

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING

MINUTES OF November 18, 2015

D. Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

I. Introduction

Members

Pauline Hamel, Ayer; Ken Chenis, Lunenburg; Paula Caron, Fitchburg; Tracy Murphy, Winchendon; David Manugian, Groton; Thatcher Kezer, MassDevelopment/Devens; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3, Jeff Hoynoski, MassDOT District 2, Doug Walsh, Athol; Noreen Piazza, Lancaster.

Guests

Frank Maxant, Ayer.

Staff

Sheri Bean, Brad Harris, Brian Doherty, George Snow

II. Approval of September 16, 2015 Minutes

It was the consensus of the MJTC to approve the September 16, 2015 MJTC minutes as written with one abstention.

III. Complete Streets Funding Program

B. Harris distributed a handout regarding the Complete Streets Program. He explained there have been changes to the Certification Program. Final revisions are being made. MassDOT will hold workshops in 2016 through Bay State Roads. He also distributed a handout developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council which explains the Complete Streets Program and includes projects that have been undertaken in the MAPC region.

S. Bean indicated that she recently attended the State's annual Conference entitled "Moving Together" regarding bike and pedestrian modes of transportation. At that conference, MassDOT indicated that the only twelve communities participated in the Certification Process of the Complete Streets Program which was lower than MassDOT expected. MassDOT surveyed communities regarding the Certification Process. Feedback indicated that the process was complicated.

S. Bradbury added that she also attended that Conference and also came to the conclusion that although the Certification Process was a good concept but it was too restrictive for some communities to participate. Therefore, MassDOT is trying to revise the process so more communities will participate.

Discussion occurred about the challenges of the Complete Streets Program i.e. most roads are not wide enough to accommodate bike/pedestrian lanes, therefore roads have to be widened which is a huge expense to communities. Discussion also took place regarding the benefits including combining Complete Streets funding opportunities with other pots of funding such as Massworks, and Chapter 90 monies to get projects done.

B. Harris distributed and explained a newly released handout from MassDOT entitled Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide.

IV. Review of Route 12 Leominster Road Safety Audit

G. Snow presented a PowerPoint prepared by Green International Affiliates Inc. of Littleton regarding a Road Safety Audit for Route 12 from Sterling Town Line to Tocci Street in the City of Leominster. Road Safety Audits are traffic studies of a roadway that has been identified as a high crash area that focuses on safety issues. MassDOT requires an RSA be conducted prior to submitting a 25% design plan. The purpose is to identify safety issues and potential improvements. He explained in detail the safety issues on this roadway and possible enhancements that could be undertaken.

Discussion followed about Road Safety Audits and communities' liabilities.

V. Update to the Public Participation Plan (PPP)

B. Harris distributed the existing Public Participation Plan which was amended in September 2015. A PPP outlines the process of how the MPO solicits input from the general public for the major reports and studies we undertaken. The plan was done in 2007 and we are in process of updating the plan. We are modeling the update based on some of the information included in MassDOT's PPP. A draft will be completed by the end of the year for MassDOT's review. He distributed and explained a pre-draft of the updated PPP.

VI. Contract Status Reports

- a. FTA**
- b. RTA**

B. Harris indicated that the Transit Authority offices are undergoing some major renovations. The transit service in Westminster will be starting soon, the transit service in Lunenburg is up and running and there is no new information on the Ayer Rail Station.

c. MassDOT 3C

B. Harris stated that the tasks of the UPWP have begun. We are completing a study in Harvard and a study in Lancaster. We purchased radar traffic counters and have used them in problem locations and they are working well. They also record speed of vehicles. The next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 2017-2021 is expected to be endorsed in June. We will compile project listings in January, transportation evaluation criteria and air quality in February, funding scenarios in April leaving us with a draft TIP sometime in May. We will bring all information to the MJTC at upcoming meetings. He encouraged communities who have projects on the current TIP to contact their consultants to give you an update of where design stands so we can use that as part of the scoring criteria for better priority ranking. He distributed a 2016 Meeting Calendar.

VI. Administrative Matters

The next MJTC Meeting is January 20, 2016.

A question was asked if a study needed to be done regarding changing a speed limit on a roadway.

B. Harris responded speed is based on a 85th percentile calculation. Traffic counters will do speed counts. Often if there is a speeding problem, the calculation of the 85th percentile might be higher than the current

posted speed limit. A study needs to be undertaken. Other options are more police enforcement, or raising awareness with a radar sign posting the speed limit.

Discussion took place regarding the popularity of roundabouts in Massachusetts and the difference between roundabouts and rotaries.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

November 18, 2015 Agenda
September 16, 2015 MJTC Minutes
MAPC Complete Streets Summary
2016 Meeting Calendar
MPO Endorsed Amendment Public Participation Plan September 16, 2015
MPO Endorsed FFY2016 – 2019 Summary
Public Participation Plan Draft
Road Safety Audit Route 12 Leominster
Separated Bike Lane Summary 11 18 2015