

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

**Held at
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
464 Abbott Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453**

Minutes of February 21, 2018

S. Woeffel representing MassDOT Secretary Stephanie Pollack called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Steven Woeffel, MassDOT OTP; Arthur Frost, MassDOT District 3; John Telepciak, MRPC; Mohammed Khan, MART; Allan Mayo, Subregion 1; Paula Bertram, Subregion 3; Noreen Piazza, Subregion 4

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Nikki Tishler, MassDOT OTP; Jeff Hoynoski, MassDOT District 2; Ann Sullivan, MassDOT District 3; David Chandler, FHWA; Mark Wetzel, Ayer; Albert Gallant, Winchendon; Rich Benevento, WorldTech Engineering; Mike Myers, TEC

STAFF PRESENT

Brad Harris; George Snow; Brian Doherty; David Fee; George Kahale; Glenn Eaton

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments to be made.

III. Approval of January 24, 2018 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the January 24, 2018 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed with N. Piazza and A. Mayo abstaining.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review/Response on Comments to Draft Amendment #3*
- *MPO Endorsement of FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #3*

G. Snow referred to the handout on Amendment #3. He indicated that a comment period from January 26, 2018 to February 15, 2018 passed without comment. He explained the amendment which involves the addition of target funds to project #608188 Gardner/ Leominster/ Sterling – Intersection Improvements at three locations. The cost for this project has increased and as such, MassDOT would like to utilize the remaining target funds of \$1,385,219 for our region in FFY 2018. This would be added to the project along with an additional \$37,278 of statewide HSIP funds. Altogether, the project has increased from \$1,200,000 to \$2,622,497 and by utilizing these two funding changes the project can move forward. This amendment is within the FFY 2018 target amount of \$9,864,087. Therefore, the TIP would remain fiscally constrained. He indicated that the amendment was discussed at both the February 14, 2018 MJTC meeting and the February 1, 2018 MRPC meeting and was recommended for MPO endorsement by both groups.

P. Bertram asked whether the amendment would affect the status of the Fitchburg, Lunenburg, Leominster Summer Street (project #606124). Due to the fact the amendment would fulfill the whole

target allocation for 2018, would the Summer Street project, which is currently an advanced construction (AC) project over two (2) years, be affected if it no longer was determined to be AC status and had to be funded in one year?

A. Frost indicated that since the Summer Street project was already advertised and approved for AC status no change is expected to affect it.

A motion was made to endorse TIP Amendment #3. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

V. Montachusett FFY 2019-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review of Regional Project Listing*
- *Project Presentations*

B. Harris presented a number of items pertaining to the 2019–2023 TIP. The first was referenced in a handout comparing target funds between the 2018-2022 TIP and the 2019-2023 TIP. He indicated that there is an increase in allocations and the state is not splitting funds up by funding category in the 2019-2023 TIP. Also provided was a handout of preliminary draft listings of the transit element of the 2019-2023 TIP, which will be updated as the TIP process develops. Additionally, a handout of target eligible projects was provided for reference.

B. Harris indicated that there are presentations for four (4) projects: #608784 Templeton Roundabout Construction; #608879 Winchendon Route 202; #608779 Lancaster Intersection Improvements; and #607902 Ayer Rehabilitation of East Main Street (Route 2A).

J. Hoynoski presented on project #608784 Templeton Roundabout Construction. This roundabout project is located in Templeton at the intersection of Patriots Road (Rt. 2A), South Main Street, North Main Street and Gardner Road. Construction of the roundabout will remedy existing issues at the five-legged intersection which include lack of bicycle/pedestrian accommodations, driver confusion upon entering the intersection and safety concerns. The current project estimate is \$1,900,000 and is at pre-25% design.

J. Hoynoski presented on project #608879 Winchendon Route 202. He indicated this is a district in-house design on a section of Route 202 (Maple Street) in Winchendon from Vine Street to Glennallen Street (1.36 miles). Pavement reconstruction, pedestrian accommodations and minor widening to provide adequate shoulders will be included. Drainage issues will be addressed as well. This project is pre-25% design and is estimated at \$1,680,444.

N. Piazza referred to the handout on project #608779, Lancaster Intersection Improvements. M. Myers presented this project which includes improvements in the area of Route 70 and Route 117 in Lancaster. The project includes the addition of two (2) stop lights, one at each intersection in the project area. The addition of stop lights would remedy high traffic volumes and congestion at the intersection approaches. Also included are improved crosswalks and bicycle accommodations through the area. A design public hearing for the project is on track for this spring and is possibly on target for a 75% design sometime in the fall. The estimated cost is \$2,500,00.

M. Wetzel introduced project #607902 Ayer Rehabilitation of East Main Street (Route 2A). Support letters from the town and project renderings were distributed.

R. Benevento discussed improvements which include improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodations as well as pavement reconstruction throughout the project area. East Main Street is the major corridor through town and will benefit greatly from this project. The town is ambitious on the design and there is

overwhelming public support for the project. A 75% design is expected in late March or early April. Right of Way work is underway. The town has expressed interest in moving the project up from the current listing on the 2022 year of the 2018-2022 TIP. Projected cost for the project is \$3,800,000.

VI. Montachusett FFY 2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- Development Schedule and Budgets

B. Harris presented a budget comparison between the current FFY 2017-2018 UPWP and the upcoming FFY 2018-2019 UPWP. The FFY 2018-2019 UPWP will see a budget increase from the current \$647,248 to \$661,146 (\$13,898). Many of the tasks for next program year will be identified upon in the next few months as we develop the FFY 2018-2019 UPWP. A major work item will be the Regional Transportation Plan update. Budget for the Transit element will also be updated in the coming months. More discussions on possible tasks and UPWP items will be held at meetings throughout the spring.

VII. Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- Initial Subregion Meetings

B. Doherty gave an update on the subregion specific MPO meetings held in January. Meetings were held in Ashburnham (Subregion 2), Lancaster (Subregion 4), Lunenburg (Subregion 3) and Winchendon (Subregion 1). Common themes ranged from the TIP development process to how communities fund transportation improvements. Nine (9) of the nineteen (19) communities which are part of a subregion attended and the possibility of holding subregion meetings on a more frequent basis was brought up at each meeting. As of now, we are planning on developing a quarterly meeting schedule for each subregion.

VIII. Updates

- MassDOT Highway Division

A. Frost gave an update on project #608188 Gardner/ Leominster/ Sterling – Intersection Improvements at three locations. A 75% design was completed on January 2. Bids were opened on project #606124 Fitchburg, Lunenburg, Leominster Summer Street and are awaiting award.

J. Hoynoski gave an update on project #608179 North Fitzwilliam Road over Lawrence Brook in Royalston. Currently this project is at 75% design.

- Transit

G. Kahale stated that the contractor has demolished a building at the current station as part of the project for the parking lot at the Ayer Commuter Rail Station. Design is ongoing and the project is anticipated to go out to bid by the end of the spring.

M. Khan indicated that the ridership on the Devens shuttle is increasing and we hope to keep the shuttle running in the next program year barring funding.

- Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)

B. Harris indicated that the next MJTC meeting will be held in Westminster on March 14, 2018 at 6:30 PM in the Town Offices.

B. Harris also referenced a handout on a workshop opportunity from Baystate Roads, “Move Your Municipal Project Forward: Know the State Development Process and Avoid the Pitfalls”.

A handout on the Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program from the Division of Ecological Restoration (DER), Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game was provided.

B. Harris indicated that Sheri Bean, Principal Planner at MRPC, is participating on a webinar with the Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC) on Complete Streets.

B. Harris referenced a handout on population projections in the region which staff plans on using for planning purposes only. These projections have been presented at public meetings for the last few months as well as sent out to the communities for their comments. These numbers have been sent to MassDOT for their use in transportation modelling efforts. One of the worries from communities was that these numbers would be used to determine funding and may not reflect the actual numbers. MRPC, along with MassDOT will further assure communities that these numbers will not be used to determine funding and are solely for Regional Transportation Plan and modeling purposes only.

- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

G. Eaton indicated that MRPC’s audit has started today. Also, on the March agenda for the MRPC meeting will be a discussion on the Trump Administration’s Proposed Infrastructure Plan, Gas Tax, and Highway Trust Fund.

S. Woeffel made mention to MassDOT’s annual Innovation and Tech Conference which will be held in Worcester April 10–11 for those who are interested.

IX. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris indicated that the next MPO meeting is scheduled for Wednesday March 21, 2018 at 1:00 PM here in the MRPC offices.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 2 21 2018 Agenda
1 24 18 MPO Minutes
FFY 2018 Amendment #3 Summary 1 24 2018
TIP Target Comparison 2 1 2018
FFY 2019 2023 TIP TEC Listing
MPO Draft Budget 2 2 2018
Ayer Letter to MPO 1-13-18
Templeton 608784 – Winchendon 608879 Project Presentation
Final FY 19 DER CRMA Grant Announcement
Revised Population Projections 2 16 2018

