

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

Held at
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
464 Abbott Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453

Minutes May 15, 2019

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

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

Steve Woefel, MassDOT OTP; Arthur Frost, MassDOT Dist. 3; Mohamed Kahn, MART; Mary Jo Bohart, Fitchburg; Stephanie Lahtinen, Subregion 2; Trevor Beauregard, Gardner; Heather Lemieux, Subregion 3; Gordon Robertson, Leominster; John Telepciak, MRPC; Phil Duffy, Subregion 4

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Dist. 3; Mike Bolduc, MassDOT Dist. 2; Tim Kilhart, Harvard DPW; Bob Szocik, Templeton DPW; Adam Lamontagne, Templeton; Bonnie Mahoney, MART; Travis Brown, Hubbardston DPW

STAFF PRESENT

Brad Harris; George Snow; Sheri Bean; Brian Doherty

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of April 17, 2019 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the April 17, 2019 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed. A. Frost abstained.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2019-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review and Discussion of Comments Received on Amendment #3*
- *MPO Action to Endorse TIP Amendment # 3*

G. Snow indicated that, due to cost changes related to several projects, MassDOT is seeking to amend the FFY2019 Highway Element. He referenced a handout that shows the affected projects and their proposed cost adjustments. All projects are listed in FY 2019.

Section 1A / Regionally Prioritized Projects

- Project #604961 CLINTON – RESURFACING & RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 110 (HIGH STREET) will increase in cost from \$2,436,388 to \$3,153,674;
- Project #607848 HUBBARDSTON – RESURFACING AND RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 68, FROM WILLIAMSVILLE ROAD TO THE GARDNER CL will increase in cost from \$4,044,376 to \$4,190,296.

- In order to stay within fiscal constraint in FY 2019, some Statewide funds will be used to fund these increases.

Section 2A – Bridge Program/Off-System

- Project #608259 TOWNSEND – BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, WEST MEADOW ROAD OVER LOCKE BROOK will increase in cost from \$991,896 to \$3,235,608

Section 2C – State Prioritized Expansion Projects

- Project #608193 FITCHBURG-LEOMINSTER RAIL TRAIL CONSTRUCTION will reduce in cost in 2019 from \$11,059,443 to \$6,530,900. The cost reduction in 2019 is the result of the project carrying more cost and construction in 2020.

G. Snow mentioned that there was a 21-day public comment period that began on April 23, 2019 and ended on May 13, 2019. During that time there two comments received. One comment from MassDOT that updated the cost amount for Project #608193 Fitchburg-Leominster Twin Cities Rail Trail Construction (phase 1). Total cost should be listed as \$6,530,900. MRPC adjusted the cost as requested.

The second comment was from MART regarding the Transit element. The following updates were mentioned –

1. The Fitchburg-Leominster UZA received higher 5307 funds for FY19, and MART has decided to use 100% of these funds in our FY19 TIP. The balance left over after all capital adjustments has been programmed into the 50/50 Operating ALI. Therefore, this line reflects an increase with a new total of \$2,380,439 in federal 5307 with a same match of State funds bringing the total to \$4,760,878.
2. Project ID# RTD0007047 has been decreased by \$3,000 total and the federal funds (\$2400) shifted to the 50/50 operating and the RTACAP funds shifted to the buses.
3. MassDOT has given MART an additional \$800,000 in RTACAP funds to add to the Ayer Project, so that MART does not have to get a \$1M loan to finish the project
4. The cost of the buses which go back to the original \$735,000 as reflected in TIP Amendment #2.
5. The new project added with the TIP Amendment (RTD0008228) has been decreased to \$12,684.
6. An additional new project (RTD0008220 – MicroTransit SW) has been added to this amendment from MassDOT. MART received this award thru a competitive application process.

These adjustments were made as requested.

A motion was made to approve Amendment #3 of the 2019 – 2023 TIP. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

V. Montachusett FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review and Discussion of Comments Received on Draft FFY 2020-2024*
- *MPO Action to Endorse FFY 2020-2024 TIP*

B. Doherty reviewed the Draft FFY 2020-2024 TIP that went out for a 21-day Public Comment Period beginning Tuesday April 23rd to Monday May 13th 2019.

The Target projects below were presented.

- FFY 2020 - Leominster- Reconstruction on Route 13 from Hawes Street to Prospect Street
- Ayer – Reclamation & related work on Rt. 2A from Harvard Rd to Main St.
- FFY 2021 - Winchendon – Improvements & related work on Central St (Rt. 202) from Front St to Maple St
- Lancaster – Intersection Improvements on Rt. 117/70 at Lunenburg Road and Route 117/70 at Main Street
- Westminster – Resurfacing & related work on Route 140 from Rt. 2A to Patricia Road.
- Gardner – Reclamation & related work on Pearson Blvd.
- FFY 2022 - Leominster – Reconstruction/rehabilitation on Rt. 12 (Central St)
- FFY 2023 - Sterling/West Boylston – Improvements on Rt. 140 at I-190
- Hubbardston – Highway reconstruction of Rt. 68 (Main St) from 1,000 ft north of Williamsville Rd. to Elm St.
- Gardner – Resurfacing and rumble strip installation on Rt. 140
- Templeton – Roundabout construction at the intersection of Patriots Rd, South Main St, North Main St, and Gardner Rd.
- FFY 2024 - Lancaster – Interchange Improvements at Route 2 Exit 34
- Ashburnham – Resurfacing & Related Work on Route 101

B. Doherty referenced a handout that shows the comments received from MassDOT and MART during the comment period. The MassDOT comments included a number of grammatical/narrative related adjustments that were made within the final document. MassDOT also commented on the Federal Highway Project Listing portion of the TIP and those changes were made. The last comment mentioned the removal of outdated programs such as GreenDot and mode shift goals. Those changes were also made.

MART provided a comment that requested Project #RTD0007049 be put back on the TIP and use Toll Credits to match. MART has the federal funds to do the projects and would like to expedite the process. MART was also looking to use the un-programed Highway funding in FY 2020 to purchase new vehicles and they would use TDC funds as a match.

The MPO agreed to add Project #RTD0007049 to the FY 2020 TIP with the understanding that the total toll credit amounts won't be available until the fall. MART agreed to vouch for the local match for the time being and will use toll credits if they become available or if they're needed. MRPC will work with MART to determine eligible purchases to spend unspent Highway Target funds in FFY 2020.

A motion was made to approve FFY 2020-2024 TIP. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VI. Montachusett FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- *Review of Draft UPWP Document*
- *MPO Action to Release Draft FFY 2020-2024 UPWP for Public Review and Comment*

S. Bean presented the Draft UPWP document for review. The handout showed the table of contents and budget and full versions of the draft were also made available.

A motion was made to release the FFY 2020 UPWP for a 21-day public comment period starting on May 28, 2019 – June 17, 2019. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VII. Montachusett 2020 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- *Review of Project Priorities for Draft RTP*
- *Planning Scenarios Based on RTP Survey Results*
- *Goals, Objectives and Strategies*

B. Harris referenced handouts related to the RTP. The first handout referenced funding program options and Long-Range Projects for RTP consideration. These projects were developed based on the outreach process for the RTP. These projects also have potential to be incorporated into the statewide model that's being developed by CTPS as additional RTP analysis of regionally significant projects.

Survey responses were also highlighted. A handout referenced the survey results as they related to different areas of the region – rural, urban and all. Funding categories were analyzed and listed by priority based on survey responses. The top three categories included Road Maintenance & Infrastructure, Safety, and Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities.

B. Harris referenced another handout called Montachusett RTP Scenarios. MassDOT has advocated for scenario-based planning for the development of the RTP. This type of planning was used by the State Transportation Commission on the "Future of Transportation" report. This report was referenced and a handout was made available. In this report, four scenarios were outlined along with recommendations for each– Gridlock, Vibrant Core, Multiple Hubs, and Statewide Spread. MRPC based the scenario planning on what was applicable to the Montachusett Region. At this time, two scenarios were identified and summarized into something that would fit the area – Gridlock and Multiple Hubs. A third scenario may be added if appropriate.

The final handout is a refresher on the Goals, Objectives and Strategies for the RTP that was presented in the past. The objective is to link these into the scenarios that were mentioned earlier and incorporate them into the financial plan. This will be incorporated as a chapter of the drafted document.

VIII. Updates

- *MassDOT Highway Division*

MassDOT Dist. 2 – Templeton roundabout has the 25% design plans currently under review; two bridges in Athol (Crescent St bridge & Washington Ave bridge) were advertised recently and have bid openings this month.

MassDOT Dist. 3 – Clinton- High Street is at PS&E and scheduled to advertise in June; Hubbardston- Route 68 resurfacing is also at PS&E and due to advertise in mid-June; Westminster – Route 2A at Route 140 intersection was advertised in December and awarded to PJ Albert; Townsend – Meadow Rd over Lock Brook bridge is at 100% design; Hubbardston- Evergreen Road over Mason Brook has 100% design plans due and hope to advertise by the end of September; Lancaster/Harvard/Littleton – resurfacing & related work on Route 2 was advertised in December and awarded to PJ Keating; Fitchburg/Leominster-Twin Cities Rail Trail has 75/100% design under review for phase 1 and will be advertised on September 14.

There was a question on the status of the Route 62 Ware River culvert bridge. A. Frost indicated that he was unaware of this project being on the bridge plan. He's knows of the poor conditions for the bridge but there isn't enough funding as we would like to have. Some additional funds may become available in the future. MassDOT is moving ahead with the design for the bridge but they still need to find a way to fund the project.

- *Transit*

M. Kahn indicated that MART has started the \$5 million Ayer parking garage project and the formal ground breaking ceremony will be held on May 20th at 10:00am in Ayer. All are welcome to attend. This project had around \$1 million shortfall but the State came through with \$800,000 additional funding to help fill the gap. The project is expected to be completed within one year.

MART has also had some increased use at the commuter rail parking garages which resulted in increased revenue. There is also construction happening on the commuter rail tracks that prevent the train from coming all the way into Wachusett Station during certain hours of the day. It currently stops in Littleton and there is a shuttle service to the other stations to the west.

B. Mahoney mentioned that MART has 6 out of 13 of their vans in and expect the others to arrive over the next few months. They also have two larger buses expected in June.

- *Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)*

B. Harris stated that the MJTC has just begun the process to elect new officers which will officially take place at the July MJTC meeting.

MRPC has an RFP out to hire a consultant to assist with ADA transition planning. There were two submittals and interviews are being held this week. We hope to hire the consultant within the next few weeks and get started on data collection for up to three communities shortly thereafter.

Staff will be attending a Route 2 Safety Task Force (STF) meeting tonight in Erving to discuss the ongoing projects along the roadway.

B. Harris referenced a handout on the MassDOT Capital Investment Plan. There is a series of public outreach meetings being held throughout the State. Leominster is hosting a meeting at City Hall on June 3rd. Another handout is from Baystate Roads and a series of training workshops on the MaPIT program.

This program is required for any project submission that involves statewide funding. There will be a training on this being held at MRPC on June 18th 9:00am-12:00pm. This is a free workshop but registration is required.

The next MJTC meeting will be on June 12th at 6:30pm at MRPC.

- *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)*

No update.

IX. Administrative Matters

- *Next MPO Meeting*

B. Harris indicated that the next MPO meeting is scheduled June 19th at 1:00 PM in MRPC offices.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

MPO 5 15 2019 Agenda

MPO 4 17 2019 Minutes

FFY 2019 – 2023 TIP Amendment #3 Comments

FFY 2020 – 2024 Recommended TIP Summary

2020 RTP – Recommended Funding Goals

2020 RTP – Funding Program Options and Long-Range Projects for RTP Consideration

2020 RTP Scenarios

UPWP FFY 2020 Draft Document

2020 RTP Goals, Objectives & Strategies

2020-2024 CIP Meeting Flyer

MaPIT Workshops