

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING
MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2020
Meeting Held Online through GoToMeeting.com - Hosted by the MRPC

J. Wyman called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

I. Introduction

Members

Jon Wyman, Westminster; Doug Walsh, Athol; Tim Kilhart, Harvard; Veronica Kell, Townsend; Tracy Murphy, Winchendon; Christopher McDermott, North Central MA Chamber of Commerce;

Ex-Officio

Laura Hanson, MassDOT District 2; Mike Bolduc, MassDOT District 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP

Non-Members

Roger Hoyt, Ashburnham; Bob Szocik, Templeton; Joshua Hall, Westminster;

Staff

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

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of March 11, 2020 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the March 11, 2020 MJTC Meeting Minutes as presented. Consensus was given to accept the minutes as presented.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review of Draft FFY 2021-2025 TIP*
- *MJTC Recommendation on Draft FFY 2021-2025 TIP*

B. Doherty reviewed with the members the draft TIP listing that will be presented to the MPO at their next meeting on April 15, 2020. The project listings for each FFY from 2021 to 2025 was discussed along with the fiscal constraint analysis. Each year was under the provided federal aid target figures resulting in a fiscally constrained draft. The scenario present was the preferred scenario of the MPO. Since that last meeting, we received an email from the town of Templeton that indicated the town's priorities in respect to the two projects contained in the TIP; Project # 608424 - Route 68 Reconstruction from King Phillip Trail (Route 202) North to the Phillipston Town Line (2.65 Miles) and Project # 608784 - Roundabout Construction at the Intersection of Patriots Road, South Main Street, North Main Street and Gardner Road. In the preferred scenario, the Roundabout project is listed in FFY 2023 with the Route 68 project listed in the Appendix. The town indicated that their preference was for the Route 68 project before the Roundabout. Since the projects are of considerable differences in cost (\$5.96 million for Rt 68 and \$1.5 million for the Roundabout) several changes would be needed to address this issue. Staff did develop a scenario reflecting this town priority for the MJTC to review. The Templeton Email Scenario did not take into consideration any comments from MassDOT or the status of the projects but simply tried to develop a scenario that reflect the town's concerns. B. Doherty then

compared the MPO Preferred Scenario to the Templeton Email Scenario with the MJTC. Discussion followed regarding the scenarios.

MassDOT Districts 2 and 3 presented to the MJTC their feelings regarding the movement of the projects impacted by the Templeton Email Scenario as well the prior information provided to MassDOT from the town and the current status of the design and costs. As such they would not favor the Templeton Email Scenario.

The MJTC then reached consensus to recommend the MPO release the Draft FFY 2021-2025 TIP as developed and based on the MPO Preferred Scenario for a 21-day public review and comment period.

V. Montachusett FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- *Review of Draft FFY 2021 UPWP*
- *MJTC Recommendation on Draft FFY 2021 UPWP*

S. Bean reviewed the draft FFY 2021 UPWP with the MJTC and highlighted the changes made to the document since the last MJTC presentation. This included a completed overall budget as well as individual task budgets. S. Bean then reviewed several tasks in order to highlight what will be the focus during the next program year. This included Tasks 2.6 Intersection Analysis; 3.1 Walkability Study(s) for Sterling & Townsend; 3.2 Fitchburg Corridor Study for Route 12; 3.4 Regional Pedestrian Plan; 3.5 ADA PROW Database; 3.6 Roundabouts and the MRPC Region; and 4.4 Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Evaluation

The Draft UPWP will be presented to the MPO next week for their review and we would like a recommendation from the MJTC as to whether or not the Draft should be released for a 21-day public review and comment period.

Discussion followed.

The MJTC then reached consensus to recommend the MPO release the Draft FFY 2021 UPWP as presented for a 21-day public review and comment period.

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

- *Review of Draft TIP Amendment #3*
- *MJTC Recommendation Draft Amendment #3*

B. Harris presented to the members a draft TIP Amendment that was put out by the MPO for a 14-day public review and comment period after the last MPO meeting on March 25th. The requested change only impacts one target project in FFY 2020, the Route 13 project in Leominster. This project has a cost increase of \$745,000. We currently have a balance of unspent target funds for FFY 2020 of \$855,000 so the additional funds can be incorporated without impacting the fiscal constraint of the TIP. The other major project is the Fitchburg-Leominster Twin Cities Rail Trail that has a cost increase and is recommended to be move to FFY 2021. In addition, two new projects are being added due to the recent awarding of Workforce Transportation Grants to MART. These are federal funds that will be transferred from FHWA to FTA and therefore needs to be amended into the TIP.

As mentioned, this is currently out for a reduced public comment period of 14 days due to the revised scheduling of last months MPO meeting. We did receive one comment from MassDOT advising us that the Route 13 final cost estimate needs to be increased by an additional \$13,909 bring its final cost to \$6,753,635. Again, because of unspent target funds in FFY 2020, we can accommodate this without impacting any other target project and still be fiscally constrained. We are seeking a recommendation from the MJTC to the MPO on whether or nor this Amendment #3 should be formally endorsed by the MPO at their April 15th meeting.

The MJTC then reached consensus to recommend the MPO endorse Draft FFY 2020 TIP Amendment #3 as presented.

VII. Contract Status Reports

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

G. Kahale informed the members that as previously reported the Ayer Commuter Rail Parking Facility is completed and opened but due to the COVID-19 pandemic the station is empty as are the other train stations. Phase 2 of the Ayer project which involves the development of a pedestrian plaza at Depot Square will be starting soon and has an estimated completion date at the end of June.

Due to the pandemic, MART is offering free ridership on their all of their bus services. In addition, they are undergoing a vigorous disinfection process on a daily basis.

b. MassDOT 3C

B. Harris indicated to the members that due to the pandemic, all MRPC staff is working from home. However, if any one wishes to contact a staff member, they can still call the office and leave a voice message. That message will be sent as an email to the staff member. So, we will still be able to respond to phone questions.

In addition, the traffic count program is being delayed due to the effects of the pandemic. We will be discussing how to respond internally. The next MPO meeting on April 20th will also be held online. Information on how to join in are on the MRPC website in the Event Calendar.

VIII. Administrative Matters

- Next MJTC Meeting

The next meeting of the MJTC is currently scheduled for May 13, 2020 at 2:30 p.m. at the MRPC Offices or online.

L. Hanson of MassDOT brought to the attention of the members that the deadlines for the Complete Streets Funding Program have been extended. Tier 2 application submittals have been extended to June 1, 2020 while Tier 3 applications have been extended to July 1, 2020.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

- 4 8 20 Agenda
- 3 11 2020 MJTC minutes
- 4 MPO & Templeton Scenario Comparison 4 15 2020
- 4 Preferred Target Scenario
- 4 State Prioritized Projects
- 4 Summary of TIP & UPWP Changes 4 8 2020
- 4 TIP 2021-2025 Transit Projects
- 5 DRAFT FFY 2021 UPWP MJTC Summary
- 5 DRAFT FFY 2021 UPWP
- 6 Comments Responses FFY 2020 TIP Amendment #3
- 6 FFY 2020 TIP Amendment #3 3 30 2020

