

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)



Thursday, July 2, 2020

7:00 PM

REMOTE: GO TO MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

1. Open Meeting, Introductions and Announcements

G. Corbosiero called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. G. Corbosiero stated in accordance with Governor Baker's Covid-19 Executive Order regarding the Open Meeting Law and remote participation, votes will be taken through Roll Call. G. Corbosiero read the roll call.

2. Approval of June 4, 2020 MRPC Minutes

J. Telepciak moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the June 4, 2020 minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed.

Alan Pease	Yes
Guy Corbosiero	Yes
Barbara Yocum	Yes
John Telepciak	Yes
Stacia Donahue	Yes
Bob Swartz	Yes
Alyne Butland	Yes
Tom Skwierawski	Yes
Laura Shifrin	Yes

3. Cash Schedule – June 2020

G. Eaton read the June 2020 cash schedule.

Opening Balance \$361,065.09; Total receipts this month \$114,707.67; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$475,772.76; Less: amount of this warrant \$148,870.00; Balance after this warrant \$ 326,902.76.

J. Telepciak moved to accept the June 2020 cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed.

Alan Pease	Yes
Guy Corbosiero	Yes
Barbara Yocum	Yes

John Telepciak	Yes
Stacia Donahue	Yes
Bob Swartz	Yes
Alyne Butland	Yes
Tom Skwierawski	Yes
Laura Shifrin	Yes

4. Administrative Matters

4.1 Executive Director's Report

G. Eaton stated that FY21 Budget was reviewed and a revised version will be presented at the next meeting. MRPC is complying with all Massachusetts' COVID 19 requirements and regulations. He attended online training regarding budgeting, cash management and strategic planning. Strategic planning will take place this year starting in August. MRPC will hire a full-time Economic Development Manager and possibly two interns to administer a grant from the Economic Development Administration to provide technical assistance to municipalities and businesses in relation to COVID 19 and re-engaging the economy.

G. Eaton gave a brief overview of the role of the Economic Development Manager.

5. Status Reports

5.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

MRMapper & MOBILE APPS (GENERAL)

Data and applications are continuously being updated throughout the year. Check <https://mrmapper.mrpc.org> periodically for updates.

COMMUNITY-RELATED

Lunenburg Conservation Lands Mapping – The Lunenburg Conservation Commission received a grant to create and install maps at the intersections of the trails on its properties. We will be working on creating a series of "You Are Here" maps that will be installed at the kiosks and intersections of multiple conservation maps. We have reached out to the town to begin discussing the specifics of the maps and we are currently wait for a response. This project will be ongoing for the next several months.

Winchendon Zoning Map Updates – We are currently in the process of updating the Official Zoning map for the Town of Winchendon. The decision was made to update the zoning layers to match the current parcel data where applicable. This project is currently on hold until the Town can collect data regarding the origins of the zoning districts and provide it to the MRPC.

Templeton Cemetery – We are currently working with the Town of Templeton to update their cemetery GIS data. The updated data will be used to create internal (with editing/database maintenance functionality) and public MRMapper WebApps. A draft data set was sent to the Town for their review and we are awaiting a response to finalize the data. A draft WebApp has been created and tested. Once the data is finalized, we will finalize the WebApp and present it to the Town for their review. This project should will be ongoing for the next few months.

Ayer Parcel Maintenance – We are currently in the process of updating the Town of Ayer's parcel data and MRMapper sites. This project is expected to be completed by the end of June.

Clinton Parcel Maintenance – We are currently in the process of updating the Town of Clinton's parcel data and MRMapper sites. This project is expected to be completed by the end of July.

Townsend Parcel Maintenance – We are currently in the process of updating the Town of Townsend's parcel data and MRMapper sites. This project is expected to be completed by the end of June.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING-RELATED

ADA Compliance Checklist Survey Creation – We’ve 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 developed a training manual for staff to use to complete these digital surveys and we will continue to provide any technical assistance as needed until the project is complete. This project is currently on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DLTA

- Westminster OS Update – We finalized the open space land inventory and we have updated the 12 maps in the current Open Space plan with the updated data that we have but we are waiting for the Tier 2 Hazardous Materials Locations. Once we have this information, we will geocode the data, update the appropriate map and send the first round of draft maps to the town to review. Once the Action Plan Concepts are finalized in late fall, we will map them out and update the Five-Year Action Plan map and the Unique Features map. This project will be ongoing for the next several months.
- Harvard Buildout Analysis – We are currently working with the Town on a buildout style analysis. We will develop a scenario-modeling spreadsheet and series of maps detailing current areas of developed, absolute and partial development constraints and developable lands in Town. The goal will be to assess what current zoning will result in regarding full development in terms of housing units, school children and miles of new road.

TRANSPORTATION-RELATED

Trail Data Application –We are currently in the process of finalizing two applications that will allow communities to update the existing Trail Inventory data in ‘live’ or ‘offline’ (disconnected) editing session. We met with a group to review the applications and databases and are working on updating those based on feedback. The next step will be to deploy the application and setup training sessions. This project will be ongoing throughout the summer.

Bike Inventory – We completed analyzing and collecting data for the non-priority roadways (outside of the half of a mile buffer from a tourist attraction). We created a heat map of all of the bike routes in order to analyze the most popular bike routes. We have also created an internal MRMapper application in order to further analyze and process the data. The analysis will incorporate crash data. This portion of the project is expected to be completed in early June.

MRPC Travel by Tourism – We created community-wide maps with the tourist attractions and the transportation options with the half of a mile buffer so that Transportation staff can continue with their analysis. We also provided zoomed in snips of the city attractions. We will continue to provide support, information, and maps as needed. This project will be ongoing.

TRANSIT-RELATED

MART Stop Count – We were asked to redo the stop counts so that the outbound and inbound stop counts follow the same criteria as a previously completed report. We have identified all of the individual stops, both currently scheduled and recommended in a previous report. We are currently working on finalizing the numbers of stops that are outbound scheduled, outbound recommended, inbound scheduled, and inbound recommended. This project is expected to be completed by the end of July.

Planning and Development

Comprehensive Planning Division

FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)

MRPC put together and submitted a \$400,000 grant application to EDA for the following:

1. Short-term and long-term economic development planning and coordination to update the Montachusett Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) focused on pandemic recovery and resiliency.
2. Funding for MRPC to hire a regional Disaster Economic Recovery Coordinator (DERC) for a two-year period to serve the communities and local governments and work with business leaders across the geographic region to stimulate economic growth within the business community.
3. Enhance MRPC capacity support for coronavirus response, including technology costs and personnel for MRPC staff members directly working on or supporting the work of the coronavirus-related economic development response.

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

Work continues on the following projects:

***Fitchburg:** 49 Snow Street Phase I Environmental Site Assessment.*

***Lunenburg:** 925 Massachusetts Avenue Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.*

***Winchendon:** 4 Summer Drive. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment*

MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS (EOEEA)

MRPC was awarded an FY20 Planning Assistance grant to fund Master Plan Chapters for the Town of Hubbardston. MRPC staff completed the Transportation Element. MRPC staff completed a draft Services and Facilities inventory and analysis and is ready to present to the Hubbardston Planning Board.

DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)

MRPC staff is initiating work on the following projects:

1. **Hubbardston:** Land Use Master Plan Chapter.
2. **Ayer:** ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. Project to be matched with ADA Planning Grant from MA Office on Disability to the Town of Ayer.
3. **Townsend:** Amend zoning bylaws to provide more age restricted market rate housing opportunities in Town.
4. **Townsend:** Provide statistical data to confirm the feasibility of the Town adopting M.G.L. 43D – Expedited Local Permitting Program.
5. **Athol:** Millers River Greenway Planning Assistance.

6. **Athol:** Urban Renewal Planning Assistance (Phase 2).
7. **Westminster:** Open Space and Recreation Plan update assistance (maps and statistics generated from maps, and updating tables in Community Setting Section).
8. **Sterling:** Transportation Master Plan Chapter.
9. **Sterling:** Implementation of Housing Production Plan Action Items: A. Amend accessory apartment bylaw and incorporate accessory apartments into the Subsidized Housing Inventory, and; B. Explore adoption of affordable housing on non-complying lots.
10. **Petersham:** Community survey, facilitating public input at community meetings, and identifying any funding options concerning the Nichewaug Inn & Academy building.
11. **Harvard:** Build – Out Analysis Update and Fiscal Impact Analysis.
12. **Lunenburg:** ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (Phase 2). Phase 1 was completed using last round of DLTA.
13. **Lancaster:** Draft language for a new center-village zoning district or overlay district
14. **Shirley:** Housing Production Plan
15. **Ashby:** Natural Resource Protection Bylaw
16. **Ashburnham:** Housing Master Plan Chapter and Wetlands Bylaw Update

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES (DOER)

MRPC received a Regional Energy Planning Assistance (REPA) grant award in the amount of \$59,065 in August 2019 with a contract end date of 5/30/21. REPA grant award funds were used by MRPC for Green Communities Program Designation Application Submissions for Groton, Hubbardston and Templeton. All three communities have been designated Green Communities by the DOER as a result of MRPC's assistance with the Applications with a total amount of grant funds of \$428,680. These three communities are now under contract with DOER to expend their grant funds on energy conservation projects.

MRPC staff assisted the Towns of Athol and Lunenburg under REPA to develop Competitive Grant Applications which were successfully submitted to DOER May 1st. We have yet to hear if these grants were awarded.

MRPC staff are also assisting the Towns of Royalston and Ashby under their Green Communities Grant Award administrative costs with tasks associated with managing the grant awards such as reporting, procurement, and data management. MRPC will also perform these tasks under administrative costs of the grant awards for Groton, Hubbardston, Templeton, Athol, and Lunenburg.

HEALTHY AGING TUFTS MOMENTUM FUND

MRPC has a \$10,000 grant for a pilot program to assist the Towns of Ashburnham, Westminster, and Winchendon to become certified Age Friendly. This contract ends December, 2020. MRPC staff has established contact with all participating communities and have begun to create working groups. Ground work has initiated with the data gathering stage to discover the current state of the towns and how the communities currently line up with Healthy Aging Best Practices.

HEALTHY AGING TUFTS FUND

MRPC was awarded a \$75,000 grant to help all of the non-Age Friendly communities in the Montachusett Region become certified as Age Friendly. The contract is scheduled to begin July 1, 2020 and ends December 2021 (18 months long). Invitations will be sent out to all non-Age Friendly communities to a kick-off introductory virtual meeting to go over the Age Friendly process, answer questions, and establish working groups with each participating community.

Community Development Division

A \$264,500 proposal was submitted to the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) on June 12th to fund small business and food bank assistance programs in Lunenburg, Shirley, Royalston, Townsend, and Westminster. If the grant is awarded (in July) the Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP) would be available in all, five towns while food bank assistance would be provided in Lunenburg, Shirley, and Townsend.

MONTACHUSETT ENTERPRISE CENTER, INC.

No new information.

5.3 Transit

G. Kahale commented that MART hired a consultant to complete the update to the Transit Development Program. The consultant has put together a survey regarding the update which has been posted on our website.

5.4 Transportation

5.4.1 Authorization for Chairman to endorse the Amendment to the FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) at a MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday July 15, 2020

FFY 2020 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

At the MPO meeting on June 17, 2020, the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) voted to release for public comment an Amendment to the FFY 2020 UPWP. Due to restrictions implement by the state due to the COVID-19 pandemic, certain work items included in various tasks of the FFY 2020 UPWP will be unable to be completed. This is apparent in the collection of certain data sets because of the interruption to normal activities such as travel patterns, transit ridership and vehicle usage. Any data collection conducted under current restrictions will not reflect normal behavior or usage and will be severely compromised. In addition, once retractions are lifted and individuals can return to their normal routines, it may take several weeks or months before travel patterns can return to pre-pandemic levels. Therefore, a re-allocation of "PL" funds from certain pandemic impacted tasks to other non or less effected tasks is requested. The Amendment will reduce the task budgets for 2.31 Data Collection & Analysis Program and 4.41 Bus Routes Performance Evaluation by \$16,500 and \$1,500, respectively. These funds would then be added to tasks 1.11 Support of 3C and 2.21 GIS Mapping and Analysis.

TASK NO./NAME		PL			FTA - 5303	MassDOT	TOTAL
		FHWA	MassDOT	TOTAL			
2.31 Data Collection & Analysis Program	Current	\$32,000	\$8,000	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
	Reduction	\$13,200	\$3,300	\$16,500	-	-	\$23,500
	NEW BUDGET	\$18,800	\$4,700	\$23,500	-	-	\$23,500
4.41 Bus Routes Performance Evaluation	Current	\$9,600	\$2,400	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$3,000	\$27,000
	Reduction	\$1,200	\$300	\$1,500	-	-	\$1,500
	NEW BUDGET	\$8,400	\$2,100	\$10,500	\$12,000	\$3,000	\$25,500
	Total PL Reduction	\$14,400	\$3,600	\$18,000			
TASK NO./NAME		PL			FTA - 5303	MassDOT	TOTAL
		FHWA	MassDOT	TOTAL			
1.11 Support of 3C Process	Current	\$54,027	\$13,507	\$67,534	\$6,000	\$1,500	\$75,034

	Increase	\$7,200	\$1,800	\$9,000	-	-	\$9,000
	NEW BUDGET	\$61,227	\$15,307	\$76,534	\$6,000	\$1,500	\$84,034
					-		
2.21 GIS Mapping and Analysis	Current	\$46,400	\$11,600	\$58,000	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$63,000
	Increase	\$7,200	\$1,800	\$9,000	-	-	\$9,000
	NEW BUDGET	\$53,600	\$13,400	\$67,000	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$72,000

The public review and comment period will run from Wednesday June 24, 2020 to Tuesday July 14, 2020. After the close of the comment period, the MPO will meet on Wednesday July 15th to review and address any and all comments received. The MPO will then likely vote to endorse the Amendment to the FFY 2020 UPWP at that meeting. After a review of comments received to date, it is requested that the MRPC authorize its Chairman and the MPO to endorse the Amendment to the FFY 2020 UPWP at the next scheduled MPO meeting. The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) will also review the Amendment to the UPWP at its July 8th meeting and recommend the MPO endorse the document.

J. Telepciak moved that the MRPC has reviewed the Amendment to the FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and based upon this review as well as the review of any comments received, authorizes its Chairman to endorse the Amendment to the FFY 2020 UPWP at a MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday July 15, 2020 at 1:00 PM at the MRPC offices. The motion was seconded

Roll call vote followed.

Alan Pease	Yes
Guy Corbosiero	Yes
Barbara Yocum	Yes
John Telepciak	Yes
Stacia Donahue	Yes
Bob Swartz	Yes
Alyne Butland	Yes
Tom Skwierawski	Yes
Laura Shifrin	Yes

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC)

the June 10th MJTC meeting, the Nominating Committee put forth a slate of officers for the upcoming year:

Chair – Jon Wyman, Westminster
Vice Chair – Nicolas Bosonetto, Fitchburg
Secretary – Tracy Murphy, Winchendon

The election will occur at the July 8th MJTC meeting. Floor nominations will also be accepted at this meeting.

Next MJTC Meeting – July 8, 2020 at 2:30 PM at MRPC Offices

Next MPO Meeting – July 15, 2020 at 1:00 PM at MRPC Offices

6. New Business

There was no new business for discussion.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Ashburnham BOS	A	Ashburnham	7.2020		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011		X
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001	X	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
Butland, Alyne	M	Fitchburg	7.2020	X	
Skwierawski, Tom	A	Fitchburg	7.2020	X	
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	
Vacant	A	Townsend			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	

STAFF PRESENT: Glenn Eaton, George Kahale, Jason Stanton

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING:

June 4, 2020 MRPC Minutes
 July 2, 2020 Meeting Handout
 Flyer – MART Survey
 UPWP Budget Amendment Memo
 MPO Task Adjustment Summary