

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 19, 2008

D. Ouellette called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

I. INTRODUCTION/ MEMBERS PRESENT

Don Ouellette, Ashburnham; Sarah Bradbury, MassHighway; Chantell Wead, Templeton; Paul Hale, Hubbardston; Doug Walsh, Athol; Pauline Hamel, Ayer; Dan Keeney, Gardner; Paula Caron, Fitchburg; Andrew West, Royalston; John Oelfke, Shirley; Joe Lynch, Shirley; Noreen Piazza, Lancaster; Robert Saiia, Lunenburg

EX-OFFICIO

Joanne Telegen-Weinstock, EOT; Mohammed Khan, MART

ORGANIZATION

GUESTS

Frank Maxant, Ayer

STAFF

George Snow, Brian Doherty, Brad Harris, Stephanie Brow, Sheri Bean

II. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 15, 2008 MINUTES.

R. Saiia made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The minutes of October 15, 2008 were approved and passed unanimously.

III. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE IN THE MONTACHUSETT REGION

B. Harris began a discussion on future planning for the Montachusett Region. He mentioned that this discussion would cover past demographic studies, issues related to overall population, age groups, and commuting patterns. He also mentioned that this discussion could be used in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Mr. Harris stated that this presentation would focus on what has been done and then how to look at improving the projections and methods that have been used in the past to determine population growth, etc.

J. Lynch asked about the validity of the data received from EOT in comparison to other data sets.

B. Harris stated that the general assumptions of population change have been based on the EOT Forecast for 2025.

G. Snow mentioned that the regions have also done their own projections, and the numbers that were found remained consistent.

R. Saiia stated that projections should be created for the specific, smaller communities in the area in order to see the changes, instead of just focusing on the cities and regional totals.

J. Oelfke mentioned that the method of data collection should be modified and other data sets should be looked at as well.

B. Harris stated that the agency would need to establish a data collection procedure that works well in order to remain consistent throughout the coming years.

R. Saiia mentioned several ways that population projection could be undertaken to ensure accuracy. Much discussion followed.

IV. DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

B. Harris stated that at the most recent MPO meeting, the MPO recommended that the Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) go out for 30 day public review and comment period. Mr. Harris stated that the real change that occurred for this document is regarding the four MPO subregions and the way the representative will be chosen. The process for choosing the a subregion representative has been added to the MPO MOU as an attachment, in order to preserve the ability to make any changes as needed, without having to redo the entire MOU.

V. CONTRACT STATUS REPORT

- **FTA/RTA**

G. Kahale stated that MART has hired McMahon Associates to do the feasibility study for the Wachusett Commuter Rail Station Facility and possible extension to Gardner. They recently signed their contract and had the first meeting to go over the scope of services for the design. This project will take approximately one year.

The Fitchburg Line Working Group met on Monday, and was given a presentation on updates about the Fitchburg Line project. The project is going to take the length of time on the Commuter Rail from Fitchburg to Porter Square from 90 minutes to one hour. Part of this project is the in-cab signalization. Mr. Kahale also mentioned that the tracks will be doubled to the Wachusett Station, and then from the Ayer Station to South Acton.

The Gardner MART Storage and Maintenance Facility project has been completed and MART staff is going to be moving to this facility by December.

MART received approval from EOT and FTA to release the \$80,000 to complete a feasibility study at the Ayer Parking Facility location. MRPC and MART are working together to complete some of the study, the two agencies are still working to create a schedule to complete this project.

- **MASSHIGHWAY DEPARTMENT 3C**

B. Harris stated that at the most recent MPO meeting the amendment of the FY2009 element of the FY2007-2010 TIP was endorsed. There is no future MPO meeting scheduled yet.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) came to the MRPC to talk about work done on last year's UPWP. MRPC and FHWA went over several studies that have been completed recently by George Snow, Brian Doherty and Sheri Bean. Those completed reports will be posted on the MRPC website for viewing.

The Route 140 Task Force met in October and the next meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2009 in Sterling. There will be a Route 2 Safety Task Force meeting in the town of Irving on January 15th, to discuss projects being completed on Route 2.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for discussion.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Harris stated that there would be no December MJTC meeting and that next meeting will be held on Wednesday January 21, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, D. Ouellette adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.