

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)**

464 Abbott Avenue, Leominster, MA

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2018**

**7:00 PM**

### **1. Open Meeting, Introductions and Announcements**

J. Telepciak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All present introduced themselves.

### **2. Approval of August 2, 2018 MRPC Minutes**

R. Hoyt moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the August 2, 2018 minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **3. Administrative Matters**

#### **3.1 Community Development Block Grant Program**

G. Eaton indicated that a meeting of the Executive Committee will be held in September to review CDBG management of operations in Shirley and Winchendon.

L. Parmenter mentioned that Tom Bratko is no longer a member of the MRPC. Mr. Bratko was a Member at Large of the Executive Committee so that position is now vacant. If anyone is interested in serving out the remainder of the term (end June 30, 2019) this matter will come up for a vote at the next meeting of the MRPC.

J. Telepciak explained the responsibilities of the Executive Committee Member.

Discussion followed about procedures and processes of the Community Development Block Grant Program.

#### **3.2 Adoption of Remote Participation at MRPC Meetings**

G. Eaton explained that the Open Meeting Law regulations allow members of public bodies to participate in meetings remotely if the practice is adopted by the public body. Once adopted any members of the public body may participate remotely only if physical attendance would be unreasonably difficult. Minimum requirements for remote participation are: 1) A quorum must be present; 2) members of the public body and all those present and those who participate remotely must be clearly audible to each other; and 3) All votes must be taken by a roll call vote if a member participates remotely.

L. Shifrin moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission adopts the practice of members participating remotely if physical attendance is unreasonably difficult. It is noted that this practice will also apply to all subcommittees of the MRPC; including but not limited to Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC), Montachusett Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (MRCEDS), Montachusett Brownfields Group (MBG), and MRPC's Executive Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

MRPC will create procedures for remote participation. At this time please contact Linda Parmenter, Administrative and HR Director beforehand if you plan on participating remotely.

### **3.3 Personnel Update**

G. Eaton stated that MRPC hired a Fiscal Manager. Linda Quinlivan will start on Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **4. Status Reports**

### **4.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**

#### **MRMapper & MOBILE APPS (GENERAL)**

- The public MRMapper WebApps have all been added to the most current version (2.7) of the software.
- One additional application has been added to the MRMapper homepage:
  - Roadway Safety Improvement Project Targets

#### **COMMUNITY-RELATED**

Fitchburg Parcel Enhancements – We have completed all training and established a nightly data replication to ensure the parcel data is up-to-date daily. We are in the final stages of making edits to the internal site then we will finalize a public site for the City. This project is complete.

Shirley Cemetery Mapping – We have completed mapping of the Center and Village cemeteries. Additionally, we have created a MRMapper application that the Town can use to populate their cemetery records in. The Town is currently entering data into this application. Data entry should be completed by the end of the FY. Once data entry is complete, the end results will be internal and public applications for the two cemeteries.

Lunenburg Potential Truck Exclusion Mapping – In conjunction with the Transportation Dept, we are currently working on a potential truck exclusion mapping project with the Town. This project is ongoing.

Town of Athol Downtown Parking – Updates have been completed to the map as well as the MRMapper application. This project is complete.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING**

DLTA Brownfields – We have begun to map out the locations that are a part of the MRPC's and TRC's Brownfields Program History. We will also map out the locations of chemical release sites. This project is expected to be completed by the end of September 2018.

#### **TRANSPORTATION-RELATED**

Trail Guide Update – We recently updated trail data for the communities of Leominster and Gardner. We still have to complete updates for Lunenburg and we are waiting to hear back from the Conservation Commission before we proceed. We are also waiting on additional information and data from Fitchburg and Winchendon. We are also still accepting new trail data so we may have more updates to do in the future if other communities send us more data. We’ve finished updating the individual community trail maps and we are now working on distributing the maps to the communities so that they can review these updated trail maps and provide input before they are released to the public. This phase of the project is expected to be completed in Fall 2018.

Fitchburg Trail Guide - This project is complete.

Gardner Sidewalk Inventory – A series of maps were produced showing the current Gardner sidewalk inventory in relation to bus routes, schools, hospitals, elderly facilities, trails, industrial parks, shopping plazas, and special populations. These maps were used by our Transportation staff in a report to identify focused priority areas. We then made another map that clearly shows these focused priority areas. This project is complete.

Climate Change Mapping – We recently completed mapping transportation infrastructure vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Structurally deficient bridges, high hazard dams and TIP projects are mapped annually to determine which and how many are within vicinity of the FEMA 100-year flood zones. This project is complete.

#### **TRANSIT-RELATED**

Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Plan Update – We updated the maps so that the bus routes shown include the Orange/Athol line and the recently established Littleton-Westford Regional Commuter Rail Shuttle. We also updated the buffers so that these newly added lines were included. This project is complete.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) Data processing – We have finalized the LiDAR data processing. We are generating 2ft contours for Community MRMapper applications. In the future we will extract building footprints and their heights.

NewVue Communities Liabilities to Assets – We created a map for NewVue Communities that highlights the location of residential properties that need rehabbing or redeveloping in five communities. This map will be used in a grant application to secure funding to rehab or redevelop these properties. This project is complete.

### **4.2 Planning and Development**

#### **FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)**

MRPC is resubmitting the Industrial Lands Inventory and Analysis grant application to EDA with a reduced scope of work, and a lower requested dollar amount. MRPC previously applied under the EDA Technical Assistance Program but has now been advised to apply under a new funding opportunity announced in July (Economic Development Assistance Program) where funds are currently available. It was indicated under the previous application that there were insufficient EDA funds under the Technical Assistance Program to fund MRPC’s proposal.

MRPC staff attended a training workshop and became certified to provide technical assistance to communities under the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant program (MVP) to plan for resiliency to mitigate the impacts from climate change. MRPC staff also held an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan meeting on July 26<sup>th</sup> here at MRPC offices that included a discussion of MRPC planning services for assisting communities to develop ADA Transition Plans.

#### **FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA), MONTACHUSETT REGION BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

MRPC staff has been working on mapping all sites that have been assessed through MRPC's Brownfields Program as well as existing brownfield sites throughout the region.

#### **DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)**

Projects that MRPC staff are working on include:

Town of Winchendon: Assistance to complete previous work on individual chapters of Winchendon's Master Plan and compile each chapter into a complete Master Plan document.

Town of Athol: Transportation Master Plan Chapter Update.

Town of Ayer: Assistance with identifying and prioritizing existing and potential conservation lands in Ayer.

Ashby: Housing Production Plan.

Lunenburg: Community Business Brochure and Implementation Plan for the "Formation of a Business/Town Partnership" drafted in the 2017 DLTA round.

Lunenburg: Permitting Guidebook.

Fitchburg: Investigating/researching parking adjustments that can be made to support Smart Growth in the City's denser neighborhoods.

Fitchburg: Best practices review with recommendations for off-site student housing policy/procedures in University neighborhoods.

Industrial Lands Inventory for the Montachusett Region.

#### **COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT OF NORTH CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS**

MRPC completed a draft update of a Community Health Assessment of North Central Massachusetts. The final report will be presented to Heywood Hospital in September.

#### **CHEMICAL SAFETY AND CLIMATE CHANGE PREPAREDNESS TRAINING**

MRPC staff is near completion on a grant from the Massachusetts [Office of Technical Assistance and Technology](#) (OTA) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to sponsor workshops about the toxic chemicals stored, used and transported through their communities. The final report will be forwarded to OTA on or before September 1.

#### **MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES (DOER)**

MRPC is utilizing grant funds from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) to assist the Towns of Hubbardston, and Templeton to become Green

Communities and to assist with administration of existing Green Communities for Ashby, Athol, Harvard, Fitchburg, Lunenburg, Shirley, Townsend and Westminster.

### ***Community Development Division***

#### **Community Development Block Grant**

The FY17 Shirley CDBG Program is progressing steadily; 17 applications for housing rehabilitation assistance have been received, nine have been approved, five projects have gone out to bid and construction will commence this month and two were denied. The remaining applications are incomplete and MRPC staff is waiting for paperwork from the homeowners. At least 23 homeowners applied for home heating fuel assistance; \$5,264.55 in oil deliveries have been made to date.

MRPC provided assistance to the Planning Board/Interim Community Development Steering Committee with the creation of a community wide needs survey which will be distributed in September. Results will be used to support the town's FY19 CDBG proposal.

Montachusett Enterprise Center, Inc.

Three of four of MEC's remaining homes have been sold; 207 Adams Drive, Athol on July 17, 10 Monroe Drive and 32 Whitney Drive on August 10 and 31, respectively. Surpluses were achieved on all three properties.

## **4.3 Transit**

### **AYER PARKING FACILITY**

On August 1, 2018 MART opened the General Contractor bids for the Ayer Parking Facility project. Two bids were received.

NELCO Worldwide of Burlington, MA \$7,975,572 and;

J & J Contractors of N. Billerica, MA \$6,487,000

Both bids were over budget. MART rejected both Bids and decided to re-bid the project in December.

On August 14, 2018 Staff attended the Ayer Board of Selectmen meeting regarding the Ayer Parking Facility project. On August 22, 2018 Staff attended a meeting with Town Officials to discuss the next step moving forward.

### **COORDINATED TRANSIT PLAN UPDATE**

During the past month MRPC completed the Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP) Update; and the Montachusett MPO at their meeting on August 15 voted to release the Draft 2018 (CPT-HSTP) Update for a 21-day Public Review and Comment Period. The comment period will run from Tuesday August 28th until the close of business on Monday September 17th. The Coordinated Plan focuses on three target populations within the Montachusett region, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals (or persons below the poverty level) and the elderly, and seeks to identify gaps in existing transportation services and needs to meet those gaps. The

updated Coordinated Plan includes new information on existing transportation resources and newly identified gaps. The plan also includes new demographic data.

#### **4.4 Transportation**

##### **COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT – HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2018 UPDATE (CPT-HSTP)**

At the MPO meeting on August 15, 2018, the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) voted to release for a 21-day public review and comment period the Draft Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan 2018 Update (CPT-HSTP). The Montachusett CPT-HSTP focuses on three target populations within the Montachusett region, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals and the elderly, and seeks to identify gaps in existing transportation services and needs to meet those gaps. The Coordinated Plan has been developed as a tool to help local transportation providers and communities improve transportation services, increase efficiency of service delivery, and expand outreach to meet growing needs. It provides a framework to guide the investment of existing transportation resources and the acquisition of future funds.

The comment period will run from Tuesday August 28, 2018 and close at the end of business on Monday September 17, 2018. Comments received will be reviewed and addressed by the MPO at a meeting scheduled for Wednesday September 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM at MRPC Offices.

R. Hoyt moved that the MRPC has reviewed the Draft Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan 2018 Update (CPT-HSTP) and based upon this review of comments received to date and the anticipated recommendation of the MJTC, authorizes it Chairman to endorse the Draft CPT-HSTP at the MPO meeting scheduled for Wednesday September 19, 2018 at 1:00 PM at the MRPC offices. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

##### **MONTACHUSETT MPO SUBREGION REPRESENTATIVE SELECTION PROCESS**

An election survey was undertaken through the end of August in order to replace the outgoing Representative and Alternate from Subregion 3. The four towns, Ayer, Harvard, Lunenburg and Shirley were contacted to see if there was any interest by current Board of Selectmen members to act for the Subregion. Two candidates stepped forward; Jamie Toale from Lunenburg and Kara Minar from Harvard. Based upon their input, Mr. Toale ran as the Representative candidate and Ms. Minar ran as the Alternate candidate. A brief Survey Monkey online poll was established to allow the four communities to vote. Mr. Toale and Ms. Minar were then selected to be the Representative and Alternate, respectively. They will fill in for the remainder of the term for the prior Representative and Alternate, i.e. until next August.

A selection process for new Subregion representatives for all four Subregions will begin in November and their term of office will run for three years beginning In September 2019. MPO Subregion members until August 2019 are:

### MPO Subregion Representatives

Subregion	Communities Represented	Position	Name	Community
1	Athol, Hubbardston, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Templeton, Winchendon	Representative	Barbara Anderson	Winchendon
		Alternate	Julie Richard	Templeton
2	Ashburnham, Ashby, Groton, Townsend, Westminster	Representative	Kyle Johnson	Ashburnham
		Alternate	Heather Billings	Westminster
3	Ayer, Harvard, Lunenburg, Shirley	Representative	Jaime Toale	Lunenburg
		Alternate	Kara Minar	Harvard
4	Clinton, Lancaster, Sterling	Representative	Stanley B. Starr, Jr	Lancaster
		Alternate		Clinton

- **Next MJTC Meeting – September 12, 2018 at 6:30 PM at MRPC Offices**
- **Next MPO Meeting – September 19, 2018 at 1:00 PM at MRPC Offices**

### 5. New Business

There was no new business for discussion.

### 6. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Johnson, Kyle	A	Ashburnham	7.2015		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001		X
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2005		X
Truehart, Duane	M	Athol	7.2016	X	
Rebecca Bialecki	A	Athol	7.2017		X
Vacant	M	Ayer			X
Vacant	A	Ayer			X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011		X

Vacant	A	Clinton			X
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Caron, Paula	M	Fitchburg	7.2002		X
Vacant	A	Fitchburg			X
Gross, Allen	M	Gardner	2.2005		X
Cruz, Maribel	A	Gardner	8.2017	X	
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016		X
Vacant	A	Groton			X
Maiore, Rich	M	Harvard	7.2017		X
Vacant	A	Harvard			X
Bratko, Thomas	M	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Christopher, Thomas	M	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Piazza, Noreen	A	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Vacant	M	Leominster			X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Cole, Tanner	M	Lunenburg	7.2018	X	
Adams, Kathryn	A	Lunenburg	7.2018	X	
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Vacant	M	Phillipston			X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.201	X	
Natrowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015		X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Widing, Sarah	A	Shirley	7.2015		X
Yocum, Barbara	M	Shirley	8.2017	X	
Pineo, Michael	M	Sterling	7.2014		X
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X



Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Terenzini, Carter	A	Templeton	9.2016		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend		X	
King, Cindy	A	Townsend	7.2016		X
Weist, Linda	M	Westminster	7.2017		X
Vacant	A	Westminster			X
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011		X
Cyganiewicz, Austin	A	Winchendon	7.2015		X

STAFF PRESENT: Brad Harris, George Kahale, Glenn Eaton, Linda Parmenter

EXHIBITS/DOCUMENTS PRESENTED AT MEETING

September 6, 2018 MRPC Handout

August 2, 2018 Minutes

2018 Moving Together Conference Flyer

Ride Hailing Partnership Forum Flyer

Interested Parties Memo – Human Services Transportation Plan Update