

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2017  
7:00 PM**

**1. OPEN MEETING AND INTRODUCTIONS**

J. Telepciak called the meeting order at 7:00 p.m. All present were introduced.

**2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 5, 2017 MEETING MINUTES**

M Pineo moved to approve the January 5, 2017 minutes as printed. The motion was seconded and passed with N. Piazza abstaining.

**3. TREASURER'S REPORT**

**3.1 Approval of Cash Schedule**

A. Pease read the January 1, 2017 – February 2, 2017 cash schedule. Balance after last \$76,423.29; Total receipts this month \$187,722.52; Total cash on hand before this warrant \$264,145.81; Less: amount of this warrant \$184,725.68: Balance after this warrant \$79,420.13

G. Corbosiero moved to accept the January 1, 2017 – February 2, 2017 cash schedule cash schedule as read subject to audit and to be placed on file. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Members voted to take Item 4.4 "Office Space" Out of Order. G. Eaton introduced to the Board Josh Hasenfus, Superintendent of the Trustees of the Reservations.

**4.4 Office Space**

G. Eaton explained that for a number of years MRPC has been interested in relocating its operations as our current office space is not large enough for the number of staff we employ. To that end, in accordance with the Massachusetts Procurement Statute, the MRPC issued an Office Space Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2013. Approximately six proposals were received. An average of 5,000 SF of space was offered for an approximate annual cost of \$75,000 plus utilities. All proposals were rejected as the proposed annual cost to this agency were too high.

Currently, MRPC leases 2,864 square feet of office space with MART. MRPC is in year one of a three lease with MART for \$26,635 annually. MRPC's lease price agreement with MART will increase over the next two years by approximately \$1,000 each year. MRPC was also recently required by MART to hire its own cleaning company with the new lease. The cost for cleaning services is approximately \$7,800 per year.

In November of 2016 the Trustees of Reservations (TOR) contacted MRPC's Executive Director regarding office space they have available for rent on the first floor of their facility at the Doyle Center (DC) on 464 Abbott Avenue in Leominster. The TOR is extremely interested in entering into a leasing agreement with MRPC. TOR's staff have discussed the possibility of providing an annual rental cost at a rate comparable the MRPC's current budget for an office space increase of 82%. (A locus map showing the DC's location and exterior and interior photos of the facility was distributed.)

At the DC the TOR has 5,954 square feet of office space available; the entire first floor. Office space at the DCC includes the following:

- Two to four conference rooms depending upon configuration of the entire space on the first floor
  - Presently we share two conference rooms with MART and MTS, Inc.
- Break room and kitchenette
  - A kitchen is available at MART with no separate break room for the MRPC staff
- Four bathrooms including one with a shower
  - MRPC has one bathroom for its 16 employees and shares another bathroom with MART and MTS, Inc. staff on MART's first floor
- Six individual offices
  - five offices are currently used by MRPC staff at the MART facility, however the Fiscal Director, Transportation Projects Director and GIS and IT Director do not have individual offices
- Parking for up to 150 cars
  - MRPC's rented parking spaces for its employees totals 23 and this agency shares its visitor parking with MART; about eight spaces

During informal discussions with TOR staff the TOR has indicated that it would be willing to provide a proposal to the MRPC at a cost that would be comparable to the MRPC's current annual costs for rent, utilities and cleaning. MRPC's Executive Director, being encouraged by the conversation with TOR staff recommends that the Commission issue a Request for Proposals for Office Space. The RFP would be issued in compliance with the State's Procurement Statute (MGL Ch. 30B) so that the TOR and/or any other party(ies) may an equal opportunity to submit a proposal(s) in response to the RFP during an open and fair, publicly advertised solicitation (in the Central Register and the regional newspaper). Some evaluation criteria that would be used in evaluating proposals would be, as follows:

- Minimum 5,000 SF of office space on the same floor
- Office spaces to be dedicated to MRPC staff, i.e. conference room
- Parking for no less than 16 employees plus visitors
- Very close proximity to Route 2 and the geographic center of the region
- Access to high speed Internet
- Storage room for traffic counting equipment within the office space that is reasonably close to an exterior door and motor vehicle access

- Other factors of importance to the MRPC as determined by the Executive Director

An office relocation budget will be established. This estimate will include:

- Relocating, setting up and wiring the existing telephone system
  - It should be noted here that the telephone system's life expectancy is at about 75%, but it does not appear that the system needs to be replaced at this point in time
- Relocating, setting up and wiring the existing computer system and all peripherals
  - The MRPC updated its entire computer system in the summer of 2016 (FY17)
- Moving company cost
- Purchase of conference room tables and chairs
- Other potential moving-related costs not yet identified

Quotes for the above will be collected and provided to the Commissioners at the next meeting (March 2, 2017) should the Commissioners authorize the Executive Director to issue an office space RFP at this evening's meeting.

Should the Commissioners authorize the Executive Director to proceed with issuing the Office Space RFP and, ultimately, authorize the relocation of the agency to another location, then the proposed schedule for all major milestones would be as follows:

- Advertising the RFP, February 8
- Deadline for the submission of office space proposals to the MRPC, March 10<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup>
- Reviewing and ranking proposals so as to recommend the most advantageous property to the Commissioners, Week of March 13<sup>th</sup>
- Making the recommendation to the Commissioners, April 6<sup>th</sup>
- Issuing the required 90-day notice to MART for terminating the lease, April 7<sup>th</sup>
- Relocating the MRPC office to another location, July 7<sup>th</sup>

A number of questions were asked of and answered by the representative from the Doyle Center and MRPC's Executive Director.

Commissioners toured the building.

G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission authorizes its Executive Director to, in accordance with the Commonwealth's Procurement Statute (MGL Chapter 30B), issue a Request for Proposal for lease of a minimum of 5,000 square feet of office space, review all proposals received and provide a recommendation and all associated relocation and operational costs related to the agency's potential relocation to another location and that all of the aforementioned objectives be completed so that a

full report may be provided to the Commissioners at their meeting to be held on Thursday April 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **3.2 Employee Attendance at Esri User Conference, San Diego, CA**

G. Eaton reported that MRPC has a robust geographic information system (GIS) and delivers these services to the region's 22 communities regularly. This agency utilizes Esri GIS ArcGIS Pro software; MRPC accesses the software and updates through an annual license subscription. Annual license holders are offered free registration at Esri's annual User Conference (UC) held in San Diego. MRPC's Executive Director attended his first Esri UC in June/July 2016. He was exposed to a variety of existing and new applications of GIS in planning. At the Esri UC he learned, among other things, about some cutting-edge GIS and planning-related topics concerning 3D mapping, community health care assessments and the use of drones in land planning. Six months later MRPC has engaged a part time employee that will help the Executive Director and GIS & IT Director to develop a 3D mapping and printing service, the Executive Director is strengthening the organization's relationship with the health care industry to assess and plan for changes in the health of the population in the region and will pursue Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding in order to create a Future Industrial Lands (FIL) analysis of all, potential manufacturing sites and parks in the region and gathering current imagery via drones will be a part of the project's scope of services.

The Esri UC is attended by 16,000 GIS professionals, managers, public and private sector officials who attend and present at 300+ moderated sessions, hands-on training, technical workshops and demonstrations, user presentations over five days. The weekend before the Esri UC, professionals in business organizations will gather for a more specialized GIS event called the Esri Business Summit. The Executive Director's attendance at this Summit will enable him to gain more insight and perspectives into location-based mapping, such as location intelligence and real estate, and would assist directly with the EDA FIL project.

The Executive Director respectfully requests the approval of the Commissioners to attend the 2017 Esri UC. The total estimated cost of \$3,098+ consists of the following: conference registration \$0; Business Summit registration \$395; air fare \$462 (plus taxes, insurances, fees and bags fees [if any]); lodging \$1,641 (plus taxes and fees); and, meals and incidentals \$300 (\$50/day \* 6 days). Business Summit registration (\$395) and air far (\$462) would be charged to the FY17 budget (for a total of approximately \$857) while the hotel (\$1,641) and meals/incidentals (\$600) costs (for an estimated total of \$2,641) would occur in FY18.

G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission authorizes the Executive Director's attendance at the 2017 Esri User Conference to be held in San Diego, CA from July 9<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup> of 2017 at a cost not to exceed \$3,300 including applicable taxes and fees. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **3.3 Discussion of FY17 Draft Revenue/Expenses Report**

B. Johnson presented a seven-month revenue and expense report for FY2017. The spreadsheet depicts the revenue received by MRPC and the expenses paid. During that time period, it shows that more was expended than taken in.

A. Pease asked what \$449,006.77 in cash disbursements is composed of.

B. Johnson replied all MRPC expenses except payroll.

### **3.4 Presentation of FY 2018 Draft Budget; Estimate of Revenue and Expenses per MGL Chapter 40B, Section 7**

G. Eaton presented the draft FY2018 budget. In the month of June, the budget will be adopted. He reviewed all upcoming anticipated contracts with the Commission.

He informed the Commission that this budget does not include additional, potential revenue from:

- One probable \$800,000 state grant for the renovation of a mixed-use (commercial & residential) property in a central business district in the region where the administrative fee that would be paid to the MRPC would be approximately \$50,000
- The proposed Economic Development Administration (EDA) Future Industrial Lands (FIL) grant (\$155,500)
- Two, possible contracts for environmental-related work that the MRPC anticipates that it may complete in FY18
- One, potential contract for a health care provider for a community health assessment

Questions were asked by the Commissioners and answered by the Executive Director regarding payback of the Line of Credit and potential contracts.

B. Johnson added that all moving expenses and increased rent are included in the draft FY2018 budget.

## **4. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

### **4.1 Proposed Employee Promotions**

G. Eaton explained that he, the Planning and Development Director and Community Development Manager are recommending a promotion for Holly Ford, from Administrative Assistant/Community Development to Executive Assistant. Ms. Ford was hired as an Administrative Assistant/Community Development in November 2015 to assist MRPC's Community Development Manager with MRPC's Community Development Block Grant Program and Montachusett Enterprise Center Inc. projects. She has over 14 years' experience in the field. Ms. Ford has demonstrated the ability to handle tasks with ease, perform above and beyond and her required job responsibilities and work independently. If promoted, Holly's additional responsibilities would include assisting the Executive Director on a daily basis with administrative matters and Fiscal Director with financial tasks. The former Administrative Assistant position to the Executive Director has

been vacant since December 2014 and the Executive Director has a vast need for support staff.

M. Pineo moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, based on the recommendation of the Executive Director, Planning and Development Director and Community Development Manager, approve the promotion of Holly Ford from Administrative Assistant/Community Development, Grade 1, Step 4, \$36,076 to Executive Assistant, Grade 2, Step 2, \$42,235 effective February 6, 2017. Ms. Ford's next eligibility for salary increase will be July 1, 2018. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

G. Eaton indicated that the Planning and Development Director are recommending a promotion for Shubee Sikka, from Regional Planner to Principal Planner. Ms. Sikka was hired by MRPC as a Regional Planner in May 2016 and has a Master's Degree from the University of Miami and over five years of experience working in urban design and institutional planning at Sasaki Associates. Under the direction of MRPC's Planning and Development Director, Ms. Sikka has been performing at the Principal Planner level at MRPC since being hired last spring and has shown the ability to work both independently and as a team player on a variety of projects. Additional responsibilities, if promoted, will include acting as a project or team leader and supervising other employees as assigned.

M Pineo moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, based on the recommendation of the Planning and Development Director and the Executive Director, approve the promotion of Shubee Sikka from Regional Planner, Grade 2, Step 5, \$45,483 to Principal Planner, Grade 4, Step 6, 51,398 effective February 6, 2017. Ms. Sikka's next eligibility for salary increase will be July 1, 2018. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **4.2 Revisit of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Revolving Loan – Clinton**

G. Eaton indicated that at the December 8, 2015 MRPC Meeting members discussed a request by K. Gervais regarding forgiveness of 50% (\$170,000) of a Revolving Loan provided to Mr. Gervais by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administered through the MRPC. MRPC voted to send a letter to Mr. Gervais indicating that if he made 12 consistent monthly payment of \$3,199.14 starting January 2016, the Commission would revisit the issue at its MRPC Meeting in January 2017. (Reconsideration is on the agenda of the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting as MRPC staff provided Mr. Gervais all of January 2017 to make his monthly payment and as the Commissioners now meet on the first Thursday of each month instead of the last Tuesday.)

Mr. Gervais has made ten payments. The last payment received was on November 22, 2016 for the month of October 2016.

The Executive Director recommends that no reduction in principal or interest in the loan be provided to the borrower.

After some discussion, M. Pineo moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission authorizes its Executive Director to send a letter to Mr. Gervais indicating that the Commission as promised revisited the matter at its February 2, 2017 MRPC Meeting and his request for forgiveness of this taxpayer-funded loan not be reduced by 50% or any other percentage at this time. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **4.3 MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Acquisition of Land – Hubbardston**

G. Eaton stated that MA Department of Conservation and Recreation has notified MRPC indicating they have under consideration the acquisition of an interest in approximately 52.2 acres of forested land owned by Peter and Margaret Aalto which is currently used for open space (a map from the DCR may be found two pages following this page). The proposed use for the property will be managed under the Quabbin Land Management Plan Guidelines. DCR owned property abuts the property to the north and to the east. DCR is asking to waive the 120-day notification period so it may complete this transaction as soon as possible (see following page for waiver language).

MRPC contacted the Town of Hubbardston regarding this matter. The Town Administrator informed MRPC of the following:

- At this time, due to the town being unable to hold a discussion on the matter, and the opinion of one Select Board member who is against it, Hubbardston's position is no on the waiver.
- The land in the DCR acquisition is currently designated as 61A, meaning the town would have to be given the right of first refusal. The notice by DCR is the first-time Hubbardston was made aware of the acquisition.

After discussion, G. Corbosiero moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission authorize its Executive Director not to sign the 120-day waiver form regarding this acquisition based on Hubbardston's position. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **5. STATUS REPORTS**

### **5.1 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)**

#### **MRMAPPER & Mobile Apps (General)**

No new information.

#### **Comprehensive Planning**

Distressed Property Identification and Revitalization (DPIR) App – No new information.

District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) – These projects are complete.

#### **Central Region Homeland Security Advisory Council**

Evacuation and Critical Infrastructure App Trainings – This project is complete.

#### **Community-Related**

Fitchburg Parcel Enhancements – No new information.

Royalston Parcel Enhancements – No new information.

Shirley Open Space & Master Plan– No new information.

Templeton Master Plan– No new information.

Westminster Parcel Enhancements – This project is complete. MRMapper applications for the Town have been updated accordingly.

#### **Transportation-Related**

Storm water Apps – We are currently working on scheduling a training on the apps.

## **5.2 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **Community Development Block Grants**

MRPC is providing substantial assistance to the Towns of Lancaster, Shirley, Townsend and Winchendon to prepare FY17 Community Development Block Grant applications. Grants are due on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

### **Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Montachusett Region Brownfields Assessment Program**

No activity to report. Funds for additional ESA's for Montachusett communities remain available.

### **District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)**

MRPC's District Local Technical Assistance program was funded again this year by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and a Request for Service Delivery (RSD) was issued by MRPC to all MRPC communities in December. MRPC is required to provide a minimum of two solicitations for DLTA project requests. This year, proposal due dates are 3 p.m. on January 30, 2017 and 3 p.m. on April 3, 2017.

#### **5.2.1 Approval of District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Projects**

##### **Reviews and Awards for Services**

J. Hume indicated that on or before January 30, 2017, a total of ten (10) proposals were received for use of District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) resources to provide a variety of services. The seven proposals received are as follows:

1. **Hubbardston:** Master Plan Economic Development Element
2. **Athol:** Master Plan Economic Development Element
3. **Athol:** Templeton Road (Route 2A) Design Guidelines for Town of Athol Gateway
4. **Winchendon:** Review and draft appropriate bylaws to promote commercial development and to further refine design guidelines specific to that purpose. This includes consideration to zoning pertinent to the legislation recently passed regarding recreational marijuana.



5. **Ashburnham:** Master Plan Economic Development Element
6. **Ashburnham:** Revamp Signage Zoning Bylaw
7. **Shirley:** Create a Permitting Guidance Handbook
8. **Lancaster:** Assist with the update of the 2010 Lancaster Open Space & Recreation Plan
9. **Ayer:** Transit oriented Development Planning Project in the Downtown Ayer Rail Commuter Station/Depot Square and Park Street Corridor Area.
10. **MRPC:** Region – Wide Industrial Lands Analysis. MRPC will complete an Industrial Lands Analysis (ILA) project with the majority of financial assistance received from the Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA); financial support from the EDA will be sought in a grant proposal to be submitted to the EDA this winter.

Proposals will be forwarded to the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for comments/suggestions/approval.

The Commission’s approval of all of the above proposals would commit approximately 90% of the DLTA funds (\$197,000+) available for this calendar year. The balance (approximately 10%) of the DLTA allocation would be available to communities during the second solicitation of local proposals anticipated to take place by the spring 2017.

A. Pease moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) recommends that #1 through #10 of the above-named proposals and project requests for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA), **if eligible**, be **conditionally** awarded based upon further communication/ clarification with the applying communities and **approval from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)**. All activities in some applications may not be awardable under the DLTA program: MRPC staff reserves the right to negotiate an awardable detailed scope of services.

Those requests conditionally awarded (#1 through #10) are subject to the conditions listed below.

1. The services to be delivered to the communities will be completed commencing no earlier than a fully executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the subject (lead) community and the MRPC.
2. Services will be delivered to the subject community(ies) during the implementation of the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program year (2017).
3. The award of services from the MRPC is subject to the:
  - a. Funding available to the MRPC during the program year (2017);
  - b. Successful negotiation of a detailed scope of services, schedule for the completion of the tasks identified in the scope of services, and budget utilizing DLTA and other funds, if available and eligible for the aforementioned project;

- c. Execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MRPC and the community(ies); and,
  - d. The MRPC's receipt of a letter from the Chief Elected Official (CEO) of all of the affected communities indicating agreement to this proposal and willingness to participate in this analysis. (Communities may agree to participate in this analysis after the full execution of the MOU between the subject (lead) community and the MRPC but must agree to participate in order to receive the results of the report.)
4. Where and when possible the MRPC will deliver the tasks related to "analysis, preparation and presentation ... report(s) ..." as indicated above. The MRPC and the community requesting services will "outsource" consulting services only when absolutely deemed to be necessary by both the lead community and the MRPC.
  5. This is an award of services from the MRPC to the applicable community(ies). This is not a cash award.
  6. If at any time DHCD determines that the project is ineligible, the award of services will be null and void.
  7. The municipality and all municipal departments shall provide MRPC with cooperation/access/assistance to public data applicable to the DLTA project including the provision of such materials. Related costs associated with this (data collection, photocopying, etc.) will be at the expense of the municipality(s).

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **5.2.2 Approval of Matching Funds for EDA application**

G. Eaton indicated that the Montachusett Region has, traditionally, has been home to many manufacturers since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. Generally, many original manufacturing sites with multi-story brick structures have been replaced by commercial and industrial parks that dot the landscape from Orange to Littleton; many historic industrial buildings still serve as places of manufacturing or have been converted to office or housing uses. Some of these more modern industrial developments have been constructed along the Route 2 corridor with excellent access to the State and Interstate Highway System. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Randall Pond, Orange
- North Quabbin Commons, Athol
- West Gardner, East Gardner and Summit Industrial Parks in the City of Gardner
- Tyco and Westminster Business Parks, Westminster
- 231 and Montachusett Industrial Parks, Fitchburg
- Jytek, Pioneer, Orchard Hill and others, Leominster
- Pratts Junction, Sterling
- Many other communities have a strong industrial presence such as in Ayer, Clinton, Shirley, Townsend and Winchendon

Many of the spaces identified above are full or have low vacancy rates. Industries such as those involving metals, plastics and other high end products are thriving in this region. It is of paramount importance that existing manufacturers are provided with future expansion spaces and firms relocating to this region are provided with more choices than

are currently available along major highways with other amenities that are available in the region such as rail, high speed Internet access, municipal utilities and other assets. Additional land suitable for commercial and industrial development purposes must be identified and promoted among public sector economic developers and the private sector to bolster the regional business community. To this end MRPC's staff proposes that the Commissioners allow the agency to submit a proposal to the Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) to fund a Future Industrial Lands (FIL) report. The report would include an analysis of all lands suitable for potential commercial and industrial development that have excellent strengths such as highway access, high speed Internet access, municipal water and sewer, rail, and in communities that desire business development in accordance with local plans, have an appropriate workforce, education and training programs available to the workforce for the types of industries in question, past history and/or commitment to work with expanding businesses seeking tax incentives, favorable development topography, streamlined or favorable permitting system, commercial and industrial uses allowed in local zoning "as of right" versus by "special permit" and other attributes to be determined. All, 22 communities and Devens will be eligible to participate in the study. Analyses of sites, strengths and weaknesses, site development plans and 3D printed maps will be provided for no less than one and no more than three sites per community that has a large number of assets that would be deemed favorable by the private sector.

This project is eligible under a EDA Planning Grant. Grant proposals to the EDA must be for a minimum of \$100,000 and must also include a dollar-for-dollar cash match. MRPC's staff request that the Commissioners authorize matching funds of \$155,000 comprised of the following resources to be used to match our proposal to the EDA to fund this twelve-to eighteen-month study through FY18 and beyond, as follows:

- \$5,000, Local Technical Assistance (LTA), FY17 Budget, MRPC
- \$15,000, Local Technical Assistance (LTA), FY17 Budget, MRPC
- \$20,000, Program Year Ten, District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program
- \$100,000, Program Year Ten, District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program
- \$15,500, 15% of the Executive Director's Time to be directly allocated to completing tasks on this proposed project

Discussion occurred regarding redistributing the DLTA funds if MRPC was unsuccessful in receiving the EDA grant award. Executive Director indicated if we are unsuccessful MRPC will have time to redistribute. It takes approximately 3 – 5 months after application submission to award. Discussion also occurred regarding if there was a demonstrated need for additional industrial park space in the Region. Executive Director responded there is a demonstrated need and gave examples. The EDA grant would include identifying industrial park land as well as the suitability of the land.

M. Pineo moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission that it authorizes the use of the above-named programs and dollar amounts from each source, totaling \$155,500, in order to supply the matching funds needed to match an EDA Planning Grant for the completion of a Future Industrial Lands Analysis for the benefit of the region's communities, to provide land development opportunities for the private sector in order

to maintain and expand commercial and industrial operations utilizing the labor force available to it from communities within the Montachusett Region. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **Shirley Master Plan Update**

MRPC is working on the Implementation Element and incorporating Planning Board comments into the draft document.

#### **Templeton Master Plan**

A draft Templeton Master Plan has been completed and was presented to the public at a Public Forum held at the Narragansett Middle School Cafeteria on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Comments/edits are being incorporated into the document and a final version will be forwarded to the Templeton Planning Board in February for adoption.

#### **Shirley Lancaster FY2015 CDBG Housing Rehab Program**

The program has submitted a budget revision request to DHCD. The Town is requesting that \$16,500 be transferred from the fuel assistance program to the housing rehab program. This will allow the housing rehab program to complete two additional projects before the extended end of the grant period of June 30, 2017. Seven projects are being started or are ongoing at this time. Once these seven projects are completed the program will have met its goal of twenty units of housing.

#### **Fuel Assistance**

The program is requesting a budget revision to transfer \$16,500 from the fuel assistance program to the housing rehab program. It was decided to transfer these funds instead of opening the application process to a new heating season. Since the LIHEAP restrictions would again apply it is unlikely that these funds would be spent down by the new grant end date of 6/30/2017. \$5,000 of fuel funds are being held in the program to address emergency cases for new or existing customers in Shirley or Lancaster.

DHCD conducted a monitoring of the grant program. MRPC is awaiting the conclusion of this monitoring.

#### **Winchendon Ashby FY2016 CDBG Housing Rehab Program**

CDBG staff is receiving applications processed by CDBG staff in Winchendon and from Applicants in Ashby. Initial lead and housing inspections are being scheduled.

#### **Fuel Assistance**

Applications are being processed in both towns for this program.

#### **MEC: AG Receiverships Program, 40 B projects, and 30 Phillipston Road Affordable Housing**

No change in the status of loans to complete repairs to 207 Adams Street in Athol and 30 Powers Mill Road in Phillipston. MEC is in the process of terminating the receivership of 119 Everett Avenue in Athol. On January 4, 2017, the Bank of record requested time to determine their interest in paying off MEC's lien to the property. The Court allowed two weeks. However, on January 18, 2017 the bank claimed a determination had not been reached and the Court allowed a final period of two weeks. If the Bank does not

pay off the receiver's lien at this time it will go to foreclosure auction to try to recoup its investment in the property.

### 5.3 TRANSIT

#### **Wachusett Commuter Rail Station and Layover Facility**

No new information.

#### **Ayer Parking Facility**

On January 9th and 19th, 2017, staff attended two meetings with Town officials regarding the Ayer Depot Square access improvement project. Staff continues to assist MART in working with FTA, MBTA, EOEEA, DCAMM, DCR, Town of Ayer and the Engineer to move forward with the construction of the proposed project.

#### **Ayer/Shirley/Devens/ Fixed Bus Route**

On January 25, 2017, Staff attended a meeting with Devens Businesses, Mass Development and Devens Enterprise Commission representatives and presented a Bus Route Service scenarios. Staff continues to assist MART to development a bus route to connect Devens industries with the MBTA commuter rail station for the reverse commute (Last Mile) and with the Fitchburg/Leominster labor force; and to connect the residents of Ayer, Shirley and Devens with the Shopping Centers in Leominster.

### 5.4 TRANSPORTATION

#### **Montachusett FFY 2017-2021 TIP Amendment #3**

At the MPO meeting on January 25, 2017, it is expected that the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will review a potential Amendment #3 to the FFY 2017-2021 TIP that will reflect changes to projects in the FFY 2017 Highway and Transit Elements. If the Montachusett MPO votes to release an Amendment #3 for a 30-day public review and comment period further information will be available at the Commission meeting.

P. Duffy moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission authorizes its Chair as signatory to the Montachusett MPO to endorse the FFY2017 Transit Element Tip amendment #3 at a MPO meeting to be held on February 15, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **Montachusett MPO Meeting Schedule – 2017**

A final decision regarding the MPO meeting schedule for the remainder of 2017 will be determined at the January 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. MassDOT is asking the MPO to adjust its regular meeting schedule in order to have it occur in the last two weeks of the month and to be coordinated with the Central MA Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC). Results of a survey conducted by the MRPC of MPO Signatories showed of the 10 respondents (as of 1/19/17), eight (8) had no preference as to the third or fourth Wednesday of the month while the remaining two (2) respondents preferred the third Wednesday of the month as a meeting time. A new calendar schedule for MPO meetings will be provided.

### **Montachusett FFY 2018-2022 TIP Development**

The MRPC is continuing with the development of the FFY 2018-2022 TIP. The MPO will review a listing of federal aid target eligible projects for the region. The next step will be to review and update the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) for these projects in order to develop a prioritized listing.

### **Montachusett Public Participation Plan (PPP) – Amendment**

At the MPO meeting on January 25, 2017, the Montachusett MPO reviewed an Amendment to the Montachusett Public Participation Plan (PPP). The PPP outlines the process for public involvement in, specifically, the Regional Transportation Plans (RTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and as well as any other major transportation study undertaken by the MMPO. The PPP outlines the process that the MMPO uses to reach out to persons identified under the regulations/laws of Title VI, Environmental Justice (EJ), Limited English Proficiency (LEP), Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and as well any other traditionally underrepresented population.

As part of the PPP, key documents and amendments are released for 30-day public review and comment periods. In order to maintain a more consistent MPO meeting schedule, the proposed PPP Amendment will change the public comment period to 21 days from the current 30 days. This would allow for meeting dates to remain relevant and avoid the shifting of dates in order to accommodate the 30-day periods. The Montachusett MPO will likely release this PPP amendment for a required 45-day public review and comment period. Further information will be available at the Commission meeting.

### **Massachusetts Freight Plan Open House – January 26, 2017 Worcester**

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) hosted the first of their planned Open Houses for the Massachusetts Freight Plan on Thursday, January 26, at Union Station (Union Hall) in Worcester. Additional meetings will be held across the Commonwealth. Other dates, locations and times can be found on the MassDOT website referenced below. Additionally, MassDOT convened the first Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) immediately before the open house at the same location. FAC meetings are also open to the public.

A meeting flyer for is available at the Commission meeting. Additional information, including the first technical memorandum, can be found on the project website: <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/planning/Main/StatewidePlans/FreightPlan.aspx>

- **Next MPO Meeting – February 2017 at 1:00 PM (TBD)**
- **Next MJTC Meeting – February 15, 2017 at 7:00 PM (subject to change)**

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

### DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING

MRPC Handout, February 2, 2017

Meeting Minutes January 5, 2017  
 FY2018 Draft MRPC Budget  
 Public Participation Plan (PPP) Amendment #1 Summary  
 2017 Revised Meeting Calendar  
 Highway Transit Amendment #3 Summary  
 FY2018-22 TIP Project List  
 FY2017 Revenue/Expense Report  
 Interested Parties TIP and PPP Amendment Memo  
 MassDOT Freight Meeting Flyer  
 Doyle Center Photos and Locus Map  
 Cash Schedule - January 1, 2017 – February 2, 2017

<b>Meeting Attendance</b>					
<b>Name</b>	<b>M/A</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Appointment Date</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Johnson, Kyle	A	Ashburnham	7.2015		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001	X	
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2005		X
Truehart, Duane	M	Athol	7.2016	X	
Dodge, Alan	A	Athol	7.2016		X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011	X	
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Caron, Paula	M	Fitchburg	7.2002	X	
Gross, Allen	M	Gardner	2.2005		X
Cormier, Joshua	A	Gardner	7.2015		X
Burke, Russ	M	Groton	7.2016		X
Graham, Don	M	Harvard	7.2015		X
Bratko, Thomas	M	Hubbardston	7.2016	X	
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston	7.2016		X
Christopher, Thomas	M	Lancaster	7.2016		X
Piazza, Noreen	A	Lancaster	7.2016	X	
Prokowieiw, David	M	Lunenburg	7.2015		X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.201	X	
Natrowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015		X
Hardie, John	A	Royalston	7.2007		X
Widing, Sarah	M	Shirley	7.2015		X
Pineo, Michael	M	Sterling	7.2014	X	
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Terenzini, Carter	A	Templeton	9.2016		X
King, Cindy	A	Townsend	7.2016	X	
Fortin, Mike	M	Westminster	7.2015	X	
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	
Cyganiewicz, Austin	A	Winchendon	7.2015		X

**STAFF PRESENT:** John Hume, Brad Harris, Linda Parmenter, Bobbi Jo Johnson, Glenn Eaton, George Kahale

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Mark Goldstein, MRPC Legal Counsel, Shaun Suhoski, Athol Town Administrator; Jamie Haddad, Hubbardston Selectboard.