

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

Minutes of December 14, 2016

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

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Steve Woelfel, MassDOT OTP; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Highway; John Telepciak, MRPC; Mohammed Khan, MART; John Columbus, Subregion 1; Heather Budrewicz, Subregion 2; Paula Bertram, Subregion 3; Ryan McNutt, Subregion 4; Trevor Beaugard, Gardner; Mayor Stephen DiNatale, Fitchburg

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

David Chandler, FHWA; Tim Kilhart, Hubbardston; Nikki Tishler, MassDOT OTP; Gary Luca, Ayer; Bonnie Mahoney, MART; Steve Nims, Ashburnham; Sue Kennedy, Ayer; Megan Pierce, Rep. Stephan Hay's Office

STAFF PRESENT

Brad Harris, George Snow, George Kahale, Sheri Bean, Brian Doherty, Kaitlyn Olbrich

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments to be made.

III. Approval of November 9, 2016 Minutes

S. Bradbury indicated that she was present at the November MPO meeting. The minutes will be revised to include S. Bradbury, MassDOT District 3 under Members and Guest Present.

A motion was made to approve the November 9, 2016 MPO Meeting Minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded and passed with P. Bertram abstaining.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

- *Review and Discussion Regarding TIP Amendment #2 –Transit Element*
- *MPO Release for Public Review and Comment Period*
- *Discussion Regarding TIP Development Schedule, Projects and Meeting Dates*
- *Update Related to Upcoming Highway Amendment*

B. Mahoney of MART discussed the need for an amendment to the FFY 2017 Transit Element. The amendment includes an original CMAQ project for a sidewalk at Wachusett Station as well as two additional new projects for some further enhancements within the station; all three projects totaling \$296,000. Additionally, there are some cost changes to five existing projects and an additional project for work at the Ayer Park & Ride Station. Two other projects are being removed due to budget changes that will allow MART to incorporate this as additional work in prior projects. B. Mahoney then indicated that MART would like to see this amendment go out for public comment as soon as possible because MART is trying to get their grant application approved through the FTA.

A motion was made to release FFY 2017 TIP Amendment #2 for a 30 day Public Review and Comment Period. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

B. Harris then provided the MPO with an update on what will likely be occurring at subsequent MPO meetings related to additional TIP amendments, an amendment to the Public Participation Program and changes to the development schedule for the next TIP. In addition, he discussed a request by MassDOT to review and possibly change the schedule for Montachusett MPO meetings from the second Wednesday of the month to the third or fourth Wednesday of the month and to also coordinate these meetings with the Central MA Regional Planning Commission. A survey will be compiled and sent to MPO signatories for their feedback.

V. Montachusett Regional Population Projections Analysis

- Presentation and Discussion

K. Olbrich gave a presentation entitled “Montachusett Regional Population Projections” that highlighted her work on developing a projection method that could be used by the MRPC to assess and compare to other projection estimates made for our member communities. The presentation highlighted the methodology used, the projection estimates for 2020, 2030 and 2040, and how they compared to state projections developed by the Donahue Institute.

Discussion followed related to the methodology used, the number of variables that influence population change that are hard to model, the difficulty in developing plans and assumptions on the various projections available and how the projections developed will be utilized by the MRPC in future transportation planning efforts.

VI. Updates

- MassDOT Highway Division

S. Bradbury indicated that the 100% plans have been received for Summer Street and they are under review; Gardner Matthews Street was advertised on November 26th and Hubbardston is at 100% and should be ready for advertisement winter/spring of this year.

A question was asked on when the ground will be broken on the Summer Street project. S. Bradbury indicated that it would depend on a number of things such as bid dates, awards, contract completion, etc.

B. Harris provided some information on District 2 projects; Royalston Stockwell Road bridge replacement is at 25% with a public hearing held on November 27th and the 75% will be due in a week; in Winchendon bridge replacement project on North Royalston Road is at 100% and under review; also in Winchendon, resurfacing on Route 12 is at 75%.

- Transit

G. Kahale indicated that the Wachusett Station project has been substantially completed and since November 21st full service is available at the station. Also, parking occupancy is over 25% daily at this time. The grand opening schedule for December 15th has been postponed due to expected cold weather. For the Ayer parking facility, MART signed a contract with Weston & Sampson to start the design of the facility.

M. Khan indicated that they are working with industries in Devens on limited fixed route service between the Fitchburg/Leominster area and Devens.

- MJTC

B. Harris indicated there is no December meeting and the next MJTC will be at 7:00 PM on January 18, 2017 at MRPC.

- *MRPC*

B. Harris indicated that the MRPC is offering its assistance to member communities on Complete Streets prioritization planning. We have heard from a couple of towns that are interested and we will be discussing things with them in the near future. Also, we are exploring the opportunity to establish a bike rack purchase program through available CMAQ funds and have sent out notices to our communities to judge their interest. Once we have that compiled, we will let everyone know how the program will work.

VII. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris mentioned that with TIP Amendment #2 out for 30 day comment period, the next MPO meeting would need to be rescheduled to January 18th or 25th. We will talk with MassDOT to confirm a date and let everyone know ahead of time.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 12 14 2016 Agenda
11 9 16 MPO Minutes
Transit FFY 2017 Amendment #2 12 13 2016
MPO Changes Process 12 6 2016
MPO Upcoming Actions 12 2016
Regional Population Projection Presentation