

**MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF September 14, 2022**  
**Meeting Held Online through GoToMeeting.com - Hosted by the MRPC**

D. Kilhart, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

**I. Introduction**

**Members**

Roger Hoyt, Ashburnham; Dick Kilhart, Athol; Marc Morgan, Athol; Tim Kilhart, Harvard; Alice Livdahl, Hubbardston; Janet Tice, Shirley; Richard Maki, Sterling; Veronica Kell, Townsend; Beth Faxon, Townsend; Brian Croteau, Winchendon

**Ex-Officio and Organizations**

David Kline, The ARC of Opportunity; Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; George Kahale, MART

**Non-Members**

Randy Williams, Ashburnham; Frank O'Connor, Harvard; Jasmin Farinacci, Lancaster; Amanda Reid, Lunenburg; Emily McCaffrey, Townsend

**Staff**

Brad Harris; George Snow; Sheri Bean; Brian Doherty

**II. Public Comments**

There were no comments at this time.

**III. Approval of July 13, 2022 Minutes**

A motion was made to accept the July 13, 2022 MJTC Meeting Minutes as presented. Consensus was given to accept the minutes.

**IV. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update**

- Vision Statement Revision
- Public Survey Revision
- Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures Review and Discussion

B. Doherty discussed the Vision Statement for the RTP that was initially brought this up at the last meeting. He then reviewed the current RTP Vision Statement along with two initial revisions based on feedback from the staff and the MPO. He indicated that this revision added wording on environmentally sustainable to the sentence on economic development. We then received some additional comments that wished to ensure that the statement reflected all types of users and modes by adding to the first sentence the word inclusionary. This comment also suggested the removal of the term growth in the encourage and support sentence. Mr. Doherty then discussed what we are calling Draft Vision Statement number 3 that includes these wording changes.

A question was asked as to how the new wording of inclusionary would change the statement. A second question was then asked if the word is not there would it exclude anything.

B. Faxon from Townsend mentioned that she had made the comment and her intention was that the statement was to reflect the inclusion of everyone that uses the system including those identified under ADA guidelines. The question was then asked if that is already implied in the law. B. Faxon stated that the definition for inclusion reads “...designed or intended to provide equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized such as those having physical or intellectual disabilities or belonging to other minority groups.” B. Faxon stated that she believes that is what we are reaching for in this statement. B. Harris suggested that the wording be stated to read “...to provide a multimodal and inclusionary transportation system...” as a way to clarify the statement.

The discussion then focused on the removal of the word growth from the last sentence. It was thought to be repetitive with the term development. A point was made that where it is in the sentence preceded by a comma, it seems to refer to the growth of the transportation system and by removing the word, would it eliminate the expansion of the system as needed. B. Harris suggested that the sentence be written as follows “...sustainable economic development, comma, systematic growth and revitalization...”

After more discussion, it was decided to revise the inclusionary wording as suggested and to leave the term growth as is for the time being. B. Doherty stated that the Vision Statement can be revised at any time during the RTP process, so if we receive some further insight on the last sentence, we can discuss and revise as needed.

B. Doherty then discussed the next steps will be to examine the Goals, Objectives and Strategies of the RTP. Staff will be reviewing and refining them for further review by the MJTC. He then reviewed the definitions of the terms Goal, Objectives and Strategies. He then discussed the Performance Measures from the RTP and how staff will be looking at these in order to be more quantitative then qualitative. Again, these will be provided to the MJTC.

B. Doherty then reviewed the latest draft of the public survey developed for the RTP. We welcome any comments on the survey but are looking to wrap this up as soon as possible so that we can get it out to the general public. B. Faxon asked if there is a question that asks people if they are aware of the transit options available to them in their particular community. B. Doherty stated that that was an interesting question and we will see how we can phrase it so that we get back some usable information.

## **V. Safe Streets for All Federal Grant Program**

### **– Update of Application Process**

B. Harris provided to the MJTC an update on the SS4A application that will be submitted tomorrow by the MRPC on behalf of the entire region. He reviewed the basics of the program, the need for a Planning Grant to be developed so that implementation funds can be sought in future SS4A programming years. He reviewed the responses received from the communities regarding this application, the addition of MART as a joint applicant and the recent news that MRPC received from MassDOT that stated their intention to provide the funds for the 20% local match. The addition of MART has increased the number of communities involved and the data needed for the application. He then reviewed the proposed budget for the planning grant and how the 20% local commitment was to be funded. But as he mentioned, MassDOT has stepped up to assist with the funding by providing the local match. He concluded by stating that the application is due to be into the U.S. DOT tomorrow by 5:00 pm. This should not be a problem at this time.

A question was asked that with the addition of MART to the application, if a town is not a member of MART will they still receive the full benefit of the grant. B. Harris stated that if the community is a member of just MRPC, MART and MRPC or just MART, it would not make a difference in the level of effort or benefits associated with this grant. All communities will be examined and treated the same.

A question was asked on the difference between a community being a joint applicant or a partner on the overall SS4A application. B. Harris stated that based on the funding notice, it appears that difference is only in the

ability of a community to apply on their own without being rejected because they had applied as a joint applicant to another proposal. As far as the MRPC is concerned, there will be no difference in the level of analysis and outreach between a partner applicant and a joint applicant.

A question was asked on whether the planning grant would only focus on the state highway network. B. Harris stated that the grant notice stated that the entire road network needs to be considered in the planning grant so all of the roads in a town should be part of the review.

## **VI. Contract Status Reports**

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

B. Harris stated that there is nothing new to report on the transit side at this time.

- MassDOT 3C

B. Harris stated the MPO will not be meeting this month. The next MPO meeting will be on October 19th at 1:00 pm.

Staff is currently working on various work program tasks in order to close out the current year. On October 1<sup>st</sup> we will begin the FFY 2023 program year that is currently budgeted at \$927,038 up from the current year budget of \$747,979.

We have had the successful conclusion to our traffic count program as our consultant has completed all 60+ traffic and TM counts. They have been submitted to us and reviewed for uploading to MassDOT. We paid approximately \$27,000 to Amos Engineering for this program. This would be comparable to us hiring interns considering their hours, overhead, travel expenses, supplies and staff supervision time. We will be looking to do this again for the next count season.

Two handouts for discussion:

From MassDOT, there is the Northern Tier Passenger Rail Study newsletter for August 29, 2022. The newsletter discusses the next phase in the development of this study that being "the development of potential service plans or "alternatives" for passenger rail service along the North Adams-Greenfield-Boston corridor. The alternatives development process will take a two-phase approach. In Phase 1, the team will develop two alternatives to show the type of service schedules that could be achieved through a lower investment level and a higher investment level. A half-day public workshop will be held in early fall 2022 to review the two initial service plan alternatives and evaluation framework. Feedback received will be used to develop four additional service plan alternatives as part of Phase 2. When we receive further information on this workshop, we will post it on the MRPC website under Announcements.

The second is for informational purposes. Back in the spring of this year, the MRPC submitted a grant application under the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) funding program to try to secure funding to conduct an analysis and design for a new interchange on Route 2 at South Athol Rd in Athol. We applied for \$1,000,000, the minimum award amount, for this planning grant. Unfortunately, we did not receive any funding. However, 2 MA projects were selected, and they are highlighted on this handout. One award of \$20,250,000 went to MassDOT for the Lynnway Multimodal Corridor and the second went to city of Boston for \$20,000,000 for the Roxbury Resilient Transportation Corridors.

## **VII. Administrative Matters**

- Next MJTC Meeting

B. Harris stated that the next meeting is Wednesday November 9, 2022 at 2:30 pm. There will be no meeting in October.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

#### **DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:**

- 9 14 2022 Agenda
- 7 13 2022 MJTC minutes
- 4 DRAFT Vision Statement
- 4 RTP 2020 GO&S
- 4 RTP Draft Survey
- 5 Regional Community Ltr of Support 9 14 2022
- 5 SS4A Community List 8 23 2022
- 5 SS4A MJTC Info 9 14 2022
- 6 Northern Tier Aug 2022 Newsletter
- 6 RAISE 2022 Award FACT SHEETS Massachusetts