I. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by ITE Committee Chair Brent Ogden.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

There were 16 ITE members and guests present:

Brent Ogden Chair
Anya Carroll Friend (Chair of AHB-60)
Tom Lancaster Member
Phil Poichuk Member
Andy Davis Member
Bill Browder Friend
Suzanne Horton Friend
Gene Russell Member
Ray Lewis Member
Lisa Fontana-Tierney ITE Staff
Gene Wilson Friend
Paul Eng-Wong Friend
Steve Laffey Friend
Gary Carr Friend
John Sharkey Friend
Rick Campbell Friend
III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lisa Tierney announced that new Traffic Engineering and Transportation Planning hand-books would be published by ITE in 2008. There will a geometric design guide for urban roads published in 2008, and a geometric design guide for rural roads in 2009. These will complement the geometric design guide for freeways which was published in 2007. A traffic signal maintenance handbook and the 8th edition of the TRIP GENERATION handbook will be published in 2008. ITE expects to update the traffic control devices handbook in 2009. ITE will also undertake a traffic signal change interval recommended practice.

IV. ITE COMMITTEE ITEMS

a. Conference Sessions Update

Brent Ogden stated reported that a railroad crossing session was proposed for the ITE International meeting in Anaheim in August 2008. Notification of acceptance of the proposal will not be made until the end of January 2008. The meeting program, including the railroad crossing session if the proposal is accepted, will be on the ITE web site at the end of January, and in the ITE Journal in March. There will be a Committee meeting in Anaheim, but not at the ITE Technical Meeting in Miami.

b. US DOT Grade Crossing Handbook Webinar

The first webinar based on the new Grade Crossing Handbook was held on December 12, 2007, with Brent as the instructor. There were 38 sites that were signed up, including two in Canada. Lisa said that, given the technical nature of the webinar, the turnout was good. There was discussion regarding repeating the webinar, possible with a supplemental webinar with in-depth discussions of some of the topics.

Possible future webinar topics could include: (1) railroad crossing quiet zones; (2) traffic signal preemption. Potential instructors include Sean Skehan, Rick Campbell, and Peter Koonce. Bill Browder reported that the FHWA is considering the development of a webinar on traffic signal preemption for its internal use. Lisa will send a form to Brent for a new webinar proposal.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Web Page

Brent proposed that the Committee establish a page on the ITE website that would be dedicated to railroad crossing information. The site could include reports and presentations such as the grade crossing handbook, grade crossing handbook supplements, preemption timing spreadsheets, and other publications along with errata for those publications. It could also include links to related material, such as the MUTCD, the TWG report, railroad crossing conference schedules, and others. Tom Lancaster suggested that an abstract accompany each link to assist people who are looking for specific items.

It was noted that ITE prefers proposals which address keeping the site current and monitoring items posted. In response to a request for volunteers to serve as moderators, a committee including Joaquin Siques, John Sharkey, Ray Lewis, and Tom Lancaster was appointed. The duties of the committee will be to examine the web page every month or two to be verify that it is current, and to review all submissions to the web page. The moderators can suggest revisions to the authors of submittals if appropriate. The actual posting of material will be handled by ITE.
Lisa can make a key-word search to pull up and post ITE Journal articles relating to railroad crossings. Brent will complete an ITE form for a web page application.

b. Termination of Separate Committees

ITE has requested the termination of separate committees (TENC 102-05 Active Devices and TENC 102-06 Passive Devices.) It was noted that there is technically a committee which Bill Alroth had established prior to his passing away which has never met (“Operations”). The chairs of the Active and Passive committees have been contacted and concur with the consolidation of committees.

c. Other Activities

Bill Browder reported that in general, railroad business in the US was down last year. However, crossing safety has improved, including trespassing accidents. The AAR has contracted with the FRA to conduct research on suicide prevention. APTA has developed standards and practices for light rail crossings which is available on its web site.

Andy Davis reported that Operation Lifesaver is beginning a program to allow non-railroad volunteers to learn more about the railroad industry.

Lisa Tierney reported that a new traffic signal warrant is being proposed for the MUTCD which provides for the installation of traffic signals at intersections adjacent to railroad crossings under certain conditions. Also, there is an upcoming FHWA webinar in February which will discuss changes proposed for the MUTCD.

John Sharkey reported that he will be prepared to present a webinar on four-quadrant gates in a year or so. It would be a joint project of AREMA and Safetran.

Gene Russell reported that the National Roundabout Conference will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, from May 18 to May 21, 2008.

Rick Campbell reported that the NPA (Notice of Proposed Amendments) for the MUTCD has been published by the FHWA. Numerous substantive changes have been proposed, and a new MUTCD is expected to be published in 2009. The comment period for the NPA closes on July 31, 2008. Some of the proposed changes include the mandatory use of Stop and Yield signs at all passive railroad crossings (the Yield sign is the default control) and requirements for back-up power at traffic signals preempted by trains. There are also new sections for pathway crossings of railroad and LRT tracks. Traffic control devices for quiet zones that had previously been proposed for inclusion in the new MUTCD were deleted, but comments will be submitted to FHWA requesting a restoration of that material.

VI. NEXT MEETING

The next ITE committee meeting will be at the ITE International meeting in Anaheim, CA, on August 17 to 20, 2008.

VII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:09 PM.