

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20, 2008

N. Piazza called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**I. INTRODUCTION/ MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mary Krapf, Ashby; Doug Walsh, Athol; Pauline Hamel, Ayer; Peter Johnson, Ayer; David Streb, Fitchburg; Dan Keeney, Gardner; Paula Caron, Fitchburg; Noreen Piazza; Lancaster; Robert Saiia, Lunenburg; Joe Lynch, Shirley; John Oelfke, Shirley; Chantell Wead, Templeton

EX-OFFICIO

Joanne Telegen-Weinstock, EOT; Mohammed Khan, MART; Sarah Bradbury, MassHighway District 3

ORGANIZATION

GUESTS

Vyto Andreliunas, Royalston; Frank Maxant, Ayer

STAFF

George Snow, George Kahale, Brian Doherty, Glenn Eaton

**II. APPROVAL OF JULY 16, 2008 MINUTES.**

The minutes of July 16, 2008 were approved and passed unanimously.

**III. FFY2009-2012 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – DISCUSSION AND UPDATE**

G. Snow presented options related to the draft FFY2009-2012 TIP, much discussion followed. Mr. Snow indicated that the TIP will not be going out for public review until October at the earliest due to issues related to air quality conformity determination at the state level.

S. Bradbury stated that the TIP is currently still being developed, and it cannot be formally released yet.

J. Lynch asked if the TIP is still on hold until the CMAQ target figures are disbursed.

S. Bradbury replied that the CMAQ projects don't need to be approved in order to release the TIP. Any project that has air quality benefits like bikeways or buses, are eligible for CMAQ funds.

D. Streb stated that Fitchburg submitted a PNF about signalization in the city.

S. Bradbury indicated that MassHighway has been working on how best to assess the situation and whether or not it's going to be done as one project or several.

N. Piazza asked for consensus approval from the group to support the draft TIP as presented and its eventual release for a 30 day public review and comment period in the near future.

#### **IV. MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – UPDATE**

G. Snow discussed the MOU meeting from earlier in the day. Mr. Snow indicated that the MPO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Working Group has been working to create a more flexible MOU for the communities in the MPO. The major issue that led to change related to the subregion selection process and the size of the subregions. It was decided that representatives would be selected through a caucus process run by the MRPC and that the subregions would remain as currently constituted.

N. Piazza asked when the subregions will be able to go into a caucus to determine their representative.

S. Bradbury stated that some specific details needed to be established before a schedule will be formed. The representatives of each town are going to be the Chief Elected Officials, who will be able to nominate someone to be voted in caucus.

R. Saiia asked how the MPO affects the work being done at the MRPC.

S. Bradbury indicated that the MPO is the decision making entity of the transportation funding available to the area.

J. Lynch stated that the MPO traditionally takes the opinions of the MRPC, MJTC, and MART into high regard when endorsing projects; however they do retain the power to go in a different direction than suggested by the Planning Commission. The MPO can also make their determination based on the public comments received when a project is out for a comment period. Much discussion followed.

## **V. CONTRACT STATUS REPORT**

- **FTA/RTA**

G. Kahale stated that MRPC and MART are working together on updating the bus routes in Fitchburg/Leominster/Gardner area; especially in the areas of new developments and shopping centers.

The Wachusett Commuter Rail Station Facility RFP opening for the engineer and architect services for the design of that station was opened last month. MART received five proposals from consultant companies and a committee will be meeting at MBTA in Boston to pick one of the consultants.

The Gardner MART Storage and Maintenance Facility is moving forward. The building is completed, and finishing work is being done. The completion date is projected for October 2008.

The parking expansion at North Leominster Station is being worked on by Jacobs of Boston; MART and Mayor Mazzarella have been reviewing the alternative studies of the area.

J. Oelfke asked if the consultants are taking the future traffic flow into that area that will be brought in by the construction of the North Leominster Station.

M. Khan indicated that the consultants will take care of the projected traffic flow of the area.

J. Lynch stated that more people will be involved if the construction of the station requires a MEFA environmental impact report. Much discussion followed.

- **MASSHIGHWAY DEPARTMENT 3C**

G. Snow stated that a Route 140 Task Force will be meeting, for the first time, at the Princeton Town Hall on September 4, 2008. MRPC and CMRPC will be providing support as it moves forward.

The October 1, 2008-September 30, 2009 UPWP was endorsed by the MPO earlier today. The next MPO meeting will be held on November 12, 2008 at 2:00PM.

## **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

J. Oelfke asked the MJTC to add a discussion on the future of the Commuter Rail to an upcoming meeting agenda in the fall.

S. Bradbury stated that representatives from the MBTA should be invited to the meeting as well to help with informing the MJTC.

J. Oelfke moved that the MRPC and staff provide an informational presentation on commuting in the year 2020; including a variety of opinions and perspectives from other organizations on the topic. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business for discussion.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, N. Piazza adjourned the meeting at 8:45PM.