

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)
MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2016
7:00 PM

1. OPEN MEETING AND INTRODUCTIONS

J. Telepciak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All present introduced themselves. Meeting attendance can be found on the last page of this document.

2. APPROVAL OF JULY 26, 2016 MRPC MEETING MINUTES

G. Corbosiero moved to approve the July 26, 2016 minutes as printed. The motion was seconded and passed with P. Duffy abstaining.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

3.1 Approval of Cash Schedule

A. Pease read the August 30, 2016 cash schedule. Balance after last \$92,134.58; Total receipts this month \$189,662.54; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$281,797.12; Less: amount of this warrant \$154,568.10; Balance after this warrant \$127,229.02.

G. Corbosiero moved to accept the August 30, 2016 cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

G. Eaton provided an update on the EPA Program Income Account. MRPC has been invoicing the owner of 184 Stone Street for monies owed to the EPA Revolving Loan Fund. Earlier in the year, MRPC sent a letter to the owner (based on the owner's request) indicating that if he made twelve months of consistent payments, MRPC would revisit this re-payment issue in January 2017. The owner has been making payments. The owner is now current. MRPC will revisit this issue in January 2017.

Discussion followed regarding repayment.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

4.1 Employee Update

G. Eaton indicated that Ms. Chantell Fleck, Principal Planner has resigned her Regional Planner position. She will begin working for the Town of Winchendon on or about September 19. The Executive Director is in the process of preparing the job advertisement to seek out a new Principal Planner. The search and hiring process usually takes approximately 90 to 120 days. MRPC will ensure that the State's District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) contract has been executed prior to any new hiring. He would like to advertise the salary at a higher rate, approximately \$50,000.

Discussion followed regarding paying a higher rate for a Principal Planner. G. Eaton explained MRPC's pay scale is notoriously low. He was concerned that if the salary is not increased MRPC will have a tough time filling the position. Over the past couple of years, MRPC has struggled to get a high number of qualified applicants and has had to re-advertise in order to fill positions in which some cases has taken six months to get an employee on board.

4.2 MA Sick Leave Statute – Presentation by Attorney Goldstein

M. Goldstein stated that the management letter from the Auditor indicates that MRPC is not in compliance with the MA Sick Leave Law. Based on a request from the Executive Director regarding this matter, Mr. Goldstein is of the following opinion regarding the MA Sick Leave Law. MGL Chapter 149 Subsection 148b does not apply to Regional Planning Agencies unless this agency adopts the statute. If MRPC wants to implement mandatory sick time for all employees, the board would have to adopt the statute. The statute is somewhat convoluted and does not really refer to RPAs, but refers to public employees not employed by a municipality. Other Regional Planning Agencies also concur with this position. It is not a mandated benefit at this time unless the MRPC votes to adopt it.

Discussion followed regarding present policy for employees.

- Full-time employees earn 7.5 hours of sick leave per month.
- Part-time who work 18.75 hours or more earn 3.75 hours of sick leave per month.
- Part-time employees who work less than 18.75 hours are not eligible for paid sick time.
- Temporary Employees - At the July 2016 MRPC Meeting, members approved revising the Personnel Regulations to eliminate fringe benefits for temporary employees, excluding mandated benefits (MA Sick Time Law).

If MRPC adopts the MA Sick Time Law, paid sick leave benefits would be extended to all employees. If MRPC chooses not to adopt the MA Sick Time Law paid sick leave benefits will not be available to those work less than 18.75 hours per week and temporary employees.

P. Duffy moved that the MRPC adopt the provisions of MA Sick Leave Law which would extend sick leave benefits to all employees including temporary employees and those who work less than 18.75 hours per week.

After discussion, the motion was seconded and not approved.

4.2 MRPC Meeting Attendance Survey Results

G. Eaton distributed a summary of the results of this survey. Fifteen (48.4%) of the 31 active Commissioners responded. They indicated the following:

1. The first Thursday of the month appears to be the day with the greatest favor of Commissioners to meet with 10 (66.67%) of fifteen responses

2. The fourth Tuesday of each month followed with nine (60%) responses
3. Eight (53.33%) of the respondents indicated that the following days would work:
 - a. First week of the month on Monday
 - b. First week of the month on Tuesday
 - c. First week of the month on Wednesday
 - d. Second week of the month on Tuesday
 - e. Second week of the month on Thursday
 - f. Third week of the month on Thursday
4. Five days of the month tied for 4th place with 7 (46.67%) of the respondents indicating that they could make meetings on the following days:
 - a. Third week of the month on Monday
 - b. Third week of the month on Tuesday
 - c. Third week of the month on Wednesday
5. Six (40%) of the 15 respondents chose three days per month; they were as follows:
 - a. Second week of the month on Monday
 - b. Second week of the month on Wednesday
 - c. Fourth week of the month on Wednesday
6. Four other open-ended responses were received; they were:
 - a. Night Meetings are very difficult
 - b. Available most times of the days indicated
 - c. Tuesday I have meetings occasionally but they don't fall on any particular week of the month
 - d. Monday's are no good because I have Planning Board meetings

The Executive Director recommends that the Planning Commissioners begin meeting on the first Thursday of each month starting in January and that the following meeting schedule be followed from September through December 2016 as a transitional period as the agency adjusts from meeting on the last Tuesday of each month to the first Thursday of each month.

September 27, 2016
October 25, 2016
November 22 or 29, 2016 (Thanksgiving Holiday will be celebrated on November 24)
December 13 or 20, 2016
January 5, 2017

Discussion followed.

G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission shall hold its monthly meetings on the first Thursday of each month starting on January 5, 2017. The November 2016 will be held November 22, 2016 and the December 2016 will be held December 13, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

G. Eaton presented a snapshot of MRPC's website.

4.3 Salary Scale Revision

G. Eaton explained that all of the existing employees' salaries can be found within the following table. Employees are compensated according to the previously adopted pay scale on the following page.

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION										
PAYSCALE										
Effective 7/1/16										
PLANNING & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF										
TITLE	STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6	STEP 7	STEP 8	STEP 9	STEP 10
Glenn Essex EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	93,402	95,737	98,130	100,584	103,098	105,676	108,318	111,026	113,801	116,648
Grade 8	\$47.90	\$49.10	\$50.32	\$51.56	\$52.87	\$54.19	\$55.55	\$56.94	\$58.36	\$59.82
Rebecca Harris TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR	70,759	72,528	74,341	76,200	78,105	80,057	82,059	84,110	86,213	88,368
Grade 7	\$38.29	\$37.19	\$38.12	\$39.08	\$40.05	\$41.06	\$42.08	\$43.13	\$44.21	\$45.32
George Kenna TRANSIT DIRECTOR	70,759	72,528	74,341	76,200	78,105	80,057	82,059	84,110	86,213	88,368
Grade 7	\$38.29	\$37.19	\$38.12	\$39.08	\$40.05	\$41.06	\$42.08	\$43.13	\$44.21	\$45.32
James Parmaster HR/ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR	70,759	72,528	74,341	76,200	78,105	80,057	82,059	84,110	86,213	88,368
Grade 7	\$38.29	\$37.19	\$38.12	\$39.08	\$40.05	\$41.06	\$42.08	\$43.13	\$44.21	\$45.32
John Hume PLANNING & DEV. DIRECTOR	69,965	61,464	63,001	64,576	66,190	67,845	69,541	71,280	73,062	74,888
Grade 6	\$30.75	\$31.52	\$32.31	\$33.12	\$33.94	\$34.79	\$35.66	\$36.55	\$37.47	\$38.40
George Snow TRANS. PRINCIPAL PLANNER	69,965	61,464	63,001	64,576	66,190	67,845	69,541	71,280	73,062	74,888
Grade 6	\$30.75	\$31.52	\$32.31	\$33.12	\$33.94	\$34.79	\$35.66	\$36.55	\$37.47	\$38.40
James Shannon GIS/IT DIRECTOR	69,965	61,464	63,001	64,576	66,190	67,845	69,541	71,280	73,062	74,888
Grade 6	\$30.75	\$31.52	\$32.31	\$33.12	\$33.94	\$34.79	\$35.66	\$36.55	\$37.47	\$38.40
Bonnie Jo Johnson FISCAL DIRECTOR	69,965	61,464	63,001	64,576	66,190	67,845	69,541	71,280	73,062	74,888
Grade 6	\$30.75	\$31.52	\$32.31	\$33.12	\$33.94	\$34.79	\$35.66	\$36.55	\$37.47	\$38.40
Brian Keating COMMUNITY DEV. DIRECTOR	69,965	61,464	63,001	64,576	66,190	67,845	69,541	71,280	73,062	74,888
Grade 6	\$30.75	\$31.52	\$32.31	\$33.12	\$33.94	\$34.79	\$35.66	\$36.55	\$37.47	\$38.40
Georgina Dunn TRANS. PRINCIPAL PLANNER	45,428	46,564	47,728	48,921	50,144	51,398	52,683	54,000	55,350	56,733
Grade 4	\$23.30	\$23.88	\$24.48	\$25.09	\$25.71	\$26.30	\$27.02	\$27.69	\$28.38	\$29.09
Brian Donohue TRANSPORTATION PLANNER	45,428	46,564	47,728	48,921	50,144	51,398	52,683	54,000	55,350	56,733
Grade 4	\$23.30	\$23.88	\$24.48	\$25.09	\$25.71	\$26.30	\$27.02	\$27.69	\$28.38	\$29.09
Chantell Flock PRINCIPAL PLANNER	43,265	44,347	45,455	46,592	47,758	48,950	50,174	51,428	52,714	54,032
Grade 3	\$22.19	\$22.74	\$23.31	\$23.89	\$24.49	\$25.10	\$25.73	\$26.37	\$27.03	\$27.71
Pending TRANSPORTATION PLANNER	41,205	42,235	43,291	44,373	45,483	46,620	47,785	48,980	50,204	51,459
Grade 2	\$21.13	\$21.66	\$22.20	\$22.76	\$23.32	\$23.91	\$24.51	\$25.12	\$25.75	\$26.39
Sharon Kane REGIONAL PLANNER	41,205	42,235	43,291	44,373	45,483	46,620	47,785	48,980	50,204	51,459
Grade 2	\$21.13	\$21.66	\$22.20	\$22.76	\$23.32	\$23.91	\$24.51	\$25.12	\$25.75	\$26.39
Nancy Goldstein REGIONAL PLANNER	33,500	34,338	35,196	36,076	36,978	37,902	38,850	39,821	40,816	41,837
Grade 1	\$17.18	\$17.61	\$18.05	\$18.50	\$18.96	\$19.44	\$19.92	\$20.42	\$20.93	\$21.45
Harry Ford ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	33,500	34,338	35,196	36,076	36,978	37,902	38,850	39,821	40,816	41,837
Grade 1	\$17.18	\$17.61	\$18.05	\$18.50	\$18.96	\$19.44	\$19.92	\$20.42	\$20.93	\$21.45

The existing pay scale is as follows:

EXHIBIT A

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Compensation Plan - Based on Market AverageStep % - 2.50
Hrs/Wk = 37.50

Grade	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10
1	\$33,500	\$34,338	\$35,196	\$36,076	\$36,978	\$37,902	\$38,850	\$39,821	\$40,816	\$41,837
2	\$41,205	\$42,235	\$43,291	\$44,373	\$45,483	\$46,620	\$47,785	\$48,980	\$50,204	\$51,459
3	\$43,265	\$44,347	\$45,455	\$46,592	\$47,756	\$48,950	\$50,174	\$51,428	\$52,714	\$54,032
4	\$45,428	\$46,564	\$47,728	\$48,921	\$50,144	\$51,398	\$52,683	\$54,000	\$55,350	\$56,733
5	\$49,971	\$51,220	\$52,501	\$53,813	\$55,159	\$56,538	\$57,951	\$59,400	\$60,885	\$62,407
6	\$59,965	\$61,464	\$63,001	\$64,576	\$66,190	\$67,845	\$69,541	\$71,280	\$73,062	\$74,888
7	\$70,759	\$72,528	\$74,341	\$76,200	\$78,105	\$80,057	\$82,059	\$84,110	\$86,213	\$88,368
8	\$93,402	\$95,737	\$98,130	\$100,584	\$103,098	\$105,676	\$108,318	\$111,026	\$113,801	\$116,646

G. Eaton explained that the above pay scale is based upon the analysis completed by HRS, Inc. It allows employees to receive pay increases within and between grade ranges based upon performance (merit) and longevity (see p. 19 of the HRS, Inc. 2011 report accepted adopted by the Commission on April 26, 2011). HRS originally developed this scale on behalf of the MRPC. It allows salaries of employees moving between grade ranges and no salary was capped. This method was approved by the MRPC in 2003.

Paula Caron provided the Executive Director with multiple scenarios for altering the pay scale. He distributed Ms. Caron's email and accompanying spreadsheets in hard copy as a separate handout. He explained that some of the spreadsheets include cost of living adjustments. G. Eaton explained that some RPAs strictly have a merit pay scale system and others have a combination of merit and COLA. MassDOT will not fund COLA increases for employees. If COLA is adopted by the MRPC, our five transportation staff would have to charge their COLA salary percentage increases to Administration, thereby increasing MRPC's overhead rate.

G. Eaton mentioned that the retention of a 2.5% increase in salaries will increase MRPC's budget by approximately \$25,000 each year.

G. Eaton distributed and explained a report he prepared concerning MRPC fiscal sustainability. The issue of sustainability of the organization has been raised and drawn in to the conversation concerning the proposal to alter the organization's pay scale. Included in the report are projected retirement dates of current staff. For the next decade we are sustainable based on those projected retirement dates. However, after that time, the matter needs to be revisited.

G. Eaton also explained that as per the Commission's directive of July 26, 2016 he inserted a new grade in between grades 7 and 8 in the existing pay scale. The new pay grade is numbered 8; grade 7 remains

the same numeral while the former grade 8 is now grade 9. In addition, the lowest step of the former pay scale has been eliminated and an addition step has been added per the consensus of the Commissioners and their directive to the Executive Director in July. A new step 11 has been added for consideration by the Commissioners per the email received from Ms. Paula Caron, Scenario D.

August 30, 2016											
Compensation Plan ("Pay Scale")											
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission											
Step % = 2.50											
Hours/Week = 37.50											
Step -->	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10	Step 11
Grade											
1	\$34,338	\$35,196	\$36,076	\$36,978	\$37,903	\$38,850	\$39,822	\$40,817	\$41,838	\$42,883	\$43,956
2	\$42,235	\$43,291	\$44,373	\$45,482	\$46,620	\$47,785	\$48,980	\$50,204	\$51,459	\$52,746	\$54,064
3	\$44,347	\$45,456	\$46,592	\$47,757	\$48,951	\$50,175	\$51,429	\$52,715	\$54,033	\$55,383	\$56,768
4	\$46,564	\$47,728	\$48,921	\$50,144	\$51,398	\$52,683	\$54,000	\$55,350	\$56,734	\$58,152	\$59,606
5	\$51,220	\$52,501	\$53,813	\$55,158	\$56,537	\$57,951	\$59,399	\$60,884	\$62,407	\$63,967	\$65,566
6	\$61,464	\$63,001	\$64,576	\$66,190	\$67,845	\$69,541	\$71,279	\$73,061	\$74,888	\$76,760	\$78,679
7	\$72,258	\$74,064	\$75,916	\$77,814	\$79,759	\$81,753	\$83,797	\$85,892	\$88,039	\$90,240	\$92,496
8	\$90,577	\$92,841	\$95,162	\$97,542	\$99,980	\$102,480	\$105,042	\$107,668	\$110,359	\$113,118	\$115,946
9	\$95,737	\$98,130	\$100,584	\$103,098	\$105,676	\$108,318	\$111,026	\$113,801	\$116,646	\$119,562	\$122,551

The Executive Director proposed two resolutions for the meeting, A and B, below. He recommended that the Commissioners adopt Resolution A so as to resolve this matter. However, if the Commissioners want to study this matter further, then the Executive Director recommends the hiring of a qualified consultant to prepare a report on matters relevant to this discussion so that the Commission may take action in the future on this matter.

- A. BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission hereby adopts the new job classification plan, pay scale including the new "grade 8," and also hereby adjusts the annual salary of Mr. Brad Harris, Transportation Projects Director from \$88,368 to \$90,578 commencing on July 1, 2016, the beginning of FY17; the bonus paid to Mr. Harris shall be included within his compensation for FY17 and shall not be added to the difference in the two pay grades of \$2,210.00. OR
- B. BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission hereby exceed \$10,000 be allocated (within the "Professional Consultants" line item), that authorization be given to the Executive Director to engage a qualified consultant in order to propose to the Commissioners a new job classification plan, pay scale to provide beginning and ending pay ranges for employees and a methodology for updating the data periodically, and to address any other compensation

matters identified by the Commissioners.

Much discussion followed. Highlights are below.

G. Eaton explained that in 2014 MRPC voted that when employees reach the last step of a pay grade they receive a bonus of approximately 1.5%. He indicated that because an employee reaches the last step of a paygrade does not mean their salary is capped, as MRPC has not adopted salary caps.

He further explained that prior to that vote in 2014, those who reached the last step were moved to the next higher pay grade as per a compensation study undertaken by HRS Consultants and adopted by the MRPC in 2003. Pay increases were based on merit and longevity.

G. Corbosiero asked if it was the recommendation of HRS that a salary survey be undertaken every three years and have those taken place.

G. Eaton indicated that he has undertaken salary surveys utilizing data from the American Planning Organization and the federal bureau of labor statistics. The data for the above pay scale is more reflective of the current market rate. Referring to his sustainability report, he indicated that based on averages of inflation rates over the past 30 years, the median is 2.3% and MRPC is at 2.5% increase.

P. Duffy asked the Director if he felt the pay scale was constraining in any way.

G. Eaton replied he did not believe the pay scale itself was constraining. However, he was concerned with the interpretation that once someone reaches the last step of a pay grade they cannot go any further salary-wise in their position. That has never been MRPC's system. He indicated that he was opposed to the bonus system payment when adopted in 2014 and is still opposed. It is difficult administratively and is inconsistent with our practices of past decades.

P. Duffy asked if the Director felt confident with sustaining 2.5%.

G. Eaton replied that MRPC has been at 2.5% increases for a number of years. When there is not enough revenue, he will not recommend salary increases.

The Director was asked what his preference was in terms of hiring a consultant or adopting a pay scale as presented.

G. Eaton responded the MRPC has been discussing this issue for a long time and he would like to adopt a pay scale and put the matter behind us.

G. Corbosiero asked what the effective date of the proposed pay scale was.

G. Eaton responded the effective date could be now, but employees just received increments in July 2016 so none would be eligible until July 2017. However, the Transportation Director's increment would be effective immediately, as the bonus he has received is less than the step

increment. The increase would be equal to the 2.5% that all other employees received July 2016.

Additional issues were discussed regarding:

- Paying employees below the market rate in turn making a MRPC training ground;
- Doing more with less employees because of high cost of future salaries;
- What are other RPAS paying;
- Increasing base salaries;
- Commission voting yearly on a percentage increase; and
- Lack of qualified planners in the marketplace

After further discussion, G. Corbosiero moved that the Salary Scale Revision item be postponed until the next meeting as more time is needed for members to review the scale presented by the Director and the pay scales submitted by Paula Caron. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

4.4 Esri User Conference

The Executive Director attended the annual Esri Users Conference held each year in San Diego, CA. He attended multiple training sessions including one in GIS system management. Other sessions attended include the use of drones to map land areas, improving health care utilizing GIS, using Esri's Story Map module to graphically depict areas of interest to other persons for the purposes of historic preservation, use of recreation trails, economic development and other applications. He absorbed a great deal of content concerning the depiction and analyses of existing areas and planned developments in three dimensions (3D) using Esri's 3D Analyst module. He returned to the agency with the objectives of expanding GIS use among the agency's employees and to promote the use of 3D technology in the office and in the field with clients.

5. STATUS REPORTS

5.1 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

MRMAPPER & MOBILE APPS

Staff is 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 have completed updates to the internal and public MRMapper sites for the Town.
- Ayer – The internal MRMapper sites for the Town is currently in BETA. Once testing has been completed the internal site will be finalized and the public site will be released.
- Royalston – The internal MRMapper sites for the Town is currently in BETA. Once testing has been completed the internal site will be finalized and the public site will be released.

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.
 - Westminster Senior Center Parcel Analysis – Mapping and data analysis was completed to study the feasibility of housing on the back section of this parcel. This project will be ongoing as necessary.

TRANSPORTATION

Stormwater App Development – MRPC is 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. An initial meeting was held to discuss the app with several interested communities. We are in the process of gathering data and will be working with several communities develop and test the app. This project will be ongoing through the Summer/Fall.

COMMUNITY-RELATED

Harvard Open Space Plan Mapping – This project has been completed.

Shirley Parcel and Assessor Map Updates - This project has been completed.

CENTRAL REGION HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Evacuation and Critical Infrastructure App Trainings – Several trainings will be conducted in the Fall related to the Evacuation and Critical Infrastructure Apps that were developed for the council.

5.2 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)

Staff is currently drafting a grant application to be submitted to EDA to conduct an Inventory and Analysis of Industrial Lands within the Montachusett Region. A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee meeting is being tentatively scheduled for a date to be

determined in October – agenda items are expected to include implementation of the recently completed Devens Economic Impact Report.

FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA) AND FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA), MONTACHUSETT REGION BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Environmental Site Assessments have been completed for Harvard and Westminster and ESA's are being conducted for Clinton, Gardner, and Leominster. Funds for additional ESA's for Montachusett communities remain available.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE PROJECT

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 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 August 17th, twenty MRPC communities have adopted the plan and are eligible to apply to Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for mitigation grants administered by FEMA.

DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)

Staff is initiating work on the following DLTA projects:

1. **Templeton:** Master Plan Land Use Element – This project has been completed.
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. **Westminster:** 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.
13. **Shirley:** Business Summit

SHIRLEY MASTER PLAN UPDATE

MRPC 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 HOUSING REHABILITATION/FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Housing Rehab Program has facilitated twelve loan closings for Housing Rehab projects. Five projects have been completed. These projects include lead abatement, window and door upgrades, electrical upgrades, new roofs, insulation, new heating and hot water systems, a connection to public sewer where the property had until now been serviced by a cesspool, and a new septic system. This month two additional properties have been approved and one qualifying intake was conducted and another one scheduled. A total of nineteen projects – one less than the program goal – are either completed or are in the pipeline.

- 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 13 units and 6 units are scheduled to be bid out.
- Program staff is now scheduling a loan closing and homeowner-contractor agreement for the one remaining project that has gone out to bid. A title search attorney is running title searches on all properties before loan closings are scheduled.
- Approximately 90% 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 \$5,434.03.

(18%) in fuel. The delivery schedule is accelerating as applicants' LIHEAP benefits are being exhausted.

MEC

RECEIVERSHIP PROJECTS

MEC has made significant progress this month towards closing out its receivership projects. On June 29th the Court approved a motion that the bank of record pay off MEC's lien for the property located at 41 Lewis St and for MEC to go to foreclosure auction for the property at 207 Adams St. Construction is completed at 119 Everett St and MEC will also go to foreclosure auction for this property as well. October 14 is the target date for the auctions. As of this month, each receivership project other than 112 Harvard St. has been terminated or will be scheduled to be auctioned by August 31. Because the title issue has still not been cured MEC is renting this property to a family. The rental agreement is tenancy at will and MEC will be receiving \$800.00/month. MEC will pay for water but the tenant is responsible for all other utilities.

MONTY TECH PROJECTS

Both projects are completed however, the Certificates of Occupancy are still being held by the Ashburnham Zoning Board of Appeals. This is because the developer from whom MEC purchased the lots did not properly file the comprehensive permit request. As of the date of this report, MEC staff is awaiting the outcome of the Planning Board meeting that was scheduled 8/11. MEC is now in the process of marketing and selling the homes to qualified homeowners under Chapter 40B guidelines. The Community Development Manager is working with MassHousing, the subsidizing agency, to develop the scope of work to achieve this objective.

30 POWERS MILL RD

MEC has received an estimate of \$32,250 to complete the repairs needed at this property due to the water damage. This will put MEC's investment into this property at \$177,250. The appraised value for the property is \$175,021. In order to realize revenue from this project MEC intends to lease the property for one year before putting it on the market. The MEC Board will meet on August 18 in part to hear a request to borrow funds to complete this project.

5.3 TRANSIT

AYER PARKING FACILITY

Staff assisted MART in drafting a Request for Response and reviewed the submitted proposals for the following: Properties Appraisals, Properties Appraisals Review, Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA), and a Request for Qualifications for Architectural and Engineering to construct the proposed project of Ayer commuter rail surface parking lot for 200 parking spaces at the Ayer Rail Trail parking lot location at Park Street.

FITCHBURG COMMUTER RAIL LINE IMPROVEMENTS

Work on the project is continuing along the Fitchburg Line corridor and South Acton Station. The double tracking work along the corridor has been completed and also the substantial

completion for the rest of the project (Signals, Bridges and South Acton Station) has been completed with full completion scheduled for mid-2016.

MBTA has released the Final revision of the Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line Schedule. The One hour service to Boston has been achieved; the express train leaving Fitchburg at 6:33 AM arriving at the North Station at 7:43 AM weekdays; and also the early reverse commute train to Fitchburg arriving at 7:38 AM has been achieved.

ATHOL / ORANGE FIXED BUS ROUTE

Staff continues to assist MART on the new Bus Route and Schedule for the Athol/Orange area to shift riders from paratransit to fixed route service.

AYER/SHIRLEY/DEVENS/ FIXED BUS ROUTE

Staff is working on development of a bus route to connect Devens industries with the MBTA commuter rail station for the reverse commute (Last Mile) and with the Fitchburg/Leominster labor force; and also to connect the residents of Ayer, Shirley and Devens with the Shopping Centers in Leominster.

WACHUSETT COMMUTER RAIL STATION AND LAYOVER FACILITY

The construction work on the Wachusett Commuter Rail Station in Fitchburg and on the MBTA's Commuter Rail Layover Facility at the Westminster Business Park has been expedited to have a substantial project completion by end of September, 2016 with full completion scheduled for Early 2017; MBTA anticipate a Train Service from Wachusett Station by November 7, 2016. The Development Road Extension is approximately 99% complete. Staff is working with the City of Fitchburg and Westminster to transfer the ownership of the Development Road property to Westminster. Staff continues to work with Pan Am Railways and the City of Fitchburg to transfer 5th Mass Turnpike property to MART; and continues to attend and assist at the monthly project coordination meeting with FTA, MBTA and the Engineers.

IDENTIFICATION OF FIXED ROUTE BUS STOP LOCATIONS

Staffs continue to compile data for the Bus Stop Locations in MART service area. As part of this study data will be collected utilizing a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) unit equipped with ArcPad and GPS technology. To identify and establish safe bus stops locations on the Fitchburg/Leominster, Gardner and G-Link fixed bus route transit services in the MART Region. Currently, the fixed route lines operate as a flag down system.

5.4 TRANSPORTATION

MONTACHUSETT MPO

The MPO met on August 3rd and at that meeting formally endorsed the:

- FFY 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- 2016-2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- FFY 2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment No. 2

Comments received for each document were reviewed, addressed and incorporated into the

final versions endorsed by the MPO. Copies of each of these documents are available for download at the MRPC website: www.mrpc.org

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING (NPRM) ON MPO COORDINATION

The U S Department of Transportation (DOT) released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) regarding Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination on June 27th that if implemented has the potential to significantly affect the MPO structure, process and designation. The public comment period was scheduled to close on August 26th with requests for an extension of the comment period denied by DOT. Several MPOs across the country as well as across Massachusetts have submitted comments to the official docket. The Montachusett MPO authorized a comment submittal under the Executive Directors signature on behalf of the MPO. In addition, the MRPC drafted a comment for the Chairman to submit. Copies are available.

The NPRM seeks to identify one MPO for each Urbanized Area (UZA). Because the Boston UZA reaches into the eastern section of the Montachusett Region, under this NPRM we would have to:

- 1) merge to form one MPO; or
- 2) adjust jurisdictions/boundaries to create one MPO in the UZA; or
- 3) coordinate with the other MPO(s) to produce one set of transportation planning documents, i.e. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), TIP and performance measures.

This would have a significant impact to our local planning process, our outreach to member communities and populations and programming equity. We have reached out to member communities to inform them of this NPRM and encouraged anyone to comment as they feel appropriate.

Next MPO Meeting – September 14, 2016 at 1:00 PM *Refer to website for Confirmation*

Next MJTC Meeting – September 21, 2016 at 7:00 PM

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING

July 26 2016, MRPC Minutes

Cash Schedule 8 30 2016

Handout 8 30 2016

MRPC Meeting Date Survey Results

MRPC Financial Sustainability Report

Email and related documents from Paula Caron – Salary Chart Examples

MRPC Letter to U.S. DOT dated August 22, 2016

Meeting Attendance					
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
Willis, Stephen	M	Athol	7.2016		X
Dodge, Alan	A	Athol	7.2016		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
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016		X
Graham, Don	M	Harvard	7.2015		X
Bratko, Thomas	M	Hubbardston	7.2016	X	
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston	7.2016		
Christopher, Thomas	M	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Piazza, Noreen	A	Lancaster	7.2016	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
King, Cindy	A	Townsend	7.2016	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, Bobbi Jo Johnson, Brad Harris

GUESTS PRESENT: Mark Goldstein, MRPC Legal Counsel