

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

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

Minutes April 17, 2019

B. Pounds representing MassDOT Secretary Stephanie Pollack called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Bryan Pounds, MassDOT OTP; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Dist. 3; John Hume, MRPC; Bonnie Mahoney, MART; Mary Jo Bohart, Fitchburg; Albert Gallant, Subregion 1; Jamie Toale, Subregion 3;

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Mark Wetzel, Ayer DPW; Tim Kilhart, Harvard DPW; Laurie Reed, Hubbardston; Bob Szocik, Templeton DPW; Tracy Murphy, Winchendon; Steven Tyler, Howard Stein Hudson; Nicolas Bosenetto, VHB; Adam Lamontagne, Templeton

STAFF PRESENT

Brad Harris; George Snow; George Kahale; Sheri Bean; Brian Doherty; Sean O'Donnell

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of March 20, 2019 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the March 20, 2019 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed.

IV. Tier 1 Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan

- Review and MPO Adoption of TAM Plan and Targets

B. Mahoney reviewed MARTs TAM Plan which was completed by MART in September and previously presented to the MPO in October. Under the TAM rule, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) was required to set performance measures that provide a basis for agencies to determine whether assets are in a condition sufficient to operate at a full level of performance. Performance measures were set under the three categories of rolling stock, equipment, and facilities. Ms. Mahoney reviewed MARTs targets under each FTA performance measure. The TAM Plan states that MART will use these condition assessment tools to gauge the need to replace or rehabilitate capital assets.

A motion was made to adopt the Transit Asset Management Plan. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

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

- *Review of TIP Highway & Transit Amendment #3*
- *MPO Action to Release Draft TIP Amendment #3 for Public Comment*

B. Harris referred to a handout regarding the Transit Element amendment. B. Mahoney explained that the transit amendment de-obligates 5339 funds in FFY 2018 and moves them into 2019 so vehicles can be purchased. Originally the purchases were to be made with 5307 funds, however, those 5307 funds will be needed to supplement the Ayer commuter rail parking project.

B. Harris referred to handouts on the proposed amendment to the Highway Element of the 2019 – 2023 TIP. He then detailed the amendments below. All projects are listed in 2019.

Section 1A / Regionally Prioritized Projects

- Project #604961 CLINTON – RESURFACING & RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 110 (HIGH STREET) will increase in cost from \$2,436,388 to \$3,153,674;
- Project #607848 HUBBARDSTON – RESURFACING AND RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 68, FROM WILLIAMSVILLE ROAD TO THE GARDNER CL will increase in cost from \$4,044,376 to \$4,190,296.
- In order to stay within fiscal constraint in FY 2019, some Statewide funds will be used to fund these increases.

Section 2A – Bridge Program/Off-System

- Project #608259 TOWNSEND – BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, WEST MEADOW ROAD OVER LOCKE BROOK will increase in cost from \$991,896 to \$3,235,608

Section 2C – State Prioritized Expansion Projects

- Project #608193 FITCHBURG-LEOMINSTER RAIL TRAIL CONSTRUCTION will reduce in cost in 2019 from \$11,059,443 to \$6,530,900. The cost reduction in 2019 is the result of the project carrying more cost and construction in 2020.

B. Harris then discussed additional verbiage regarding the Safety Performance Measures (PM1), as well as Bridge and Pavement (PM2) and Reliability and Emissions (PM3) Performance measures which will need to be amended into the 2019 – 2023 TIP as well. These Performance Measures were previously presented and adopted by the MPO.

A motion was made to release Amendment #3 of the 2019 – 2023 TIP for a 21-day Public Comment Period beginning Tuesday April 23rd to Monday May 13th 2019. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VI. Montachusett FFY 2020 – 2024 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

- *Review of Draft TIP Document*
- *MPO Action to Release Draft FFY 2020-2024 TIP for Public Comment*

B. Doherty reviewed the process of developing funding scenarios for Target Section projects undertaken by staff and recent developments in project statuses which have affected the preferred scenario chosen by the MPO at the last meeting. Specifically, a letter was received from the town of Lancaster requesting that Project #608799 – Intersection Improvements at Route 117/70 be moved from 2020 to 2021 in order to allow more time for project design. This allowed Ayer Project #607902 – Reclamation and Related Work on 2A to move ahead to 2020. Unfortunately, this also required the movement of Westminster Project #607431 – Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 140 to also be moved from 2020 to 2021 due to fiscal constraint in 2020. He reviewed the staff recommended project scenarios, as well as all other listed highway projects included in the document. The Target projects below were presented.

- FFY 2020 - Leominster- Reconstruction on Route 13 from Hawes Street to Prospect Street
 - Ayer – Reclamation & related work on Rt. 2A from Harvard Rd to Main St.
- FFY 2021 - Winchendon – Improvements & related work on Central St (Rt. 202) from Front St to Maple St
 - Lancaster – Intersection Improvements on Rt. 117/70 at Lunenburg Road and Route 117/70 at Main Street
 - Westminster – Resurfacing & related work on Route 140 from Rt. 2A to Patricia Road.
 - Gardner – Reclamation & related work on Pearson Blvd.
- FFY 2022 - Leominster – Reconstruction/rehabilitation on Rt. 12 (Central St)
- FFY 2023 - Sterling/West Boylston – Improvements on Rt. 140 at I-190
 - Hubbardston – Highway reconstruction of Rt. 68 (Main St) from 1,000 ft north of Williamsville Rd. to Elm St.
 - Gardner – Resurfacing and rumble strip installation on Rt. 140
 - Templeton – Roundabout construction at the intersection of Patriots Rd, South Main St, North Main St, and Gardner Rd.
- FFY 2024 - Lancaster – Interchange Improvements at Route 2 Exit 34
 - Ashburnham – Resurfacing & Related Work on Route 101

Discussion followed on project statuses and fiscal constraint issues. B. Harris mentioned the possibility of funding a MART project with remaining highway Target funds in 2020. A list of unfunded transit projects was reviewed and discussed; however, more discussion is needed between MPO staff and MART before this would be determined to be feasible.

A. Gallant asked whether possible additional drainage work on the Lancaster Route 117/70 project could affect the budget for 2021. B. Doherty mentioned that everything will be re-evaluated during the development of the TIP next year.

B. Harris mentioned a support email from the town of Westminster DPW which expressed a desire to fund Project #607431 in 2020 or as soon as possible. The email also voiced concern that delaying this project a year could potentially cost the town more in additional design costs that have not been appropriated/anticipated, i.e. update survey to reflect conditions that change in the next year. B. Pounds said that if the project has progressed far enough there is still a possibility that it can be advertised as soon as October 2020, due to FFY 2021 starting October 1, 2020. Therefore, the move from 2020 to 2021 may not have as big of an impact on it. B. Doherty mentioned that if this project were left in FFY 2020 it would essentially leave over \$2,000,000 unallocated in that year due to no other project being able to fit within the funding. The decision to move Ayer Project #607902 up from 2021 was recommended because it would leave less money on the table and because it received a higher Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) score.

B. Doherty discussed the TIP Document as a whole, which will include transit elements, and the availability of the Draft document on the MRPC website if it is released for public comment.

A motion was made to release the Montachusett FFY 2020 – 2024 Draft TIP for a 21-day Public Comment Period beginning Tuesday April 23rd to Monday May 13th 2019. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VII. Performance Based Planning Agreement

- *Comments and Review of Draft Agreement*
- *MPO Action to Endorse Performance Based Planning Agreement*

B. Harris referenced a handout regarding a Performance Based Planning Agreement from all the MPO's Statewide and MassDOT. D. Krevat discussed the agreement which involves the development and acceptance of performance measures, sharing of data between the RPA's/ MPO's/MassDOT/Transit Authorities, outlines responsibilities and roles as well as possible dispute resolution measures, etc. This was discussed at the previous MPO meeting last month and made available to those who wished to provide comments. There were no comments received.

A motion was made to endorse the Performance Based Planning Agreement. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VIII. Montachusett FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- *Review Status of Draft UPWP Document*

S. Bean referenced a handout on the 2020 UPWP. She indicated that the majority of the tasks are standard and do not change year to year. However, there are a few new tasks proposed for the upcoming year such as Travel Options & Rideshare Program, Scenic Byway and/or Heritage Program Development and a Trail Data Application. She reviewed a number of tasks and indicated that next month's MPO the full Draft UPWP will be discussed and voted on to release for a 21-day public comment period.

B. Harris mentioned that if a community is interested in a particular task please let staff know within a week or so.

B. Pounds mentioned that the local match 5303 Transit Contracts will be fully covered by MassDOT.

IX. Montachusett 2020 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- *Status of Document*
- *Survey Results*

G. Snow gave an update on the development of the RTP. Draft chapters are currently being developed. He referenced a handout of the online RTP survey. He went over preliminary results of the survey which will be further analyzed within the plan itself.

B. Harris indicated that feedback from the survey will help in driving the funding scenarios being developed.

B. Pounds asked about the development of the Vision, Goals and Objectives portion of the document. B. Harris confirmed that this portion was the first section discussed with the MPO and MJTC. More discussion on the RTP will be on the agenda for next months meeting.

M. Bohart shared feedback regarding the survey from Fitchburg. She felt the survey wasn't easily accessible for some seniors. Also, that questions regarding where the survey taker was from could be confusing. In general, she is concerned that more members of the general public did not participate in providing feedback.

B. Harris mentioned staff's willingness to still go out and meet with groups to present information and get feedback if there is interest. He detailed the outreach efforts by staff and the opportunities provided for comment. He mentioned that the survey will still be available to people interested in providing feedback for a short period of time.

B. Pounds mentioned that the chance to provide comment for the RTP is still ongoing. Public Meetings of the MPO and MJTC will include items on the RTP in the next few months.

T. Murphy requested that some sort of a flyer be provided mentioning the survey so people know it is still available.

X. Updates

- *MassDOT Highway Division*

MassDOT Dist. 3 – S. Bradbury mentioned Twin Cities Rail Trail is currently at 75% design; Clinton Rt. 110/High St is at PS&E and due to be advertised on April 20th; Hubbardston Rt 68 is at 100% PS&E and due to be advertised in June; Westminster Rt. 2A at Rt. 140 was advertised on Dec. 1st and bids were opened on March 26th with P.J. Albert appearing to be the winning bidder; Townsend Evergreen Rd. over Locke Brook should be ready in 2019.

- *Transit*

B. Mohoney mentioned that MART is awaiting the arrival of two new buses.

G. Kahale mentioned the Ayer commuter rail parking facility will begin construction on April 29th. A ground-breaking ceremony for the project will be held on May 20th and the completion of the project is

expected by the end of the calendar year. He also mentioned that the bus routes are continuing to be monitored for possible improvements and that a recent survey received over 700 responses so far.

- *Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)*

B. Harris mentioned a presentation on ADA Transition Plans given to the MJTC which is available upon request. He also mentioned a request for qualifications MRPC has released for a consultant to assist communities in developing ADA public right of way sections in their ADA Transition Plans. He also mentioned that the Route 2 Safety Improvement Task Force which has been meeting for a number of years dealing with Route 2 from Athol to Greenfield will be meeting in May. He mentioned a Baystate Roads workshop on June 18th from 9 AM to noon at MRPC offices regarding MassDOT's MaPIT Project Intake Tool.

- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

J. Hume referred to a handout updating the MPO on MRPC activities. He mentioned that MRPC is updating the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and will be coordinating it with the development of the RTP. For the DLTA program, 14 Communities submitted a total of 17 requests for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) services. Staff is in the process of reviewing the requests and ensuring each community that made one receive planning assistance. He also mentioned the Brownfields Loan Program and that MRPC will adopt a new loan policy for the provision of additional loans for environmental site assessments and remediation activities.

XI. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris indicated that the next MPO meeting is scheduled May 15th at 1:00 PM in MRPC offices.

XII. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 4 17 2019 Agenda
MPO 3 20 2019 Minutes
MART TAM Targets
FFY 2019 – 2023 TIP Amendment #3 Highway
FFY 2019 – 2023 TIP Amendment #3 Transit
Performance Measures Section – FFY 2019 TIP Amendment #3
FFY 2020 – 2024 TIP 3/20/19 MPO Scenario
FFY 2020 – 2024 Recommended TIP Funding Scenarios
Unfunded Transit Projects
Performance-Based Planning and Programming Agreement
UPWP FFY 2020 Draft Task Lists
2020 RTP Survey Review
MaPIT Workshops