

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING

MINUTES OF May 10, 2017

J. Wyman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

I. Introduction

Members

Jon Wyman, Westminster; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Nikki Tishler, MassDOT; Doug Walsh, Athol; Phil Duffy, Clinton; Tracy Murphy, Winchendon; Noreen Piazza, Lancaster; John Kilcoyne, Sterling; John Telepciak; Phillipston

Staff

George Snow, Brad Harris, Sheri Bean, Kaitlyn Olbrich, George Kahale, Glenn Eaton

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments

III. Approval of April 2017 Minutes

It was the consensus of the MJTC to approve the April 12, 2017 MJTC minutes as printed.

IV. Selection of Nominating Committee

J. Wyman appointed Doug Walsh as convener; who then selected Noreen Piazza, Tracy Murphy, and Jon Wyman to serve on the Nominating Committee.

V. FFY 2018-2022 Montachusett Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- Review/Discussion/Recommendation of Draft TIP

B. Harris stated that the MPO voted at the last meeting to release the Draft FFY 2018-2022 TIP for a 21-day public comment period, which began on April 21, 2017 and would close on May 11, 2017. B. Harris mentioned that prior to this meeting, a TIP selection committee meeting occurred at 6:00 PM to discuss potential projects to add to the FFY 2018-2022 TIP to fill the funding gaps that currently exist. B. Harris stated that currently the Draft TIP is about \$1,300,000 under the target for FFY 2018, and also under the target for FFY 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. B. Harris indicated that discussion at that meeting generally centered on the current projects within the Draft TIP, as well as some new projects. B. Harris mentioned, however, that the new projects discussed have not been through the project review committee process.

B. Harris mentioned at this point in time, options are limited in regards to filling the funding gaps that exist in the Draft TIP, but the MPO will take up the issue on May 17, 2017, at which time he hopes that the MPO will endorse the TIP to send to MassDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). B. Harris then went on to discuss the five public comments received on the Draft TIP at this point in time, and the measures MPO staff will take to address said comments.

Jon Wyman asked how the MPO had changed the Draft TIP since the MJTC's last Draft TIP recommendation. B. Harris responded, saying that the MJTC had previously recommended moving the Gardner, Leominster, Sterling intersection project (Project #608188) from 2018 to 2019, which would allow the Winchendon Project #608728 to move up to 2018, which would reduce the funding gap in 2018 to about \$440,000. However, by moving Project #608188 into 2019, the region would lose the \$500,000 in statewide funds that was allocated to the project in 2018. Therefore, the MPO decided to keep Project #608188 in 2018. S. Bradbury also mentioned that there was significant discussion about project readiness at the last MPO meeting. General discussion then ensued regarding the process through which projects are considered ready for incorporation in TIP documents.

The MJTC then recommended that the MPO endorse the current Draft TIP, contingent on the MPO staff reviewing the possibility of changing the estimated project cost of the Winchendon project #608728 from about \$1.8 M to about \$1.7M and the movement of the project from 2020 to 2019, based on new information provided from MassDOT.

VI. FFY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- Discussion of Proposed Draft UPWP

B. Harris discussed how the UPWP process generally works, and then mentioned that the Planning Allocation that the region has received from MassDOT for 2018 is \$647,248, with a total budget of \$725,176 when including the FTA contract budget. B. Harris then briefly discussed each task included in the Draft UPWP, and elaborated on the new projects proposed for inclusion the 2018 UPWP. These new tasks include freight corridor identification and screening, a regional development initiative, local ADA transition plan development, and a regional transportation needs assessment.

N. Tishler asked if there was a bike rack program included in past UPWPs, to which B. Harris replied that there hadn't been. She then recommended the inclusion of the bike rack program in a UPWP task.

VII. Freight Corridor Designations

- Review/Discussion/Recommendation of Draft

B. Harris stated that MassDOT has asked each region within the Commonwealth to identify a certain number of miles as urban and rural freight corridors for inclusion in the National Highway Freight Network, and Massachusetts' State Freight Plan. B. Harris mentioned that staff had undergone a mapping exercise to identify appropriate freight corridors based on the criteria provided. The selected roads were put out for a public comment period, during which one comment was received from a representative from the Devens Enterprise Commission suggesting that Barnum Road in Devens should be included in the region's critical urban freight corridors. Staff reviewed this comment, and recommended the inclusion of Barnum Road and the reduction of the mileage identified as critical urban freight corridor on Route 70 in Lunenburg and Lancaster to account for the addition of new mileage.

B. Harris mentioned that the designation of these freight corridors would allow those roads to be eligible for an additional funding opportunities under the National Freight Highway Network. N. Piazza asked if those funds would be administered through the MPO, and if the communities in which the corridors existed would be notified of the opportunity to pursue such funds. B. Harris mentioned that the MPO would notify those communities when the funds were available, but they would be administered as state-wide funds. N. Tishler also mentioned that the designations could be modified as needed in future years. The MJTC then recommended that the MPO endorse the designation of the regional Critical Freight Corridors as discussed.

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

- Review/Discussion of Draft Amendment to FFY 2017 Transit Element

B. Harris stated that an amendment regarding the adjustment of two project costs in the transit section of the FFY 2017-2021 TIP was put out for public comment period which will end May 11, 2017. B. Harris indicated that there had been no public comments made to date. The projects both entail the rehabilitation and/or renovation of the Administrative and Maintenance Facility. The first project is being adjusted from a total project cost of \$125,000 to \$362,400, and the second project's cost will be adjusted from \$400,000 to \$332,600. These cost adjustments are based off of bids and construction costs received on these projects. General discussion occurred regarding the location and the scope of the project.

The MJTC recommended that the MPO endorse the amendment as discussed.

IX. Contract Status Reports

a. Federal Transit Administration (FTA)/Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

G. Kahale mentioned the changes to the projects addressed in the TIP 2017-2021 amendment included the replacement of gas tanks and a reduction in the amount of pavement being resurfaced.

Wachusett Station and MBTA layover facility has been substantially completed in September 2016 and the contractor is working on the punch list. MART and MBTA expect the full completion of the project by June/July 2017. MBTA started full service at the station in November, and over 100 cars have been parking at the facility so far. The station parking lot was full for the Boston Patriot's Victory Day Parade.

Weston and Sampson is working on the design of the Ayer parking deck, and it was approved to be constructed by the Ayer Board of Selectmen. The design is anticipated to be completed by the end of this year, and construction is anticipated to start in the beginning of 2018.

The Ayer/Shirley/Devens fixed bus route was created to connect the labor force of Fitchburg and Leominster to the businesses in Devens, as well to provide residents of Ayer and Shirley with a service to the shopping centers in Fitchburg and Leominster. The service began on April 24, 2017, and there have been about 30 riders each week that utilized the service to access employment opportunities. J. Wyman asked how many buses served the route, and G. Kahale mentioned that the buses operated to match twelve hour shifts and eight hour shifts that exist at the businesses in Devens, and they are considering adding buses to serve three additional shifts. G. Kahale also mentioned that the cost is about \$300,000 per year, and the costs are being split by the businesses in Devens, MART, and the three communities (Shirley, Devens, and Ayer).

b. Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) 3C

B. Harris mentioned that the state was holding public meetings on the Capital Investment Plan, and the closest one for the region would be held at the Leominster City Hall on May 18 at 6:00 PM. The information is also available on MassDOT's website.

One traffic intern is scheduled to begin working for the MJTC in June, and the organization is still searching for another intern.

The MRPC is relocating to the Doyle Conservation Center at 464 Abbott Ave in late June.

c. Administrative Matters

The next MJTC Meeting will be June 14, 2017 at 6:30 PM. The MPO will meet on May 17 at 1:00 PM.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

5/10/17 Agenda

4/12/17 Minutes

DRAFT Summary Projects Montachusett MPO 2018 20122 4/21/2017

DRAFT TIP Comments Responses TIP 5/12/2017

DRAFT 2018 UPWP Summary 5/10/2017

Montachusett Region Freight Corridor Designations Web

Critical Freight Corridor Proposal

FFY 2017 Transit Amendment #4 Summary

Interested Parties Draft TIP FC Memo 4/20/2017 ENGLISH

18.22.Draft.CIP.Public.Meeting.Flyer