

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)



THURSDAY, June 4, 2020

7:00 PM

REMOTE: GO TO MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

1. Open Meeting, Introductions and Announcements

G. Corbosiero called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. G. Corbosiero stated in accordance with Governor Baker's Covid-19 Executive Order regarding the Open Meeting Law and remote participation, votes will be taken through Roll Call. G. Corbosiero read the roll call.

2. Approval of May 7, 2020 MRPC Minutes

J. Telepciak moved to approve the minutes of May 7, 2020 with corrections:

Item 4. Slate of Officers for FY21 should include "Members at Large – Phil Duffy and Maribel Cruz" and Roll Call Votes throughout minutes should include Russ Burke. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed.

Alan Pease	Yes
Guy Corbosiero	Yes
Barbara Yocum	Yes
John Telepciak	Yes
Mike Smith	Yes
Stacia Donahue	Yes
Phil Duffy	Yes
Russ Wilson	Yes
Bob Swartz	Yes
Maribel Cruz	Yes
Russ Burke	Yes
Laura Shifrin	Yes

3. Cash Schedule – May 2020

A. Pease read the May 2020 cash schedule.

Opening Balance \$306,264.07 Total receipts this month \$142,650.50; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$448,914.57; Less: amount of this warrant \$87,849.48; Balance after this warrant \$361,065.09.

R. Burke moved to accept the May 2020 cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed.

Alan Pease	Yes
Guy Corbosiero	Yes
Barbara Yocum	Yes
John Telepciak	Yes
Mike Smith	Yes
Stacia Donahue	Yes
Phil Duffy	Yes
Russ Wilson	Yes
Bob Swartz	Yes
Maribel Cruz	Yes
Russ Burke	Yes
Laura Shifrin	Yes

4. **Election of Officers for FY21**

G. Corbosiero indicated last month the Nominating Committee recommended the following Slate of Officers.

Chair- Guy Corbosiero

Vice Chair – John Telepciak

Treasurer – Laura Shifrin

Treasurer- Roger Hoyt

Secretary

Members at Large: Maribel Cruz and Phil Duffy

R. Burke moved to elect the Slate of Officers as recommended by the Nominating Committee. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed.

Alan Pease	Yes
Guy Corbosiero	Yes
Barbara Yocum	Yes
John Telepciak	Yes
Mike Smith	Yes
Stacia Donahue	Yes
Phil Duffy	Yes
Russ Wilson	Yes
Bob Swartz	Yes
Maribel Cruz	Yes
Russ Burke	Yes
Laura Shifrin	Yes

5. **Administrative Matters**

5.1 Executive Director's Report

G. Eaton indicated all MRPC services are being delivered and staff continue to work remotely. We completed the business re-opening plan yesterday in compliance with the Governor's requirements. MRPC employees will return to work on a limited basis effective the week of June 8, 2020. He summarized the Plan. MRPC was successful in receiving a \$25,000 small business assistance grant from the MA Attorney General's office.

5.2 FY21 Budget Presentation

G. Eaton presented MRPC's FY21 budget. Budget is conservative, minimizing potential revenue and keeping expenses as low as possible. The budget includes two salary increases for two employees (Brian Doherty and Sheri Bean, Principal Planners, Transportation Department). MRPC hired a compensation consultant and that report indicates that those employees' salaries do not meet the minimum market rate. No other salary increases are proposed at this time. FY21 budget assumes that MRPC does not receive \$200,000 from the State for Year 13 District Local Technical Assistance funding. MRPC will receive monies from Federal Economic Development Administration in the amount of \$400,000 through the First Cares Act. This is a two-year grant and he would hire a Planner. Budget only includes revenue for contracts that are committed. State will have a \$6 billion deficit next year which means discretionary funding could go away.

G. Eaton explained the five exhibits in the budget. Referring Exhibit C, the bottom line shows total projected revenue of \$1,773 million and total projected expenses of \$1,709 million leaving a gap of \$63,313 or 3.7% that we have to fill.

B. Yocum stated that Exhibit C shows there is a surplus of \$63,313 not a gap. Revenue is higher than expenditures.

G. Eaton indicated there may be a cell reference or formula reference problem. He indicated he would correct and email.

R. Burke moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the FY21 Budget with the above noted correction. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed.

Alan Pease	Yes
Guy Corbosiero	Yes
Barbara Yocum	Yes
John Telepciak	Yes
Mike Smith	Yes
Stacia Donahue	Yes
Phil Duffy	Yes
Russ Wilson	Yes
Bob Swartz	Yes
Maribel Cruz	Yes
Russ Burke	Yes
Laura Shifrin	Yes

6. Status Reports

6.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

MRMapper & MOBILE APPS (GENERAL)

Data and applications are continuously being updated throughout the year. Check <https://mrmapper.mrpc.org> periodically for updates.

We have completed the process of updating the WebApp software on all regional public applications from v2.13 to v2.15 of the software. This project is complete.

COMMUNITY-RELATED

Lunenburg Conservation Lands Mapping – The Lunenburg Conservation Commission received the grant that it applied for to create and install maps at the intersections of the trails on its properties. We will work on creating a series of “You Are Here” maps. We have reached out to the town and begun discussing the specifics of the maps. This project will be ongoing for the next several months.

Winchendon Zoning Map Updates – We are currently in the process of updating the Official Zoning map for the Town of Winchendon. The decision was made to update the zoning layers to match the current parcel data where applicable. This project is currently on hold until the Town can collect data regarding the origins of the zoning districts and provide it to the MRPC.

Templeton Cemetery – We are currently working with the Town of Templeton to update their cemetery GIS data. The updated data will be used to create internal (with editing/database maintenance functionality) and public *MRMapper* WebApps. A draft data set was sent to the Town for their review and we are awaiting a response to finalize the data. A draft WebApp has been created and tested. Once the data is finalized, we will finalize the WebApp and present it to the Town for their review. This project will be ongoing for the next few months.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING-RELATED

ADA Compliance Checklist Survey Creation – We’ve created four digital surveys that can be completed out in the field using tablets. They will be used by MRPC staff to inventory the features and amenities of public spaces to see if they are ADA compliant. We developed a training manual for staff to use to complete these digital surveys and we will continue to provide any technical assistance as needed until the project is complete. This project is currently on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DLTA

Westminster OS Update – We are currently in the process of updating the 12 maps in the current Open Space plan. We need to update the open space land inventory and verify it with the assessor parcel data. This project will be ongoing for the next several months.

Harvard Buildout Analysis – We are currently working with the Town on a buildout style analysis. We will develop a scenario-modeling spreadsheet and series of maps detailing current areas of developed, absolute and partial development constraints and developable lands in Town. The goal will be to assess what current zoning will result in regarding full development in terms of housing units, school children and miles of new road.

TRANSPORTATION-RELATED

Trail Data Application – We are currently in the process of finalizing a mobile application that will allow communities to update the existing Trail Inventory data in ‘live’ or ‘offline’ (disconnected) editing session. The current goal is to have the app ready to be tested internally when the COVID-19 pandemic distancing guidelines have been lifted. At that point we can also begin community outreach and training accordingly. This project will be ongoing throughout the spring and likely summer.

UPWP – We included language for an additional task in the GIS section relating to the utilization of MassDOT’s MaPIT application that is used to initiate highway projects. We will continue to provide any data and analysis as requested. This project is expected to be completed by the end of June.

Bike Inventory – The model to process the GPX files of popular bike routes into lines with the correct coordinate system ran successfully. We created another model to merge all of the files into a single working file that we used to establish which roadways are bike routes used by the public. We analyzed priority roadways within a half of a mile from tourist attractions (see next task) and collected data regarding designated bike lanes, protected bike lanes, and sharrows. We are currently analyzing the remaining bike route roadways. This portion of the project is expected to be completed in early June.

MRPC Travel by Tourism – After working with Transportation staff to establish an understandable symbology of all of the transportation options, we created snips of all of the tourist attractions and the

transportation options with the half of a mile buffer so that they can continue with their analysis. We will continue to provide support, information, and maps as needed. This project will be ongoing.

TRANSIT-RELATED

MART Stop Count – We were asked to redo the stop counts so that the outbound and inbound stop counts follow the same criteria as a previously completed report. We have identified all of the individual stops, both currently scheduled and recommended in a previous report. We are currently working on finalizing the numbers of stops that are outbound scheduled, outbound recommended, inbound scheduled, and inbound recommended. This project is expected to be completed by the end of June.

Shirley Station Potential Parking Easement – We previously created two maps showing the outlines of the potential easements, orthophotography, and the approximate dimensions of the easements. These maps were utilized by transit staff in a meeting with officials at MART and the MBTA about the procurement of the easements. After the meeting, we extended one of the easements, provided new measurements, and updated the two maps. Our portion of this project is currently complete but we will continue to update maps and provide information as transit staff continue with the procurement.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

MRPC CLOUD SERVER MIGRATION

We have made the decision to migrate the contents and roles of our physical server to the Office 365 cloud. We believe that this will create a better and more consistent user experience both in and out of the office. In addition, this change will allow us to be better prepared for off-site working during any potential future disaster/pandemic-related events.

As part of the process we will be moving from the enterprise cloud to the government cloud. Some benefits of this migration include:

- Compliance with Federal requirements for cloud services, including FedRAMP Moderate and with certifications and accreditations that are required for US Public Sector customers.
- All content is stored within the United States.
- Access to your organization's customer content is restricted to screened Microsoft personnel.
- Cheaper costs along with enhanced benefits.

With this change will come additional enhanced functionality within Office 365. We will wait to roll out additional functionality once the changeover is complete and people are comfortable with the new way of doing things.

It is estimated that this cloud server migration will initially cost approximately \$1,500 in setup fees, but will actually save us over \$300/month in Office365 and IT vendor subscription costs

6.2 Planning and Development

Comprehensive Planning Division

FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)

As part of this contract, MRPC provides assistance to communities seeking grant funds to improve economic vitality. MRPC staff put together grant applications to fund the Implementation Plan of the Town of Hubbardston's Master Plan, three Master Plan Chapters for the Town of Sterling, and downtown zoning for the Town of Athol. Grants were due to the state Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs on Friday, May 15, 2020.

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) meeting was held on Tuesday, May 19th at 4 p.m. Topics discussed include the CDBG – CV Substantial Amendment, the Attorney General's Small

Business Relief Partnership Grant Program, and Federal EDA Funding Opportunities including a two - year duration \$400,000 Supplemental Grant to MRPC.

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

Work on the following sites continue:

- **Fitchburg:** 49 Snow Street
- **Lunenburg:** 925 Massachusetts Avenue Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.
- **Winchendon:** 4 Summer Drive. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment

MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS (EOEEA)

MRPC was awarded an FY20 Planning Assistance grant to fund Master Plan Chapters for the Town of Hubbardston. MRPC staff presented work done on the recommendation section of the Transportation Element to the Planning Board on May 6th. MRPC staff has also initiated work on the Services and Facilities and Housing Master Plan Chapters.

DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)

MRPC staff is initiating work on the following projects and is working with the town of Ashburnham to prioritize and award at least one project.

1. **Hubbardston:** Land Use Master Plan Chapter.
2. **Ayer:** ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. Project to be matched with ADA Planning Grant from MA Office on Disability to the Town of Ayer.
3. **Townsend:** Amend zoning bylaws to provide more age restricted market rate housing opportunities in Town.
4. **Townsend:** Provide statistical data to confirm the feasibility of the Town adopting M.G.L. 43D – Expedited Local Permitting Program.
5. **Athol:** Millers River Greenway Planning Assistance.
6. **Athol:** Urban Renewal Planning Assistance (Phase 2).
7. **Westminster:** Open Space and Recreation Plan update assistance (maps and statistics generated from maps, and updating tables in Community Setting Section).
8. **Sterling:** Transportation Master Plan Chapter.
9. **Sterling:** Implementation of Housing Production Plan Action Items: A. Amend accessory apartment bylaw and incorporate accessory apartments into the Subsidized Housing Inventory, and; B. Explore adoption of affordable housing on non-complying lots.
10. **Petersham:** Community survey, facilitating public input at community meetings, and identifying any funding options concerning the Nichewaug Inn & Academy building.
11. **Harvard:** Build – Out Analysis Update and Fiscal Impact Analysis.
12. **Lunenburg:** ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (Phase 2). Phase 1 was completed using last round of DLTA.
13. **Lancaster:** Draft language for a new center-village zoning district or overlay district
14. **Shirley:** Housing Production Plan.
15. **Ashby:** Natural Resource Protection Bylaw.

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES (DOER)

MRPC received a Regional Energy Planning Assistance (REPA) grant award in the amount of \$59,065 in August and the contract has an effective date of 9/10/19, with an end date of 5/30/21. REPA grant award funds were used by MRPC for Green Communities Program Designation Application Submissions on November 22nd for Groton, Hubbardston and Templeton. All three communities have been designated Green Communities by the DOER as a result of MRPC's assistance with the Applications with a total amount of grant funds of \$428,680. One additional grant application was required of the designated communities in order to receive their grant funds, which was submitted to DOER by MRPC staff.

MRPC staff are also assisting the Towns of Royalston and Ashby under their Green Communities Grant Award administrative costs with tasks associated with managing the grant awards such as reporting, procurement, and data management.

Community Development Division

MONTACHUSETT ENTERPRISE CENTER, INC. (MEC)

There is no new information to report this month.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

FY17 Shirley CDBG Program

Staff is in the process of completing final reports concerning close-out and accomplishments of deliverables (aka "milestones" within the IntelliGrants reporting system).

6.3 Transit

AYER DEPOT SQUARE PEDESTRIAN PLAZA

During the past month MRPC staff continues to assist MART and the Town of Ayer; and working with the Engineer (Weston & Sampson) to move forward the construction of The Depot Square Pedestrian Plaza located at the MBTA Station; the project will include Transit Vehicles turn around, Pedestrian Plaza, Restroom Facility, Pedestrian Access to the Station and Commuters Shelter. Depot Square Improvement Phase I has begun and the construction is underway by the contractor RA Powell Construction Corp Lunenburg, MA. MART anticipate completion of the project by June 30, 2020.

6.4 Transportation

FFY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

At the MPO meeting on May 20, 2020, the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) voted to endorse the FFY 2021-2025 TIP as presented. The endorsed TIP incorporates responses to comments received from MassDOT and FHWA. These comments did not affect the Target projects identified for each Federal Fiscal Year. The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) also reviewed the draft TIP at its May 13th meeting and recommended the MPO endorse the document. Complete copies of the MPO Endorsed FFY 2021-2025 TIP are available online at www.mrpc.org.

FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

At the MPO meeting on May 20, 2020, the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) voted to endorse the FFY 2021UPWP as presented. The endorsed UPWP incorporates responses to comments

received from MassDOT and FHWA. These comments did not affect the scope or budgets of the tasks but clarified certain items in the document. The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) also reviewed the draft UPWP at its May 13th meeting and recommended the MPO endorse the document. Complete copies of the MPO Endorsed FFY 2021 UPWP are available online at www.mrpc.org.

Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)

At the May 13th MJTC meeting, members decided to continue to meet at 2:30 PM for the foreseeable future. A review of attendees at the past few meetings have shown a slight increase in attendees especially among community members. The last two meetings have been held online so it will be interesting to see the response once we can get back to in person meetings.

Next MJTC Meeting – June 10, 2020 at 2:30 PM at MRPC Offices
Next MPO Meeting – June 17, 2020 at 1:00 PM at MRPC Offices

Please check the MRPC calendar for the most up to date information regarding these meetings as well as for information related to participating online.

7. New Business

Discussion took place regarding transit ridership.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Meeting Attendance					
Name	M/A	Representing	Appointment Date	PRESENT	ABSENT
Meissner, Rosemarie	A	Ashburnham	3.2019		
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011		
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			

Swartz, Robert	M	Gardner	7.2019	X	
Cruz, Maribel	A	Gardner	8.2017	X	
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016	X	
Vacant	A	Groton			X
Donahue, Stacia	M	Harvard	7.2018	X	
Vacant	A	Harvard			X
Vacant	M	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston			X
Christopher, Thomas	A	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Williston, Russell	M	Lancaster	11.2018	X	
Carignan, Thomas	M	Leominster	7.2019		X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Bertram, Paula	M	Lunenburg	7.2019		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	
Page, Patty	M	Sterling	7.2019		X
Maki, Dick	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Terenzini, Carter	A	Templeton	9.2016		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2018	X	
Vacant	A	Townsend			X
Smith, Mike	M	Westminster	7.2019	X	
Vacant	A	Westminster			X
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	

Ward, Rick	A	Winchendon	7.2019	X	
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STAFF PRESENT: Glenn Eaton, Brad Harris, George Kahale, John Hume, Linda Quinlivan, Jason Stanton

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING:

May 7, 2020 Minutes

June 2, 2020 MRPC Meeting Handout

FY21 MRPC Budget