



# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)**

## **THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2017**

### **7:00 PM**

#### **1. OPEN MEETING AND INTRODUCTIONS**

J. Telepciak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All present introduced themselves.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 5, 2017 MRPC MEETING MINUTES**

G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the October 5, 2017 as printed. The motion was second and passed unanimously.

#### **3. TREASURER'S REPORT**

##### **3.1 Approval of Cash Schedule**

A. Pease read the October 1, 2017 through October 31, 2017 Cash Schedule. Balance after last \$118,829.95; Total receipts this month \$90,753.12; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$209,583.07; Less: amount of this warrant \$117,865.02: Balance after this warrant \$91,718.05.

G. Corbosiero moved to accept the October 1, 2017 – October 31, 2017 cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **4. COMMUNITY COMPACT – Presentation by John Hume, MRPC Planning and Development Director**

J. Hume gave a brief presentation regarding the State's Community Compact Program.

N. Piazza spoke about the Community Compact Program in the town of Lancaster.

Question and answer session took place.

#### **5. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

##### **5.1 Ribbon Cutting and Open House Event**

G. Eaton stated that on October 6<sup>th</sup> over 50 local and state officials visited the event and toured the MRPC's new office space.

There were several drawings held for **"Door Prizes" for MRPC services**. The services and corresponding winners are as follows.

- Review of Master Plan and Proposed Recommendations (between 4/1/18 and 6/30/18)
  - 1. City of Gardner, Maribel Cruz
  - 2. Joe Kologher
  - 3. Town of Phillipston, John Telepciak

- Esri Business Analyst Online Reports: Public Sector (Five reports for first place, three for second and one for third) (by 6/30/18)
  1. Montachusett Trails Coalition, Raynold Jackson
  2. Town of Shirley, Barbara Yocum
  3. Town of Westminster, Stephen Wallace
- Esri Business Analyst Online Reports: Private Sector (Five reports for first place, three for second and one for third) (by 6/30/18)
  1. Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce, Julie Crowley
  2. Jim Yocum
  3. (Only two people enters their names for this prize)
- GIS Services, Public Sector (by 2018)
  - Travis Brown
  - Town of Athol, Eric Smith
  - Town of Hubbardston, Tom Bratko
- GIS Services, Private Sector (by 2018)
  1. Townsend Conservation Land Trust, Leslie Gabrilskal
  2. Townsend Conservation Land Trust, Veronica Kell
  3. Jim Yocum
- One Extra Traffic Count in 2018: Public Sector
  - Montachusett Trails Coalition, Raynold Jackson
  - Joe Kologher
  - Town of Ashburnham, Roger Hoyt
- One Traffic Count in 2018 for a Steeply Reduced Price of \$100: Private Sector
  1. Lavender Leopard, Guy Corbosiero
  2. Lavender Leopard, Guy Corbosiero
  3. Jim Yocum

All winners will be contacted on Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Appointments will be scheduled starting the week of November 6<sup>th</sup> to further explain services and begin delivery.

## **5.2 Conference Report: Esri Health Conference, Redlands, CA, October 17-19, 2017 as Attended by Noam Goldstein, Regional Planner and Glenn Eaton Executive Director**

G. Eaton indicated that at the ESRI Health and Human Services GIS Conference we had the opportunity to connect with a compact but very well-trained cohort of public health planning professionals, which serves staff and the MRPC vastly since we just recently started to explore and work with such a market. At the conference we learned about other tools made available by ESRI besides GIS, that are likely coming handy to us in the near future. For example: the *123Survey* and the *Community Analyst* apps- which are complementary to the (widely known and already used by us) used Business Analyst. All three tools relevant and useful in different levels to our needs.

We also had the chance to provide Esri personnel with a constructive criticism towards their products and its applicability within our target demographics. That criticism was about their company's overly reliance on technological tools, which can exclude part of the population that is not so well familiarized with many e-gadgets that are becoming more present in everyday life.

Still, these are people that need to be taken into account, and such a criticism was actually well received by the ESRI staff.

Both employees attended over 20 presentations from local and state healthcare providers and users of health data concerning multiple topics. Sessions attended by Mr. Goldstein and Mr. Eaton follow (excerpted directly from the conference agenda):

- Drug trafficking and its relationship to drug overdoses such as opioid overdoses
  - North Carolina HIDTA Drug Seizures and Opioid Overdose, 2010 – 2016 (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program)
- In NC, unintentional opioid-related deaths increased by 31% between 2015 and 2016. Heroin or other synthetic narcotics, like fentanyl and its analogues, are now involved in over 50% of these deaths. In response to growing involvement of illicit opioids in the opioid epidemic, 15 counties in NC receive funding from the Atlanta-Carolinas High Intensity Drug-Trafficking Areas (HIDTA). These counties have resources to enhance surveillance of drug trafficking. We used ArcGIS to map opioid-related drug seizures, deaths, and emergency department (ED) visits to analyze connections between public safety efforts and public health outcomes. High rates (per 100,000) of opioid-related deaths and ED visits occurred in some rural counties without a major highway, that were not HIDTA funded and had no known drug seizures. These counties may be potential drug trafficking destinations and our efforts reveal a gap in current HIDTA efforts. GIS mapping can be used for a threat assessment to identify counties for HIDTA expansion. Further analysis will be conducted to understand the correlation between drug seizures and proximity to interstate highways across the Atlanta-Carolinas HIDTA States.
  - Increasing Access to Community-Based Methadone-Assisted Treatment in Philadelphia
    - Philadelphia is in the midst of an opioid epidemic. In 2009, the Department of Behavioral Health conducted a provider network assessment to identify gaps in methadone-assisted treatment access, which identified a need for providers in Northeast Philadelphia. The Network Analyst tool provided a visualization of members receiving treatment in relation to the nearest provider location. Based on these results, two providers expanded to the Northeast in an effort to increase the service area and decrease travel time. The 2009 analysis was unable to acquire transit data and was based on a uniform speed assumption across all road classes. The 2016 analysis overcame this challenge and calculated the travel time to both the nearest provider along with individual's provider of choice. 2016 results showed an increased network capacity and decreased travel time to the nearest provider in the Northeast. Travel times, however, did not decrease significantly when considering member choice. Interestingly, member choice was more influential than proximity of service location in this population. Other factors under consideration include social stigma, provider relationships, and treatment quality.
  - Geospatial Analysis of Opioid-Related Emergency Department Visits to Address Treatment Needs in Georgia, 2014
    - Opioid overdoses are rapidly rising in Georgia, with the rate of opioid-related Emergency Department (ED) visits increasing by 85.2% during 2009-2014. Using ArcGIS, we mapped opioid-related ED visits by patient census

tract and county of residence, to identify hotspots in GA among people aged & 15 years by sex, race/ethnicity, and drug category using statewide ED discharge data. The maps display the proximity of high burden areas to rehabilitation facilities. Non-Hispanic (NH) white males had more ED visits due to opioid-related overdose visits than any other race/ethnicity. Most visits among both NH white males and females occurred in the northern suburbs of metro Atlanta and neighboring counties. Few ED visits occurred among NH black males and females, which were predominantly in south metro Atlanta. Rehabilitation facilities are located in areas where there are low number of overdose cases regardless of race/ethnicity of patients. More facilities are needed in the areas north of Atlanta and rural areas that experience higher overdose ED visits. These maps can be used to inform more targeted, data-driven policies and programs to reduce opioid misuse and abuse in GA.

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- GIS in Managing Disease

- Caring for Members Where They Live: A GIS Opportunity for Kaiser Permanente Home Care

- Kaiser Permanente (KP) operates over 700 medical facilities. But care is provided in thousands more venues: in members' homes via home care providers. While home care has potential for better outcomes at a lower cost, a major challenge is that members are outside the highly-controlled hospital environment, living in places with varying resources to help manage their disease. So, as part of recent home care strategic planning, we looked beyond our own clinical data - into consumer behaviors and household attributes where we delivery home care. We linked ESRI data with geocoded electronic health record data to help (1) fully consider the context in which members live, (2) better understand resources (social, technological, financial) members have access to, and (3) appropriately equip home care providers for a member's "whole person" needs. The analysis yielded valuable insights around family/social support, informal caregiving, and social/non-medical needs. We also identified clusters of members in the same or nearby address - retirement communities, senior living facilities, mobile home parks - which lead to more efficient operations as well as place-based interventions.

- Interactive Dashboard to Increase Anorectal Infection Screening through Surveillance Data Dissemination

- NYC DOHMH recommends frequent screening for anorectal *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* or *Chlamydia trachomatis* (GC/CT) infection among men who have sex with men (MSM) who have had receptive anal intercourse during the preceding year—but provider adherence is low. One in 15 HIV-negative MSM diagnosed with anorectal GC/CT at NYC Sexually Transmitted Disease clinics during 2008–2010 was diagnosed with HIV within a year. This represents an opportunity for providers to intervene in a timely manner—potentially reducing susceptibility to future HIV infection. Since syphilis infections occur mostly among MSM, syphilis diagnoses among men can be a proxy for where MSM seek healthcare and where we could expect cases of anorectal GC/CT to be diagnosed. We created an interactive dashboard

(Esri ArcGIS and R [packages: leaflet, flexdashboard]) to identify neighborhoods with lower than expected anorectal GC/CT rates given higher rates of syphilis. The dashboard is an engaging alternative to static maps and a useful tool for presenting surveillance data to providers. Features include a storyboard and hover-over pop-ups with demographics. Embedded source code facilitates scalability and reproducibility.

- Survey123 for Epidemiological Disease Tracking and Outbreak Response Efficacy
- Dallas County Health and Human Services utilized Survey123 for the purpose of collecting infectious disease data in the field. Non-digital data collection requires personnel to later enter the data, which can be time consuming. Survey123 increased efficiency of our disease investigation by reducing paper based data collection with in-field data entry and allowed situational awareness through geo-location. Emergency Operation Coordination (EOC) had the unique advantage of quantifying rates of response through real-time field mapping of surveyors as well as data sharing to internal operations. We identified HIPAA compliance issues and adjusted accordingly. Survey123 allowed us to integrate the state epidemiology disease form into a survey and estimate the area and rates covered by surveyors through geo-location. The program also allowed us the ability to manually flag populations of interest on a field map and the Analyze feature immediately evaluated data trends. In summary, Survey123 is an innovative approach to in-field disease surveillance. It allowed us to have real-time tracking of surveyors and EOC integration for enhanced data collection and situational awareness.

Additional sessions included the following:

- Identifying the relationships between population centers and the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases as they related to the provision of educational materials to residents about methods that can be implemented to reduce reports of incidences
- Using Esri's quickly configurable apps make it easier to address challenges related to field mobility, operational awareness and public engagement using homelessness as an example
- Publishing *Story Maps* to communicate health data with decisionmakers and other nontechnical audiences; *Story Maps* combine maps and spatial information with multiple forms of media into an engaging and intriguing information product; One session presented included vaccinations, low birth weight, and the uninsured population

The Executive Director also participated in a hands-on GIS learning lab.

### **5.3 Recommended Salary increase for Noam Goldstein, Regional Planner**

Glenn Eaton, Executive Director requested that Noam Goldstein, Regional Planner be promoted from Regional Planner, Grade 1 to Regional Planner, Grade 3, based on a recommendation from Mr. Goldstein's supervisor, John Hume, Director of Planning and Development.

Mr. Goldstein was hired in August 2015 as a Regional Planner and has Dual Master's in Regional Planning and Public Policy and Administration. When hired as an entry level planner, Mr. Goldstein's primary responsibilities were data collection and research. Over the last year, Mr. Goldstein has demonstrated his ability to take the lead and provide high quality products on a

number of projects ranging from Master Plan Chapters to Housing Production plans. Mr. Goldstein has proven that not only is he capable of growth within his multi-disciplined field, but also goes above and beyond what is required and has volunteered to work on projects for other departments, transit and transportation. Mr. Goldstein is a valuable asset to the MRPC and such a promotion will bring Noam to a level that is more parallel to his skills and contribution to MRPC. This salary increase request is also an employee retention effort. MRPC is in the process of seeking one or more entry-level planners equivalent to Mr. Goldstein's current salary; Mr. Goldstein has been with this agency for more than two years.

D. Prokowieiw moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, based on a request from the Executive Director, approve a promotion for Noam Goldstein from Regional Planner Grade 1, Step 10, \$42,883 to Regional Planner Grade 3, Step 3 \$46,592 effective November 6, 2017. His next salary review will be July 2018. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **5.4 Compensation Consultant**

G. Eaton stated that in late August, the Executive Director issued a Request for Quote for Services for a Compensation and Classification Consultant. Funds, in the amount of \$5,000, for this consultant are available from the Professional Consultant line item within the Administrative Budget. The Executive Director recommends that this 90-day contract and final report be completed prior to June 7, 2018.

The successful consultant will provide the following tasks:

- Review MRPC's current Grade and Step Compensation system
- Examine all job descriptions for all positions, filled and unfilled
- Review current salaries for all filled positions and research similar entities to obtain salary data
- Provide minimum and maximum salaries for all unfilled positions

Proposals from three firms were submitted; prices submitted were \$6,400, \$10,000 and \$20,000 (from Municipal Resources, Inc. of Meredith, NH, from D.I. Jacobs Consulting of Holden, MA and Paypoint HR of Baltimore, Maryland, respectively). Hiring any one of these firms would require an increase in the aforementioned line item.

The Executive Director and Administrative and Human Resources Director interviewed Municipal Resources, Inc. and D.I. Jacobs Consulting.

The Executive Director presented two options to the Board, one was a two-task motion to increase the Professional Consultant line item to \$10,000 and engage Don Jacobs while the other invoices rejecting all three proposals and re-advertising the job in order to seek additional consultants and, hopefully better prices. The Executive Director recommends the Commissioners adopt the option to reject the three quotes and re-advertise the work.

M. Pineo moved that based on the recommendation of the Executive Director, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission hereby rejects the three proposals submitted for the completion of a Compensation and Classification report, directs the Executive Director to re-bid the job seeking more proposals at more competitive prices, to present to the Commissioners a summary of the second procurement process and a recommendation of which firm to engage where a draft report

would be due to the MRPC no later than March 7 and the final report by April 4, 2018. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **5.4 Attendance of Fiscal Director at Training Solutions for Nonprofits and**

##### **Grant-Funded Entities – Navigating the OMB Super Circular to be held on December 12 -13, 2017 in Phoenix, AZ**

G. Eaton indicated that in place of the annual *Grants Management Systems Training Conference*, he recommends that the Commissioners authorize the attendance of its Fiscal Director, Bobbi Jo Johnson, to the following 2-day intensive training.

*Training Solutions for Nonprofits and Grant-Funded Entities – Navigating the OMB Super Circular* to be held on December 12-13, 2017 in Phoenix, AZ

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in its efforts to deliver on the promise of a 21st-Century government that is more efficient, effective and transparent, has streamlined the OMB Circulars on Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for all Federal awards into one document, referred to as the Super Circular. The Super Circular combines eight previous federal regulations into comprehensive guidance codified at 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200 (Subparts A – F). These changes will improve administration of federal grant operations from the new uniform application process to the 'close-out' process. These changes modernize cost accounting, and improve the audit process, where the threshold for a Single Audit has been increased to \$750,000 in annual federal expenditures. Agencies not expending more than \$750,000 are not required to have a Single Audit; however, the administrative requirements and cost principles still apply.

The Uniform Grants Guidance (OMB Super Circular) touches all aspects of grants management, and failure to follow its requirements can result in serious compliance problems and even loss of grant funding. To effectively manage grants and avoid these issues (regardless of whether the MRPC is a grantee, pass-through entity, or subrecipient), understanding the Super Circular and how to navigate its requirements is a must. This special training will not only explain the Super Circular's requirements, but will also go beyond the basics to address common issues and how to avoid them as well as recent legislative, policy, and legal developments to help stay up-to-date on current grants requirements. Attending this two-day conference in Phoenix on December 12 and 13, attendees will be educated how to navigate the Super Circular to better manage grants, avoid problem areas, and keep MRPC's grants in compliance.

M. Pineo moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approves the attendance of its Fiscal Director, Bobbi Jo Johnson, to the *Navigating the OMB Super Circular* training in Phoenix, Arizona from December 11 – 14, 2017 (including two travel days) at a total cost not to exceed \$2,100. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **5.5 Revision of Policy for Charging Certain Fee Amount(s) to Complete CDBG Proposals on Behalf of Communities – Action Requested December 7, 2017**

G. Eaton stated that approximately 15 years ago, in order to help the MRPC defray the bulk of the time charged for the preparation of CDBG proposals, the MRPC altered its scope of services within the Federal Economic Development Administration's (EDA) contract to include, as an eligible cost, these services (the EDA approved of the new scope as presented by the MRPC each year). Since 1999 the MRPC has been successfully worked with 14 of the 19 towns in the M-Region; these towns have been awarded in excess of \$30 million over 18 years.

In 2014 the Planning Commission adopted the policy to charge communities for application preparation services related to the annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The adopted policy is below.

### **2014 CDBG Application Preparation Fee Policy**

- Base fee of \$3,000 per town for an application
- Town designates a local coordinator, a point person through which we direct all information, who responds to our requests for materials, information, support letter, etc. and who channels responses for the Town
- Town pays for advertising, mailings
- Town provides architectural/engineering bid ready plans and specs as required by DHCD
- Town conducts the fieldwork required for the application, including the local income surveys, windshield surveys and slum and blight surveys. MRPC can provide technical assistance training and forms at a pre-grant workshop, or conduct surveys for the town for a separate fee
- This would be set forth in an MOU signed by the Town and MRPC before starting

During our most recent annual audit, our CPA advised us that we should be documenting expenses for CDBG application preparation services differently than we have been doing. According to our Fiscal Director's notes during our exit interview with Roland Lambalot, CPA, *"The correct way to expense the expenses for CDBG grants yet to be awarded is to set up a contract number for each application. We should not be charging any costs for this to ADM (administration) or other contracts. When costs are incurred it would need to be charged to that contract for the application. At that point all the costs for that specific application are booked and showing expenses with no revenue. Then when the towns are billed for the application preparation fee that revenue goes against the expenses. The end balance is either a decrease or increase of our fund balance."*

Our annual fund balance over the last few fiscal years (audited numbers) have been primarily affected by the Other Pension Employment Benefits (OPEB) "booked liability" for payments for the cost of retirees' health insurance.

The Executive Director has marketed the CDBG program successfully to communities such as Shirley and Winchendon in the past three years. However, he has had to lower the price of preparing a CDBG proposal in order to develop a partnership with each community and gain trust of new client-communities. Small payments made out of local cash by the communities for



application preparation tasks have been augmented by the MRPC's annual Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) planning grant which allows specifically for the payment of staff time for the preparation of CDBG proposals. Since taking this tack:

- Shirley received \$940,389 in Fiscal Year 2015 and another \$795,953 in Federal Fiscal Year 2017 (FFY17)
- Winchendon was awarded \$1,000,000 in FFY 2016 (for a joint proposal with Ashby) and another \$557,335 (for Winchendon only) in FFY 2017

MRPC has earned, and will earn, approximately \$475,900 in administrative dollars (not including payments to Housing Rehabilitation Specialist) to manage these four grant programs over four fiscal years (for an average of about \$118,975 per FY).

In Shirley this relationship has grown; Shirley has used local funds to pay the MRPC for services complete such as Shirley Master Plan for \$54,000 (from December 2014 through June 2017) and Shirley Implementation for another \$13,837 (from December 2016 through March 2017).

While new partnerships in both of these communities have been developed to the benefit of both the MRPC and these communities, there has not yet been strict adherence to this 2014 CDBG Application Preparation Fee Policy. The Executive Director weighed the overall benefit of bringing in new CDBG dollars to struggling towns and the positive benefit to the needy population against the MRPC's need for cash to fund the staff needed for the preparation of grant applications and successful management of awarded grants. The benefits to the communities, using Shirley and Winchendon as examples, have been the:

- Rehabilitation of 33 units of housing (20 Shirley, nine Winchendon, four Ashby)
- Provision of home-heating fuel assistance to another 44 families received in the above-mentioned communities
- Completion of drainage, water and wastewater main replacements and street and sidewalk reconstruction on Walnut Street (Winchendon)

The Executive Director recommends the following:

- Communities engaging the MRPC for CDBG application preparation services must:
  - Compensate the agency between \$1,000 and \$3,000 from local revenue to be negotiated between the chief elected officials and/or the town administrator/manager
    - Payments in full would be due and payable to the MRPC from each community no more than 30 days following the successful completion and submission of a CDBG proposal to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); this includes all towns participating in a joint proposal where participating towns will pay equivalent fees
    - Directly pay the local newspaper(s) for any and all advertising costs associated with advertising one or more public hearing(s) prior to the submission of the CDBG proposal
    - Directly pay for costs related to the distribution of survey information (i.e. housing rehabilitation pre-applications)

- Designate a local liaison
- Grant application preparers shall be paid up to \$6,000 for new CDBG awards and \$3,000 for repeat or back-to-back grant awards (this is consistent with the DHCD's CDBG application preparation fee policy)
- Payments in full would be due and payable to the MRPC from each CDBG-awarded community no more than 30 days following the successful completion of:
  - Environmental review process (MA DHCD's issuance of the DHCD's approval of the town's "request to release CDBG funds")
  - Full execution of the Grant Award agreement between the MA DHCD and the awarded community
  - Full execution of the grant management contract between the community and the MRPC
- The MRPC will not charge any community for a CDBG proposal that was not awarded to a community, post award (this does not apply to the above \$1,000 to \$3,000 payment out of local funds)
- MRPC shall conduct the fieldwork required for the application, including the local income surveys, windshield surveys and slum and blight surveys
- All terms and conditions, above would be included within a community-MRPC contract that would be fully executed by both parties prior to the MRPC's delivery of services

D. The Executive Director recommends that this proposed policy change be shared with some key community leaders, such as Ashburnham, Ashby, Hubbardston, Lancaster, Shirley and Templeton, Townsend, Westminster and Winchendon and other communities if need be, prior to taking official action at the next meeting of the Commissioners to be held on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **5.6 Authorization to Hire Two Temporary Interns – 3D Printing Tech and Graphics Tech**

G. Eaton explained that the MRPC is in need of part time assistance to augment the existing capacity of the current team. Both positions are intended to be temporary (employed for no longer than six months), part-time (up to 15 hours weekly) and to be paid at the Intern rate of \$13.00 per hour. One Intern is needed to manage, maintain and monitor the MRPC's new 3D printing software (Cura [computer-aided design or "CAD" software]) and printers as they relate to building a 3D map printing capacity. The second Intern, a computer graphics specialist, will be hired to update the MRPC's website, prepare an instruction manual for MRPC employees to use to maintain the website upon completion of the graphics Intern's term with the agency and update documents (i.e. reports) as assigned. The Executive Director will provide direct oversight to the Interns; Interns will be assigned to Team Leaders, as needed. Local colleges and high schools (senior level) will be directly targeted for recruitment of applicants. He presented a handout which shows the updated calculations for the funds available for "direct costs" which indicates that sufficient funds exist to engage both interns for six months.

After some discussion, D. Prokowiei moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission endorses the Executive Director's request for two interns to fulfill the above roles for a rate of \$13.00 per hour per intern for 15 hours per week for a period not to exceed six months. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## 6. STATUS REPORTS

### 6.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

#### MRMAPPER & MOBILE APPS (GENERAL)

- *MRMapper* ArcGIS software has been upgraded to v10.5.1.
- We are currently working on adding 2-foot contours as a *MRMapper* service.
- We are in the process of adding 2016 Google Imagery, courtesy of MassGIS, to all public applications.

#### COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Distressed Property Identification and Revitalization (DPIR) App – We have completed WebApp creation for the communities involved in this project. Data collection is ongoing and the WebApps will be updated accordingly. This project will be ongoing through the remainder of the calendar year.

(DLTA) Harvard Water Supply Resources – No new information.

#### COMMUNITY

Athol Downtown Parking Map – This project is complete.

Fitchburg Parcel Enhancements – We are currently working on training the City to maintain its' own parcel data. This project should be complete by the end of the month.

Shirley Open Space & Master Plan – We are currently working on finalizing the remaining maps after receiving additional comments from the Town. This project is expected to be completed in November.

Lancaster Open Space Update – No new information.

Westminster Assessor Mapping – The parcel data and maps have been updates. We are currently working on updating the Town's *MRMapper* sites accordingly.

Shirley Cemetery Mapping – We are in the beginning stage of a long-term cemetery mapping project for the Town of Shirley. We will be mapping the Center and Village cemeteries and creating a *MRMapper* application that the Town can use to populate their cemetery records in. The end result will be internal and public applications for the two cemeteries.

Templeton Zoning Update – We are currently working on updates to the Town's Zoning Map. This project is expected to be completed by early November.

#### TRANSIT

Bus Route Updates - We are currently working on a number of updated to bus routes and maps for MART. These projects will be ongoing.

#### TRANSPORTATION

Shirley Village Railroad Crossing– Draft maps has been created for the Town of Shirley depicting the Shirley Village Railroad Crossing. The Town is reviewing the map and will advise regarding any edits. This project is ongoing.

Pavement Management – We recently completed data gathering and creation and mapping for the Pavement Management program. This data will be updated on *MRMapper* in the near future.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) Data processing – We are currently working on ‘Smoothing’ the 2-foot contour data creation and expect this to be complete October. These products will be key in future 3D modeling and printing activities.

### 6.2 Planning and Development

#### FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)

MRPC staff is drafting a grant application for \$200,000 in federal grant funds for a Brownfields Site Assessment Grant for Hazardous Substances Sites (Community-Wide Proposal) for the completion of Phase One and Phase Two Environmental Site Assessments on sites to be determined and approved by MRPC and the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Grant applications are due on or before November 16, 2017.

#### FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA), MONTACHUSETT REGION BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Funds for environmental site assessments (ESA) for Hazardous Substances have been allocated to projects. However, some funds for environmental site assessments (ESA) for petroleum remain. Please contact MRPC staff person John Hume ([jhume@mrpc.org](mailto:jhume@mrpc.org)) for information on ESA funds available for petroleum.

#### DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)

Projects that MRPC staff are working on include:

- **Ashburnham:** Master Plan Economic Development Element
- **Athol:** Master Plan Economic Development Element
- **Ayer:** Transit oriented Development Planning Project in the Downtown Ayer Rail Commuter Station/Depot Square and Park Street Corridor Area
- **Harvard:** Research and Recommend Land Use Strategy(s) for Protecting Water Supplies
- **Hubbardston:** Master Plan Economic Development Element
- **Lancaster:** Assist with the update of the 2010 Lancaster Open Space & Recreation Plan – Project completed
- **Shirley:** Create a Permitting Guidance Handbook
- **Sterling:** Feasibility Study of Future Sewage Services in Specified Regions of the Town
- **Lunenburg:** Facilitate the Formation of a Business – Town Partnership including a Charrette, and Methods to Promote Economic Development
- **Westminster:** Housing Production Plan

**HEYWOOD HEALTHCARE ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT.** MRPC continues to work on an Economic Impact of Healthcare Report based upon Heywood Healthcare’s contribution the its Service Area. Economic census information has been gathered. The Service Area includes the following communities: Ashburnham, Athol, Erving, Gardner, Hubbardston, New Salem, Orange, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Warwick, Wendell, Westminster, and Winchendon.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT OF NORTH CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS.** MRPC staff continue to work on the update of a Community Health Assessment of North Central Massachusetts. The report will consist of a broad scope of data from multiple sources including but not limited to primary and secondary data sources, input from stakeholder interviews, community member focus groups, and survey(s) in order to provide a status of health in the service area.

**CHEMICAL SAFETY AND CLIMATE CHANGE PREPAREDNESS TRAINING.** MRPC staff is working on a grant from the Massachusetts [Office of Technical Assistance and Technology](#) (OTA) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to sponsor workshops designed to educate city officials, community leaders, Fire Departments, Departments of Public Works, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) and businesses about the toxic chemicals stored, used and transported through their communities. The goal is to make our region's communities more capable of addressing climate change-related disasters by providing critical information and thoughtful preparation needed for targeted planning.

The first workshop, designed to educate municipalities about incorporating toxics use reduction strategies into community and regional emergency preparedness, was held on September 28, 2017 at the Devens Eco-Efficiency Center, Vicksburg Conference Room, 33 Andrews Parkway, Devens, MA.

MRPC staff will be developing a survey to distribute to businesses who are chemical users and will provide training to them this winter. Fire Departments will be requested to contact any businesses needing assistance from OTA in toxic use reduction.

*Community Development Division*

## **WINCHENDON ASHBY FY2016 CDBG**

### **HOUSING REHAB PROGRAM**

The program is on pace to meet the target goal of the 13 homes served. As of the date of this report three projects in Winchendon have been completed. One additional project has closed on its loan and two others are scheduled to close. A second septic project's design has come back so that will go out to bid this week for contractors to install the new septic system. A third septic system is in the design stage and has completed its soil testing. Five applications have been approved and are in the inspection phase. A total of 10 projects are active and three are complete. A public hearing is scheduled for October 30th to request an extension of the grant period to June 30, 2018 in order to complete all projects.

### **FUEL ASSISTANCE**

The Fuel Assistance Program is complete for this grant. No further applications are being processed in either town for this program. Thirty-three applicants have been processed. 65% of the targeted goal of 50 households. \$9,591.06 in fuel has been delivered; 38.24% of the total funds allocated for this activity.

## **WALNUT STREET INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

This project has been completed on schedule and on budget. As this project has been completed their will be no further reports on this topic.

## **CDBG AWARDS**

The process to release funds from the state is underway. The Environmental Review Process has been completed and the Request for Release of Funds (RROF) for both programs has been submitted.

MRPC was not selected to administer the Bellingham CDBG FY2017 Grant.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND**

CDBG staff submitted an application to administer a grant for the Town of Winchendon. The grant would have provided construction financing in the form of a deferred payment loan (DPL) to reconstruct a 20,000-square foot commercial building into a mixed-use property. This project is a key element in the Town's Downtown Revitalization Strategy. The DHCD rejected Winchendon's proposal.

## **MONTACHUSETT ENTERPRISE CENTER**

### **RECEIVERSHIP PROGRAM**

- 112 Harvard Ave. MEC sold this property for \$110,000 and closed on 8/25
- 207 Adams Dr. – MEC recorded the deed to this property and is scheduling repairs to the kitchen and will list the property to sell in November
- 30 Powers Mill Road – MEC will use the proceeds from the sale of 207 Adams Drive., expected to be over \$185,000, to complete the repairs to this property and to list it

## **ASHBURNHAM 40B PROJECTS**

The marketing plan has been approved by MassHousing. Staff is waiting for their legal department to provide deed riders for the properties.

## **6.3 Transit**

### **AYER PARKING FACILITY**

On October 10<sup>th</sup> MRPC attended a meeting with town officials and the Weston & Sampson regarding the Ayer Parking Facility project and the Depot Square Concept Design Options. Staff continues working with Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM), Division of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Town of Ayer and Weston & Sampson to move forward with the construction of the proposed project.

#### **AYER/SHIRLEY/DEVENS/FIXED BUS ROUTE**

On October 10, 2017, MRPC attended a meeting with Tara Vista Health Care Center representatives regarding the Devens Shuttle Service. The new bus route's objective is to connect Devens industries and businesses with the MBTA commuter rail station for the reverse commute (Last Mile) and with the Fitchburg/Leominster labor force; and to connect the residents of Ayer, Shirley and Devens with the Shopping Centers in Leominster.

#### **LITTLETON REGIONAL SHUTTLE SERVICE**

Staff continues working on the development of a bus route to connect Littleton industries (IBM, Red Hat and Juniper) with the MBTA Littleton commuter rail station for the reverse commute (Last Mile/ First Mile) and with the park & ride facilities in Littleton and Westford.

### **6.4 Transportation**

#### **6.4.1 Endorsement of the FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #1**

B. Harris moved that the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) met on October 18<sup>th</sup> at which time they reviewed several administrative adjustments to the FFY 2018-2022 Montachusett Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). In addition, the MPO voted to release or a 21-day public review and comment period, Draft TIP Amendment #1. Amendment #1 includes additional projects added to FFY 2018 in both the Transit and Highway Elements. In the FFY 2018 Transit Element, four (4) new projects are proposed to be added based on grant awards under Section 5310 and Other Non-Federal to cover the acquisition of Vans and Buses for MART, GAAMHA and The Arc of Opportunity in North Central MA. In the FFY 2018 Highway Element, one (1) project is to be added under Section 1B – Earmark of Discretionary Grant Funded Projects. These additions are summarized below.

FFY 2018 Transit additions:

Section 5310

Project Number	Agency	FTA Activity Line Item	Project Description	Federal Funds	State Funds	TDC	Local Funds	Total Cost
RTD0006463	Montachusett Regional Transit Authority	111215	BUY REPLACEMENT VAN (6)	\$308,160	\$77,040	\$0	\$0	\$385,200
RTD0006486	GAAMHA, Inc.	111215	BUY REPLACEMENT VANS (2)	\$102,720	\$0	\$0	\$25,680	\$128,400
Total				\$410,880	\$77,040	\$0	\$25,680	\$513,600

Non-Federal

Project Number	Agency	FTA Activity Line Item	Project Description	Federal Funds	State Funds	TDC	Local Funds	Total Cost
RTD0006492	GAAMHA, Inc.	111315	BUY VAN FOR SVC EXPANSION	\$0	\$44,960	\$0	\$11,240	\$56,200
RTD0006537	The Arc of Opportunity in No. Central Mass	111304	BUY <30-FT BUS FOR EXPANSION	\$0	\$94,560	\$0	\$23,640	\$118,200
Total				\$0	\$139,520	\$0	\$34,880	\$174,400

FFY 2018 Highway addition:

Section 1B – Earmark of Discretionary Grant Funded Projects

Project #	Community	Description	Dist.	Fund Source	Total Funds	Federal Funds	State Funds
MA 148	Multiple	GARDNER NORTH CENTRAL PATHWAY DESIGN	N/A	HPP	\$375,000	\$300,000	\$75,000



The public comment period began on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and will run until the close of business on Monday November 13<sup>th</sup>.

G. Corbosiero moved that the MRPC has reviewed the FFY 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #1 and based upon this review as well as the review of any comments received, authorizes its Chairman to endorse the FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #1 at a MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday November 15, 2017 at 1:00 PM at the MRPC offices. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **FITCHBURG COMPLETE STREETS/SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOL RIBBON CUTTING**

MRPC staff attended a ribbon cutting for a Safe Routes to School project in Fitchburg on October 18<sup>th</sup>. The project is located at the intersection of South Street and Electric Avenue and is in close proximity to the South Street Elementary School. The project involved new sidewalks on both Electric Avenue and South Street as well as the repaving of South Street, the installation of speed limit signs and upgrades to the traffic signals. The project cost \$1,200,000 with \$16,000 from the city for sidewalk easements.

#### **FITCHBURG MAIN STREET ROAD SAFETY AUDIT**

MRPC staff will be looking at establishing separate meetings of the MPO Subregions in order to facilitate discussion and information sharing between the communities and the MPO Subregion Representatives. These meetings will likely be held in the Subregions and will provide municipalities with an opportunity to discuss transportation issues that may be advanced to the MPO.

In addition, the MJTC will look at the possibility of moving future meetings out to the member communities in order to attract greater attendance and interest. Staff will be coordinating with current members and attempt to schedule these site visit meetings in the near future.

#### **FFY 2017 UPWP STUDIES**

MRPC staff is finalizing several studies, reports or analysis from the FFY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Fitchburg & Leominster Sidewalk Inventory - This study area included the ten major bus routes in Fitchburg and Leominster and included a ¼ mile buffer around each bus route. Also included were points of interest such as major medical facilities, shopping plazas, low income and elderly housing areas, educational facilities and industrial parks within study area. A sidewalk inventory was done within the study area and trail data was also included in the process. The focus was on prioritizing areas that need better pedestrian and/or bicycle connections to the MART bus routes. The priority areas were based on proximity to special populations (elderly and disabled populations), points of interest, critical missing links, etc.

Lancaster Trail Guide – The MRPC worked closely with the town of Lancaster to update trail data and create a new trail guide for the town. The trail guide was created as a

recreation and economic tool for the community to print and distribute to residents and visitors.

#### **ROAD SAFETY AUDIT, MAIN STREET, FITCHBURG**

MRPC staff participated on Wednesday, October 18, 2017 in a Road Safety Audit (RSA) on Main Street in Fitchburg from Prichard Street to Summer Street that also included the Water Street/Laurel Street intersection and the Water Street Bridge. This RSA is being undertaken because the Water Street bridge is scheduled to be replaced in 2021 and regional high crash locations exist on both the Water Street/Laurel Street and Main Street sides of the bridge. The RSA also includes an examination of Main Street from Prichard Street to Summer Street because high crash locations exist on that segment as well. MassDOT included the Main Street segment even though a project is not being planned for the segment for the purpose of providing the City with safety improvement alternatives that could be implemented in the future. When an RSA of a roadway facility is conducted, a team of knowledgeable professionals is convened to review and to provide proven improvement alternatives to address the high crash locations. The team for this RSA includes consultants, Officials from the City of Fitchburg, MassDOT staff, and MRPC staff. The RSA consultant is in the process of compiling a draft report that will be completed in the near future and then sent to the RSA team members for a review and comment period. The final RSA report should be completed within a month.

**Next MJTC Meeting – November 8, 2017 at 6:30 PM**

**Next MPO Meeting – November 15, 2017 at 1:00 PM**

#### **7. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

<b>Meeting Attendance</b>					
<b>Name</b>	<b>M/A</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Appointment Date</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
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
Truehart, Duane	M	Athol	7.2016	X	
Rebecca Bialecki	A	Athol	7.2017		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

Cruz, Maribel	A	Gardner	8.2017	X	
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016	X	
Maiore, Rich	M	Harvard	7.2017		X
Bratko, Thomas	M	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Christopher, Thomas	M	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Piazza, Noreen	A	Lancaster	7.2016	X	
Prokowieiw, David	M	Lunenburg	7.2015	X	
Jeffreys, Michael Ray	A	Lunenburg	8.2017		X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.201	X	
Natrowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015		X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Widing, Sarah	M	Shirley	7.2015		X
Yocum, Barbara	A	Shirley	8.2017		X
Pineo, Michael	M	Sterling	7.2014	X	
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Terenzini, Carter	A	Templeton	9.2016		X
King, Cindy	A	Townsend	7.2016		X
Weist, Linda	M	Westminster	7.2017	X	
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	
Cyganiewicz, Austin	A	Winchendon	7.2015		X

Staff Present: Glenn Eaton, Brad Harris, John Hume, Bobbi Jo Johnson, Jason Stanton, George Kahale

**DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING:**

November 2, 2017 MRPC Meeting Handout

October 5, 2017 MRPC Meeting Minutes

Cash Schedules (10 1 2017 – 10 31 2017)

Community Compact Program Narrative

Direct Costs Funds Available Calculation

Ending Fund Balances by Fiscal Year Table and Graph

## Heywood Focus Group Questions