

# **MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING**

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

**Minutes of April 18, 2018**

D. Mohler representing MassDOT Secretary Stephanie Pollack called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

## **I. Introduction**

### **SIGNATORIES PRESENT**

David Mohler, MassDOT OTP; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; John Telepciak, MRPC; Mohammed Khan, MART; Mary Jo Bohart, Fitchburg; Gordon Robertson, Leominster; Gary Luca, Subregion 3; Noreen Piazza, Subregion 4

### **MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT**

Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Mike Bolduc, MassDOT District 2; Cassie Chase, FHWA; Stephen Nims, Ashburnham; Tim Kilhart, Harvard; Travis Brown, Hubbardston; Ryan McLane, Hubbardston; Paula Bertram, Lunenburg; Joshua Hall, Westminster; Eric Atkins, Green International Affiliates

### **STAFF PRESENT**

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

## **II. Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

## **III. Approval of March 28, 2018 Minutes**

A motion was made to approve the March 28, 2018 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

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

- *Review/Response of Comments to Draft TIP Amendment #4*
- *MPO Endorsement of FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #4*
- *Review of Potential TIP Amendment #5*
- *MPO Action Related to Potential TIP Amendment #5*

B. Harris referred members to a handout on the draft Amendment #4. The amendment to the FFY 2018 Highway Element is related to two bridge projects. The first is in Hubbardston, Project #607127 Evergreen Road over Mason Brook that is moved out of Section 2A – Bridge Program Off-System in FFY 2018 as it will not be ready for advertisement before September 30, 2018. The second project, #605094, Fitchburg Route 31 over Phillips Brook, also under Section 2A Bridge Program On-System in FFY 2018, reflects a cost adjustment from \$4,738,140 to \$3,120,258. Both projects are outside of our target eligible list and therefore would have no impact on the fiscal constraint for FFY 2018. At the last MPO meeting, it was decided to release the draft for a reduced comment period of 20 days instead of the standard 21 days due to time constraints resulting from the re-scheduling of the March meeting due to weather issues. The comment period began on March 29<sup>th</sup> and closed on April 17<sup>th</sup>. No comments were received on the draft Amendment. The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) also

reviewed the draft Amendment at their meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup> and recommended that the Amendment be endorsed by the MPO.

A motion was made to endorse TIP Amendment #4 as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

B. Harris then indicated that we received notice from MassDOT of the need to amend the FFY 2018-2022 TIP in order to bring it into alignment with the proposed FFY 2019-2023 TIP to be discussed later in the meeting and to reflect recent cost changes. The proposed Amendment #5 involves the addition of a project to FFY 2019 from FFY 2018 under Section 2A Bridge Program Off-System in Hubbardston, Project #607127 Evergreen Road over Mason Brook and cost changes to two projects under Section 2A Bridge Program On-System in Townsend and Athol. The Townsend project #608529 West Meadow Road over Locke Brook saw a cost reduction from \$2,061,600 to \$991,896 while the Athol project #608260 Washington Avenue over Athol Pond Outlet saw a cost increase from \$2,265,260 to \$2,485,249. Additionally, the proposed amendment affects two projects in FFY 2020. This involves the addition to Section 2A Bridge Program Off-System of project #608635 Shirley Longley Road over Mulpus Brook from FFY 2021 and a cost change for Westminster project #608639 Whitmanville Road over the Whitman River from \$2,492,200 to \$2,791,200. If released for a 21-day public comment period, it can begin on April 24<sup>th</sup> and close on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

A motion was made to release draft TIP Amendment #5 for a 21-day public review and comment period. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

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

- *Review of Draft FFY 2019-2023 TIP*
- *MPO Action to Release FFY 2019-2023 TIP for Public Review and Comment*

B. Harris indicated that at the last MPO meeting a draft financial scenario was developed for the FFY 2019-2023 TIP that was fiscally constrained. A draft summary of the project listings was developed for this meeting. In addition, full draft copies were made available to MPO signatory members either through email or download from our website due to the size of the report files. After the last MPO meeting, MassDOT District 3 contacted us to offer a revision to the funding scenario developed by the MPO that would change the projects listed in FFY 2020, 2022 and the Appendix. These proposed changes were the result of a project in Westminster, #607431 Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 140 from Route 2A to Patricia Road, being overlooked in the discussion process last month.

B. Harris described the MassDOT District 3 recommendation that would do the following to the draft scenario proposed by the MPO:

1. Project #607431 Westminster Route 140 would be removed from the Appendix and be placed into FFY 2020 replacing project #608891 Gardner Resurfacing and Rumble Strip Installation on Route 140;
2. Project #608891 Gardner Rumble Strips on Route 140 would then be placed in FFY 2022 in place of project #608888 Gardner Reclamation Work on Pearson Boulevard;
3. Project #608888 Gardner Pearson Boulevard would then be placed in the Appendix.

The MJTC did review the requested changes at their last meeting and agreed with the District's proposal. They then reached consensus to recommend that the draft TIP be adjusted accordingly by the MPO.

S. Bradbury then provided the MPO with the reasoning behind the MassDOT District 3 proposal. Basically, during the updating and review process, the Westminster project was overlooked and because

it is near 75% design and the Gardner Route 140 Rumble Strip project is safety related, it was felt that these two projects of the three should be advanced and programmed. This proposal is an attempt to correct that oversight.

A motion was made and seconded to adjust the draft TIP to reflect the changes proposed by MassDOT District 3. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion was made to release the draft FFY 2019-2023 TIP as adjusted by the previous motion for a 21-day public review and comment period. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

B. Harris mentioned that the 21-day public comment period, will begin on April 24<sup>th</sup> and close on May 14<sup>th</sup>; the same time frame as for the previous vote on TIP Amendment #5.

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

- *Review Draft FFY 2019 UPWP*
- *MPO Action to Release FFY 2019 UPWP for Public Review and Comment*

B. Harris stated that at the last MPO meeting a draft summary of the FFY 2019 UPWP was discussed and that full draft would be prepared for review for today's meeting. The full draft UPWP was made available to MPO signatory members, as with the TIP, either through email or download from our website. B. Harris then reviewed the major elements of the UPWP and discussed some of the work to be undertaken through the various tasks that have been developed. Special notice was made of the work task related to the update of the Regional Transportation Plan. This will be the major work item for the FFY 2019 program year. Staff has reviewed the draft and identified a few typographical and continuity errors that will be corrected before the document is released for public comment. As with the FFY 2019-2023 TIP and TIP Amendment #5, if approved for release, the draft UPWP will be put out for the same 21-day public review and comment period beginning April 24<sup>th</sup> and ending on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

A motion was made to release the draft FFY 2019 UPWP for a 21-day public review and comment period. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **VII. Updates**

- *MassDOT Highway Division*

M. Bolduc indicated that the bridge project #608179 North Fitzwilliam Road over Lawrence Brook in Royalston is at 100% design and is currently under review. It is still scheduled for advertisement this July. Also, Templeton Route 68 is essentially done except for a minor punch list.

S. Bradbury stated that the Summer Street project in Fitchburg/Leominster/Lunenburg has been awarded and are just waiting to give a Notice to Proceed. Fitchburg Route 31 over Phillips Brook is at 100% design; project #608188 Gardner/ Leominster/ Sterling – intersection improvements at three locations is awaiting PS&E which is due at the end of this month and the Gardner Pleasant Street Bridge project is also awaiting PS&E.

- *Transit*

G. Kahale stated that for the Ayer Commuter Rail Facility project, the preliminary construction drawings were received for review yesterday and hopefully it will go out for bid at the end of May with construction to start in the summer and completion next year. MART also had a meeting yesterday in Littleton where Littleton requested service from MART from the Littleton Commuter Rail Station to industries in Westford and Littleton. The bus route was approved and the service will start in June. The service will be for reverse commute to such companies as Red Hat, IBM and Juniper Network.

G. Kahale also stated that for the Devens Shuttle, they now have over 130 workers per week using the service from the Fitchburg/Leominster area to Devens.

M. Khan indicated that the budget for the state will be putting some constraints on all the RTA's and there may need to be some service cuts.

- *Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)*

B. Harris stated that next MJTC meeting will be on May 9<sup>th</sup> and will be held in Lancaster in the Prescott Building. In the upcoming months, the MJTC will go through its annual election of officers. Nominations will be made in June and elections will be in July. Also, appointment forms for membership on the MJTC will be going out to local Chief Elected Officials and Planning Boards for appointment to the advisory committee. Staff will be attending the second meeting of the newly revived Route 2 Safety Improvement Task Force tonight at the Erving Senior Center. A second round of MPO Subregion meetings will also be scheduled in the very near future. One of the points of discussion will be the selection process for Subregion Representatives and Alternates as we are approaching the end of the current three-year terms. This should be occurring at the end of the year with new Representatives and Alternates in place for next September.

B. Doherty mentioned that the annual pavement survey for local DPW officials will be sent out soon so communities should be on the lookout for it. This year we will make use of Survey Monkey so it can be conducted online.

- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

G. Eaton stated that the current state budget does not have any funding for the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program but this happens usually every year. Some discussion is going on in the legislature so we will need to await the final budget proposal. In GIS, we are working on the development of a 3-D printing program and we have recently been asked to do some updating and digitization of local cemetery maps. We have developed an app that will assist the towns in this process and if there are any other communities interested in something like this, please let us know.

## **VIII. Administrative Matters**

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris indicated that the next MPO meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May16, 2018 at 1:00 PM here in the MRPC offices.

B. Harris asked MassDOT about a recent discussion at a Program Managers meeting related to the development of a new Memorandum of Understanding related to the Boston Urbanized Area and the coordination of tasks and work efforts among the various MPO's and states. A draft was presented, so the question is when might this MPO be asked to take action and what might need to be done to get to that point.

D. Krevat indicated that the deadline might be the end of the calendar year. We will look to get some more information to the MPO.

## **IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

**DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING**

MPO 4 18 2018 Agenda

3 28 18 MPO Minutes

Draft TIP Amendment #4 Memo & Summary 3 29 2018

FFY 2018 Amendment #5 Summary 4 18 2018

MPO D3 TIP Comp 4 11 2018

DRAFT SUMMARY FFY 2019 2023 TIP 4 18 2018

DRAFT SUMMARY UPWP FFY 2019 4 11 2018