, at 9:30 A.M. in Don Swets' office.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/m

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write
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RALPH J. STEPHENSON
CONSULTING ENGINEER

December 21, 1970

Meeting #5

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Thursday, December 17, 1970

Attending: Jim Wichman
Tim Keuther
Bob Carroll
Don Swets
Ralph J. Stephenson

Bob Carroll will check the through traffic percentage on downtown streets. He is having difficulty obtaining the source statistics but feels he can have an estimate by our next meeting or shortly thereafter.

The major pattern of our discussion today was a review of the large scale plan of the center city area. Revisions were discussed to the plan prepared by Ralph J. Stephenson and it was agreed that the modifications suggested could be made easily. Review of the internal circulation details within large blocks will continue as an individual function of each committee member. We had considerable discussion as to how to handle scale 1 (0 - 15 MPH) on reduced capacity thoroughfares. The problem as stated was that if there was a destination for traffic, that people trying to arrive at the destination would use to capacity or beyond capacity scale 1 or 2 thoroughfares if traditionally they had used those thoroughfares previously. Thus, the problem becomes one of controlling destination points at the end of or along scale 1 traffic routes. This matter will be given serious thought by the committee between now and the next meeting. It is a valid problem point.

The next major effort was to broadly define the major thoroughfares and the secondary or penetrator thoroughfares. For (simplicity) sake, we worked with

simplicity

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these two broad categories and Jim Wichman, with the assistance of the entire committee, sketched the general road pattern of the two types of roadways we should ultimately work for in our long range planning. There was general agreement that the pattern as sketched by Jim was suitable and that it now offers a substantial base for additional study. We also are at a point where Bob Carroll will begin preparation of our written report for the January 31st target date. So far as graphics are concerned, Mr. Wichman will have a composite plan prepared from our overlays of the primary and secondary routes along with proposed major changes such as the Oakland Drive extension, the I94, US131 penetrator and the one way pairing of Edwards and Pitcher Streets. These will be distributed to each member of the committee. Further discussion of the committee revolved around the larger blocks into which the central city area is being divided by the proposed thoroughfare pattern. All members of the committee felt it was important to stress that by preserving the interior of the blocks for natural features and historical significant landmarks, a desirable and acceptable transition could be made from the present thoroughfare pattern to the future thoroughfare pattern. With the plan now under consideration, it is not a prerequisite that wholesale or even partial removal of traditional land uses be made to accomplish the ultimate plan. There is general agreement on the ad hoc thoroughfare committee that this plan represents an acceptable base point. Each member will now continue his study work as Bob Carroll prepares the report and additions to the report or revisions to the scheme will be considered at each succeeding meeting.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/m

RALPH J. STEPHENSON

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January 15, 1971

Meeting #6

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, January 8, 1971

Attending: Jim Wichman
Tim Keuther
Bob Carroll
Don Swets
Ralph J. Stephenson

We discussed the procedural elements of our study and it was affirmed that Bob Carroll will continue writing the major text for the report due on January 31st. Miscellaneous sections of the report to be written by others will be submitted to Bob for incorporation into his writing. Jim Wichman will handle the basic graphics including maps and other such large scale drawings and charts. Ralph Stephenson will prepare, to the general extent possible at this time, fundamental concepts of the large block groupings. We have not yet decided on a name for these larger blocks and the committee felt it wise to go slow in the selection of a name.

Presently it appears we can have at least a portion of the in-principal report completed since our assigned work is fundamentally done at this point. From here it is a matter of administration and procedure to get the report prepared.

A major section of this meeting was devoted to outlining the steps (at complete random) necessary to achieve some of the goals thought important in the preliminary planning work. These various step elements were noted by all attending and Bob Carroll will edit and group them

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in logical sequences to be used as a framework for the in-principal thoroughfare report.

Preliminary staging indicates six major steps to be taken, in somewhat the following sequence:

- 1) Provision of alternate east - west routes to present routes at north side
- 2) Alterations at the general route of the Edwards/Pitcher pair
- 3) Increase effectiveness of east - west routes on the south side
- 4) Improvement of the North Street/Ransom Street pair
- 5) Provision of alternate routes to those presently existing connecting Oakland and Douglas
- 6) Consideration and provision of additional limited access routes for US 131 traffic

It should be remembered that the above list is a very rough description and tentative sequence. The interrelationship between each of these six major improvement categories may demand that two or more of them proceed concurrently. The order of the actions also may be revised as further studies are made.

The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee is on Friday, January 22, 1971
9:30 A.M.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS

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RALPH J. STEPHENSON

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February 12, 1971

Ad Hoc Committee - January 22, 1971

Present: Bob Carroll
Jim Wichman
Tim Kueher
Ralph J. Stephenson

Qualifying Statement for Justification of
Approach To In-Principal Study for Major
Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

This statement should be placed near the beginning of the report, preferably in the introduction. The statement briefly outlines the qualifications of the committee, or implies them, as being an ever and above group. It should definitively relate the level of study detail we are going into now against what should be gone into later.

The statement might take the following form:

"This in-principal thoroughfare study has been prepared by an ad hoc committee of six men who occupy technical and managerial positions, with responsibility for public health, welfare and safety as an inherent part of their duties. The report is designed to present qualitative recommendations based upon the committee's individual review of much quantitative documentation prepared on this matter over the past several years. (Quantification

Ad Hoc Committee
January 22, 1971

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of the master thoroughfare plan is a requirement by the Bureau of Public Roads and ultimately will be incorporated into the comprehensive transportation study by the State Highway Department.)

The work of the ad hoc thoroughfare committee has resulted in a technically sound set of recommendations, subject to a detailed quantification analysis and consequent variation. Further quantification should basically be used to generate the design details of a creative, buildable thoroughfare plan. Therefore, the qualitative, in-principal thoroughfare plan presented in the report is designed to be used as a part of the State Highway Department's model testing to be conducted this coming summer. As such, it could be the base point for development of a plan that is finally proved sound through quantitative analysis."

RALPH J. STEPHENSON
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February 2, 1971

Meeting #7

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, January 22, 1971

Attending: Jim Wichman
Tim Kuether
Bob Carroll
Ralph J. Stephenson

This meeting was primarily devoted to tying together loose ends prior to completing preparation of the in-principal thoroughfare plan. Assignments are now as follows:

- Bob Carroll will continue writing the text generated from material provided him from other members of the committee.
- Jim Wichman will prepare the majority of the graphics that display the recommendations of the ad hoc committee.
- Ralph Stephenson will prepare a plan concept of the major land parcel system, generated as a result of the suggested thoroughfare pattern.

It was decided that the graphic plan concept would be given as an example and would not use specifics of Kalamazoo to avoid out-of-context and perhaps premature discussion about interior block arrangement, rather than allowing discussions to center on the in-principal thoroughfare study.

Ralph Stephenson dictated a preliminary rough draft describing the major land parcels developed in the thoroughfare system and requested a critique of this discussion by the committee. It was decided that the statements made and the description of the planning technique were valid and a rough draft will be made and distributed to members of the committee for review.

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Next a discussion was held regarding the submission date of the report. Our original target was January 31, 1971. It is difficult to meet this date due to staff pressure at city hall on key members of the committee to prepare and submit annual reports along with the normal day to day work load. Some of these committee members have met with the city manager and he is aware of the schedule problems. The committee, however, has decided to complete their work just as quickly as possible on this report so full discussions can be initiated at an early date.

Subsequent meetings of our committee should establish recommendations in respect to the future of the committee, as well as recommendations as to what implementation techniques should be followed so far as the thoroughfare plan is concerned. Since the plan is closely related to the county, state and federal governments in respect to their participation, requirements and on-going work in respect to transportation, the activities of the committee become of major importance. So far as the procedure on the initial in-principal report, we decided on the following steps:

- 1) Bob Carroll will prepare a rough draft of the report and as major sections are complete, he will forward these to each member of the committee.
- 2) The committee members will review, critique and correct or revise the report as they see fit, and return each section to Bob with their comments.
- 3) Jim Wichman, in conjunction with Bob, will prepare the maps and charts to accompany the report. These will be in respect to the technical requirements of the plan and deal with formal suggestions. Copies of this material will also be made available to the committee members as it is prepared.

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- 4) Ralph Stephenson will complete his conceptual study of a major land parcel in accordance with the discussion above and prepare the text to describe these parcels.

Near the close of the committee meeting, a sizable discussion was held regarding the quantification technique and the establishment of adequate basis upon which the report would be accepted as a work of competent, technical people but not bear the premature brunt of non-quantification criticism. It was decided to prepare a paragraph for the introduction of the report that explained that the material was based upon a qualitative study of quantified historical data and would not be merged into a numerical model being prepared by the state highway department. This sample paragraph should be carefully reviewed by the committee so that the full intent of the study is understood. There is to be no further meeting except as called by Bob Carroll until the major share of our individual work assignments have been completed.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/m

RALPH J. STEPHENSON
CONSULTING ENGINEER

March 9, 1971

Meeting #8

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, February 19, 1971

Attending: Jim Wichman
Bob Carroll
Ralph J. Stephenson

At this meeting we concentrated on the actual details of report format and other graphic elements of the in-principle thoroughfare study. The committee reviewed a conceptual presentation by Ralph Stephenson of the major land parcel design and the method of reproducing this material was decided upon.

The meeting was primarily procedural in nature and therefore, a detailed report is not felt essential. A heavy staff load during the past two months has delayed final preparation of the thoroughfare report. However, all participants are now devoting time to this project and the report should be ready for publication sometime within the next few weeks. Bob Carroll will continue to coordinate efforts.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/m

Handwritten note: Mailed to Bob Carroll

RALPH J. STEPHENSON
CONSULTING ENGINEER

May 7, 1971

Meeting #9

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, May 4, 1971

Attending: Mrs. Bertha Bushell
Mr. Fran Hamilton
Dr. Ray Hightower
Mr. Robert Goldacher
Mr. James Caplinger
Mr. Bruce Watts
Mr. Bruce Brown
Mr. Robert Carroll
Mr. Donald Swets
Mr. Timothy Kuether
Mr. James Wichman
Mr. Ralph J. Stephenson

This meeting was called by Mr. Caplinger to review the report of the ad hoc thoroughfare committee. The report was submitted to Mr. Caplinger on April 5, 1971 by Mr. Carroll and had been disseminated to the city commissioners for their study and review.

Mr. Ralph Stephenson made a brief non technical presentation of the key points involved in the study and Mr. Caplinger then opened the meeting to general discussion. It appears that the report was well understood and that its content has met with favor. The ad hoc committee feels this report represents fairly a consensus of the committee members' opinions and desires. They feel further that it is a good blending of sound, technical planning merged with adequate flexibility and imagination to give creative direction to the future of Kalamazoo's transportation planning.

RALPH J. STEPHENSON

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Of major importance is the method of proceeding. Mr. Caplinger and those commissioners present will work on the sequence of presentation so that it will be possible for staff members and myself to present the findings of this report to the State Highway Department as quickly as possible. This will be essential since the highway department is about to embark upon their model study of the Kalamazoo region. The thoroughfare plan is important to their work.

Mr. Caplinger made no commitment as to the future of the ad hoc committee and we shall await his decision as to desires and matters of its continuing work. There has been some general agreement on the committee that the work of this group has been productive to such degree that the technique and the personnel could well be used on continuing or future studies relating to this thoroughfare problem and the urban planning program.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS

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RALPH J. STEPHENSON, P.E.
CONSULTING ENGINEER

December 2, 1971

Meeting #10

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, November 12, 1971

- Attending: Mr. Bruce Brown
- Mr. Robert Carroll
- Mr. Ralph J. Stephenson
- Mr. Don Swets
- Mr. Bruce Watts
- Mr. James Wichman

The purpose of this meeting was to resume ad hoc committee work on the thoroughfare plan and to again establish contact with the State Highway Department regarding the Kalamazoo Transportation Study.

Bob Carroll first discussed the possibility of railroad track consolidation and trading of rights-of-way on the west side of the Kalamazoo River for help in consolidating rail traffic on the east. The committee reviewed in detail present track rights-of-way on the west side of the Kalamazoo River and decided that the matter was worthy of further study. Bruce Brown will analyze possible right-of-way locations, sizes and suitability. He, also, concurrently with this, will locate the early State Highway Department route map for 131 to the south. Bob Carroll said he would work with Bruce on the right-of-way study relative to the 131 route. Generally, the committee felt that a decision so far as the use of the track right-of-way is concerned can be made without the High-

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way Department model.

Another railroad abandonment discussed is the South Haven branch which would give a connection between Ransom and North. Don Swets felt this would also provide an excellent opportunity to tie into Ravine Road. Bob Carroll feels consideration of this right-of-way would be valuable so far as general traffic easing is concerned. The matter of utilizing track right-of-way for additions to the street system should be considered further in future meetings of the ad hoc committee.

Much of our discussion to this point dealt with interfacing local considerations with the State Highway Department Transportation Study. Don Swets and Jim Wichman phoned during the meeting to Fred Sanborn of the Michigan Department of State Highways and Mr. Sanborn reported the planning commission through Dave Hunt has requested status reports. Mr. Sanborn said that he would send a copy of the report he had sent to Mr. Hunt to bring our files up to date. Present activity at the Highway Department involves fitting land use and population data into the transportation system. The study stage now in work is known as Task 210 and the latest work report is called Technical Report #5.

It appears that the computer model will be ready for use in mid-January 1972. Once land and population data is deemed adequate, future traffic projections will be applied to the existing street

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system, with the goal of identifying deficiencies. The next step will be to test suggested improvements that might eliminate deficiencies. In the interim, local technical staff people should be assembling various solutions in graphic form. These can be then applied to future road patterns to see how they fit the total system. This process will be fully underway next spring, according to Mr. Sanborn.

Another important element mentioned in the phone call was the need for citizen involvement. Presumably this is an essential ingredient of the highway program and attention should be given now to make certain that proper groups are involved. Mr. Sanborn suggested the ad hoc committee continue working on input, similar to that we have provided them in the thoroughfare plan. The committee felt that perhaps we should now begin to systematize our submissions so easy reference can be made to those elements plugged into the base plan. Jim Wichman will start a special drawing file on all schemes and submissions that deal with our thoroughfare work. Bob Carroll and Jim Wichman will give this their attention.

Another matter discussed was the parking situation in the south end of the central business district. There is a strong desire by several of the merchants at the south end to obtain more parking now that the Michigan Bell building is taking over parking areas formerly available. The committee plans to address them-

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selves to this problem in future meetings and suggested some conceptual studies as to how parking might be planned for this area that would fit into the present pattern of land use and streets in accordance with our schematic thoroughfare plan.

Ralph Stephenson will do some conceptual studies in this matter.

The next ad hoc committee meeting is set for Friday, January 7, 1972 at 9:30 A.M. in Don Swets' Conference Room.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS
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January 14, 1972

Meeting #11

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, January 7, 1972

Attending: Mr. Robert Carroll

- Mr. Tim Kerthner
- Mr. Bruce Matka
- Mr. James Wiseman
- Mr. Don Swets
- Mr. Ralph J. Stephenson

Bob Carroll and Jim Wiseman presented a schematic study of the right-of-way alternatives for U.S. 131 on the north side of Kalamazoo. These consisted of three submaps: Alternate A, in which the proposed major thoroughfare was placed on an existing railroad right-of-way, Alternate B in which the major thoroughfare was placed on a route to the east of the Kalamazoo River swing- ing west across the river to meet the northerly extension of U.S. 131, and Alternate BA which used both routes, the railroad right-of-way as a limited easuity major thoroughfare and the right-of-way east of the river as a major high easuity thoroughfare. It was decided to work with these three submaps on a preliminary basis over the next month and to extend a projected right-of-way to the south of the central business district as was done for the northerly half. Mr. Carroll and Mr. Wiseman will work on this prior to our next committee meeting.

Preliminary advantages and disadvantages were discussed for each of the schemes. These are given briefly below:

Alternate A - Use present railroad right-of-way for major thoroughfare.

Advantages:

- Fewer and less expensive highway structures required
- Location would clearly define boundary between industrial and residential areas
- Would serve industry very well
- Would probably relieve Westridge and Park to a greater degree than alternate B due to its closer location.

Disadvantages:

- Requires considerable residential relocation and land acquisition along Edwards Street

Disadvantages con't.:

- Forces negotiation with many owners for additional land
- Entrance location to CBD tightens up downtown circulation pattern
- Only partially relieves traffic congestion on Riverview Road near Gull Road
- Must negotiate with railroad for additional right-of-way to north of city limits

Alternate B - Place major road right-of-way just to east of Kalamazoo River

Advantages:

- Will, to a high degree, relieve and perhaps solve congestion on Riverview Drive at Gull Road
- Would relieve Westnedge and Park traffic although perhaps not so greatly as Alternate A
- Would provide needed major thoroughfare route on east side of Kalamazoo River
- Most right-of-way is presently vacant and could be converted so the beauty and natural characteristics of the land would be enhanced

Disadvantages:

- Places restraint on expansion of disposal plant (here Don Swets mentioned that access from one side of the thoroughfare to the other could be provided by means of tunnels or other structures)

Alternate BA - Combination of B and A and using B for the major thoroughfare route and A as a secondary thoroughfare

Advantages:

- Provides a gradually increasing scale of traffic artery as we move away from the industrial area. This would give good diffusion of traffic. Local traffic to and from the north side is served by the A route while through traffic is served by the B route. Combining the two schemes makes it possible to utilize present railroad right-of-way without additional major land acquisition. Thus, costs are kept down.

(Note to Bob Carroll: Please feel free to add advantages and disadvantages as you remember them to the above list.)

It was the consensus of the committee that we should recommend acquisition of the railroad right-of-way as a route for a future city street since it is quite apparent that the staff members feel an additional through route to the north whether it is a major or minor artery is necessary. Although the committee thought it was still too early to be totally specific there is a general feeling that the railroad right-of-way represents a real step forward in improving the city thoroughfare pattern for Kalamazoo. Once the southerly route is plotted on the large photos Bob Carroll and Jim Wiseman will have this route reduced to a smaller map, possibly 1" equals 400 feet or smaller, for ease in reference.

The next major discussion was on parking at the southeast section of downtown, primarily between South and Walnut and between Burdick and Henrietta. Ralph Stephenson presented schematic development plans that were reviewed and discussed. It was decided we should continue studying a parking structure plan that would relate the present Gilmore deck to either surface or structure parking directly to the south on down to the present city owned property presently under study for additional parking. The discussion was helpful and constructive since it generated a consensus feeling that:

1. Additional parking is definitely needed in the south - particularly in the southeast corner of downtown.
2. That efforts to develop contiguous and related parking were most meaningful.
3. That the nearer parking could be brought to retail and business on Burdick the better a valid plan of traffic circulation would evolve.
4. That a prime responsibility is improving the circulation pattern of external streets and insuring that internal circulation in the decks or lots allow optimum access and egress.
5. That the major user of parking structures abutting dense downtown areas would be shopping traffic and short term parkers.
6. That a quantity demand analysis must be made or restricted to provide a rationale for recommendations on new structures.
7. That plans for parking structures should utilize regular rather than odd property line setbacks.
5' 6" 9' 12'.
8. That an interconnection of all three blocks extending from the Gilmore deck south to Walnut would be desirable. We could still allow street level traffic to move through this structure, building over right-of-ways to provide additional upper level parking.

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The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for either Friday, February 4, 1972, or Friday February 18, 1972, depending on availability of staff members. It is extremely important that all members of the ad hoc committee attend as many sessions as possible. Bob Carroll will check and let members of the committee know what date in February our next conference will be held.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/dv

February 25, 1972

Meeting #12

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, February 18, 1972

Attending: Mr. Robert Carroll
Mr. Tim Kuether
Mr. Bruce Watts (part time)
Mr. James Wichman
Mr. Don Swets
Mr. Ralph J. Stephenson
Mr. Richard Borsos, Pennsylvania Central Railroad

Mr. Borsos made a complete presentation of the various alternatives for track consolidation of Penn Central holdings in the city of Kalamazoo. This information is presently rather restricted since the studies are in the early stages. There is adequate information available to know that track consolidation would be of some advantage both to the city and to the railroads. The major problem in consolidating trackage is that costly improvements are necessary to make the new track system operable. For instance, Mr. Borsos pointed out that a new interlocker would be required to control intersecting lines and prevent conflicts. Such an interlocker could run as high as \$700,000 without track improvements, structural improvements, real estate acquisition or relocation costs. Thus, we are talking sizable amounts of money for bringing about such consolidation. The railroads presently have no money for this type expenditure. Financing would have to come about at present by income derived from other sources, presumably from monies derived from construction of improvements, say streets and roads that might be partially subsidized by the state and federal government.

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Our discussion centered around the less used of the two northerly track routes - the Penn Central tracks to the west. If it was decided to widen and use this track area as a 150' street right-of-way, it would be necessary to move or acquire 64 homes and three minor buildings. Our discussions centered on the possibility of utilizing the right-of-way for different kinds of road patterns. Generally, it was agreed that the type of road we are speaking of in view of the surrounding area and the use that would be made could well be a control access route rather than limited access. Controlled access means that entrance onto the street is controlled by various signals and devices. Our discussion concluded this would be a more desirable condition and allow better urban use of the right-of-way.

The Penn Central, Mr. Borsos points out, is interested in the consolidation since it would clear 16 miles of track for other use of the land on which they are located and eliminate 89 single crossings throughout the city by consolidating traffic patterns. However, Mr. Borsos was quick to point out that the advantages to the railroad in consolidating are not of such critical nature that they could not continue operating as they are at present almost indefinitely. He agreed, however, it was not in the best interests of the railroads or the city to necessarily continue on this pattern of operation. Thus, it was determined there is strong interest and commitment, particularly on the part of the operational group at the railroad to proceed with consolidation if an adequate plan of work can be prepared.

As a result of our detailed discussion, Jim Wichman and Bob Carroll felt that we must get more explicit insofar as location, structures, actual state and federal assistance available, costs, financing and other matters of influence

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on track consolidation before we can seriously consider our work as being meaningful. We reviewed the assignment of the ad hoc committee, deciding that it dealt specifically with the railroad study on hand. Therefore, Jim Wichman and Bob Carroll will, before our next meeting, make further studies on the items above.

Difficulty regarding the southerly extension of any limited or controlled access right-of-way has appeared and this southerly route will also be a matter of review over the next month. The question was asked by Ralph Stephenson about where the State Highway Department stood on its model building of the Kalamazoo transportation plan. There now is a feeling that the program has been set back by some unexpected events at the State Highway Department. Bob Carroll and the Planning Department through Tim Kuester will check into this to find out specifically what we can expect from the Highway Department in the near future. The material they are assembling, as we have pointed out repeatedly in the past, is critical to our work. The input we provide to their model building is also critical to their work. Therefore, a schedule of their time plan must be obtained so we can proceed with our studies effectively. As of now, we have provided the State Highway Department, according to our best information, with all the data they require as of this time. A report on this will be on the agenda for our next meeting.

Parking in the southerly section of downtown was not discussed at this meeting because time did not permit the necessary graphic studies to be made. It should be considered an item on the agenda for the next meeting.

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Our next meeting is to be held Friday, March 24, 1972 at the Department of Public Works conference room. The starting time is 9:30 A.M. and it is intended that because of the large amount of material that should be considered at this meeting, we will readjourn after lunch to complete our work.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS/m

April 5, 1972

Meeting #13

Ad Hoc Committee on Thoroughfare Planning - Kalamazoo County

Date of Meeting: Friday, March 24, 1972

Attending: Mr. Robert Carroll
Mr. Tim Kueher
Mr. James Wichman
Mr. Don Swets
Mr. Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

This meeting was for the general purpose of recapping committee activities to date and beginning to round into form the various plans being considered for thoroughfare study by the State Highway Department. Don Swets distributed copies of Mr. Dick Borsos' report on our last meeting regarding railroad consolidation. There is a possibility, Mr. Borsos points out, of obtaining federal funds for study of this railroad consolidation and the ad hoc committee staff members will look into this matter to determine if such funds are available for Kalamazoo.

Ralph Stephenson reviewed his position on the committee and pointed out that as of this meeting his active role on the committee would come to a close but that whenever possible, he would attend future meetings if an open invitation was available. It was strongly recommended by Mr. Stephenson that this ad hoc committee effort be continued since it has produced strong positive direction for major planning in the entire community of Kalamazoo.

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Tim Kuether discussed the highway department transportation study and said the State Highway Department is now in a position to give us a needs report in about one month. A question arose as to what to do with this data and the committee unanimously felt it should be funneled to the ad hoc group for evaluation and action. The committee staff members plan to meet with Mr. Caplinger on Tuesday, March 28th, at which time a resolution of this and other matters were to be discussed. The emphasis here is that the ad hoc committee should act, not merely react.

So far as input to the State Highway Department, we reviewed several schemes that are available to give the highway department for simulation purposes. Overall, these included the following:

- Scheme A - Present projected major thoroughfare plan for the central city dated March 1971
- Scheme B - Highway needs study dated 1970
- Scheme C - A plan prepared by the planning department for discussion on the Burdick block development and presented to the ad hoc committee by Tim Kuether
- Scheme D - That generated by the railroad relocation study
- Scheme E - Planning Commission Thoroughfare Study dated 1950
- Scheme F - The 1980 Gruen plan
- Scheme G - Lloyd Reid's feasibility study plan dated 1963 and prepared in conjunction with Bob Carroll and the Traffic Engineering Department

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Jim Wichman and Bob Carroll will take on the responsibility of identifying these plans for simulation.

Another item now is appropriate for discussion - the contribution that other county agencies can make to the thoroughfare study. Don Swets felt that we should certainly discuss our planning efforts with Mr. Herb Larkin, County Road Commission; Mr. Jim Smith, city of Portage; and Mr. Glen Flamen, city of Parchment. Contacts with these gentlemen will be made by Bob Carroll, Jim Wichman and Don Swets.

Ralph J. Stephenson, P.E.

RJS
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