

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 13, 2019

Meeting Held at

MRPC OFFICES

464 ABBOTT AVENUE, LEOMINSTER, MA 01453

J. Wyman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

I. Introduction

Members

Jon Wyman, Westminster; Doug Walsh, Athol; Richard Maki, Sterling; Veronica Kell, Townsend; Bonnie Lawrence, Shirley; Nicolas Bosonetto, Fitchburg;

Ex-Officio

Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Derek Krevat, MassDOT

Non-Members

Staff

Brad Harris, George Snow, Brian Doherty, Sheri Bean, George Kahale

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of September 11, 2019 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the September 11, 2019 MJTC Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

IV. Fatal Crash Corridors in the Montachusett Region

– Presentation on Fatal Crash Corridors Listing

G. Snow presented a series of maps and tables related to the Fatal Crash Corridors Report for the Montachusett Region. Mr. Snow explained that available data from MassDOT was reviewed and quality checked for mapping on the region's road network. This study also helps us to work with the state as part of their goal of reducing fatalities throughout the Commonwealth. Data was presented that listed fatal crashes in each member community, on what roads did these fatalities occurred, are they part of any know crash clusters in the region and are any projects currently planned that may help to address any safety concerns. This information can then be used to help us identify locations where a Road Safety Audit (RSA) or study can be undertaken to address issues. Discussion followed regarding HSIP eligibility of the locations, who should initiate a project with MassDOT, what information could come from a RSA and the availability of the data on MrMapper.

V. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Access Plan Update

– Presentation of Comments on Draft LEP Plan

S. Bean presented the information related to comments that have been received to date on the Draft Limited English Proficiency Access Plan. The current draft provides updated language data provided by American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate data from 2010-2015. The most recent Census data does not have a

language breakdown which is why the ACS data was used. This data has a high margin of error which creates some difficulties with updating the report accurately but it is the best data that was given at this time. The MPO voted at their October 16th meeting to release the draft LEP for a 21-day public review and comment period. That comment period began on October 28th and will close on November 18th.

To date, one comment has come in from the town of Townsend related to the high percentage of Hmong population in the community. We have let them know of the limited data from the ACS and that there is a high margin of error for this data. In addition, we received a verbal comment at the November 7th MRPC meeting from the town of Shirley that the large language population may likely be impacted by the federal and state facilities located in the southern part of the town. They asked that some footnote be added to explain this issue. We will make sure that it is duly noted. Staff also explained that there was some confusion as to the use and need of the LEP. We want to emphasize that this report and analysis is for the RPA and MPO to identify what possible populations and languages are in the region and to alert us that to expand our outreach, these are the major languages that we need to be aware of in order to expand involvement into the transportation planning process. Discussion followed on the data, its usage and the report.

The MJTC reached consensus to recommend that the MPO endorse the LEP Access Plan at the November 20th meeting.

VI. Montachusett FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review & Discussion of Draft TIP Amendment #1*
- *Discussion of MART Request to Utilize Available FFY 2020 Target Funds*

B. Harris mentioned that the MPO voted last month to release a draft TIP Amendment #1 for a 21-day public review and comment period. The comment period began on October 28th and will run until November 18th. This amendment is in response to a request from the Montachusett Regional transit Authority (MART) to add a project to the FFY 2020 Transit Element as well to change the cost of two (2) projects and the removal of a third project within this Element of the TIP. The additional project will allow for the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) to hire a consultant to assist with the preparation of a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). To date no comments have been received.

The MJTC reached consensus to recommend that the MPO endorse Draft TIP Amendment #1 at the November 20th meeting.

G. Kahale then discussed a potential TIP Amendment from MART that would allow them to make use of current unspent FFY 2020 TIP target funds to purchase new buses for their fleet. Currently, they are operating several vehicles that are at or near the end of their useful lives. If MART can access the unspent funds of approximately \$800,000, they would be able to purchase one 30-foot bus and three 26-foot mini-buses and allow them to be more fuel-efficient. They will be presenting this request to the MPO next week and if agreed to would result in a new TIP Amendment to reflect the proposed changes. MART has also presented this proposal at the Air Quality Consultation meeting held at the end of October for review and approval. This step was necessary in order for them to utilize CMAQ funds for the purchase. We are looking for feedback from the MJTC to present to the MPO regarding the proposal.

S. Bradbury indicated that MassDOT District 3 has received updated cost estimates for the FFY 2020 target projects and that there will need to be cost adjustments made to two projects that would use approximately \$650,000 of the available target funding of \$800,000. The projects are Route 13 in Leominster (#605651) and Route 2A in Ayer (#607902). MassDOT D3's recommendation is utilize the available funds for the current FFY 2020 projects.

Discussion followed regarding the request, the new target project cost estimates and the priorities of the region.

B. Harris indicated that it was his intention to get a recommendation from the MJTC to present to the MPO next week on the MART request but based on the information from MassDOT District 3 it would appear to be moot. He indicated that he would inform the MPO that there was no recommendation from the MJTC based upon the latest information provided by MassDOT and that it is too early at this time to redirect these funds. More information needs to be presented.

VII. Contract Status Reports

a. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) & Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

G. Kahale presented the members with an invitation to the Grand Opening of the Ayer Commuter Rail Parking Facility. After 20 years, we have finally reached a positive conclusion. He then reviewed a series of photos that documented the construction process.

b. MassDOT 3C

B. Harris indicated that ADA PROW Transition Plan Development for Three Communities is continuing for Lancaster, Lunenburg and Winchendon. Stantec has completed field work for the technical survey of the existing pedestrian facilities within each community. Meetings were held in each community to review and discuss the field data and analysis conducted to date. The remainder of the Plan development is on hold as we work out a request by Stantec for a time extension and a cost increase. We hope to have this settled by the end of the month.

The updated Montachusett Regional Trail Guide has been completed and printed. MRPC worked to update the existing trail inventory data through public and community input. All of this work has been incorporated into a new Regional Trail Guide. Copies are available and additional copies can be picked up at MRPC offices and upon request.

Work has wrapped up on the Lunenburg Walkability study that examined the town center and the Whalom area. S. Bean will be presenting the study to the Board of Selectmen on December 10th.

B. Doherty will be starting work on the development of the next TIP. This TIP will cover FFY 2021 to 2025. The first step will be the identification and development of the project list for the Region. MassDOT is developing an online TIP that will be utilized for this TIP development. As we get further along, we will be presenting regular information on the TIP.

VIII. Administrative Matters

- Next MJTC Meeting Location

The next meeting of the MJTC is currently scheduled for December 11, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the MRPC Offices. If there are no urgent or pressing matters, we can cancel the December meeting and schedule to meet next on January 8, 2020.

The MJTC agreed to cancel the December meeting and reconvene on January 8, 2020.

B. Harris then raised a question regarding the current meeting start time of 6:30 pm. It was suggested that an earlier time may result in better attendance by the communities. He asked for the MJTC's opinion on the matter. After discussion, it was decided that a survey should be made of the members to see what everyone's feelings may be. B. Harris indicated that he would put something together.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

11 13 19 Agenda
9 11 19 MJTC Minutes
Fatal Crash Corridor Tables
Int Parties Draft TIP Amendment #1
FFY20 TIP Transit Amendment No 1 10 16 2019
FFY 2020 TIP Summary 11 13 2019
CMAQ Consultation Meeting MART 11 13 2019
Int Parties Draft LEP 10 25 2019
LEP DRAFT 2019
2020 Meeting Calendar
MART Ayer Parking Facility Ribbon Cutting Invite