

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

Minutes of March 15, 2017

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

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Steve Woelfel, MassDOT; Arthur Frost, MassDOT Highway; John Telepciak, MRPC; Trevor Beauregard, Gardner; Mohammed Khan, MART; John Columbus, Subregion 1; Heather Budrewicz, Subregion 2; Paula Bertram, Subregion 3; Noreen Piazza, Subregion 4;

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Jeff Hoynoski, MassDOT District 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Nikki Tishler, MassDOT OTP; Steve Nims, Ashburnham; Raeanne Siegel, Hubbardston; Travis Brown, Hubbardston; Thatcher Kezer, Devens; Bonnie Mahoney, MART;

STAFF PRESENT

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

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments to be made.

III. Approval of February 15, 2017 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the February 15, 2017 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed.

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

- *Review and Discussion of Comments to TIP Amendment #3 –Highway Element*
- *MPO Endorsement of TIP Amendment #3*

B. Harris reviewed Amendment #3 to the Highway Element to the FFY 2017-2021 TIP. The reason for the amendment was to address the removal of two projects from the 2017 TIP due to a re-distribution of federal funds. The removed projects were Project # 607321 on Route 68 in Templeton and Project # 608542 on Route 140 in Winchendon. Together they equal approximately \$2.7 million. To offset this, one project was added to 2017; Project # 607770 on Route 13 in Lunenburg from FFY 2019 at a cost of \$1.63 million and the advanced construction cost of Project # 606124 in Fitchburg / Leominster / Lunenburg on Summer and North St was adjusted with an additional \$1.05 million. The fiscal analysis for this amendment shows that with the changes, we would zero out our federal aid target funds for FFY 2017.

B. Harris also indicated that the public comment period ran from January 30, 2017 to the close of business on February 28, 2017. During that time, we received two comments both from the Town of Lunenburg and their DPW indicating their support for the Summer Street and Route 13 projects. In addition, the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) met last week and reviewed the amendment and the comments received and subsequently recommended that the MRPC and the MPO endorse Amendment #3 as presented.

A motion was made to endorse the FFY 2017 Highway Element TIP Amendment #3. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

V. Montachusett Public Participation Plan (PPP)

- *Review of Discussion of Comments to PPP Amendment #1*
- *MPO Endorsement of PPP Amendment #1*

B. Harris reviewed Amendment #1 to the PPP. The amendment was put out for a 45-day public comment period that began on January 30, 2017 and will close at the end of business today, March 15, 2017. The reason for the amendment is to change the public comment periods for the PPP for the TIP, UPWP, RTP and any other major MPO related document from 30 to 21 days. The comment period for the Public Participation Plan and any related amendment will not be changed from its required 45 days. To date, we have not received any comments and we do not anticipate receiving any comments today. The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) met last week and also reviewed the amendment and any comments received to that point. Subsequently, the MJTC recommended that the MRPC and the MPO endorse the PPP Amendment #1 as presented.

The MJTC reached consensus to recommend to the MPO and the MRPC that they endorse Amendment #1 to the PPP.

A motion was made to endorse the Montachusett Public Participation Plan (PPP) Amendment #1. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VI. Montachusett FFY 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program

- *Review of Federal Aid Target Projects Prioritization Scoring*
- *Review of Funding Scenarios for FFY 2018-2022*

At the last MPO in February, we heard from four project proponents regarding the scope of the proposals. Additionally, we participated in the TIP Readiness Day held on February 16th at MassDOT District 3 Offices where several projects were discussed. The result of all of this was a review of the prior Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) scores for all of the projects. B. Harris then referred members to a handout of the revised TEC Prioritization list for target eligible projects. Staff then sought to develop possible funding scenarios for FFY 2018 to 2022 utilizing the TEC listing and the federal aid target amounts received from MassDOT.

S. Woelfel indicated that MassDOT will be sending out to the MPOs the statewide project listings by the end of the day today that can then be included in the TIPs.

B. Harris then referred members to a handout of four possible funding scenarios for their review and consideration and discussed the various issues with each as well as the fiscal constraint analysis for each fiscal year and scenario.

Discussion followed on project status, priorities and fiscal constraint issues. Clarifications was made on projects in Fitchburg, Leominster and Ashburnham. Discussion also occurred on project development and the schedules associated with the design, advertisement and the TIP process.

The MPO recommended that for developing a draft, the focus should be on Scenario 1 containing the Gardner/Leominster/Sterling Intersection Improvements HSIP project in FFY 2018.

VII. Updates

- *MassDOT Highway Division*

J. Hoynoski indicated that the Winchendon Route 12 resurfacing project was advertised and the bid opening is 8/8/2017; the Royalston bridge project on Stockwell Road over Lawrence Brook is at 75%; and Winchendon North Royalston Road bridge over Tarbell Brook is at PS&E.

A. Frost indicated that the Summer Street project in Fitchburg/Leominster/Lunenburg is in good shape and are looking at advertisement in August; Gardner Matthews Street was advertised and the bids are due to be open in May; Hubbardston Route 68 is expected to be advertised in April 2017 pending final permitting approval; Lunenburg Route 13 project is in good shape for FFY 2017 advertisement; Sterling resurfacing on I-190 will be advertised this summer. An adjustment will be needed as we have reduced the scope and cost for fiscal constraint reasons.

A. Frost indicated that the Jackson Road project is working on a time extension to the third week of August. Over the next month, they will be doing the deck pour.

- *Transit*

G. Kahale mentioned that with the Ayer parking facility, MART has hired Weston & Sampson and they are working on the concept plan. A few weeks ago, the consultant held a public workshop on the project. They are looking to present something to the Board of Selectmen next week. In Devens, one of the private companies has committed to funding some of the bus service being developed between Fitchburg/Leominster and Devens to bring employees to the available jobs.

T. Kezer provided additional information on the various companies looking to provide funding to this service to bring workers to Devens.

S. Woelfel asked about the plan to have two communities utilize their MBTA assessment to fund the program and if this has been discussed with the MBTA. Under the arrangement, if a community opts out of the assessment, the original 14 communities make up the difference. It should not be dropped on the MBTA at the last second. M. Khan indicated that once they have finalized plans and arrangements, they will be in contact with the MBTA.

B. Mahoney indicated that the new MART schedule is available in both English and Spanish and copies are available for anyone interested. There has been a lot of positive feedback so far.

- *MJTC*

B. Harris indicated the next MJTC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 12th. The MJTC has adjusted their schedule to now meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM. Also, memos will be going out to member communities with a list of traffic counts planned for this upcoming season in the region. A count request form will also be provided in case a community has any additional locations that they wish to be counted. Communities can request up to four additional counts at no cost to them. Work is beginning on the development of a new Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) so we are asking if any communities are interested in a possible study for their municipality to get in contact with the MRPC.

- *MRPC*

J. Telepciak indicated that RFP for new office space was due back by March 10th. Staff will be reviewing the two proposals submitted. The MRPC has advertised for a new Principal Planner; we received only a couple of resumes so we will be re-advertising. Finally, staff completed CDBG applications Townsend, Shirley, Lancaster and Winchendon.

VIII. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

The next MPO meeting will be held on Wednesday April 19th at 1:00 PM.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 3 15 2017 Agenda

2 15 17 MPO Minutes

Int Parties Draft TIP & PPP Amendment 1 25 2017

FFY 2017 Highway Amendment Fiscal Analy(sis) & Comments 3 15 2017

2017 PPP Amendment Summary & Comments 3 8 2017

FFY 2018 2022 TIP TEC Project FINAL List 3 8 2017

FFY 2018 2022 TIP Funding Scenarios 3 7 2017

FFY 2018 2022 TIP Fund Scenarios Summary 3 8 2017