ITE GRADE CROSSING COMMITTEE 102-02
Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2010

2010 ITE Annual Meeting
Vancouver Convention Center – West 105/106
Vancouver, BC

I. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 10:43 AM by ITE Committee Chair Brent Ogden. The meeting minutes from the last meeting at TRB were approved.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

There were 9 participants present plus two who participated by telephone:

Brent Ogden
Linda Mosch
Tom Lancaster
Phil Poichuk
Joe Palsa
Rock Miller
Gene Russell
Doug Noble (ITE staff)
Phil Caruso (ITE staff)
Steve Laffey (friend, by telephone)
Anya Carroll (friend, by telephone)

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 12, 2010, meeting in Washington DC were discussed, and approved with two clarifications:

1. In Item IV (a), fourth paragraph, there is a discussion of material that could be posted on the Committee’s web site relating to the Grade Crossing Handbook. The minutes should state that this information would be considered as supplemental rather than as an addition to the Handbook, and would not have to go through a formal balloting, public comment, and ITE Board approval process.

2. In Item IV (b), last paragraph, the word “as” should be “ask”.

IV. ITE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Doug Noble announced that on August 23 ITE will close its existing Washington DC office and move to its new office, reopening on August 30. The new location is 1627 I Street NW, near the Farragut Square Metro station. It will have better teleconferencing facilities. There will be a member reception at the new location during the TRB meeting in January 2011.
Doug stated that ITE has formed an association with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) to provide information about traffic calming techniques. The IAFC has added a new section to its model code that requires approval of the fire chief before traffic calming devices can be installed on any street. ITE hopes to provide guidance to the IAFC as to traffic calming techniques that will not unduly impact fire engine travel times.

Doug also stated that a statement from our Committee to the Traffic Engineering Coordinating Committee is needed reaffirming that the material in the Recommended Practice for the Preemption of Traffic Signals Near Railroad Crossings is still appropriate.

Rock Miller mentioned that that the ITE Board’s first strategic goal is safety, which is the same as our Committee.

There was a discussion of the use of teleconferencing with video for Committee meetings. Video teleconferencing is expensive, but the use of conference calls with only audio might be a good alternative. One possibility is to use the regularly scheduled Committee meetings for informal strategic discussions, but holding official business meetings by conference call at other times.

The next ITE meeting will be the Technical Conference April 3 – 6, 2011, in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, and the topic is safety. The International meeting will be August 13 – 16, 2011, in St Louis. Requests for sessions for both meetings are due August 23, 2010.

V. ITE COMMITTEE ITEMS

1. ITE Grade Crossing Web Page

Brent Ogden reiterated some of the comments made at the January 2010 meeting regarding the Committee’s web site. Joaquin Siques, the site’s webmaster, has developed a template for the web site, but more work needs to be done. Brent encourages individuals to submit information to the web site. He state that he expects previously submitted material to be posted to the web site before the end of this year. The Los Angeles DOT spreadsheet for traffic signal preemption timing was cited as a good example of material that would be appropriate to the web site. Submittals can be made to Brent at Brent.Ogden@aecom.com. It will also be desirable to have a comment and discussion board on our web site.

The temporary location of the site is www.wix.com/jsiques44/ITE-RXR-Handbook. A third party is now hosting the web site, but it would be desirable to bring it to ITE. Phil Caruso stated that ITE could provide a link to our web site from the ITE web site. ITE could also host the site, but would require that the data be kept current. A request for ITE hosting should be sent to Lisa Tierney, with a copy to Phil.


As discussed at the committee meeting in January 2010 at TRB, updating the Handbook is a separate issue from maintaining our web site. Information related to the Handbook that is added
to our web site will be supplemental to the Handbook, and will not be changes or revisions. The web site review panel will moderate supplemental Handbook information.

As part of the Handbook supplemental information, a list of topics for revision or addition for the next update to the Handbook could be maintained. These could include the distinction between pre-signals and queue-cutter signals, the implementation of Warrant 9 from the MUTCD, and the impact on railroad crossings of queuing from roundabouts.

3. High-Speed Rail Provisions

A new task force for traffic control devices at high speed rail crossings was established at the MUTCD meeting in June, 2010, in Chicago. The FRA has adopted some general guidance for HSR crossings, but this does not include traffic control devices.

4. Conference Sessions Update

Brent stated that HSR would be a good topic for the ITE meeting next year in St Louis. Anya Carroll suggested that pedestrian crossings are important. Tim Huya, who is the chair of an MUTCD task force on pedestrian crossings, was suggested as a possible speaker on this topic.

Gene Russell mentioned that France has many roundabouts with railroad crossings, and that Bill Baranowski presented a paper on this subject at the recent Vail conference. Phil Caruso suggested a session on this topic because it could integrate the issues of roundabouts, railroad crossings, context sensitive design, and safety.

A suggestion was made that a conversation circle regarding roundabouts might be appropriate for a session at the 2011 Technical Conference, with presentations of more technical information at the 2011 International meeting.

Phil Poichuk suggested that the basic assumption should be that there should be no crossings in the vicinity of roundabouts if at all possible. Brent suggested that a session theme could focus on queuing and pedestrians. Anya suggested that the topic could include the use of ITS to integrate modes, and could include high speed rail.

5. Webinars

Brent had no new information to present on this subject. Steve Laffey commented that a webinar for the basics of railroad crossings will be present by TRB on September 16 at 2 PM EST. The site registration fee will be $99 for sites not affiliated with TRB.

VI. Other Business

The January 2011 TRB meeting will be the 40th anniversary of the TRB Railroad Committee. There will be a session on the history of railroad crossing research, a session of the future of
research, and a reception for current and previous members of the committee. There is also a possibility of a poster session for the railroad committee.

VII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of this Committee will be held during the TRB meeting in January 2010. The TRB meeting will be January 23 – 27, and it is hoped that the Committee meeting will be on Monday of that week.

There is a possibility of an informal interim Committee meeting this fall, but more likely it will be held sometime next spring.

VIII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 PM.