

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

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

Minutes November 20, 2019

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

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Steve Woelfel, MassDOT OTP; Arthur Frost, MassDOT Dist. 3; Nicolas Bosonetto, Fitchburg; Guy Corbosiero, MRPC; Rosemarie Meissner, Subregion 2; Phyllis Luck, Subregion 3; Phil Duffy, Subregion 4; Trevor Beauregard, Gardner; Mark Piermarini, Leominster; Tracy Murphy, Subregion 1, Bonnie Mahoney, MART

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Mike Bolduc, MassDOT Dist. 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Dist. 3; Chris Timmel, FHWA; Travis Brown, Hubbardston DPW; Tim Kilhart, Harvard

STAFF PRESENT

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

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of October 16, 2019 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the October 16, 2019 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review & Discussion of Draft FFY 2020 TIP Amendment #1 Comments*
- *MPO Action Related to FFY 2020 TIP Amendment #1*
- *Discussion Related to Allocation of Unspent FFY 2020 Target Funds to MART*
- *MPO Action Related to Allocation of Unspent FFY 2020 Target Funds*

B. Harris reviewed the FFY 2020 TIP Amendment #1 that was put out for a public comment period on October 28, 2019 – November 18, 2019. MRPC received one comment from MART during that comment period. B. Mahoney indicated that, during the comment period, they received a call from MassDOT indicating that MART was eligible to use the MassDOT consultant for their Tier 1 Safety Plan but would have to pay for this service with non-Federal funding. The cost of the project would also change from \$50,000 to \$40,000. MART's comment reflected that change so that their funding would show \$40,000 of RTACAP funds instead of \$40,000 Federal funds and \$10,000 RTACAP. Due to the extra \$30,000 take from the RTACAP funding, MassDOT agreed to give MART an extra \$30,000 in toll credits to make up for it.

A motion was made to substitute the \$40,000 of Federal funding from project number RTD0007935 to RTACAP (State funding) project number RTD0008935 and reduce the Federal costs by \$10,000. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Another motion was made to accept the change, based on the MART comment, and to endorse the FFY 2020 TIP Amendment #1. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

B. Harris indicated that a request was made from MART in regards to the \$800,000 unspent target funds on the current FFY 2020 TIP. MART is looking to access the funds to purchase buses under the CMAQ funding category. A CMAQ analysis was conducted and reviewed at the CMAQ Consultation Committee meeting held in October and was approved at that time as being CMAQ eligible. This was discussed at the prior MJTC meeting and MassDOT was not in favor due to the possibility of the existing target projects needing more funding.

B. Mahoney reviewed the MART proposal that would replace three 35' old buses with one new 30' bus and three 26' Low Floor Minibuses. The estimate cost is \$800,000. A. Frost mentioned that he was not in favor of this proposal due to the proposed cost updates to the current FFY2020 TIP year projects. He recommended that any action on this should be postponed until the final costs come in. The MPO agreed to table further discussion until any additional information is received.

V. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Access Plan Update

- *Review & Discussion of Draft LEP Access Plan Comments*
- *MPO Action Related to LEP Access Plan*

S. Bean reviewed the two comments that were received during the 21-day public comment period that started on October 28, 2019 – November 18, 2019. The comments and responses were as follows:

Action	
Comment 1.	1. From Barbara Yocum, MRPC Representative from Shirley – There should be a note or indication that the figures for Shirley are likely affected by MCI Shirley.
Response 1.	1. It is mentioned on page 3 in the write up and we will also add a note under the Table 1.
Comment 2.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From the Townsend Planning Board – The data points presented for the Town of Townsend in Table 2 – Language Breakdown of Those Who Speak English Less Than Very Well (ELTVW) specifically the Hmong and Portuguese speaking populations, and consequently the ELTVW total, appear to be misrepresentative of the actual populations currently residing in Townsend. 2. Further research confirmed a high margin of error occurred in the results presented in Table 2 for Townsend. 3. Further research conducted through the Town Clerk could not confirm the data presented in Table 2 of the Draft LEP to be representative of the present population of Townsend. 4. The data in Table 2 and consequently the Maps generated utilizing this data on Page 13 and Page 15 of the Draft are questionable and presumed misrepresentative of the actual populations currently residing in Townsend.
Response 2.	1. MRPC used the 2010-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) for this document because it is the most up to date information available that has a language breakdown. The ACS, like any statistical activity, is subject to error. The ACS is sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau, and is part of the Decennial Census Program. The purpose of this documentation is to provide a basic understanding of what the top languages are for the Montachusett Region. The MRPC understands that this may not be what is truly represented within the member communities. Additionally, it should be noted that the LEP is developed to assist the MPO in its outreach efforts and is not intended to act as guidance for local communities.

A motion was made to endorse the Limited English Proficiency Access Plan update. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VI. Montachusett Region – Fatal Crash Corridors

- Review & Discussion of Crash Data

G. Snow indicated that the goal of this project is to assist the State in moving towards the goal of zero crash fatalities. In the 2012-2016 5-year period, 73 people lost their lives on Montachusett Region roadways. These fatal crashes occurred in 18 of 22 Communities with Fitchburg (9), Leominster (7) and Westminster (5) being the top three communities with the most crashes. Forty-nine fatal crash locations and forty-two overall crash corridors were identified. Of the total crashes, Route 12 in Leominster, Route 13 in Lunenburg/Leominster and Route 31 in Fitchburg & Ashby were identified as having the top total crashes regionwide and Route 13 & Route 12 had the highest injury crashes. Discussion followed.

VII. Updates

- MassDOT Highway Division

M. Bolduc mentioned that the only FFY 2020 project in District 2 is Athol/Phillipston resurfacing on Route 2 and 75% design is currently being reviewed and is expected to be advertised in February. FFY 2021 Central Street in Winchendon has the 75% design also being reviewed and is expected to be advertised in late 2020.

A Frost mentioned that the FFY2020 Leominster Route 13 project is at PS&E and Ayer reclamation and related work on Route 2A is also at PS&E. B. Mahoney inquired about the Route 13 project advertising date. A. Frost indicated that it is currently scheduled to be advertised on July 18th. B. Mahoney asked that MassDOT work closely with MART in order to re-route their transit buses during the construction period.

- Transit

G. Kahale indicated that the Ayer parking garage will be having a grand opening ribbon cutting ceremony at the new facility at 3 Groton Street in Ayer on December 9th at 10:00am. All are welcome to attend. Improvement to Depot Square, which will include shelter and bathrooms will also be included in the project

- Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)

B. Harris stated that the MJTC met on November 13th and the major points of discussion were the TIP projects and TIP amendments.

The MJTC decided to cancel the December meeting. The next MJTC meeting will be on January 8th at 6:30 pm here at the MRPC Offices. As part of that meeting, MRPC will conduct a survey of MJTC members to determine what time of day is the most convenient to hold the meetings. The purpose of a potential meeting time change is to boost attendance.

Staff completed a Lunenburg Walkability & Parking study and will be presenting the report findings to the Lunenburg Board of Selectmen on December 10th and hope to present to the MPO in the near future.

The ADA Public Right of Way Transition Plans for Lancaster, Lunenburg and Winchendon is on hold at this time. The consultant, Stantac, has asked for cost change and the MRPC responded with a counter proposal and are awaiting their reply.

MRPC is in the early stages of developing the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FFY2021-2025. The updated project list will be presented at the next MPO meeting and it is expected that project presentations will also begin early next year.

- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

G. Corbosiero referenced a handout on various MRPC activities including an education session concerning Fair Housing that was recently held at MRPC and a listening session concerning cybersecurity. MRPC is also working with the town of Shirley on a possible Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding opportunity and will soon issue its annual Request for the Delivery of Services under the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program.

VIII. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris indicated that there are no critical matters to address for the month of December so the next MPO meeting is scheduled for January 15th at 1:00 PM in MRPC offices.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 11 20 2019 Agenda

MPO 10 16 19 Minutes

FFY 2020 Transit Amendment #1

MART CMAQ Analysis

LEP Memo dated 10 24 19

LEP Draft 2019

MART Ayer Parking Garage Ribbon Cutting flyer

Ayer Parking Garage photos

MRPC Update Memo

2020 MRPC Meetings Calendar