

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Doyle Center**

**464 Abbott Avenue**

**Leominster, MA 01453**

**JANUARY 2, 2020**

**1. Open Meeting, Introductions and Announcements**

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

**2. Approval of November 7, 2019 MRPC Minutes**

J. Telepciak moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the November 7, 2019 MRPC minutes as printed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

G. Corbosiero indicated that at the last meeting he misspoke regarding MRPC's Overnight Travel Policy and wanted to correct the statement. He referred to Page 2. of the minutes. "G. Corbosiero added with the new policy expense reimbursement forms have to be submitted within a 30-day time frame or employees will not be reimbursed." G. Corbosiero indicated that according to the revised policy it is a 14-day timeframe, not a 30-day timeframe.

**3. Cash Schedules – November 2019 & December 2019– Approval Required**

R. Hoyt read the November 2019 Cash Schedule. Opening Balance \$273,297.06; Total receipts this month \$163,981.61; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$437,278.67; Less: amount of this warrant \$136,585.60; Balance after this warrant \$300,693.07.

R. Hoyt read the December 2019 Cash Schedule. Opening Balance \$300,693.07; Total receipts this month \$74,845.66; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$375,538.73; Less: amount of this warrant \$95,405.97; Balance after this warrant 280,132.76.

P. Duffy moved to accept the November 2019 cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

R. Williston moved to accept the December 2019 cash schedules as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**4. Administrative Matters**

G. Eaton indicated that at the February 6, 2020 MRPC Meeting he will present the draft FY21 budget. He will also present an update to the FY20 budget.

G. Eaton distributed three memos to the Board. He stated the first memo relates to Public Disclosure and the Conflict of Interest Law. He is disclosing that he is serving on the Board of Directors of the Athol Credit Union and the Wachusett Business Incubator Program. He will use his own time (comp/vacation) when attending these meetings if they occur during work hours. A Cyber Security Working Group Meeting will be held at MRPC on January 16, 2020. All are welcome to attend. MRPC would like to work with towns to see how we can help with cybersecurity planning. The last memo dealt with available funding from MA Historic Commission.

G. Corbosiero mentioned that regarding travel expense reimbursement from Glenn Eaton to MRPC everything has been settled and a letter has been put in his file.

## **5. Contract Status Reports**

### **5.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**

#### **MRMapper & MOBILE APPS (GENERAL)**

Two new public regional applications have been added to the site- Land Cover/Land Use (2016) and NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) SSURGO (Soil Survey Geographic Database) Soil Data. Data and applications are continuously being updated throughout the year. The traffic count data and application should be updated by the end of the month.

#### **COMMUNITY-RELATED**

Westminster Assessor Mapping – This project is complete.

Lunenburg Conservation Lands Mapping – The Lunenburg Conservation Commission received the grant that it applied for to create and install maps at the intersections of the trails on its properties. Once the Conservation Commission reaches out to start the project, we will work on creating a series of “You Are Here” maps. This project will be ongoing for the next several months.

Ashburnham Street Map – We are working with the Police Department to update road data in the Town and create a street map with grid to be used by first responder personnel. It is expected that this project will be complete shortly after the new year.

Lancaster Land Use Map – We received a request from the Lancaster Town Planner to create a map showing the land use of each parcel in town based on the Land Use Codes from the assess table. We created and sent the map for review. They gave us the correct land use for roughly a dozen parcels so we updated the map based on their edits and sent it back out for review. We are currently waiting to hear back from them but this project is expected to be completed by early January.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING-RELATED**

ADA Compliance Checklist Survey Creation – We created four digital surveys that can be completed out in the field using tablets. They will be used by MRPC staff to inventory the features and amenities of public spaces to see if they are ADA compliant. We will train staff to use these digital surveys and we will continue to provide any technical assistance as needed until the project is complete.

DLTA

Ashburnham Housing Production Plan Mapping – MRPC planning staff requested a map showing town-owned parcels with the potential for affordable housing production. We will continue to make any edits or create any maps or data products as need by the MRPC's planning staff. This project will be completed by the end of the year but our part in this phase of the project has been completed.

Ayer Housing Production Plan – We will create any more maps or data products as need by the MRPC's planning staff but our phase of the project has currently been completed. This project will be completed by the end of the year.

Groton Housing Production Plan – After meeting with the town, MRPC planning staff requested that we add an additional parcel to the map as having the potential for affordable housing production. Our portion of this project has been completed.

#### **TRANSPORTATION-RELATED**

Lunenburg Walkability Maps – We created a map of each study area that was used in the field by MRPC Transportation staff to inventory the number of parking spaces (regular and handicap) in public parking lots. Once they finished the inventory, we digitized the data and created finalized maps. We will continue to make as maps or data products as requested by MRPC Transportation staff but our portion of this project is currently completed.

2020 Regional Transportation Plan Map Journal – We have created a Map Journal for the public to view the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan. The Map Journal has been updated to reflect comments received and can be found here - <https://arcg.is/11j0T8>.

Heavy Vehicle Exclusion Map – We created a map of Lunenburg zoomed to the proposed truck exclusion and the proposed alternative route. This project has been completed.

#### **TRANSIT-RELATED**

MART Proposed Fitchburg/Worcester Commuter Shuttle – Our portion of the project is currently complete but the project will be ongoing as MART finalizes the route.

MART Proposed Eastern Shuttle – We created two working maps of the eastern portion of MART's service district (one with Ayer, Bolton, Boxborough, Harvard, Littleton, Shirley, and Stow and the other without Bolton and Stow). These maps contain point of interest data (town halls, senior centers, shopping centers, major employers, commuter rail stops, and medical facilities) and will be used to plan a shuttle route. Our portion of this project is currently complete but we will make any edits or additional maps as requested.

MART Route Calculations – We reviewed and updated the route mileage of Fitchburg/Leominster Route 2 so that the mileage accurately reflected the route on the schedule brochure. We also clarified that Fitchburg/Leominster Route 7A is on demand. This project is currently complete but we will make any edits as routes are changed or added.

## **5.2 Planning and Development**

### **FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)**

As part of this contract, MRPC provides assistance to communities seeking grant funds to improve economic vitality. MRPC staff plan to attend the FY 2020 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Training in Boston Thursday, December 19. The training is provided by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The community of Shirley has expressed an interest in MRPC application assistance.

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

MRPC staff members Glenn Eaton and John Hume attended the EPA 2019 Brownfields Conference in Los Angeles, California during the week of December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019. MRPC also received Brownfields Site Assessment Nomination Forms from Ayer (43 West Main Street), Lunenburg (925 Massachusetts Avenue), and Winchendon (4 Summer Drive) – it is anticipated that the Town of Athol may also submit a Site Nomination Form. A Montachusett Brownfields Group (MBG) meeting is being scheduled tentatively for Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. here at MRPC offices to review Site Nomination requests.

### **DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)**

MRPC staff continued working on the following projects.

1. Ashburnham: Housing Production Plan.
2. Clinton: Assist the Town of Clinton with designation as a Green Community.
3. Harvard: Permitting Guidebook.
4. Townsend: Assist to provide the municipality with regional data to update the Town's Housing Production Plan and Master Plan.
5. Athol: Urban Renewal Planning Assistance.
6. Hubbardston: Historical and Cultural Resources Master Plan Chapter. Completed.
7. Sterling: Housing Production Plan update.
8. Groton: Housing Production Plan.
9. Ashby, Townsend, and Pepperell: Regional Dispatch Feasibility Study.
10. Lunenburg: ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan - limited partial completion.
11. Ayer: Housing Production Plan
12. Lancaster: Zoning for Alcohol
13. Shirley: Shared Services Feasibility: Tree Warden & Planner
14. Winchendon: Master Plan coordination & Implementation Chapter

## **MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES (DOER)**

MRPC received a Regional Energy Planning Assistance (REPA) grant award in the amount of \$59,065 in August and the contract has an effective date of 9/10/19, with an end date of 5/30/21. REPA grant award funds were used by MRPC for Green Communities Program Designation Application Submissions on November 22<sup>nd</sup> for Groton, Hubbardston and Templeton.

REPA grant award funds were also used to assist Ashby, Athol, Fitchburg, Harvard, Lancaster, Shirley, Townsend, and Westminster to complete and submit Annual Reports due December 6, 2019. MRPC staff will also assist Athol, Fitchburg, Harvard, Lunenburg, Shirley, and Westminster under REPA to put together Competitive Grant Applications due in March 2020.

### ***Community Development Division***

#### **FY17 SHIRLEY CDBG PROGRAM**

##### **Management/Administrative Issues**

The Board of Selectmen approved of the MRPC's request to transfer funds out of the Public Service, Home Heating Fuel Assistance program and into two administrative line items in order to provide sufficient compensation to Shirley's three consultants to complete the Housing Rehabilitation program and all, other required administrative tasks by December 31, 2019. With the assistance received from the Town Administrator's office, this budget amendment has been submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

#### **MONTACHUSETT ENTERPRISE CENTER, INC.**

MEC's Director executed a Purchase and Sale Agreement with a buyer of this property. A sale is believed to be imminent.

Approximately one month ago MEC received an award of \$10,000 from the Tufts Health Foundation for aging-in-place planning services.

## **5.3 Transit**

#### **AYER PARKING FACILITY**

During the past month MRPC staff continues to attend the project progress weekly meetings to assist MART and the Town of Ayer; and working with the Engineer (Weston & Sampson) to move forward the construction of the Ayer Commuter Rail parking facility.

The construction of the project is moving along; the Ground Level Parking paving has been completed and the Parking Deck Precast structure erection has been completed. On December 9, 2019 MART and the Town of Ayer Held a Grand Opening Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was attended by Town and State Officials: Congresswoman Lori Trahan, Senator James Eldridge, State Representative Jennifer Benson, Ayer Board of Selectmen,

Federal Transit Administration, MassDOT and Fitchburg Mayor Stephen DiNatale. MART anticipate project completion and Opening Date by January 2020.

#### **BUS ROUTES PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

During the past month MRPC staff continued to compile data on-time performance. The purpose of the study is to track on-time performance of buses on all individual bus routes over time to establish a base line of bus performance reliability to determine whether the bus service is running on-time or not beyond the current daily tracker.

### **5.4 Transportation**

#### **ADA PROW TRANSITION PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR THREE COMMUNITIES**

Plan development is continuing for Lancaster, Lunenburg and Winchendon. A contract amendment has been agreed to with Stantec that has established a new completion date of February 28, 2020. Meetings will be held in each community to review the draft Plans in February.

#### **FFY 2021-2025 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

Staff has initiated development of the next Montachusett TIP that will cover Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2021 to 2025. Notices related to the TIP development have been sent to member communities as well as posted to the website. The current schedule will result in a MPO endorsed TIP by April/May 2020. Information will be brought forward as the process unfolds. Staff is currently developing a list of target eligible projects for inclusion in the TIP. Information will also be discussed in more detail at all upcoming MJTC meetings.

#### **FFY 2021 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)**

Staff has initiated development of the next Montachusett UPWP for the upcoming FFY 2021 program year that will begin on October 1, 2020. The UPWP is a task and budget tool that outlines our work efforts for the year. A memo was sent to member communities soliciting their ideas for potential tasks for us to review. Once we receive the requests, we will review the projects and try to incorporate a few into the UPWP. The UPWP budget will be based on our "PL" and FTA Section 5303 funding amounts for FFY 2021. Those figures should be provided to us in the near future. MPO endorsement of the UPWP is set for April/May 2020.

#### **MONTACHUSETT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) ACCESS PLAN**

The Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) met on November 20th at which time they formally endorsed the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Access Plan. The LEP Access Plan reflects the MPO's commitment to assisting individuals, for whom English is not their primary language, understand and have access to MPO programs, activities or services. Language for many Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals can be a barrier to accessing important benefits or services, understanding and exercising important rights, complying with applicable responsibilities or understanding

other information provided by federally funded programs and activities. The MPO Endorsed LEP has also been posted to the MRPC website.

The next MJTC Meeting is January 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. The next MPO Meeting January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

**6. New Business**

R. Hoyt asked if the Request for Response for District Local Technical Assistance has been sent out.

L. Parmenter replied the RFR was sent last week.

**7. Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Meissner, Rosemarie	A	Ashburnham	3.2019		
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
Vacant	M	Ayer			X
Vacant	A	Ayer			X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011	X	
Vacant	A	Clinton			X
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Caron, Paula	M	Fitchburg	7.2002		X
Vacant	A	Fitchburg			
Swartz, Robert	M	Gardner	7.2019		X
Cruz, Maribel	A	Gardner	8.2017		X
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016		X

Vacant	A	Groton			X
Donahue, Stacia	M	Harvard	7.2018	X	
Vacant	A	Harvard			X
Vacant	M	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston			X
Christopher, Thomas	A	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Williston, Russell	M	Lancaster	11.2018	X	
Carignan, Thomas	M	Leominster	7.2019		X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Bertram, Paula	M	Lunenburg	7.2019		X
Adams, Kathryn	A	Lunenburg	7.2018		X
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Vacant	M	Phillipston			X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.201	X	
Natrowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015		X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Widing, Sarah	A	Shirley	7.2015		X
Yocum, Barbara	M	Shirley	8.2017		X
Page, Patty	M	Sterling	7.2019	X	
Maki, Dick	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Terenzini, Carter	A	Templeton	9.2016		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2018		X
King, Cindy	A	Townsend	7.2016		X
Smith, Mike	M	Westminster	7.2019	X	
Vacant	A	Westminster			X
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	



Ward, Rick	A	Winchendon	7.2019	X	
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**STAFF PRESENT:** Glenn Eaton, Brad Harris, Linda Parmenter, George Kahale, Linda Quinlivan

**GUESTS:** Beth Faxon representing Laura Shifrin; Theresa Page, Sterling

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

January 2, 2020 MRPC Handout

November 7, 2019 Minutes

Cash Schedules – November 2019

Cyber Security Working Group Memo from Executive Director

Availability of MA Preservation Project Funds Memo from Executive Director

Public Disclosure of Volunteer Activities Memo from Executive Director