

Minutes: Minnesota Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

February 10, 2021 1:00 – 3:00

NPA Special Meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendance

- Sara Buermann, Wright County
- Diane Colton, MnDOT
- Joe Gustafson, Washington County
- Tiffany Kautz, MnDOT
- Jon Krieg, Hennepin County
- Mike Martinez, HDR
- Tim Plath, City of Eagan
- Scott Poska, Alliant Engineering
- Howard Preston
- Ron Rauchle, MnDOT
- Mark Sehr, Rock County
- Tom Sohrweide, SHE
- Will Stein, FHWA
- Josie Tayse, MnDOT
- Scott Thompson, MnDOT
- HunWen Westman, City of St. Paul

Guests

- Ken Johnson, MnDOT
- Jeff Morey, MnDOT
- Michelle Moser, MnDOT
- Ted Ulven, MnDOT

I. Membership Update/Introductions – Tiffany Kautz

II. Corrections/Updates to the Minutes – Tiffany Kautz

A. Comments on NPA for MCUTCD spreadsheet.

- Remove Tom Sohrweide from Attendance
- Use Jon Krieg instead of Jonathan Krieg
- Sara Buermann - no H in Sara.

Motion to approve minutes and comment spreadsheet: Howard Preston, seconded by Jon Krieg.

VOTE: Updates/Minutes accepted

III. MN MUTCD Revision Update/Timeline, Revision 9 – Diane Colton

No Update

A. Current list:

1. Appendix C – remove Appendix C and all references to it from the MN MUTCD.
2. Figure 2M-12 – remove (was supposed to have been removed in Rev 8).
3. 2C.12 – review One-Direction Large Arrow language.

IV. Request for Experimentation Update – Tiffany Kautz

The City of Minneapolis may be pursuing a request – there is no additional information at this time.

V. Review of Action Items from Previous Meeting – Tiffany Kautz

A. Tiffany will talk to Will about FHWA interpretation of speed limit signing to allowing for green and/or blue signs for citywide speed limit signs.

Discussion:

- Will believes that it is a regulatory sign and we need to adhere to the white with black lettering. This is covered in the current manual.
- If we have it in an ordinance does it need to be regulatory? The sign is informational rather than regulatory.
- Using the green/blue color is not the way to go. Another problematic part of the sign is the pictograph – should be eliminated.
- It would be helpful to spell out what isn't allowed – maybe that could be addressed in the MUTCD.

Other Topic: FHWA overview webinars

So far there's been one for internal FHWA staff. They don't have a calendar of additional webinars but are looking into recording one and posting it online. There's not a lot of information at this point.

B. Joe will propose new language regarding County Signs – NPA 2D.11

See below

VI. NPA Update/Timeline

A. Extended for 60 days, Additional Meetings? New deadline date May 14th.

Does the MCUTCD want to meet every 2 weeks?

Motion to meet every 2 weeks on Wednesdays at 1:00 by Joe Gustafson, seconded by Tim Plath.

VOTE: Motion passed.

Action Item – Diane will set up additional meetings.

B. Additional Items to Review?

1) Section 4E.01 – Traffic Signals.

Discussion:

- EVP flashing lights – there is a section in the MUTCD that says you can't have flashing lights next to traffic signals unless there is an exemption. Currently EVP indicator lights are exempt. The NPA is proposing to remove this section.
- There is no explanation why this is being removed. The change wasn't apparent – the section was not crossed out.
- MnDOT Signals group knows about this.

Motion made to review Section 4E.01 by Jon Krieg, seconded by Joe Gustafson.

VOTE: Motion passed. Section 4E.01 will be added to the list for review.

2) New email letter from National Committee dated February 9, 2021

Discussion:

- HunWen - The letter seems to provide some guidance on how to provide comments - could help guide us on how we're reviewing items. It seems to say that it's not worthwhile to discuss details.
- Joe - It seems like there are things that wind up in the MUTCD without us knowing – we need to be focused on details.
- Jon –there are folks on the National Committee that would like to get more involved with the details. The goal is to try - if we submitted new wording to them and they adopt it then ok. If they don't adopt the language is it worth fighting for. There are somethings that we do need to get into the details. The challenge is with the National Committee - that they need to go through the whole thing. Key is to try to hit the high points and things that make a big difference to us. We need to decide what is significant and what we need to let pass.
- Tiffany – suggest that we continue as we have been.

Other topic: Ken Johnson – Chapter 2L has criteria copied from the old MUTCD that are things that CMS's can't do. Do we just let Brian Kary's group look into it?

Motion made to review Chapter 2L by Joe Gustafson, seconded by Tim Plath.

VOTE: Motion passed.

VII. NPA Topics for Discussion – Tiffany Kautz

A. County Signs

1. We are not in conformance with FHWA and MN MUTCD on county signs. NPA: 2D.11 (page 162).

Joe provided language for Option statements for this section:

- Option: The route number on the County Route (M1-6) sign may be white for improved conspicuity.
- Option: Where established by local policy, a jurisdiction may utilize an alternative sign design for numbered county or township roadways which, if used, shall contain black numerals on a white rectangular background with a black border, and shall indicate the appropriate jurisdiction by name or jurisdictional level.

Motion made by Scott Poska to add the two Option statements above to our NPA comments spreadsheet, motion seconded by Howard Preston.

VOTE: Motion passed.

B. Single flagger location

Previous Language: 6E.07 (MN in blue): (removed from current MUTCD)

*When a single flagger is used, the flagger should be stationed **in the closed lane at the beginning of the taper**, or in a position where good visibility and traffic control can be maintained at all +times.*

NPA: 6E.02 (lines 29-32, page 542):

Guidance: When a single flagger is used, the flagger should be stationed on the shoulder opposite the constriction or workspace, or in a position where good visibility and traffic control can be maintained at all times. When good visibility and traffic control cannot be maintained by one flagger station, traffic should be controlled by a flagger at each end of the section.

Discussion:

- Ken – we feel it’s safer for the worker to be on the same side as the work area.
- Ted – Feds have a typical application that will go this way – we will be going against this. We have the move over law.
- Ken – MnDOT will review the federal typical application. As of now we do have it in our comment form.
- Howard – Since this is guidance and would allow MnDOT to continue doing what you already do doesn’t that suggest that an illustration or figure could be added to our manual. The point was made in the national committee letter that at this point changes to the manual are unlikely to happen. If we’re convinced this allows us to continue what we’ve been doing, maybe we make this part of our manual rather than changing the fed manual.

Vote to make comments on Single Flagger Location

VOTE: No comments will be made.

C. Height of Portable Work Zone Signs

1. Previous Language: 6F.03 (MN in Blue), Please note: This is different language than the language we proposed.

Except as provided in the following Option, signs anticipated to be in one place for more than 30 days should not be mounted on portable supports. Whenever this anticipated time period changes, signs mounted on portable supports should be re-evaluated.

2. NPA 6F.02:

Except as provided in Paragraph 12, signs mounted on portable sign supports that do not meet the minimum mounting heights provided in Part 2 should not be used for a duration of more than 3 days

Discussion:

- Ken – The existing MUTCD is probably fine regarding this. Will talk to Michelle, Ted and Jeff. We were finding we were using portable signs longer than 3 days. Our concern here was assuaged.

Motion to continue discussion at later meeting by Jon Krieg, seconded by HunWen Westman.

VOTE: Motion passed.

D. Distance between advance warning signs (Work Zones)

NPA: Table 6B-1 and 6B.04

Discussion:

- The proposed table – MUTCD (Table 6B-1) distances are different than Minnesota (Table 6C-1) for expressway/freeway.
- Ted – Minnesota is uniform, Feds is non-uniform.

No Motion – we won't be commenting.

E. Chevrons/Curve warning signs:

1. The new NPA has some modifications. The table appears to have issues - looks like they missed some things. Exceptions for low volume road has potential for impacts to counties.
2. NPA: 2C.05 thru 2C.13

Discussion per Section:

2C.05 – Horizontal Alignment Warning Signs - no comments.

2C.06 - Device Selection for Changes in Horizontal Alignment (new section) – no comments.

- Howard – one of the tables talks about understanding the speed differential between the curve and the approaches. An informal survey found that the majority of rural roadways couldn't tell you what the 85th percentile on curves is – no ball bank indicators. Maybe curve radius with speed could provide guidance as to what the 85th percentile would be.
- Joe - Lines 5/6 – says you should have an idea of the 85th percentile of your approach speed, not the 85th percentile of the curve itself. Assuming there is somewhere else in the manual that provides guidance on what the speed should be.
- This discussion will occur outside of this committee

2C.07 – Horizontal Alignment Signs (W1-1 through W1-5, W1-11, W1-15) – no comments.

2C.08 - Chevron Alignment Sign (W1-8)

Line 33 (page 124) Standard Statement: “LEDs shall not be flashed from one sign to the next along the curve or turn.”

- Is that saying that sequential flashing would not be allowed? There is promising research regarding this.

Motion to remove standard on Line 33 by Tim Plath, seconded by Joe Gustafson.

VOTE: Motion passed – add this to our NPA comments.

2C.09 – Combination Horizontal Alignment/Intersection Signs (W1-10 Series) - no comments.

2C.10 - One-Direction Large Arrow Sign (W1-6), NPA page 125, Lines 32-33

- Josie - Line 31 doesn't state mounting height.
- Need to include a guidance statement for the mounting height in roundabout. The guidance would allow a shorter mounting height (of 4 feet) for the One-Direction Large Arrow Sign when mounted in the center island of a roundabout. The statement would be similar to guidance statement found in the One-Way sign section.

Motion made by Josie Tayse to add a Guidance statement about mounting height when a One-Direction Large arrow is used in the center island of a roundabout. The guidance would be similar to the guidance for when a one-way sign is used in a center island. Motion seconded by Jon Krieg.

VOTE: Motion passed

Guidance statement proposed: Where used on the central island of a roundabout, the mounting height of a One-Direction Large Arrow sign should be at least 4 feet, measured vertically from the bottom of the sign to the elevation of the near edge of the traveled way.

2C.11 – Truck Rollover Sign (W1-13) – no comments.

2C.12 – Advisory Exit and Ramp Speed Signs (W13-2 and W13-3) and Combination Horizontal Alignment/Advisory Exit and Ramp Speed Signs (W13-6 through W13-13) – no comments.

2C.13 – Vehicle Speed Feedback Sign (W13-20, W13-20aP)

Discussion:

Line 1 page 128, “The vehicle speed displayed on the changeable portion of the sign shall not flash or change color”.

- This is different than MnDOT signs. If you're going over the speed limit the sign will flash at you – if you're going way over the speed limit the sign goes blank.
- Joe – Numbers flashing over the limit has been standard procedure – been an effective tool.
- Jon – Would like to see flash stay in there.
- Josie – could add language that it is allowed.
- Joe – need to suggest an alternative rather than just removing line one.
- Tim – would want the ability to flash a sign – there may a study that could recommend other language.

Action Item: Joe will come up with language for discussion at our next meeting to allow for flashing speed plaques in response to NPA 2C.13 - Line 1 page 128 which states, “The vehicle speed displayed on the changeable portion of the sign shall not flash or change color”.

Lines 42-44, page 127, “When used as a warning to motorist of their speed in relation to the posted speed limit, the Vehicle Speed Feedback Plaque (W13-20P) shall be mounted below a Speed Limit (R2-1) sign (see Section 44 2B.23).

- MnDOT doesn't require this – can be mounted with or without the sign.
- Joe – seems that when they're not mounted with another sign it's a temporary situation.

- HunWen – we rotate them around the city so use them in a temporary fashion.
- Doesn't appear that there is flexibility on mounting.
- Joe - One of our maintenance trucks has one mounted on the back of the truck. Doesn't have a speed limit sign mounted on it.
- HunWen – For our temporary installations we don't have an issue of having a static sign with it. There is a police vehicle with the sign mounted on the back of it.
- Jeff – In work zone layouts we show the sign standing alone with an advisory speed on it or accompanied by a speed limit sign.

Action Item: Joe will come up with language regarding the mounting height and locations of Vehicle Speed Feedback Plaques for discussion at next meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

F. In-street pedestrian crossing signs.

The NPA requires that to use the in-street pedestrian crossing signs, the pedestrian warning sign with a down arrow must be used. MnDOT does not believe the warning sign needs to be used.

VIII. Future Meeting

- A. Possible discussion at the February 24th meeting for items that may come up from the City Engineering Traffic meeting on February 11th.
- B. Trapped lane turning into a turn lane
- C. Lane Reduction Layout
- D. Lane Reduction Arrows
- E. Striping Cycle
- F. Crosswalk Blocks – wider than
- G. Stop and Yield Lines at a Ramp Meters: Section 3B.19 (existing Section 3B.16)
- H. In-street pedestrian crossing signs.
- I. Section 4E.01 – Traffic Signals
- J. Chapter 2L – Changeable Message Signs

IX. Next Meeting

Next meeting is on Feb 24th.

X. Round Robin

XI. Future agenda items (to be discussed after NPA):

Modification to 2D.29 – Tiffany Kautz, Josie Tayse

Add an exception (to 1st Standard, 1st paragraph) for signed township route and (maybe) National Forrest routes.

2I.5.1 Public Water Access Signs – Tiffany Kautz, Josie Tayse

Working with DNR to establish guidelines regarding sign placement. Tiffany and Josie talking with DNR about this section.

2C.27 Low Clearance Signs – HunWen Westman

- First Option in MN MUTCD states “The Low Clearance sign **should** be installed on **and** in advance of the structure. If a sign is placed on the structure, it **should** be a rectangular shape.....”
- MUTCD states “The Low Clearance sign **may** be installed on **or** in advance of the structure. If a sign is placed on the structure, it **may** be a rectangular shape.....”