ITE GRADE CROSSING COMMITTEE 102-02
Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2013

Meeting during 2013 TRB Annual Meeting

I. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 AM by ITE Committee Chair Brent Ogden.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was held at ITE Headquarters on I “Eye” Street in Washington DC. Most of the participants used the conference line. There were 16 participants on the call:

Conference Call Participants
Brent Ogden
Natalia Vlasov (ITE staff)
Lisa Fontana Tierney (ITE staff)
Tom Lancaster (Secretary)
Bob Seyfried
Phil Poichuk
Andy Davis
Dee Chappell
John Van Hoff
Brian Gilleran
Steve Venglar
Ray Lewis
Gene Russell
Joe Palsa
Kurt Anderson

It was noted that the designated time slot was too early for persons to participate from the western US, in the future, meetings will be scheduled during normal business hours across the country to the extent practicable (e.g., between 8 am – 2 pm Pacific / 11 am – 5 pm Eastern).

Lisa Fontana Tierney discussed some of the difficulties involved in setting a meeting time at ITE Headquarters for our committee. She said Monday of TRB week is typically not available, but Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday usually are.

III. ITE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lisa Fontana-Tierney provided the ITE Report:

- Implementation of SHRP is now well underway. The program extends from 2005 to 2015, and focuses on safety, capacity, reliability, and renewal. It also includes freight modeling. Additional information is available on the SHRP website:

After 2015 when funding ends, SHRP will probably migrate to FHWA.

- ITE is in the process of updating a strategic plan for the organization.

- The Traffic Engineering Council is working on a study to determine the optimum width for traffic lanes.

- Six new roundtable sessions have been added to the Technical Conference program at San Diego in March due to their popularity with members. There will be three at a time (with possibly also a regular presentation session). Each roundtable will include a facilitator and a note taker, and will be open to all attendees.

- Legislative update: Proposed restrictions on travel for federal employees were not passed by Congress, but Congress did pass a program for reimbursement of up to $240 per month for parking and commuting for federal employees.

- ITE and FHWA have been working with the Access Board on issues involving pedestrians in roundabouts.

- Phil Poichuk stated that meeting costs are important in obtaining government approval to attend ITE conferences. He suggested that committee members should get a discount on meeting fees.

- Proposed Recommended Practice on the accommodation of pedestrians and bicycles at interchanges has been completed and will soon enter the review and comment period. Brent suggested that the proposed version should be in electronic format rather than a hard copy. Lisa said that most of them are, and this one probably will be.

- An informational report is being prepared on separated bikeways, which has proven to be somewhat controversial.

- A Recommended Practice on clearance intervals is being prepared. It was prepared once before, but it did not survive the review and comment process.

- A school planning and design information report is underway.

- A speed management report was published last year, and is on the FHWA and ITE web sites.

- A Recommended Practice on urban roadway systems has been through the approval process and will be published soon.

- A report on sustainability is being prepared.

- The 2009 Traffic Engineering Handbook will be updated again. ITE will hire one person as a project manager. After completion of the draft there will be a review and comment period.
• An ITS primer is being prepared under contract with the US DOT. It will be a series of 14 modules for use in classrooms and by professionals. It is intended to provide an interactive experience. The draft is due in February and there have been many reviewers. There has been a lot of interest in this project.

IV. ITE COMMITTEE ITEMS

1. ITE Grade Crossing Web Page

The grade crossing web site is now available from several locations within the ITE web site: The website can be accessed from the ITE website through Technical Information/Transportation Safety or Technical Information/MUTCD.

Some presentations from 2011 and 2012 are now on the web site. Brent will submit some additional presentations for inclusion in the site. He is not sure if videos embedded in the presentations can be included.

It was stated that it will be important to maintain the site and keep it current.

Brent suggested that a link to the Recommended Practice for the Preemption of Traffic Signals Near Railroad Crossings be included in the site. There is apparently an existing link to purchasing the document. Lisa said she will check to see if it is possible to offer the RP as a downloadable PDF document.


The new Traffic Control Devices Handbook has been completed and will be published in February. Bob Seyfried stated that it will include new chapters on changeable message signs and traffic control devices on private property. The price is not yet available.

3. MUTCD Items

Brent reported on the NCUTCD meeting that was held the previous week in Crystal City, Arlington.

The FHWA has requested comments on a proposal to split the MUTCD into two sections. Some people believe that the MUTCD is getting to be too big, and updating the document is too cumbersome because every change must go through the formal rule-making process. Alternative A is to keep all the Standards in one document, and move everything else into a companion document. Alternative B is to keep the Standards and the important Guidance and Option items in one document, and move everything else into a second document. In both cases, the second document would not be subject to rulemaking.

Gene Hawkins prepared a response to the proposal for the NCUTCD stating that the proposals are premature at this time because the strategic plan process for the MUTCD is not yet
completed. The response also raised the question as to who would maintain the companion document, and whether it would be recognized by FHWA.

Lisa stated that the FHWA proposal has been posted on the ITE web site, and encouraged ITE members to comment on it. She said that March 12 is the deadline for comments.

Tom Lancaster stated that two sections of the MUTCD relating to active control devices at LRT grade crossings have been simplified and combined into one section, and the proposal has been approved by the NCUTCD and sent to the FHWA for approval.

Brent stated that the joint work project by the Railroad and Signals committees on traffic signal preemption continues on development of a proposal for substantial additions to the MUTCD section on preemption at railroad crossings.

Work also continues on revisions to the MUTCD for traffic control at pedestrian crossings.

4. Update of Recommended Practice for the Preemption of Traffic Signals Near Grade Crossings

Tom Lancaster reported that last section of updated material is expected to be received in February. When this material is received, the full draft will be sent out to all task force members for review and comment. When there is a consensus on the draft, the formal ITE approval process for the Recommended Practice will begin.

Lisa stated that the approval process for an RP is as follows:
   a. Committee reaches consensus on draft revision to RP.
   b. Committee has formal vote on draft.
   c. ITE submits draft to Review Panel
   d. Review Panel reviews and votes on draft.
   e. If approved by Review Panel, ITE publishes proposed revised RP and solicits comments.
   f. Committee revises RP based on comments.
   g. Committee votes on revised RP.
   h. If approved by Committee, Review Panel again votes on RP.
   i. ITE reviews approved RP draft, publishes proposed RP for review and comment.
   j. ITE Board of Direction votes on adoption.

Brent suggested that having the proposed RP available for review and use by practitioners during the review process could help in the discovery of any items or procedures in the RP that might not be accurate or practical.

5. Conference Sessions Update

Brent stated that the proposed training session on signal preemption had been planned for the March 2013 meeting in San Diego, and the session on traffic control for non-motorized users at grade crossings was planned for the August 2012 annual meeting in Boston. ITE has now...
tentatively scheduled the training session for August, and there is no railroad session scheduled for San Diego.

Rick Campbell has agreed to lead the training session, but he has requested that it be described as an overview of issues rather than training so that people who attend the session do not expect that they will be proficient in preemption. Phil Poichuk stated that describing a program session as “training” assists in obtaining approval for attendance.

It was stated that having a preemption session in August was a good idea because it could help attendance, and it will be important to get this information out to ITE members. Brent said he would work on promotion of the session. Brent also suggested that having a longer session on the Sunday prior to the meeting, and charging a fee, would also be an option. Brian Gilleran agreed that charging a fee would be acceptable. He also said that the sooner the meeting program is set, the easier it is for Federal employees to get approval to attend.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business before the committee.

VI. UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. March 5, 2013, 10:30 AM – 12 PM, ITE 2013 Technical Conference and Exhibit, San Diego.


3. January 13, 2014, 11 AM – 12:30 PM, Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting, Washington DC. (This date is subject to change due to limitations on the use of the conference room at the ITE Headquarters).

VII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 AM.