

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

**Held Remotely via GoToMeeting.com
Hosted by the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
464 Abbott Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453**

Minutes October 21, 2020

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

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Steve Woelfel, MassDOT OTP; Arthur Frost, MassDOT Dist. 3; Mary Jo Bohart, Fitchburg; Bonnie Mahoney, MART; Tracy Murphy, Subregion 1; Michael-Rey Jeffries, Subregion 3; Rosemarie Meissner, Subregion 2; Elizabeth Wood, Leominster

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Bryan Pounds, MassDOT OTP; Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Paula Simmons, MassDOT Dist. 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Dist. 3

STAFF PRESENT

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

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of September 16, 2020 Minutes

Paula Simmons mentioned that in the MassDOT District 2 update, she had given updated cost information for project 608548 in Winchendon, but the dollar amounts were not reflected in the minutes. B. Harris acknowledged the dollar amounts were left out. A motion was made to approve the September 16, 2020 MPO Meeting Minutes, with the addition of the dollar amount for project 608548. The motion was seconded and passed with E. Wood, T. Murphy and M. Jeffries abstaining.

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

- *Review and Discussion of Amendment to FFY 2021 Transit Element*
- *MPO Action Related to Propose TIP Amendment*

B. Mahony discussed a possible transit related TIP amendment which is being put on hold until next month's meeting. The amendment consists of a number of cost changes, new added line items and removed items in the 2021 element of the transit section. Upon recent discussion with MassDOT, it was determined to put off this amendment until the November MPO meeting.

V. Performance Measure 3 Report and Update

- *Presentation by MassDOT Status of Targets for PM3*
- *MPO Action Related to MPO Adoption of PM3 Targets*

D. Krevat from MassDOT presented to the MPO members a review of the federally required Performance Measures, their targets, changes to the targets and the next required reporting period. Performance Measure 1 covers Safety, PM 2 covers Bridge & Pavement Conditions and PM 3 covers System Performance such as Non-Single Occupant Vehicles (SOV) and Emissions. For the next reporting period, MassDOT is only recommending changes to two targets under PM 3, those being Non-SOV Travel and Emissions reduction. D. Krevat then reviewed the slides related to these new target proposals. As part of the process, since the Montachusett MPO, is part of the Boston Urbanized Area, these targets need to be presented to and adopted by the MPO.

For the Non-SOV travel, new data from 2017 and 2018 indicates that the non-SOV travel percentages in the Boston UZA originally projected for these years were exceeded. Based on this new data, it is proposed that a new trend line be used to revise the four-year target from 35.1% to 35.8%.

On Emissions Reduction, CO2 emissions are being tracked for all projects but this PM only applies to CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality) projects. This measure is calculated by summing 2- and 4-year totals of emissions reductions in kilograms per day for all CMAQ-funded projects located in municipalities classified as air quality maintenance areas (Waltham, Lowell, Worcester, and Springfield) or non-attainment areas (Oak Bluffs). Only CMAQ-funded projects in these air quality maintenance or nonattainment areas programmed between 2018 and 2021 were used to calculate the four-year targets. These are then the numbers that will be reported to Federal Highway.

M. Jeffries asked how the PM3 targets are set.

D. Krevat responded that the projects which are reviewed are only CMAQ projects; the emissions reductions from these projects are calculated and are factored into the tracking procedures. CMAQ projects are part of the target funded TIP projects which are selected through regional priorities.

VI. Nashua NH-MA Urbanized Area Draft Transportation Planning MOU

- *Review and Discussion*
- *MPO Action as Needed regarding MOU*

B. Doherty presented a proposed MOU developed by the Nashua Region Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) and relevant agencies operating in the Nashua NH-MA Urbanized Area (Nashua UZA). Staff has discussed the MOU with both MassDOT and Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), and responded back to Nashua with no additional comments to the MOU. He mentioned the MOU contained basic roles and responsibilities between agencies operating within the Nashua UZA. The document is similar to the MOU approved between the MPO and Boston UZA agencies in 2018. NRPC will be developing a final version of the MOU. When it is ready, the MPO will need to decide on approval.

B. Mahoney asked whether it was necessary for MART to be involved in the MOU, since MART boundaries do not contain any area within the Nashua UZA. After further discussion it was determined that MART likely did not need to be included, and that information would be relayed to NRPC.

VII. Updates

- *MassDOT Highway Division*
- *Transit*
- *Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)*
- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

S. Bradbury updated the group on projects ongoing in District 3.

M. Jefferies asked about the work being done on the Route 70 bridge over Route 2 in Lancaster, causing a detour on Route 70 southbound.

S. Bradbury responded that the work is being done on an emergency basis after a car struck the bridge abutment. She indicated that she will seek out additional information for the MPO.

P. Simmons reviewed the status of District 2 projects in the TIP.

B. Doherty mentioned that MJTC did not meet in October, and that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 10, one day earlier than usual due to the Veterans Day holiday on Wednesday, November 11.

He also referenced a news article in the handouts which detailed construction on the Twin Cities Rail Trail, along with the associated temporary closure of the on-ramp from Route 12 northbound to Route 2 eastbound, for the next 2 months for construction purposes.

He mentioned another article provided in the handouts from the Gardner News in reference to the \$47,999 in Shared Streets Initiative grant funding which is being utilized to bolster out-door options for patrons of downtown businesses in Gardner.

Two Design Public Hearings will be held virtually for projects in the region. Those are on October 27th, for project #609732 - intersection improvements at Crescent Street and Chestnut Hill Avenue in Athol, and on November 4th, for project #608784 – Roundabout construction in Templeton. Both Design Public Hearings will be posted to the MassDOT website on those days.

B. Harris explained how to access meeting handouts for MPO meetings on the MRPC website. He went through the process to access the handouts of current and past meetings.

VIII. Administrative Matters

- Next MPO Meeting

B. Harris stated that the next scheduled MPO meeting is on November 18.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 10 21 2020 Agenda

MPO 9 16 2020 Minutes

TIP Transit List (2021) – Current

TIP Transit List (2021) – Possible Amendment

Non-SOV and Emissions Targets - PM3

Nashua NH-MA Urbanized Area Draft MOU

Telegram & Gazette Article – Construction Underway on Twin Cities Rail Trail

Gardner News Article – Shared Streets Initiative

Notice of Design Public Hearing – Project 608723, Crescent St. at Chestnut Hill Ave. in Athol

Notice of Design Public Hearing – Project 608784, Roundabout Construction in Templeton