

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 10, 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; Dick Kilhart, Athol; Mark Wetzel, Ayer; Nicolas Bosonetto, Fitchburg; Janet Tice, Shirley; Richard Maki, Sterling; Elizabeth Faxon, Townsend; Guy Corbosiero, Winchendon

Ex-Officio and Organizations

Paula Simmons, MassDOT District 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP;

Non-Members

Veronica Kell, Townsend; Erik Atkins, Green International Engineering

Staff

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

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

B. Harris provided members with a quick overview of how to access all of the handouts for the meeting.

III. Approval of September 9, 2020 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the September 9, 2020 MJTC Meeting Minutes as presented. Consensus was given to accept the minutes as presented.

IV. Nashua NH-MA Urbanized Area Transportation Planning MOU

- *Review and Discussion*
- *MJTC Recommendation to MPO Regarding MOU*

B. Doherty discussed a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) developed by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) and agencies operating in the Nashua NH-MA Urbanized Area (Nashua UZA). The reason for our notification and involvement on this MOU is due to the fact that a small portion of the Nashua UZA enters into our region in Groton. Because of this we were asked to review and comment on a draft of the MOU and then to subsequently sign onto it through MPO approval. Staff discussed the draft MOU with both MassDOT and Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), who are also impacted by the Nashua UZA. The MOU contains and outlines the basic roles and responsibilities between the agencies operating within the Nashua UZA. This includes the sharing of data and information and coordination in the development of studies and plans. The document is similar to a MOU approved between the Montachusett MPO and several Boston UZA agencies in 2018. The MOU was discussed by the MPO at their October 21, 2020 meeting at which time MART advised the MPO and subsequently the Nashua RPC that although they are listed on the draft MOU, they do not have any member communities that are actually in the Nashua UZA and should therefore be removed as a signee. Other than that, no other comments were submitted to the Nashua RPC. They have therefore developed the final version of the MOU presented today.

Brad Harris indicated that MassDOT has decided that once all of the Massachusetts MPO's involved in the MOU have agreed to it, then the Secretary of MassDOT, Stephanie Pollack, will sign on behalf of the MPOs.

Consensus was given to recommend to the MPO that they endorse the MOU as presented.

V. MART PTASP Plan & Safety Metrics Study

- Presentation on Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)

G. Kahale gave a presentation on the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) for the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) that details the safety processes and procedures for MART. This plan utilizes existing agency safety practices and best practices to be implemented in order to meet the new regulation set in 49 CFR Part 673 of the federal guidelines. The PTASP includes formal documentation to guide the agency in proactive safety management policy, safety risk management, safety assurance, and safety promotion. The goal is to provide management and labor a comprehensive, collaborative approach to managing safety. The plan includes the process and schedule for an annual review of safety performance measures and to update processes that may be needed to advance the organization's safety practices.

G. Kahale then walked members through a presentation that covered the plan development and approval process, the safety performance targets, the safety management policy, the safety risk management process, safety assurances and safety promotion and training. The safety targets in this plan were discussed with the MPO at their September 16, 2020 meeting. MART is now looking for a formal vote by the MPO on acceptance of the safety targets at next weeks MPO meeting.

A question was asked when the Employee Safety Reporting Program will be implemented. G. Kahale mentioned that the plan will be adopted by the MART Advisory Board next week on November 17th.

Consensus was given to recommend to the MPO that they endorse the MART PTASP as presented.

VI. Contract Status Reports

- a. Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**
- b. Regional Transit Authority (RTA)**

G. Kahale informed the members that in the upcoming program year, MRPC staff will be doing an ADA Bus Stop Evaluation along the fixed route system. Each location will be documented for ADA accessibility. This will be a multi-year evaluation. Work continues on the Depot Square project in Ayer. Phase 1, which includes the driveway and drop off area for riders has been completed. Phase 2 of the plaza has also been completed. The third Phase includes a bathroom and bus shelter that is under design. With the onset of winter, it will not be completed before the end of the year. MART hopes to start on it in early spring.

MART is working on a project in Shirley to see if there can be any commuter parking improvements made at the station. MART is currently talking with the MBTA regarding this issue.

A question was asked about the MBTA meetings being presented on service cuts and if they will have any affect on MART. G. Kahale replied that people should attend because the commuter rail ridership is only operating at 10% and it is important to stress the need is still there.

- c. MassDOT 3C**

G. Snow discussed with the MJTC members that Students from WPI have begun work on a study project under our UPWP that will examine the intersection of Route 2A/Route 12/Route 31 in west Fitchburg. They will be

looking at the traffic flow, geometrics and accident history in order to develop potential alternatives and solutions to the problems that exist. This work is part of their senior project.

At the October MPO meeting a question was asked regarding the partial closing of the bridge on Route 70 over Route 2 in Lancaster that is an access road for Lunenburg residents to Route 2. The question was how long would the bridge be closed or restricted. MassDOT District 3 responded that a temporary southbound lane closure on the Route 70 Bridge over Route 2 will remain closed for several months following a bridge strike. A copy of the news release is part of the handouts.

Other handouts include a Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Notice of a Grant Opportunity titled Taxi/Livery Partnership Grant Program for Fall 2020. MAPC in partnership with MassDevelopment, has developed this state-wide Taxi/Livery Partnership Grant program to provide funding for grantees to contract with taxicab, livery, or hackney businesses for transportation and delivery needs for the Commonwealth's vulnerable populations and others. The grant program will support public transportation and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) initiatives that can be served by taxi, livery, or hackney businesses in Massachusetts. These services could include first mile/last mile connections, fixed-route shuttle service, micro-transit initiatives, incentivizing NEMT programs, and other services that taxi, livery and hackney companies can provide that meet local transportation needs, such as meal deliveries, senior transportation, and other services to be identified through outreach. Information on the application are listed on the handout.

Other handouts include two news articles on the construction of the Twin Cities Rail Trail between Fitchburg and Leominster parallel to Route 12; one on a Shared Streets grant awarded to the city of Gardner for approximately \$48,000 in order to create an outdoor dining and waiting area for the city's restaurants, barbers and salons; and finally, there is a Notice of a pre-recorded Design Public Hearing that will be posted to the MassDOT website on December 7, 2020 to present the proposed Roundabout Construction at Elm Street, Pearl Street, Central Street and Green Street project #609279 in Gardner. The handout provides information and links on how to view the public hearing.

Also, the next MPO meeting will be next week on November 18 at 1:00 pm. We anticipate that a TIP Amendment will be released for public comment related to changes in the FFY 2021 Transit Element. This will likely be a topic of discussion at the next MJTC meeting.

B. Doherty indicated that today we received a notice of a new program by MassDOT titled "Shared Winter Streets and Spaces". It appears to be similar to the recent "Shared Street and Spaces" program. B. Doherty then illustrated how to access the cloud folder which contains all of the handouts for this meeting.

VII. Administrative Matters

- *Next MJTC Meeting*

The next meeting will be on Wednesday December 9th at 2:30pm.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

- 11 10 20 Agenda
- 9 9 2020 MJTC minutes
- 4 NashuaUZAMOU_FinalDraft_Oct2020
- 5 MART Final_PTASP
- 6 FFY 2021 Proposed Amendment 1

6 Gardner Proj 609279 Public Hearing Flyer
6 Gardner receives state grant - The Gardner News 9 22 2020
6 MAPC Grant Opportunity 11 02 2020
6 Rt 70 Bridge MassDOT News Release
6 Twin Cities Rail Trail T&G Articles
2021 Meeting Calendar Ver 1
Shared Winter Streets News Release 11 10 2020