

**MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING
MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2016**

J. Wyman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. Introduction

Members

Doug Walsh, Athol; Jeff Hoynoski, MassDOT District 2; Jon Wyman, Westminster; Nikki Tishler, MassDOT OTP; Russell Burke, Groton; Tracy Murphy, Winchendon; Paula Caron, Fitchburg; Noreen Piazza, Lancaster; Cindy King, Townsend; Phil Duffy, Clinton;

Guests

Greg Dumas, Sterling; Eric Rodriguez, Cleghorn Neighborhood Center;

Staff

Brad Harris, Sheri Bean, George Kahale

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of September 21, 2016 Minutes

It was the consensus of the MJTC to approve the September 21, 2016 MJTC minutes as printed.

IV. FFY 2017-2021 Montachusett TIP

- Amendment/Adjustment Review & Discussion

B. Harris referred members to a handout titled *Montachusett Transportation Improvement Program FFY 2017-2019*. The first item is labelled a "Time Sensitive Amendment" and is the result of a recent notice that we received from MassDOT for the need to amend the FFY 2017 Highway Element of the FFY 2017-2021 TIP. This amendment entails the addition of a project to Section 1C Federal Aid Non-Target Projects of FFY 2017. The project is #608193 Fitchburg-Leominster Rail Trail, also known as the Twin Cities Rail Trail, is a HPP (High Priority Program) project with a total cost of \$2,846,000. This includes \$2,276,800 in federal funds and \$569,200 in local non-federal funds. The local funds are to be split between Fitchburg and Leominster at \$157,099.20 and \$412,100.80, respectively. The Amendment will allow the cities to acquire 3.8 miles of CSX inactive rail line. The cities would also like to make this purchase before or around December 1st of this year before a new appraisal is sought by CSX. Because of the time constraints of this project the MPO, after their review, voted to release the Amendment #1 for a shortened public comment period of 15 days instead of the usual 30 days.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the MJTC to recommend that the MRPC and the MPO endorse the TIP Amendment #1 as presented.

B. Harris then reviewed a recent adjustment approved by the MPO early today to the 2017-2021 TIP. based on a request from MassDOT. As part of the requirements with the FFY 2017-2021 TIP Programming Guidance, each RPA was requested to conduct a Green House Gas (GHG) analysis for both completed and proposed transit projects. Due to the timing of the subsequent coordination and review process, the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) was unable to capture this analysis into the completed TIPs and State TIP (STIP). Therefore, MassDOT came back and request the incorporation of the transit project GHG analysis as an Appendix into each RPAs endorsed TIP as an adjustment. The MRPC prepared an Appendix for the current Montachusett TIP and presented it to the MPO today. Based on the

Adjustment criteria and procedures outlined in the TIP, the addition of an Appendix can be considered a minor modification and action since there are no changes made to any projects, their costs or fiscal year listings. This adjustment simply requires the notification of the MPO and their approval. No public review and comment period is required. The MPO subsequently approved this adjustment to the TIP.

A question was asked about the emission analysis and the numbers that seem to indicate an increase in the emissions with the purchase of new vehicles. B. Harris explained that the number does actually reflect a reduction in emissions but the formatting requested by MassDOT is to remove the negative sign. We will add a footnote that will identify that these numbers do reflect an emissions reduction.

A comment was made that the projects listed with assumed emissions reductions, i.e. signage, marketing, etc., would show air quality benefits. B. Harris explained that the analysis procedures are based upon an agreed analysis format and procedure and that while those types of projects would more than likely result in increased riders and possibly less vehicles on the roadways, the analysis methods are not sufficiently defined or developed enough to result in a quantifiable number.

B. Harris then presented information to the MJTC regarding a potential future TIP Amendment to address changes to the FFY 2017 Highway Element as a result of two current projects in our TIP that were selected for funding in FFY 2016 through the redistribution of federal highway funds to Massachusetts. The projects are: Templeton Route 68 resurfacing (#607321) and Winchendon Route 202 resurfacing (#608542). As a result, these two projects will be removed from FFY2017 and will leave us \$2,678,965 under our regional target of \$9,256,919 for FFY 2017. He then reviewed two potential options to address the issue. The first involved a shift of advance construction funds for the Fitchburg/Leominster/Lunenburg Summer Street project between 2017 and 2018; essentially adding \$2.6 million to 2017 and reducing the 2018 cost a corresponding \$2.6 million. This basically, shifts the problem down the road resulting in available target funds in 2018. The second option is based on a new project recently developed by MassDOT District 2 for resurfacing and related work on Route 202 in Winchendon (Project #608728). This project was approved by the PRC on October 6th and is estimated at \$2.3 million. This is a new project that has not been subjected to the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) scoring mechanism. The MPO also recommended that we see if there are other communities that may have projects to bring forward to fill the 2017 gap.

After discussion related to the merits of the projects included in the TIP, which ones might be candidates to move forward and new projects versus existing prioritized projects, the MJTC recommended the following approach to addressing the 2017 funding issue be presented to the MPO:

- a. Review estimated costs of FFY 2017 and 2018 projects for any changes;
- b. Fill in the \$2.6 million gap in FFY 2017 with current projects from 2018, 2019, etc.;
- c. Add the proposed project from MassDOT District 2 in Winchendon on Rt 202 (#608728) to FFY 2017 at \$2.3 million. Utilize any leftover funds on existing projects if possible;
- d. Adjust the Summer St project funding between FFY 2017 and FFY 2018 to “zero out” target funds in FFY 2017. Move any potential FFY 2019 project into FFY 2018 to use up any target funds in FFY 2018 or leave approximately \$2.6 million unallocated in FFY 2018 and then address in the next TIP development process, i.e. the FFY 2018-2022 TIP.

V. Regional Low Income Data Analysis

- Review of Regional Data vs. Statewide Figures

B. Harris presented information developed by Kathryn Olbrich of our staff related to a Low-Income Data Development Analysis conducted for our region. This came about as we developed our last Regional Transportation Plan when MassDOT asked if the census low income figures were appropriate for the region and if we had considered trying to develop our own figures. Ms. Olbrich recently joined the MRPC and began a review of available data and methods for developing a more applicable regional figure. B. Harris then went through a PowerPoint presentation that documented the approach and subsequent results.

A question was asked if there was a reason that we had used HUD standards for Low-Income rather than Environmental Justice standards. B. Harris explained that there was no particular reason for it, he had simply presented Ms. Olbrich with some parameters and asked her to see what she could devise but that is something we can look at as we continue to review and update the data.

N. Tishler mentioned that for whatever standard we feel is appropriate that we document in the report the justification as to why that one was chosen for the region.

VI. Contract Status Reports

a. FTA/RTA

G. Kahale stated that Wachusett Station and MBTA layover facility has been substantially completed on 9/30/16. Limited MBTA service began on 9/30/16 with two inbound and two outbound trains. Full service from the station will be available on 11/21/16 with 17 trains leaving daily. MART will be operating buses and shuttles to the station to meet the trains at the Wachusett Station.

MART has hired a consultant, Weston and Sampson, to work on the Ayer Train Station. Design work has begun and in two months they should have some conceptual designs.

b. MassDOT 3C

B. Harris referred the MJTC some handouts made available. They include an updated acronym list; a brochure from Baystate Roads on the second Complete Streets workshop; the extension of the public comment period by Federal Highway on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding MPO coordination; an announcement on a design public hearing scheduled in Royalston on October 25th; and a calendar of meeting dates for 2017.

A question was asked on the setting of MJTC and MPO meetings and whether the timing allows the MJTC to make recommendations etc. to the MPO. B. Harris stated that usually the way items are developed, the MJTC is reviewing things prior to the next MPO meeting but with the timing of TIP Amendment #1 that was discussed today it resulted in the MPO acting on it before the MJTC. This is usually not the case.

VII. Administrative Matters

The next meeting of the MJTC will be on November 16, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the MRPC Offices.

A question was asked on the GIS data that is available for use without having to pay. B. Harris suggested that Jason Stanton, our GIS Director, be contacted at ext. 313 for information.

Eric Rodriguez stated that the Community Health Improvement Plan will be released this December and once a date has been established he can forward it to the MRPC for feedback.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

MJTC TIP Info 10 19 2016
TEC Score Updated 2017 TIP 10 19 2016
APPENDIX E Transit GHG Part A
Low Income PPT
MPO NPRM Ext of Comments
Royalston Public Hearing Notice on Project #608250
Complete Streets 201 Baystate Roads Workshop Flyer

Meeting Calendar Oct to Nov 2016
2017 Meeting Calendar
MMPO MRPC ACRONYM LIST 8 2016
MBTA Fitchburg Line Commuter Rail Schedule