MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

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

Minutes February 19, 2020

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

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT
David Mohler, MassDOT OTP; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Dist. 3; Mohammed Khan, MART; Guy Corbosiero, MRPC; Mary Jo Bohart, Fitchburg; Trevor Beauregard, Gardner; Tracy Murphy, Subregion 1; Rosemarie Meissner, Subregion 2; Tim Kilhart, Subregion 3

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT
Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Mike Bolduc, MassDOT Dist. 2; Travis Brown, Hubbardston DPW; Albert Gallant, Winchendon DPW; Bonnie Mahoney, MART; Jonathan Rockwell, TEC Inc;

STAFF PRESENT
Brad Harris; Sheri Bean; Brian Doherty; George Kahale

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of January 22, 2020 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the January 22, 2020 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Project TEC Scores & Target Data*
- *Presentation on Harvard - Project # 609213 Route 2A (Ayer Road)*

B. Doherty presented information on the development of the TIP for FFY 2021-2025. The first handout presented listed the target figures for FFY 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 for the Montachusett Region. A comparison with the target figures utilized for the current FFY 2020-2024 TIP showed no changes in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. The new target figure provided for 2025 does show a slight decline from 2024 levels, i.e. from $11,462,749 in 2024 to $11,195,149 in 2025.

The second handout was a list of target eligible projects and their updated Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) scores. In addition, the design status of the projects have been updated and are reflected in the listing.

Finally, a third handout presented a listing of the projects based on the current FFY 2020-2024 TIP. Projects are presented in the federal fiscal year as developed last year. This is our starting point for the development of this new TIP. Staff also met recently with MassDOT as part of TIP Readiness Day. At

this meeting, various MassDOT departments discussed project status and their potential for advertisement in a particular year. B. Doherty then discussed some of the issues raised and their impact on the TIP as a whole. As we continue to move forward in the development process, projects will continue to be updated and refined as more data is made available. The next step in the TIP development will be to develop funding scenarios for each federal fiscal year for MPO review.

B. Doherty then introduced Tim Kilhart from the Harvard DPW for a presentation on MassDOT Project #609213 Route 2A (Ayer Road). T. Kilhart then presented Jonathan Rockwell from TEC Inc., the design consultant for the project. J. Rockwell then walked the MPO through the project's current design and status. He indicated that the 25% design submittal should be made this summer with a public hearing in the fall/ winter of 2020.

Further discussion followed on the project's status and potential readiness.

V. Montachusett FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- *Review & Prioritization of Task Requests from Member Communities*

S. Bean reviewed the latest responses from member communities regarding potential UPWP tasks in response to an outreach request to member communities soliciting their ideas. Staff reviewed the tasks received, looked at prior tasks by community as part of an equity analysis and then developed a preferred ranking of the tasks. As a result, the following task listing has been developed:

- Townsend Walkability Study
- Sterling Walkability Study
- Hubbardston Pavement Management Program Assistance
- Fitchburg Route 12 Corridor Study

In addition, we were contacted by a professor from Worcester Polytech Institute (WPI) to see if there were any potential projects that may be useful for students as part of their final projects. We have therefore identified some tasks that are based on the local responses that we feel could be useful to the students. This work will likely be under a potential Regionwide Intersection Analysis Study that will address 4 intersections identified by the communities.

Discussions followed on the tasks. M. Bohart from Fitchburg emphasized the importance of a Route 12 Corridor Study for the city, especially in light of the development of the Twin Cities Rail Trail.

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

- *Review of Comments on FFY 2020 Transit TIP Amendment #2*
- *MPO Endorsement of FFY 2020 Transit TIP Amendment #2*
- *Review of Possible FFY 2020 TIP Amendments*
- *MPO Action Related to Other Possible FFY 2020 TIP Amendments*

B. Harris reviewed with the members TIP Amendment #2 for the FFY 2020 Transit Element. The state announced Community Transit Grant Program award winners across the Commonwealth. In the Montachusett Region, three awards were made to Ashburnham, GAAMHA, Inc, and MART for the purchase of new vehicles for their programs. Because these awards involve federal funds, they need to be incorporated into the TIP. In addition, MART received additional funding for the purchase of new buses. The TIP Amendment was released for a 21-day public review and comment period that ended on February 18th. No comments were received. In addition, the MJTC recommended at their meeting on February 12th, that the MPO endorse TIP Amendment #2 as presented.

A motion was made to endorse TIP Amendment #2 as presented as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

There were no additional projects or changes to the TIP at this time, therefore, there was no discussion on this agenda item.

VII. Updates

- *MassDOT Highway Division*

S. Bradbury mentioned that the Ayer Route 2A project is at PS&E and should be ready for advertisement in late March/early April. There is a slight increase in cost that we will be looking to address. The Leominster Route 13 project is also at PS&E. MassDOT is awaiting final information on the utilities so a final cost has not been compiled. Once that is available, this project may also need to be addressed through a TIP Amendment.

M. Bolduc stated that the only FFY 2020 project in District 2 is Athol/Phillipston resurfacing on Route 2. It is at PS&E and is scheduled to be advertised by the end of next week.

M. Bolduc then mentioned a new Engineering Directive E20-001 out of the Highway Division. It is basically an update to the design justification process that gets away from DER's and moves towards a Design Justification Workbook. Any project not at 25% design by the end of 2019 will need to go through this and submit at 25%. Towns and their designers should be aware of this. It should make the process easier and smoother.

- *Transit*

G. Kahale mentioned that the Ayer Commuter Rail Parking Facility is at about 70% capacity. Work will soon begin on improving the pedestrian access to the station at Depot Square. This will include restroom facilities; vehicle turn around and pedestrian facility. It should be completed this year.

- *Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)*

The MJTC conducted a survey of its members regarding a possible change to the meeting start time. 24 individuals responded to the survey. At the February 12th meeting the results were discussed. Of the 24 responses, a significant majority preferred a start time between 9 AM and 4 PM. Broken down further, the 12 to 4 time period was preferred by about 64% of the respondents. At the March meeting there will be further discussion and a start time change may be recommended.

On the ADA PROW Transition Plan Stantec has completed draft ADA Public Right of Way Transition Plans for the communities of Lancaster, Lunenburg and Winchendon. All three Plans have been released for a public review and comment period. The public review and comment periods have ended for the communities of Lunenburg and Lancaster and BOS public meetings were held on February 11th and 18th respectively. The Winchendon Plan public review and comment period is ongoing and the BOS public meeting is scheduled for February 24th.

A series of public meetings has been scheduled by MassDOT for the upcoming release of the Capital Investment Plan or CIP. Eleven (11) meetings are planned across the Commonwealth with the closest for our region being on Wednesday May 27th in Worcester at the City Hall. A copy of the notice is available. It has alco been posted to our website.

There are also two notices regarding project public meetings to be held in Gardner and Hubbardston.

In addition, copies are available of two documents that are usually endorsed at the time of the TIP endorsement. These documents relate to the Certification of the Montachusett Region MPO Transportation Planning Process and the Certification of the Global Warming Solutions Act Requirements. These documents have been updated and are presented now for your information and review. Action on them will come in April/May.

The next MJTC meeting will be held on March 11th at 6:30pm.

- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

G. Corbosiero referred to a memo on various MRPC activities including a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) proposal for the town of Shirley; the creation of a Cyber Security Working Group; the DLTA programs; and work on a New Makerspace, a Collaborative Workspace and Lauchspace, Inc.

VIII. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris indicated that the next MPO meeting is scheduled for March 18th 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 2 19 2020 Agenda
MPO 1 22 20 Minutes
FFY 2021 2025 TEC Scores
Montachusett Federal Target Comparison
Int Parties Draft TIP Amendment #2
TIP updated project list
UPWP requests to date
FFY 2020 Transit Amendment #2 MPO Release 1 29 2020
MRPC Status Memo
CIP 2021-2025 Public Meeting Flyer
Hubbardston Flyer 608793
PUBLIC_HEARING_MEETING_NOTICE_609279
Self Cert & GHG Endorsement Pages 2 13 2020