

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

Minutes of July 19, 2017

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

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Trey Wadsworth, MassDOT; Arthur Frost, MassDOT Highway; John Telepciak, MRPC; Mohammed Khan, MART; Gordon Robertson, Leominster; Albert Gallant, Subregion 1; Noreen Piazza, Subregion 4;

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Jeff Hoynoski, MassDOT District 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Nikki Tishler, MassDOT OTP; David Chandler, FHWA; Tim Kilhart, Harvard DPW; Travis Brown, Hubbardston DPW

STAFF PRESENT

Brad Harris; George Snow; Sheri Bean; Brian Doherty

II. Public Comments

A. Frost announced that Thomas Tinlin will resign as Administrator for the MassDOT Highway Division at the end of July and Jonathan Gulliver has been named to replace him on an acting basis. Also, Barry Lorion is the Acting District Highway Director for District 3.

III. Approval of June 21, 2017 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the June 21, 2017 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. T. Wadsworth and A. Frost abstained.

IV. Montachusett Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- *Review /Response to Comments Received on Draft*
- *MPO Endorsement of Draft UPWP*

B. Harris presented the draft of the 2017-2018 Unified Planning Work Program that was out for public review and comment. He indicated that at last month's meeting, the MPO voted to release the draft UPWP for a 21-day comment period that began on June 26th and ended on Monday July 17th. He stated that a notice was distributed to all individuals, organizations and communities on our outreach list in both English and Spanish announcing the availability of the draft, the start and end dates of the comment period and how the public could comment and be involved. During this time period, comments were only received from the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP). He then reviewed those comments and the planned responses to them with the MPO.

A motion was made and seconded to endorse the FFY 2018 UPWP. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

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

- *Review/Response to Comments Received on Draft Amendment #5*
- *MPO Endorsement Draft TIP Amendment #5 to FFY 2017 Highway Element*

B. Harris reviewed the draft Amendment #5 to the FFY 2017 Highway Element that was put out for a 21-day public review and comment period. This comment period began on June 26th and ended on Monday July 17th. This amendment was developed in response to a cost change to bridge project #608250 Royalston Bridge Replacement on Stockwell Road over Lawrence Brook. The cost has increased from \$862,500 to \$1,544,693. At the last MPO is was determined that this was a significant increase and as such would require that an Amendment to the FFY 2017 Highway Element be developed. Additionally, because this project is listed in the TIP under Section 1B – Federal Aid Bridge Projects Off System, there would be no impact to any fiscal constraint issues related to our Target Funds.

B. Harris indicated that no comments were received related to this Amendment and is therefore presented to the MPO as released.

A motion was made and seconded to endorse the Draft TIP Amendment #5. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VI. Boston Urbanized Area (UZA) Coordination Memorandum of Understanding

- Discussion on Need Between MPO's and Status of Revision

N. Tishler referred to two handouts related to the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a map of the newly expanded Boston Urbanized Area (UZA). What is being presented is informational at this time. Essentially, the Boston MPO is working to develop a draft of a new MOU related to this expanded Boston UZA that will outline coordination and data sharing between and among various MPO's involved. The expanded Boston UZA has resulted in additional MPO's now being included within the Boston UZA and Montachusett is one of those MPO's. This also came out of the federal certification reviews done at other MPO's where it was highlighted as a need. The original MOU was prepared in 2003 and only incorporated five MPO's within Massachusetts. The new MOU would include these five, two additional Massachusetts MPO's and three MPO's in New Hampshire as well as the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Council. As stated the MOU is currently under development by the Boston MPO and once a draft has been agreed upon, it will be forwarded to the affected MPO's for further review and eventual action. There is no time frame established for this but we wanted to bring it to the MPO's attention as something that will eventually be coming down the road that will require MPO action.

N. Piazza asked if the rest of the Montachusett MPO is part of the Worcester UZA and where does Lancaster fall. B. Harris responded that some Montachusett communities are part of the Worcester UZA, such as parts of Clinton, but the majority are part of the Leominster-Fitchburg UZA. Lancaster is on the edge with some small parts in the Worcester UZA and parts in the Leominster-Fitchburg UZA.

D. Chandler of FHWA indicated that those issues with the Worcester UZA would be covered under a different agreement with the Central MA MPO.

M. Khan indicated that the Transit Authority has a different agreement that includes Boston and Worcester but it is different than a coordination MOU.

B. Harris indicated that the prior issue related to a federal rule change that would redefine the MPO boundaries and relationships is no long a concern as that proposed rulemaking has been dropped.

VII. Updates

- MassDOT Highway Division

A. Frost indicated that Fitchburg/Leominster/Lunenburg Summer Street project is at final design and it is expected to be advertised August 5th; Gardner Matthews Street was advertised and PJ Albert Inc. is the

contractor and it is under construction; Hubbardston Route 68 bids are due to be opened on October 3rd; Sterling I-190 Resurfacing is expected to be advertised in September; the Gardner/Leominster/Sterling HSIP project at three locations 25% design submission is expected in early August; Fitchburg Route 31 over Phillips Brook expected to be advertised in Spring 2018 and Gardner Pleasant Street is expected to be advertised in December; and Lunenburg Chase Road (Route 13) was advertised and bids are due to be opened November 15th. Lastly, the Route 13 bridge over Nashua River in Leominster is now opened to traffic after a sewer main break about two weeks ago.

J. Hoynoski stated that the Winchendon North Royalston Road bridge over Tarbell Brook was advertised and the bid opening is set for September 26th; Winchendon Route 12 resurfacing project has a bid opening on August 8th; and the Royalston bridge project on Stockwell Road over Lawrence Brook that was discussed early on the TIP Amendment #5 is at 100% design.

- *Transit*

M. Khan mentioned that the current earmark for the Athol/Orange route has been vetoed by the Governor but there will be an attempt at an override by the state legislature. MART has also started a new service between the Fitchburg/Leominster area to Devens to serve industrial workers. This is experimental until the end of September and a determination will be made based on the ridership. This may also result in some service reduction because all RTA's outside of the MBTA have received less money this year than the previous year so there will need to be some belt tightening.

A question was asked on the status of the Authority Drive sidewalk. M. Khan indicated that he does not have the information right now but that it will be done once the money ownership can be straightened out.

A. Frost indicated that it was transferred over to transit a few years ago. M. Khan indicated that the MBTA and MART are the ones who need to work out who would do the work.

- *MJTC*

B. Harris indicated that elections for MJTC officers was held last month; Jon Wyman of Westminster is the Chair; Noreen Piazza of Lancaster is the Vice Chair; and Doug Walsh of Athol is the Secretary. The MJTC also decided to not meet in August unless some urgent business comes up. Finally, the MJTC discussed the status of local representative appointments to the MJTC.

- *MRPC*

J. Telepciak indicated that the MRPC move to this new building is complete and that a ribbon cutting/open house will take place in the fall.

VIII. Administrative Matters

B. Harris discussed the need for a new Representative for Subregion 1 due to John Columbus of Templeton giving up his select board seat. We have canvassed the communities in Subregion 1 seeking volunteers and have heard from Templeton that Julie Richard is interested in the position. Since this is the only volunteer, an online poll will be conducted of the municipalities involved for her election. Once the poll is completed and assuming her election, she would then assume the Subregion 1 Alternate position with the current Alternate, Barbara Anderson of Winchendon, moving up to the Representative position.

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris indicated that if the MPO so desires, the August MPO meeting could be cancelled with the next scheduled meeting set for Wednesday September 20th at 1:00 PM. The MPO agreed to not hold an August meeting and to reconvene on September 20th.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 7 19 2017 Agenda
6 21 17 MPO Minutes
DRAFT UPWP 2017 2018 No Maps 6 2 2017
UPWP Comments Responses 7 10 2017
Int Parties Draft UPWP Memo 6 23 2017
FFY 2017 Highway Amendment 5 Summary
Endorsed UZA Coordination MOU 2003
Boston Urbanized Area
MPO Subregion 1 Email 2017
Doyle Map July 2017