

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING

MINUTES OF March 10, 2021

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; Nicolas Bosonetto, Fitchburg; Tim Kilhart, Harvard; Alice Livdahl, Hubbardston; Janet Tice, Shirley; Richard Maki, Sterling; Elizabeth Faxon, Townsend; Guy Corbosiero, Winchendon; Brian Croteau, Winchendon

Ex-Officio and Organizations

Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Paula Simmons, MassDOT District 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Kristen Lamoureux, The Arc of Opportunity; Richard Liberatore, Fitchburg Airport Commission; Travis Condon, North Central MA Chamber of Commerce

Non-Members

Veronica Kell, Townsend; Chris McGown, Clinton; Paul Milewski, Green International Engineering; Erik Atkins, Green International Engineering

Staff

Brad Harris; Sheri Bean; Brian Doherty; George Kahale; Matt Leger

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of February 10, 2021 Minutes

A motion was made to accept the February 10, 2021 MJTC Meeting Minutes. Consensus was given to accept the minutes as presented.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Project Presentation – Clinton #610681 Reconstruction of Sterling St (Rt 62)*
- *Review and Update of Project Priority Listing*
- *Review of Target Funding Scenarios*
- *Identification of Preferred Funding Scenario*

B. Doherty introduced P. Milewski from Green International who will give a presentation on project #610681, the reconstruction of Sterling Street (Rt 62) in Clinton. A presentation was also made last month to the MPO. We briefly talked about this project and its TEC score at last month's MJTC meeting and the fact that this is a new project for this year's TIP. P. Milewski then gave a brief presentation on the project, the key connectivity that this roadway provides to the area, the existing conditions of the roadway including poor safety, poor drainage, the lack of adequate pavement and sidewalk conditions, and the lack of accessibility for all roadway users. The major intersection in the project is a HSIP eligible safety location. The recommended design improvements were discussed and highlighted. Initial estimates place this project at around \$3.5 million and a 25% design was prepared for MassDOT. A road safety audit (RSA) is targeted for around April. C. McGown of

the Clinton DPW discussed how this project fits into other work that is being done in Clinton and how this is part of a plan to improve accessibility to the downtown.

B. Doherty then continued to review the status of the FFY 2022-2026 TIP development. We are still on track to have a draft document by April for the MPO to review. He then presented information to the MJTC on statewide funded projects for the Montachusett Region and a draft listing of Transit projects for FFY 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026.

B. Doherty then proceeded to review funding scenarios developed for the members to discuss. Based upon the target funds estimated for our region and the status of the target projects, two funding scenarios were compiled. Both scenarios contained the same projects for FFY 2022 and 2023. All the differences occur in the outer three years of the TIP. B. Doherty then reviewed the scenarios in more detail.

Much discussion followed on the funding scenarios including comments from T. Kilhart from Harvard in support of Scenario 2; D. Kilhart from Athol on the design status of Athol project #608732, Intersection Improvements at Crescent Street and Chestnut Hill Avenue being closer to 75%; P. Simmons of MassDOT District 2 indicating that they expect to receive the 75% designs for Athol in the near future; and A. Livdahl of Hubbardston indicated her support the towns project and its inclusion in the TIP. A series of questions were asked related to funding programs, projects under MassDOT jurisdiction and the TIP process.

After further discussions, it was the consensus of the MJTC to recommend Scenario 2 to the MPO as the preferred funding option.

V. Montachusett FFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- *Review Identified Task List*
- *Review of Initial Budget Estimates*

S. Bean presented to the members an updated listing of tasks for the UPWP based upon the requests received and our review of MassDOT's guidance letter. Additionally, we have developed a draft budget for the UPWP tasks based upon our anticipated PL and FTA Section 5303 funds. S. Bean then reviewed the various sections of the UPWP and what tasks are to be included in each one. Individual tasks were previewed and their scopes were highlighted.

S. Bean then discussed the community requests that were received and how they are being incorporated into several of the new tasks. Basically, all the requests received have been worked into the UPWP. Response letters have gone out to the communities informing them of their inclusion in the UPWP.

Staff will now be working on the compilation of a draft UPWP for public release after the April MPO meeting. As part of the draft, we will conduct an equity analysis to see what communities, if any, have not received any planning assistance over the last few years. Our goal in doing this is to see that all our municipalities can share in this planning program.

VI. Contract Status Reports

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

G. Kahale mentioned that the Ayer project is still on hold and under redesign of the last phase, that is the restrooms. A new engineer is working on the design and it should be done by June with construction to follow shortly afterward. Hopefully, by March/April they can resume work on the remaining construction. The staff is still working with the MBTA to see how we can improve the paring at the Shirley Commuter Rail Station. MART has implemented a new service called Worcester Commuter Shuttle that starts in Fitchburg/Leominster through

Clinton and then on to Worcester. The Shuttle Service started just recently, and the ridership has been low. We are asking you to spread the word about the service in your communities. This service has one loop in the morning and two in the afternoon. The service is in addition to the shuttle service that goes to the Worcester hospital.

- MassDOT 3C

B. Harris stated presented two separate handouts to the MJTC. The first is a news article from the Greenfield Recorder stating that the Mohawk Trail from Athol westward through Franklin County and into Berkshire County ending in Williamstown has been named a National Scenic Byway by the U. S. DOT. The Mohawk Trail was one of 15 new All-American Roads and 34 new National Scenic Byways. An application was submitted by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) in cooperation with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the MRPC. The second handout is a notice of a MassDOT Design Public Hearing on project # 609314 in Ashby for the proposed Intersection Improvements at Greenville Road (Route 31) and Turnpike Road. This pre-recorded hearing will be available April 12th.

The MRPC has posted on our website a job announcement for 2 traffic interns. If you know of any college or even high school student looking for a spring summer position, please direct them to our website for complete information.

Finally, we have a question for the MJTC. Matt Leger from the Planning & Development department of the MRPC is asking if the MJTC would be interested in hosting and being part of a focus group on transportation as part of the development of a Community Health Assessment Project for Heywood Hospital. As part of the development of the 2021 Plan, the MRPC is setting up a series of focus group sessions and would like to know if the MJTC would be willing to host at an upcoming meeting in April or May. The MRPC would invite individuals and groups in the service area, such as CHNA 9 and the FRTA, to attend and to provide opinions and feedback regarding transportation issues and access to the health network. Additionally, they are asking if anyone in the MJTC has any groups or organizations that they know of that should be included and invited to the session. The MRPC would give a presentation and then open it to questions, opinions, etc. It is estimated that it should run no longer than 60 to 90 minutes. After discussion, it was decided that a separate meeting would be the best course of action to take and to not try to squeeze it into the MJTC, especially with upcoming discussions on the TIP and UPWP.

VII. Administrative Matters

- *Next MJTC Meeting*

The next meeting will be on Wednesday April 14th at 2:30pm.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

- 3 10 21 Agenda
- 2 10 2021 MJTC minutes
- 4 Clinton Sterling Street Handout
- 4 FFY 2022 2026 TEC Scores
- 4 MART Preliminary 22-26 CIP Project List
- 4 Statewide Priority Listing
- 4 Target Project Scenario 1
- 4 Target Project Scenario 2

4 Target Project Status List
5 UPWP Task List
6 Mohawk Trail receives national recognition 2 18 2021
Ashby Public Hearing 609314 DPHFlyer