



(51) International Patent Classification:
H04N 7/18 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2012/034236

(22) International Filing Date:
19 April 2012 (19.04.2012)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
61/477,315 20 April 2011 (20.04.2011) US

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **MAGNA ELECTRONICS INC.** [US/US]; 10410 North Holly Road, Holly, Michigan 48442 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **SALOMONSSON, Ove Jan** [US/US]; 30815 North Wendybrook Ct., Farmington Hills, Michigan 48334 (US). **VAN DAN ELZEN, Christopher L.** [US/US]; 415 North Castell Road, Rochester, Michigan 48307 (US).

(74) Agent: **FLORY, Timothy A.**; Gardner, Linn, Burkhart & Flory, LLP, 2851 Charlevoix Dr., S.E., Suite 207, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 (US).

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BR, BW, BY, BZ,

CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, RW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

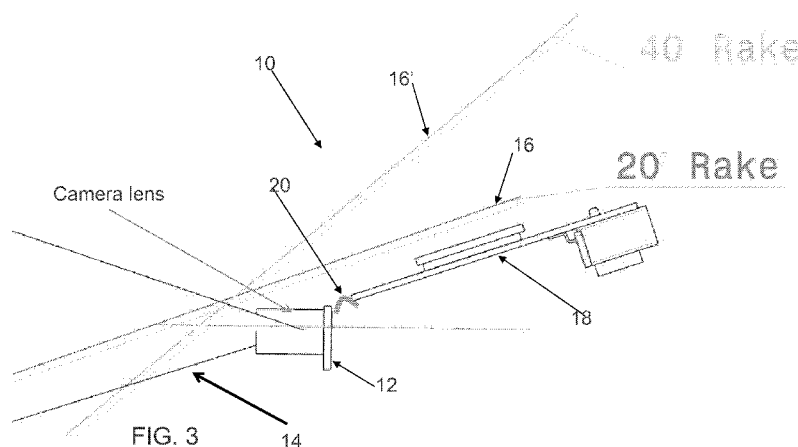
Declarations under Rule 4.17:

- as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii))
- as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))
- of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv))

Published:

- with international search report (Art. 21(3))

(54) Title: ANGULAR FILTER FOR VEHICLE MOUNTED CAMERA



(57) Abstract: A vision system for a vehicle includes a camera disposed at a windshield of a vehicle and having a field of view forward of the vehicle and through the windshield of the vehicle. A processor is operable to process image data captured by the camera. An angular filter is disposed at or near the windshield forward of the camera. The angular filter includes a substantially transparent film that limits reflection of light through an angular range that generally corresponds to the stray light that reflects off of the vehicle dashboard and would otherwise impinge a lens aperture of the camera.

ANGULAR FILTER FOR VEHICLE MOUNTED CAMERA

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

The present application claims the filing benefit of U.S. provisional application Ser. No. 61/477,315, filed Apr. 20, 2011, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to imaging systems or vision systems for vehicles.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Use of imaging sensors in vehicle imaging systems is common and known. Examples of such known systems are described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,949,331; 5,670,935; and/or 5,550,677, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a vision system or imaging system for a vehicle that utilizes one or more cameras to capture images exterior of the vehicle, and provides the communication/data signals, including camera data or image data, that may be processed by an image processor, such as for a headlamp control or other machine vision system, or that may be displayed at a display screen that is viewable by the driver of the vehicle.

According to an aspect of the present invention, a vision system for a vehicle includes a camera or image sensor disposed at a windshield of a vehicle and having a field of view forward of the vehicle and through the windshield of the vehicle, and a processor operable to process data transmitted by the camera. The vision system or camera assembly or system includes an angular filter disposed at or near the windshield forward of the camera. The angular filter comprises a substantially transparent film that limits reflection of light through an angular range that generally corresponds to the stray light that reflects off of the vehicle (such as off of the vehicle dashboard) and would otherwise impinge the camera lens aperture.

The camera is electrically connected to circuitry established at a circuit board that is mounted generally along the windshield behind the camera, and the camera preferably is electrically connected to the circuitry via a flexible electrical connector. The flexible electrical connector flexes to allow a viewing angle of the camera to be adjusted relative to a mounting angle of the circuit board.

Therefore, the present invention provides an angular light filter that rejects or substantially rejects or attenuates reflections from the vehicle dash board into the camera. The angular filter replaces the stray light cone or shroud of a typical module or housing, allowing greater flexibility and lower mounting of the camera at the windshield.

These and other objects, advantages, purposes and features of the present invention will become apparent upon review of the following specification in conjunction with the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a camera disposed at a module that attaches at an interior surface of a vehicle windshield and that includes a stray light cone in front of the camera as part of the module or housing;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the camera module of FIG. 1, shown with the module mounted at a vehicle windshield with the stray light cone extending forward from the camera and along the windshield; and

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of a camera assembly or system with an angular light filter disposed along the windshield in front of the camera in accordance with the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

A vehicle vision system and/or driver assist system and/or object detection system and/or alert system operates to capture images exterior of the vehicle and may process the captured image data to display images and to detect objects at or near the vehicle and in the predicted path of the vehicle, such as to assist a driver of the vehicle in maneuvering the vehicle in a forward (or rearward) direction.

Front facing vehicular cameras include optical elements that constitute the camera. These elements are typically mounted in a vehicular camera housing, such as a windshield electronics module housing or the like, such as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 (and such as a housing that utilizes aspects of the vision systems described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 7,526,103; 7,480,149; 7,188,963; 6,824,281; 6,341,523; 6,250,148; 6,516,664; and/or 6,968,736, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties). As can be seen with reference to FIGS. 1 and 2, the housing may extend forward of the camera lens aperture and includes a stray light cone or shroud which serves to insulate the camera lens aperture from stray light that arises from reflections off the dashboard and/or windshield. Such housings are typically relatively bulky compared to the optical elements of the camera and thus the housing may occupy a

considerable amount of windshield real estate or space. It thus may be desirable to eliminate the housing, or at least minimize the extent of the camera housing, so as to free up space on the windshield. This would not only provide better aesthetics, but also increased visibility through the windshield for the driver of the vehicle.

As shown in FIG. 3, the present invention proposes to eliminate the stray light cone or shroud and minimize the camera housing so that the housing only contains the optical elements of the camera and any necessary interfacing elements. At the very least, the present invention seeks to eliminate the stray light cone or shroud so that there is a minimum of the camera housing projecting forward of the camera lens aperture. Instead of a stray light cone or shroud, the camera or vision system 10 of the present invention includes a camera 12, with an angular filter 14 placed on or near the windshield 16 forward of the camera 12 and the camera lens aperture (and not part of or incorporated in a camera housing of a windshield electronics module or the like). The angular filter 14 comprises a transparent (or substantially transparent or light transmitting) or see-through film, which limits or substantially precludes reflection of light through an angular range corresponding to the stray light that would otherwise impinge the camera lens aperture.

The angular filter 14 may comprise any suitable materials. For example, a suitable film material may be found on the likes of computer notebook screens and other types of display monitors and are commercially available from the 3M company and other suppliers. In some embodiments, the filter may be placed directly on the windshield, and in other embodiments (and such as shown in FIG. 3) the filter may be spaced apart from the windshield surface on a plane just below the camera lens aperture, in which case the filter may be mounted on a transparent substrate (not shown) or the like. Optionally, the filter may be provided in the form of anti-reflective coating on the windshield, which acts to prevent reflections from the windshield.

With the proposed structure, the designer of the camera system or vision system is afforded a great deal of design flexibility. In particular, and as can be seen with reference to FIG. 3, it will be appreciated that the printed circuit board 18 and other electronic components may be housed and disposed rearward of the camera optical elements and placed higher up on or along or near the windshield or even hidden all together under the vehicle roof liner.

Optionally, and as shown in FIG. 3, a flexible coupling 20 may also be provided between the small camera 12 and the printed circuit board 18. With such a flexible

coupling (which electrically connects circuitry of the circuit board with circuitry of the camera to power and/or control the camera and to receive image data from the camera), the present invention may provide a universal or substantially universal solution to many vehicles which may all have different windshield rake angles. For example, and as can be seen with reference to FIG. 3, the flexible coupling 20 may flex to allow the camera 12 to be arranged generally horizontally when the circuit board 18 is mounted along (and generally parallel to) the windshield 16, such as, for example, along a windshield that has a rake angle of about 20 degrees, and the flexible coupling 20 may be adjusted or flexed to allow the camera 12 to be arranged generally horizontally when the circuit board 18 is mounted along a different windshield 16', such as, for example, along a windshield that has a rake angle of about 40 degrees. The flexible electrical connector thus flexes to allow a viewing angle of the camera to be adjusted relative to a mounting angle of the circuit board, depending on the particular vehicle application of the camera system. Thus, a common camera assembly or system 10 may be provided that may readily be adapted or configured for application to vehicles with different windshield angles (with the flexible coupling or flex connection allowing for adjustment of the angular tilt or relative angles between the camera and lens axis and the circuit board), without requiring additional mounting bracketry and the like to adapt the assembly to the particular vehicle.

The camera or sensor may comprise any suitable camera or sensor. Optionally, the camera may comprise a "smart camera" that includes the imaging sensor array and associated circuitry and image processing circuitry and electrical connectors and the like as part of a camera module, such as by utilizing aspects of the vision systems described in U.S. provisional applications Ser. No. 61/565,713, filed Dec. 1, 2011; and/or Ser. No. 61/563,965, filed Nov. 28, 2011, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

The vehicle may include any type of sensor or sensors, such as imaging sensors or radar sensors or lidar sensors or ultrasonic sensors or the like. The imaging sensor or camera may capture image data for image processing and may comprise any suitable camera or sensing device, such as, for example, an array of a plurality of photosensor elements arranged in 640 columns and 480 rows (a 640 x 480 imaging array), with a respective lens focusing images onto respective portions of the array. The photosensor array may comprise a plurality of photosensor elements arranged in a photosensor array having rows and columns. The logic and control circuit of the

imaging sensor may function in any known manner, such as in the manner described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,550,677; 5,877,897; 6,498,620; 5,670,935; 5,796,094; and/or 6,396,397, and/or U.S. provisional applications, Ser. No. 61/615,410, filed Mar. 26, 2012; Ser. No. 61/613,651, filed 2012; Ser. No. 61/607,229, filed Mar. 6, 2012; Ser. No. 61/605,409, filed Mar. 1, 2012; Ser. No. 61/602,878, filed Feb. 24, 2012; Ser. No. 61/602,876, filed Feb. 24, 2012; Ser. No. 61/600,205, filed Feb. 17, 2012; Ser. No. 61/588,833, filed Jan. 20, 2012; Ser. No. 61/583,381, filed Jan. 5, 2012; Ser. No. 61/579,682, filed Dec. 23, 2011; Ser. No. 61/570,017, filed Dec. 13, 2011; Ser. No. 61/568,791, filed Dec. 9, 2011; Ser. No. 61/567,446, filed Dec. 6, 2011; Ser. No. 61/559,970, filed Nov. 15, 2011; Ser. No. 61/552,167, filed Oct. 27, 2011; Ser. No. 61/540,256, filed Sep. 28, 2011; Ser. No. 61/513,745, filed Aug. 1, 2011; Ser. No. 61/511,738, filed Jul. 26, 2011; and/or Ser. No. 61/503,098, filed Jun. 30, 2011, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. The system may communicate with other communication systems via any suitable means, such as by utilizing aspects of the systems described in PCT Application No. PCT/US10/038477, filed Jun. 14, 2010, and/or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/202,005, filed Aug. 17, 2011 (Attorney Docket MAG04 P-1595), and/or U.S. provisional applications, Ser. No. 61/567,150, filed Dec. 6, 2011; Ser. No. 61/565,713, filed Dec. 1, 2011; and/or Ser. No. 61/537,279, filed Sep. 21, 2011, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

The imaging device and control and image processor and any associated illumination source, if applicable, may comprise any suitable components, and may utilize aspects of the cameras and vision systems described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,550,677; 5,877,897; 6,498,620; 5,670,935; 5,796,094; 6,396,397; 6,806,452; 6,690,268; 7,005,974; 7,937,667; 7,123,168; 7,004,606; 6,946,978; 7,038,577; 6,353,392; 6,320,176; 6,313,454; and 6,824,281, and/or International Publication No. WO 2010/099416, published Sep. 2, 2010, and/or PCT Application No. PCT/US10/47256, filed Aug. 31, 2010, and/or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/508,840, filed Jul. 24, 2009, and published Jan. 28, 2010 as U.S. Pat. Publication No. US 2010-0020170; and/or U.S. provisional applications, Ser. No. 61/511,738, filed Jul. 26, 2011; and/or Ser. No. 61/503,098, filed Jun. 30, 2011, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. The camera or cameras may comprise any suitable cameras or imaging sensors or camera modules, and may utilize aspects of the cameras or sensors described in U.S. patent applications, Ser. No.

12/091,359, filed Apr. 24, 2008; and/or Ser. No. 13/260,400, filed Sep. 26, 2011, and/or U.S. Pat. Nos. 7,965,336 and/or 7,480,149, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. The imaging array sensor may comprise any suitable sensor, and may utilize various imaging sensors or imaging array sensors or cameras or the like, such as a CMOS imaging array sensor, a CCD sensor or other sensors or the like, such as the types described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,550,677; 5,670,935; 5,760,962; 5,715,093; 5,877,897; 6,922,292; 6,757,109; 6,717,610; 6,590,719; 6,201,642; 6,498,620; 5,796,094; 6,097,023; 6,320,176; 6,559,435; 6,831,261; 6,806,452; 6,396,397; 6,822,563; 6,946,978; 7,339,149; 7,038,577; 7,004,606; and/or 7,720,580, and/or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/534,632, filed May 11, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,965,336; and/or PCT Application No. PCT/US2008/076022, filed Sep. 11, 2008 and published Mar. 19, 2009 as International Publication No. WO/2009/036176, and/or PCT Application No. PCT/US2008/078700, filed Oct. 3, 2008 and published Apr. 9, 2009 as International Publication No. WO/2009/046268, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

The camera module and circuit chip or board and imaging sensor may be implemented and operated in connection with various vehicular vision-based systems, and/or may be operable utilizing the principles of such other vehicular systems, such as a vehicle headlamp control system, such as the type disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,796,094; 6,097,023; 6,320,176; 6,559,435; 6,831,261; 7,004,606; 7,339,149; and/or 7,526,103, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties, a rain sensor, such as the types disclosed in commonly assigned U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,353,392; 6,313,454; 6,320,176; and/or 7,480,149, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties, a vehicle vision system, such as a forwardly, sidewardly or rearwardly directed vehicle vision system utilizing principles disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,550,677; 5,670,935; 5,760,962; 5,877,897; 5,949,331; 6,222,447; 6,302,545; 6,396,397; 6,498,620; 6,523,964; 6,611,202; 6,201,642; 6,690,268; 6,717,610; 6,757,109; 6,802,617; 6,806,452; 6,822,563; 6,891,563; 6,946,978; and/or 7,859,565, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties, a trailer hitching aid or tow check system, such as the type disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 7,005,974, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, a reverse or sideward imaging system, such as for a lane change assistance system or lane departure warning system or for a blind spot or object detection system, such as imaging or detection systems of the types disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 7,720,580;

7,038,577; 5,929,786 and/or 5,786,772, and/or U.S. pat. applications, Ser. No. 11/239,980, filed Sep. 30, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,881,496, and/or U.S. provisional applications, Ser. No. 60/628,709, filed Nov. 17, 2004; Ser. No. 60/614,644, filed Sep. 30, 2004; Ser. No. 60/618,686, filed Oct. 14, 2004; Ser. No. 60/638,687, filed Dec. 23, 2004, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties, a video device for internal cabin surveillance and/or video telephone function, such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,760,962; 5,877,897; 6,690,268; and/or 7,370,983, and/or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/538,724, filed Jun. 13, 2005 and published Mar. 9, 2006 as U.S. Publication No. US-2006-0050018-A1, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties, a traffic sign recognition system, a system for determining a distance to a leading or trailing vehicle or object, such as a system utilizing the principles disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,396,397 and/or 7,123,168, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties, and/or the like.

Optionally, the circuit board or chip may include circuitry for the imaging array sensor and or other electronic accessories or features, such as by utilizing compass-on-a-chip or EC driver-on-a-chip technology and aspects such as described in U.S. Pat. No. 7,255,451 and/or U.S. Pat. No. 7,480,149; and/or U.S. patent applications, Ser. No. 11/226,628, filed Sep. 14, 2005 and published Mar. 23, 2006 as U.S. Publication No. US-2006-0061008, and/or Ser. No. 12/578,732, filed Oct. 14, 2009 (Attorney Docket DON01 P-1564), which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

Optionally, the vision system may include a display for displaying images captured by one or more of the imaging sensors for viewing by the driver of the vehicle while the driver is normally operating the vehicle. Optionally, for example, the vision system may include a video display device disposed at or in the interior rearview mirror assembly of the vehicle, such as by utilizing aspects of the video mirror display systems described in U.S. Pat. No. 6,690,268 and/or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/333,337, filed Dec. 21, 2011 (Attorney Docket DON01 P-1797), which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. The video mirror display may comprise any suitable devices and systems and optionally may utilize aspects of the compass display systems described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 7,370,983; 7,329,013; 7,308,341; 7,289,037; 7,249,860; 7,004,593; 4,546,551; 5,699,044; 4,953,305; 5,576,687; 5,632,092; 5,677,851; 5,708,410; 5,737,226; 5,802,727; 5,878,370; 6,087,953; 6,173,508; 6,222,460; 6,513,252; and/or 6,642,851, and/or European patent application, published Oct. 11, 2000 under Publication No. EP 0 1043566, and/or U.S.

patent application Ser. No. 11/226,628, filed Sep. 14, 2005 and published Mar. 23, 2006 as U.S. Publication No. US-2006-0061008, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. Optionally, the video mirror display screen or device may be operable to display images captured by a rearward viewing camera of the vehicle during a reversing maneuver of the vehicle (such as responsive to the vehicle gear actuator being placed in a reverse gear position or the like) to assist the driver in backing up the vehicle, and optionally may be operable to display the compass heading or directional heading character or icon when the vehicle is not undertaking a reversing maneuver, such as when the vehicle is being driven in a forward direction along a road (such as by utilizing aspects of the display system described in PCT Application No. PCT/US2011/056295, filed Oct. 14, 2011 (Attorney Docket DON01 FP-1725(PCT)), which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety).

Optionally, the vision system (utilizing a forward and/or rearward facing camera and other cameras disposed at the vehicle with exterior fields of view) and/or the camera or cameras as part of a vehicle vision system comprising or utilizing a plurality of cameras (such as utilizing a rearward facing camera and sidewardly facing cameras and a forwardly facing camera disposed at the vehicle), may provide a display of a top-down view or birds-eye view of the vehicle or a surround view at the vehicle, such as by utilizing aspects of the vision systems described in PCT Application No.

PCT/US10/25545, filed Feb. 26, 2010 and published on Sep. 2, 2010 as International Publication No. WO 2010/099416, and/or PCT Application No. PCT/US10/47256, filed Aug. 31, 2010 and published Mar. 10, 2011 as International Publication No. WO 2011/028686, and/or PCT Application No. PCT/US11/62755, filed Dec. 1, 2011 (Attorney Docket MAG04 FP-1790(PCT)), and/or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/333,337, filed Dec. 21, 2011 (Attorney Docket DON01 P-1797), and/or U.S. provisional applications, Ser. No. 61/615,410, filed Mar. 26, 2012; Ser. No. 61/588,833, filed Jan. 20, 2012; Ser. No. 61/570,017, filed Dec. 13, 2011; Ser. No. 61/568,791, filed Dec. 9, 2011; Ser. No. 61/559,970, filed Nov. 15, 2011; Ser. No. 61/540,256, filed Sep. 28, 2011, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

Optionally, the video mirror display may be disposed rearward of and behind the reflective element assembly and may comprise a display such as the types disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,530,240; 6,329,925; 7,855,755; 7,626,749; 7,581,859; 7,446,650; 7,370,983; 7,338,177; 7,274,501; 7,255,451; 7,195,381; 7,184,190; 5,668,663; 5,724,187 and/or 6,690,268, and/or in U.S. patent applications, Ser. No. 12/091,525,

filed Apr. 25, 2008, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,855,755; Ser. No. 11/226,628, filed Sep. 14, 2005 and published Mar. 23, 2006 as U.S. Publication No. US-2006-0061008; and/or Ser. No. 10/538,724, filed Jun. 13, 2005 and published Mar. 9, 2006 as U.S. Publication No. US-2006-0050018, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. The display is viewable through the reflective element when the display is activated to display information. The display element may be any type of display element, such as a vacuum fluorescent (VF) display element, a light emitting diode (LED) display element, such as an organic light emitting diode (OLED) or an inorganic light emitting diode, an electroluminescent (EL) display element, a liquid crystal display (LCD) element, a video screen display element or backlit thin film transistor (TFT) display element or the like, and may be operable to display various information (as discrete characters, icons or the like, or in a multi-pixel manner) to the driver of the vehicle, such as passenger side inflatable restraint (PSIR) information, tire pressure status, and/or the like. The mirror assembly and/or display may utilize aspects described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 7,184,190; 7,255,451; 7,446,924 and/or 7,338,177, which are all hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. The thicknesses and materials of the coatings on the substrates of the reflective element may be selected to provide a desired color or tint to the mirror reflective element, such as a blue colored reflector, such as is known in the art and such as described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,910,854; 6,420,036; and/or 7,274,501, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

Optionally, the display or displays and any associated user inputs may be associated with various accessories or systems, such as, for example, a tire pressure monitoring system or a passenger air bag status or a garage door opening system or a telematics system or any other accessory or system of the mirror assembly or of the vehicle or of an accessory module or console of the vehicle, such as an accessory module or console of the types described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 7,289,037; 6,877,888; 6,824,281; 6,690,268; 6,672,744; 6,386,742; and 6,124,886, and/or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/538,724, filed Jun. 13, 2005 and published Mar. 9, 2006 as U.S. Publication No. US-2006-0050018, which are hereby incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

Changes and modifications to the specifically described embodiments may be carried out without departing from the principles of the present invention, which is

intended to be limited only by the scope of the appended claims as interpreted according to the principles of patent law.

CLAIMS:

1. A vision system for a vehicle, said vision system comprising:
a camera disposed at a windshield of a vehicle and having a field of view forward of the vehicle and through the windshield of the vehicle;
wherein said camera comprises a lens having a lens aperture; and
an angular filter disposed at or near the windshield forward of said camera,
wherein said angular filter comprises a substantially transparent film that limits reflection of light through an angular range that generally corresponds to the stray light that reflects off of the vehicle and would otherwise impinge said lens aperture of said lens of said camera.
2. The vision system of claim 1, wherein said camera is electrically connected to circuitry established at a circuit board that is mounted generally along the windshield behind said camera.
3. The vision system of claim 2, wherein said camera is electrically connected to said circuitry via a flexible electrical connector.
4. The vision system of claim 3, wherein said flexible electrical connector flexes to allow a viewing angle of said camera to be adjusted relative to a mounting angle of said circuit board.
5. The vision system of claim 1, comprising a processor operable to process image data captured by said camera.

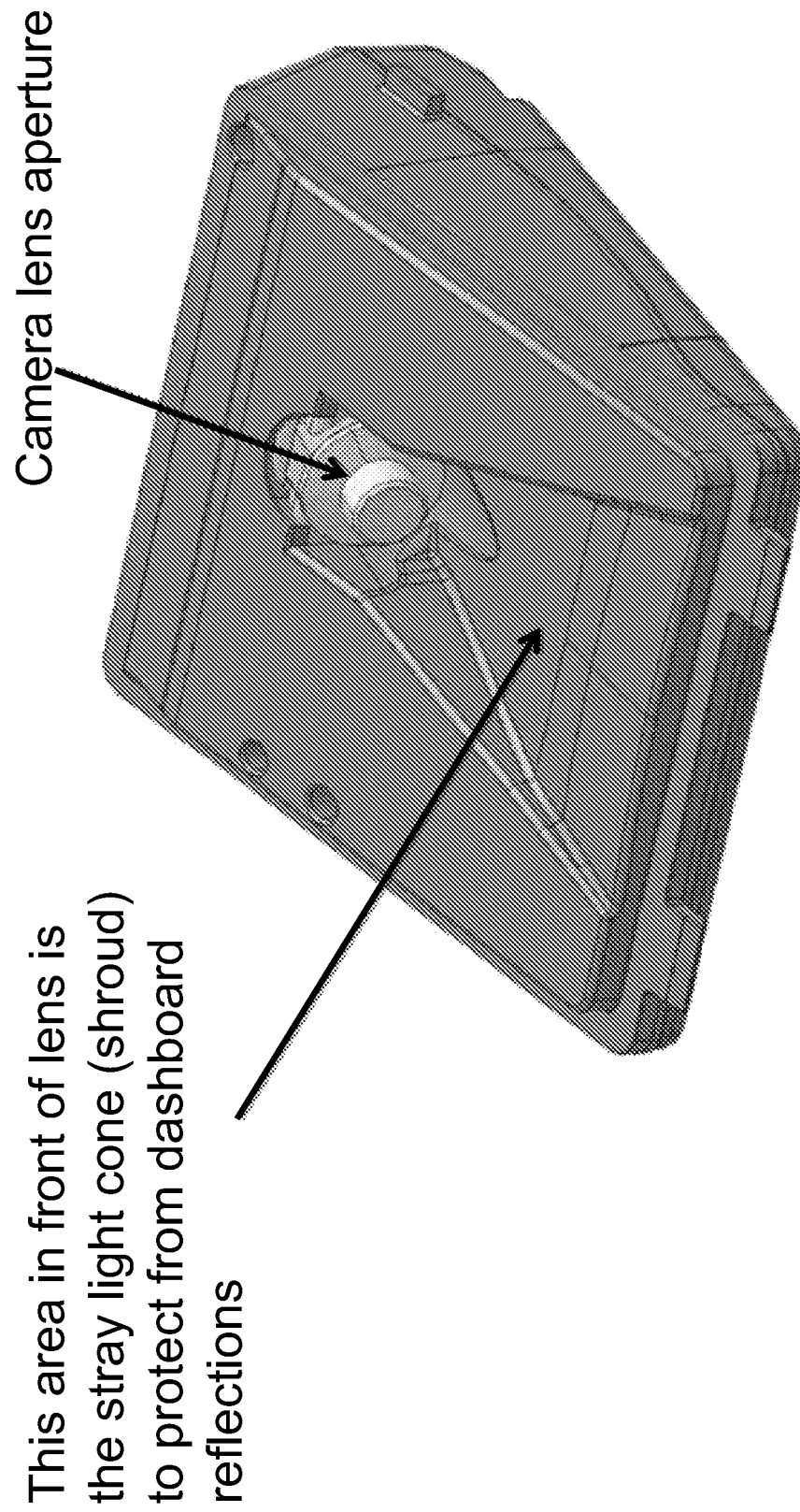


FIG. 1

Stray light filter replaces stray light shield
Stray light filter is transparent to driver

Camera

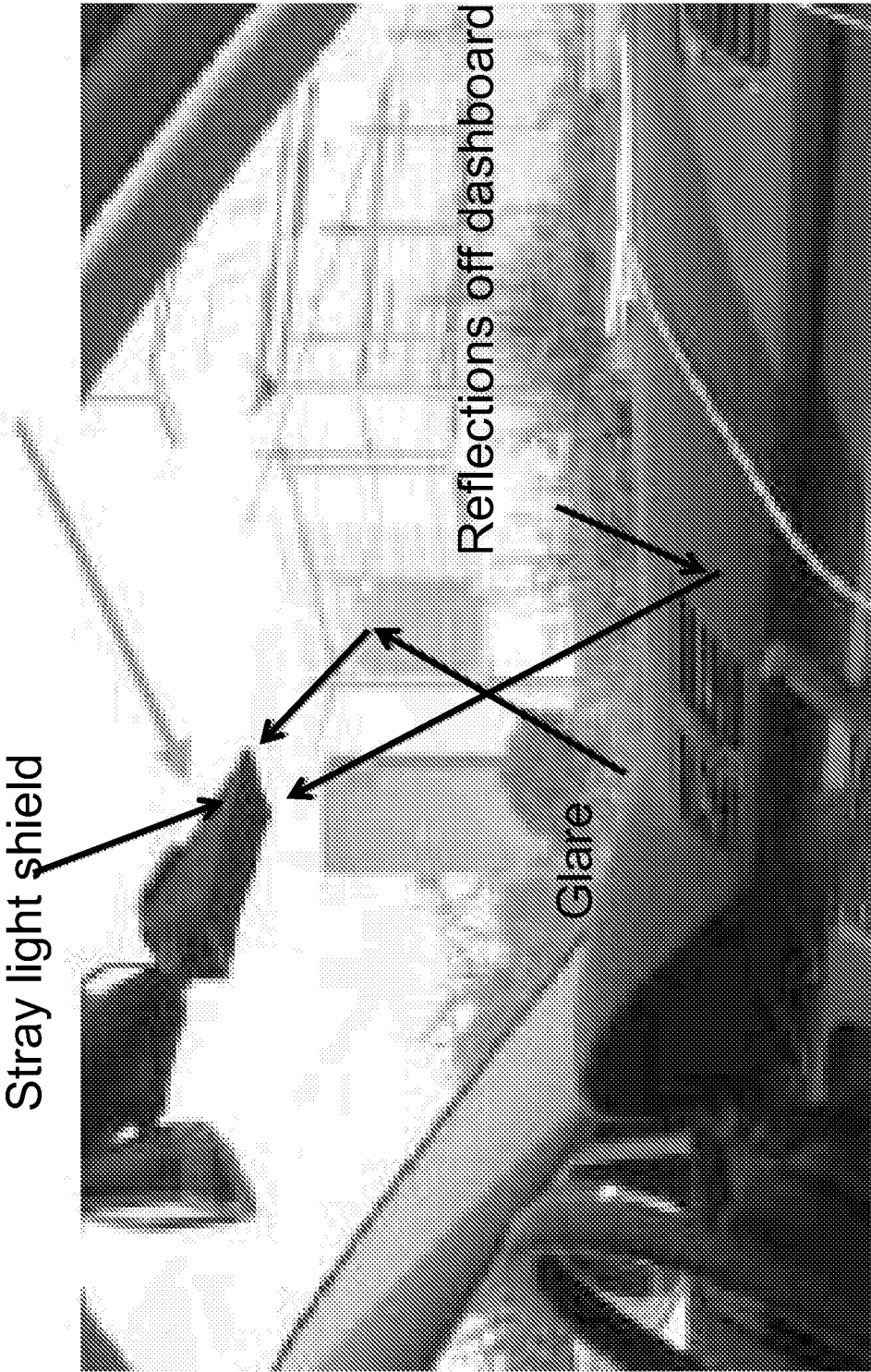
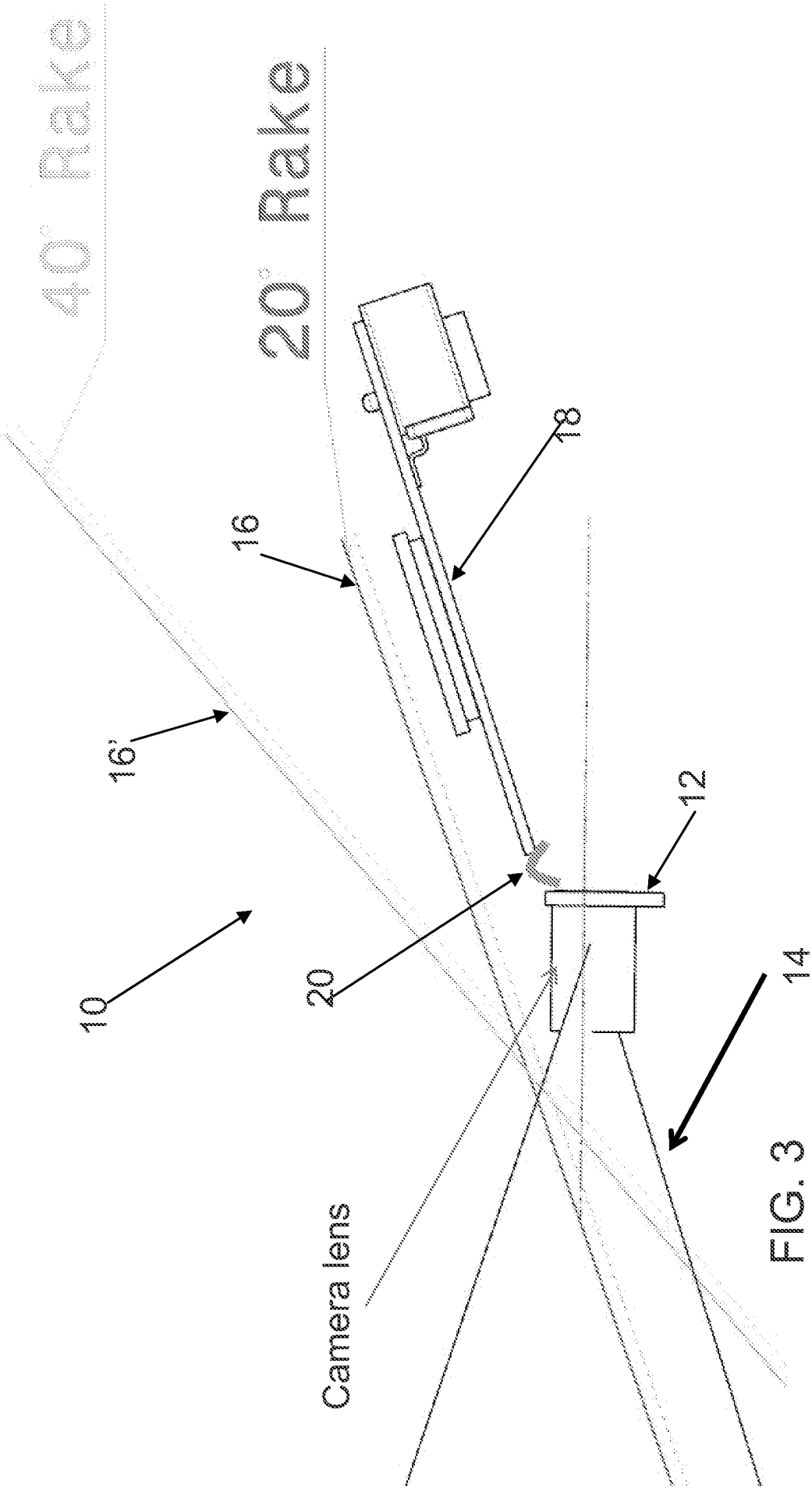


FIG. 2



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US 12/34236

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - H04N 7/18 (2012.01)

USPC - 348/148

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

USPC - 348/148

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

USPC - 348/61, 113-118, 143, 148, 273, 290, 342, 786, 835

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

PubWEST, Google Scholar

Camera, vehicle, car, automobile, windshield, dashboard, windscreen, mirror, photographic, filter, angular filter, lens

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category* | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No. |
|-----------|---|-----------------------|
| Y | US 5,096,287 A (Kakinami et al.) 17 March 1992 (17.03.1992), whole document especially abstract and column 2 | 1-5 |
| Y | US 2008/0252882 A1 (Kesterson) 16 October 2008 (16.10.2008), whole document especially abstract and Para [0010-0012] | 1-5 |
| A | US 2011/0058040 A1 (Weller et al.) 10 March 2011 (10.03.2011), whole document especially abstract and Para [0057, 0104, 0162] | 1-5 |
| A | US 2008/0266389 A1 (DeWind et al.) 30 October 2008 (30.10.2008), whole document especially abstract and Para [0079] | 1-5 |
| A | US 2010/0208077 A1 (DeWard et al.) 19 August 2010 (19.08.2010), whole document especially abstract | 1-5 |
| A | US 2010/0134616 A1 (Seeger et al.) 03 June 2010 (03.06.2010), whole document especially abstract | 1-5 |
| A | US 2010/0110192 A1 (Johnston et al.) 06 May 2010 (06.05.2010), whole document especially abstract | 1-5 |
| A | US 2009/0046149 A1 (Ohsumi et al.) 19 February 2009 (19.02.2009), whole document especially abstract | 1-5 |

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

13 July 2012 (13.07.2012)

Date of mailing of the international search report

23 JUL 2012

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US, Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Facsimile No. 571-273-3201

Authorized officer:

Lee W. Young

PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300

PCT OSP: 571-272-7774