

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
May 31, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

1. OPEN MEETING AND INTRODUCTIONS

J. Telepciak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Introductions took place. There was no quorum present.

2. MOMENT AND SILENCE AND REMEMBRANCE OF VICTOR KOIVUMAKI

A moment of silence was held for Victor Koivumaki, MRPC Chairman.

3. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 26, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

As there was not a quorum present action on this item was postponed.

4. SLATE OF OFFICERS

The Nominating Committee presented the Slate of Officers for the upcoming fiscal year.

Chairman - John Telepciak

Vice Chairman - Guy Corbosiero

Treasurer- Alan Pease

Assistant Treasurer - Roger Hoyt

Secretary - Mike Pineo

Members at Large- Phil Duffy and Paula Caron

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Roger Hoyt read the May 2016 cash schedule. Balance after last warrant \$ \$86,725.70; Total receipts this month \$104,640.74; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$175,136.88; Less: amount of this warrant \$163,274.83
Balance after this warrant \$11,862.05.

As there was not a quorum present action on this item was postponed.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

6.1 MA Sick Time Law Legal Opinion

Postponed until June Meeting

6.2 Salary Adjustments

The Executive Director is requesting one step increases for the following staff members effective July 1, 2016. See attached handout regarding details on increases.

Holly Ford	Administrative Assistant
Noam Goldstein	Regional Planner
Chantell Fleck	Principal Planner

Brian Doherty	Regional Planner
Sheri Bean	Principal Planner
Brian Keating	Principal Planner
Bobbi Jo Johnson	Fiscal Director
Jason Stanton	GIS/IT Director
George Snow	Principal Planner
Linda Parmenter	HR/Administrative Director
George Kahale	Transit Director
Glenn Eaton	Executive Director

The Executive Director is recommending a four step increase for John Hume, MRPC's Planning and Development Director; from \$66,190 (Grade 6/Step 5) to \$73,062 (Grade 6/Step 9). After the layoff in December 2014, Mr. Hume assumed the responsibility for the management of two Departments , Comprehensive Planning and Community Development. Mr. Hume has also been instrumental in obtaining a number of funding opportunities for the agency. This salary increase will also bring his salary in line with other Directors with a similar experience, education and management skills.

Brad Harris, Transportation Director will receive an annual merit payment of 2.0% (or \$1,767.36) in accordance with the vote by the Commission at its February 2014 meeting regarding employees who have reached their top step ("they will be eligible to receive annual compensation up to the most recent CPI increase for most recent year, five, or ten year span that data is available, funding available.)"

Please note that the Executive Director and Administrative and Human resources Director will complete all salary market study tasks necessary for the presentation of a new pay scale no later than July 2016.

Action was postponed until the next meeting.

6.3 FY17 Budget Approval

Mr. Eaton and Ms. Johnson propose the adoption of the FY17 budget for this agency. Please note the new format which has been prepared in accordance with our Auditor's request (Roland Lambalot, CPA). G. Eaton and Bobbi Jo Johnson explained the budget. See handout. Action was postponed until the next meeting.

6.4 Conference Attendance, Glenn Eaton

Mr Eaton will be out of the office at a conference from Friday, June 24th and he will return to the office on Tuesday, July 5th. He will not be able to attend the June 28th meeting of the Planning Commissioners.

It was decided that the Director would email members to determine what the best date would be for a June MRPC Meeting as action needed to be taken on the above matters.

Discussion took place regarding quarterly MRPC Meetings and the results of a survey MRPC conducted last year regarding this issue.

7. STATUS REPORTS

7.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

MRMAPPER & MOBILE APPS

We are consistently adding data, applications and/or enhancing tools in *MRMapper* as the need arises so please check back frequently to see what's new. We have completed converting all Flex/Flash (Legacy) applications to JavaScript/HTML5 (WebApps). This is a core change that allows users to consume *MRMapper* content on most browsers and, most importantly, without plugins that currently restrict usage on mobile devices. Legacy applications will be available for a short time only and will not be updated.

In addition, Mobile Apps are becoming increasingly popular. They are designed for two main purposes- (1) informing the public and (2) improving efficiency in data collection and field work. Public apps are created to allow the public to view data online in any browser and on any device. Data collection apps are custom designed by the MRPC to the users' field of work or area of interest.

- Shirley – We will be updating Shirley's *MRMapper* site as soon as their parcel data updates are complete
- Ayer – We will be creating a *MRMapper* site for the Town of Ayer in May and June.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Distressed Property Identification and Revitalization (DPIR) - We are currently gearing up to create several mobile apps for use in the DPIR program.

District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)

Ashby Land Use Analysis – A map depicting the Town's Land use was created and data analysis was performed regarding the acreage and percentages of particular land uses throughout the town. This project will be ongoing as necessary.

Templeton Land Use Analysis – A map depicting the Town's Land use was created and data analysis was performed regarding the acreage and percentages of particular land uses throughout the town. This project will be ongoing as necessary.

Templeton Residential Development Potential Analysis – A map depicting the Town's Residential Development potential was created. In addition data analysis was performed regarding (1) Absolute Development Constraints, (2) Partial Development Constraints and (3) Developable Lands. This project will be ongoing as necessary.

Devens Economic Impact Study – We are in the beginning stages of mapping and data analysis for this study. We will be focusing on four main areas- (1) Development Potential Analysis (Developed, Developable and Undevelopable Lands), (2) Land Use Analysis, (3) Zoning and (4) Open Space. This project will be ongoing through June.

TRANSPORTATION

Harvard Town Center – We have completed a series of maps focusing on transportation elements for Harvard Town Center. This project is expected to be completed soon.

Stormwater App Development – We are gearing up to begin the development of a Stormwater App for data collection in order to aid communities in the (Environmental Protection Agency) EPA (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) MS4 compliance. We are in the process of gathering data and will be working with the communities of Lunenburg and Winchendon to develop and test the app. This project will be ongoing through the Spring/Summer.

MART

Comprehensive Update – We have completed a comprehensive update of the MART bus routes, stops and maps. This project is complete.

COMMUNITY-RELATED

Harvard Open Space Plan Mapping – Draft maps were sent to the Town of Harvard regarding their Open Space Plan Update maps. This project is expected to be completed in May.

7.2 Planning and Development

Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) And Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Montachusett Region Brownfields Assessment Program

A joint Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)/ Montachusett Brownfields Group (MBG) meeting will be held at 5 pm on June 9, 2016 at CAN-AM Machinery, Inc., 44 Old Princeton Road, Fitchburg. MRPC's brownfields environmental consultant (TRC) will present and answer questions about the Federal Environmental Protection Agencies Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund and bringing brownfields back into productive use. Then, MRPC's Community Development Manager (Brian Keating) will present and answer questions about how MRPC can assist your community to prepare a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application. CDBG applications take considerable time and effort to put together – now is the time to initiate!

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Project

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has completed its review of the Montachusett Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for the jurisdictions referenced below and found them approvable pending local adoption of the plan. As of May 19th, the towns of Ashburnham, Ayer, Petersham, and Westminster have adopted the plan.

Economic Impact of Devens

With assistance received from the City of Leominster, MRPC received a \$100,000 grant to complete an economic impact study of Devens, which includes an analysis of the housing market, economic development, transportation infrastructure, open space, government services and facilities, and land use.

MRPC entered into a contract with the State's Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Office of Performance Management and Oversight (OPMO) for this project; the grant's termination date is June 30, 2016. Mullin Associates has been hired (John Mullin and Zenia Kotval) to assist with the economic development element.

On May 19, 2016, an audience of more than 40 stakeholders from the private and public sectors gathered at Great Wolf Lodge to provide input into the development of this report. MRPC's Executive Director Glenn Eaton moderated the event which consisted of an overview of the project, break out groups, and presentations of break out group discussions.

District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)

MRPC staff is initiating work on the following DLTA projects:

1. **Templeton:** Master Plan Land Use Element
2. **Shirley:** Feasibility Study comprised of recommendations to potentially join or not join a regional dispatch center. There are two regional dispatch centers in the neighboring communities of Groton and Devens. The study would evaluate each one and recommend the best option for Shirley.
3. **Sterling:** A DLTA report near completion for Sterling consists of recommendations to update zoning bylaws to encourage the development and redevelopment of commercial property in a manner that reflects the interests and needs of the community. This proposed project would implement recommendations.
4. **Townsend:** A DLTA report near completion for Townsend consists of recommendations to update bylaws to increase opportunities in Townsend. This proposed project would implement recommendations.
5. **Central Mass Grown:** Work with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission on Central Mass Grown by utilizing \$7,500 in DLTA funds. The mission of Central Mass Grown is to strengthen the purchases and awareness of local goods in Worcester County.
6. **Winchendon:** Master Plan Land Use Element
7. Westminister: Planning assistance to prepare a senior housing feasibility study for land behind the new senior center at 69 West Main Street.
8. Winchendon: Potential conversion of the Central Street commercial area into its own zoning district to be known as "The Winchendon Village District".
9. Ashby: Identify how Ashby can accommodate Compact Development/ investigate how Ashby can promote Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) through ANR development.
10. Fitchburg: Assist Fitchburg to meet requirements for becoming designated as a "Green Community".
11. Lancaster: Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT).
12. Harvard: Cluster Bylaw Revisions.

Shirley Master Plan Update

MRPC staff has completed all elements under contract with the exception of the Open Space and Recreation Element – to complete this element, the Town must first complete its Open Space and Recreation Plan (scheduled for completion in September).

SHIRLEY- LANCASTER CDBG HOUSING REHABILITATION/FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM The Housing Rehabilitation and Fuel Assistance program continues to meet contract milestones and grant expectations. The Housing Rehab Program has facilitated nine loan closings for work to be completed on nine projects. These projects include lead abatement, window and door upgrades,

electrical upgrades, a new roof, and a connection to public sewer where the property had until now been serviced by a cesspool, and a new septic system.

All approved properties have been inspected for code violations and lead contamination. The program goal is to service 20 units of housing. To date the program has bid out 17 units and 3 units are scheduled to be bid out.

Program staff is now scheduling loan closings and homeowner-contractor agreements for the 8 remaining projects that have gone out to bid. A title search attorney is running title searches on all properties before loan closings are scheduled.

Approximately 76% of HR program funds are earmarked for approved projects. The program staff continues to work with applicants who are not yet approved with the objective of committing 100% of funding available.

As a CDFII community Lancaster is restricted to 35% of total program funds. To date, the program has approved 9 units of housing in this community and is up against 35% of the available funds for the housing rehab portion of the grant. It is improbable that additional properties in Lancaster will be approved as housing rehab projects in this grant cycle.

The Fuel Assistance Program has received 29 applications and has delivered \$4,290.46 in fuel. The delivery schedule is accelerating as applicants' LIHEAP benefits are being exhausted.

MEC, INC. - RECEIVERSHIP PROJECTS

Brian Keating, Community Development Manager and Holly Ford, Administrative Assistant/Community Development are now responsible for these MEC real estate-related projects. Glenn Eaton, Executive Director will continue to provide training and technical assistance to these employees as they transition into this work.

112 Harvard Avenue

- Nothing new to report this month.

41 Lewis Street

- Mr. Keating met with a housing inspector representing the bank of record who inspected the property on May 19th. As of the 24th MEC has not heard back from the bank as to whether they will proceed with a buyout of the lien.

207 Adams Drive

- The bank of record for this property also has stated its intention to pay off the receiver's lien. Glenn on behalf of MEC has expressed his discomfort and also conveyed the Town's frustration that this property, as well as 41 Lewis St., could be turned back over to the banks without any reassurance

that these banks will return the property to the market. This concern was also conveyed to the Attorney General's Office and to the Housing Court.

119 Everett Avenue

- The status hearing was conducted on April 6. On April 20 the Attorney General's Office will provided a supplemental report to the Housing Court that included additional repair items that were submitted by the Board of Health in Athol. The court approved these additional repair items. Work has been completed at this property.

1158 Main Street

- The bank of record has taken possession of this property and paid-off the receiver's priority lien in full. MEC is submitting the final accounting to the Court this month.

1768-70 Main Street

- Nothing new to report this month.

MEC - ASHBURNHAM AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT – 10 MONROE DRIVE

Work on this property is very near completion. All inside finishes are complete. Flooring is scheduled. Driveway is complete. MEC staff is exploring the option of marketing and selling the property in-house.

MEC – 30 POWERS MILL ROAD

Mr. Keating is exploring all options to repair this house. A property appraiser returned a value of \$175,000 if the house is restored. A contractor returned an estimate that would bring total costs above this value.

7.3 TRANSIT

Ayer Parking Facility

On May 9th, 2016 Ayer Town meeting approved an article to take the pedestrian access to the Commuter Rail Station by eminent domain; after three years of hard work and good faith negotiations with the property owner. The property taking will enable access to the train station with a pedestrian walkway and a proposed driveway with a vehicular drop-off and turnaround. MRPC Staff assisted MART in putting together Request for Response for Properties Appraisal and for Environmental Site Assessments (ESA). The construction process of Ayer Parking Facility has moved forward.

Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line Improvements

The MBTA has released the Final revision of the Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line Schedule effective 5/23/2016. Two trains have been added; the early reverse commute train to Fitchburg arriving at 7:38 AM and a train leaving Fitchburg at 6:53 AM other than that no changes to the previously released draft schedule on 12/18/2015. For the weekend schedules were no changes, the early train arriving in

Fitchburg is 10:01 AM; a Ski Train is needed for the weekend to arrive at Fitchburg by 8:00 AM at least in the Ski Season.

Athol / Orange Fixed Bus Route

Staff attended a meeting with MART regarding public transportation in the Athol/Orange region. Additional changes have been added to the Bus Route to serve new Neighborhoods in Orange/Athol area. Staff continues working on new Bus Route and Schedule to shift Rider from Para-transit to Fixed Route service.

Wachusett Commuter Rail Station and Layover Facility

No New Update.

7.4 TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FFY 2017-2021

MRPC staff is continuing the development of the next TIP that will cover FFY 2017-2021. Initially, it was planned that a draft would be released for a 30 day public comment period after the May 25th MPO meeting. However, due to various issues regarding additional project information, MassDOT has pushed back the release until after the June MPO meeting. That meeting will likely be held on June 18th pending agreement from the full MPO. Staff is continuing to develop various funding scenarios for FFY 2017 to 2021 based upon updated information from MassDOT. As additional clarification is received these scenarios will be revised and presented to the MPO for review. In addition, work is continuing on both a geographically and equitability analysis of current and past projects for inclusion in the TIP. As of now the MPO is scheduled to meet on May 25th, June 18th and in July at a date to be determined.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) 2016-2017

The UPWP development schedule is being adjusted to coincide with TIP release and endorsement. A draft will be prepared for the June MPO for review and hopefully release for public comment. The UPWP is a budget and programming tool that outlines our work activities for the year that will cover October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017. Our PL allocation for FY 2017 is set at \$621,347. This represents a \$35,476 increase from our FFY 2016 allocation of \$58,871.

Data Collection

MRPC has hired two part time traffic interns for the summer who will be working on various data collection tasks. This will include traffic counts for MassDOT and our communities, peak hour turning movement counts and data such as crash reports from local police departments. Staff will be making use of our regular road tube counters as well as our video counter system and a recently acquired radar count unit.

Montachusett MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The Montachusett MPO previously reviewed the draft Public Participation Plan (PPP) as well as a comment received at their meeting on May 25th. After discussion and development of a response, the MPO voted to endorse the PPP. The document outlines the process the MPO undertakes to ensure adequate public notice of the transportation planning process and subsequent decisions. It also identifies how all individuals in the Region can become part of and provide input to the process with particular attention to those traditionally underserved or represented.

MJTC Meeting – June 15, 2016 at 7:00 PM

MPO Meeting – June 25, 2016 at 1:00 PM - NOTE: DATE CHANGE

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING

May 31, 2016 MRPC Handout

April 26, 2016 MRPC minutes

MRPC Cash Schedule

MRPC pay adjustments

FY2017 Budget

MRPC Meeting Attendance List

Alphabetically by Community

Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Johnson, Kyle	A	Ashburnham	7.2015		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001		X
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2005		X
Knapik, Garrett	M	Athol	7.2015		X
Grosky, Mitch	A	Athol	5.2015		X
Callahan, Jeremy	M	Ayer	7.2015		X
Maher, David	A	Ayer	7.2014		X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011	X	
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Caron, Paula	M	Fitchburg	7.2002	X	
Gross, Allen	M	Gardner	2.2005		X
Cormier, Joshua	A	Gardner	7.2015		X
Collette, Michelle	M	Groton	7.2015		X
Graham, Don	M	Harvard	7.2015		X
Wallace, Lucy	A	Harvard	7.2015		X
DiPinto, Mary Ann	M	Hubbardston	7.2015		X
Sheipers, Anita	A	Hubbardston	7.2013		X
Prokowieiw, David	M	Lunenburg	7.2015		X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.201	X	
Natrowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015		X
Hardie, John	A	Royalston	7.2007		X
Widing, Sarah	M	Shirley	7.2015		X
Pineo, Michael	M	Sterling	7.2014	X	
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Carroll, Charles	A	Templeton	7.2011		X
Shifrin, Laura	A	Townsend	7.2010		X
Fortin, Mike	M	Westminster	7.2015	X	
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011		X
Cyganiewicz, Austin	A	Winchendon	7.2015		X

STAFF PRESENT: Glenn Eaton, Linda Parmenter, George Kahale, John Hume, Brad Harris, Jason Stanton, Bobbi Jo Johnson