

Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
60 Congress Street, 2nd Floor Large Conference Room
Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

Present were:

| Name | Affiliation | Name | Affiliation |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Atty. Marie Angelides | Longmeadow | Mike McManus | Holyoke DPW |
| Glenn Barrington | UMass | Dan Murphy | Easthampton |
| Dan Call | Westfield | Dawn Nims | Town of Agawam Engineering |
| Maggie Chan | Northampton | Hung Pham | MassDOT Office of Transportation |
| Matt Chase | VHB | Jim Reidy | South Hadley |
| Michelle Chase | Town of Agawam | Josh Rickman | PVTA |
| Mark Cressotti | Westfield | Peter Shumway | Springfield DPW |
| Jim Czach | West Springfield DPW | Jason Skeels | Amherst DPW |
| Peter Frieri | MassDOT District 1 | Matt Smith | Chesterfield |
| Tyrone Holt | Springfield DPW | Matt Sokop | Springfield |
| Jeff Hoynoski | MassDOT District 2 | Michael Trepanier | MassDOT Highway Division |
| Betsy Johnson | Walk/Bike Springfield | Marvin Ward | MassBike |
| Andrew Krar | Town of Longmeadow | Steve Williams | Belchertown |
| Nick Lapointe | Fuss & O'Neill, Inc. | | |
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| PVPC Staff | | | |
| David Elvin | Principal Planner | Rana Al-Jammal | Senior Transportation Planner |
| Amir Kouzehkanani | Principal Transportation Planner | Dana Roscoe | Principal Planner |
| Andy McCaul | Senior Transportation Planner | Gary Roux | Principal Planner |
| Jeff McCollough | Senior Transportation Planner | Louise Sullivan | Admin Support |

1. Introductory Remarks

Jim Czach opened the JTC meeting at 10:21 a.m. and he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. Czach asked for a motion to approve the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) minutes of February 8, 2017.

MOVED BY JIM REIDY OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY, SECONDED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD, TO APPROVE THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 8, 2017. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Czach then moved to take up agenda item 3.

7. 2018-2022 TIP Development: Project Ranking and Scenario Development

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe thanked those JTC members present who submitted their updates last week on March 1st at the TIP Project Evaluation Day held at the PVPC. Mr. Roscoe reported that from 80 to 90 projects were reviewed that day and there will not be any request for action on the projects today. Mr. Roscoe explained that there will be discussion about universe projects today that will continue at the upcoming March 28th MPO meeting. The MPO members, he stated, will not take any action on TIP projects on March 28th, but at the April 25th MPO meeting, the MPO members will be expecting a recommendation from the JTC in order for the draft list of proposed

TIP projects to be released for public review. Mr. Roscoe stated that the document listing the proposed TIP projects will not be endorsed until the end of the month of May.

Mr. Roscoe indicated that Andy McCaul, PVPC Senior Transportation Planner, is formulating the TIP project list but nothing is yet set in stone. He explained that there are two reasons why opportunities still exist for those communities who have TIP projects that are ready: (1) At the present time, there is \$4.6 million dollars that is available; and (2) Every year the Commonwealth has an opportunity to capture federal transportation funds from other states that didn't spend their full allocation of federal funds. Mr. Roscoe stated that as a result, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) redistributes unused funds to states able to use those funds and every fiscal year, Massachusetts has successfully received \$50 million dollars in surplus funding from other states because there were transportation projects in Massachusetts that were ready to go. Mr. Roscoe explained that even if a community's project does not receive redistribution funds, a project that does receive the surplus funding will then free up the funding that had been allocated to it making it available to other transportation projects that are ready to advance.

Mr. Roscoe called the JTC members attention to the document entitled *FFY 2018 as Programmed in FFY 2017-2021 TIP*. He indicated that the top list on the first page of this legal-size, 3-page document delineates transportation projects that were considered candidates for inclusion in the FFY 2018 TIP almost 18 months ago. Mr. Roscoe pointed out that the second list on this page entitled *FFY 2018 Option 1* ranks the transportation projects as of today based on discussions with MassDOT.

Mr. Roscoe reported that Richard Cohen, Mayor of Agawam, is committed to doing whatever it takes to have the *Agawam Intersection Improvements at Route 187 & Route 57 Project* (604203) included in the FFY 2018 TIP; however, MassDOT believes it should be a FFY 2019 TIP project. Mr. Roscoe stated there are some issues with the Agawam project but it's hoped that these issues may be surmounted by Mayor Cohen's commitment to the project. Mr. Roscoe noted that similarly, the City of Holyoke needs the *Resurfacing & Related Work on Heritage Street, Front Street & Dwight Street from Maple Street to the 1st Level Canal Project* (607256) to be a FFY 2018 TIP project; but MassDOT is advocating for it to be a FFY 2019 TIP project because since not all of the project is federally eligible, there will need to be an investment commitment from the City of Holyoke in order for the project to advance in FFY 2018. Mr. Roscoe stated that the best case scenario finds Agawam and Holyoke advancing with 4 ½ million dollars still available and open to discussion of transportation projects in 2018.

Mr. Roscoe explained that the TIP is a five-year program which enables discussion of projects in the out-years; however, the commitment is to year 1 with a tentative commitment to years 2, 3, 4 and 5. At this time, Mr. Roscoe asked if there was a transportation project which someone believes to be a 2018 project that doesn't appear on either of the subject lists. Michael Trepanier of the MassDOT Highway Division replied that in his ongoing work with the PVTa and Josh Rickman on the PVTa B43 bus route between UMass and Northampton, they've been looking at implementing transit signal priority in a number of intersections. Mr. Trepanier stated that it is a \$1.2 million project and Mr. Roscoe asked everyone to turn to the top of page 2 in the document entitled *STP Project Priority Ranking* and to note the second project listed, the *Transit Signal Priority Upgrades at Various Locations Project* (608786) in Amherst, Hadley and Northampton. Mr. Trepanier stated that this project will be ready to be advertised next year. Since there is no action to be taken today, Mr. Trepanier indicated that this is a good time to introduce this project as having a possibility of being programmed in FFY 2018. Mr. Trepanier reported that this project will involve 11 – 15 intersections and consist of higher priority, traffic signal modifications. Mr. Roscoe asked if this project would involve the intersections in downtown Northampton including the Main and King Street intersection. Mr. Trepanier replied that it would and he added that a stakeholder group will convene soon. Mr. Trepanier explained that the stakeholder group will then release their report concerning the entire route of the heavily traveled, PVTa bus route B43, which extends out from the Haigis Mall.

Mr. Rickman interjected that in 2014, the PVTA went through a Comprehensive Service Analysis (CSA) and one of its tasks was to identify the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors. Mr. Rickman reported that the B43 route is one of the top ten ridership routes in the PVTA system moving over 3500 people a day and studies have shown that traffic on Route 9 will increase over the years. Mr. Rickman underscored that this project is the first step in capturing and enhancing the BRT potential of the Route 9 corridor, and Mr. Trepanier added that this project is the key to a sustainable future for Route 9 and the region.

Jim Czach agreed that the *Transit Signal Priority Upgrades at Various Locations* Project (608786) be placed for now in the FFY 2018 TIP. Mr. Roscoe interjected that ideally, the idea behind offering options is that there are more projects than there is money but currently, there aren't enough projects to fulfill even a single option. Mr. Roscoe stated that the reason this project wasn't included in the FFY 2018 TIP is because of a directive from the JTC requiring a project to be approved by the Project Review Committee (PRC) before it can be listed. Mr. Roscoe added that there are projects that are in the queue for the next PRC meeting. Marvin Ward interjected that this is a transit project that can be funded by CMAQ and it covers 3 municipalities. Mr. Roscoe replied that as long as the project is qualified by the PRC before March 23rd, it can be added to the list. He stated that adding it won't contradict the JTC's former policy and he approved that a motion be made.

MOVED BY MARVIN WARD OF MASSBIKE, SECONDED BY JEFF HOYNOSKI OF MASSDOT DISTRICT 2, TO APPROVE MOVING THE *RECONSTRUCTION OF I-91 INTERCHANGE 17 AND ROUTE 141* PROJECT (606156) IN HOLYOKE INTO THE FFY 2018 TIP. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

Jim Reidy asked about the deadline for the FFY 2018 TIP and Mr. Roscoe replied that it is the date of the May MPO meeting, May 23rd, at which time the MPO will endorse the FFY 2018 TIP but until then everything in the document can change. Mr. Ward brought up the change discussed in the last JTC meeting regarding the number of days in a public review period which changed from 30 days to 21 days. Mr. Roscoe emphasized that the legal advertisement for a public review period will stipulate the number of days required if it is less than 30 days.

Peter Frieri proposed another project for consideration, the *Cummington Route 9 Retaining Wall Project* (606797) which he anticipates will be at 25 – 75% design in July of this year. Mr. Frieri reported that the project's been to the Project Review Committee (PRC) and there is no right-of-way involved but the cost has increased to a little over \$2 million. Mr. Roscoe directed everyone's attention to the *Cummington Route 9 Retaining Wall Project* (606797) on page 4 of the STP Project Priority Ranking document. Mr. Roscoe briefly discussed the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail Project in Westfield with Dan Call and then he asked Andy McCaul, PVPC Senior Transportation Planner to continue with agenda item #7. Mr. McCaul reviewed and discussed the transportation projects proposed for FFY 2019, FFY 2020 and FFY 2021 and he completed his remarks by urging the JTC members to inform their MPO representative of any projects that they have ready.

3. Review Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting (MPO) Scheduled for March 28

Andy McCaul, Senior Transportation Planner, announced that there are currently three documents out for public review and they are all available for viewing on the www.pvpc.org website on the page entitled *Transportation Documents out for Review* as follows:

- **Propose Change to allow the Economic Development Council (EDC) of Western Mass to become a voting member of the MPO**

• **2017 – 2021 TIP Proposed Amendments**

Mr. McCall reported that the highway amendments to FFY 2017 and one for FFY 2018 consist of the following:

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| Increase cost of (604033) Southwick Congamond Road reconstruction | Springfield (607731) Viaduct Deck Replacement – Remove Project from FFY 2017 - August Redistribution |
| Increase cost of Ludlow Center Street Reconstruction | Increase funding for (PV001) Pioneer Valley Bike Share |
| Remove (608126) Goshen Route 9 Resurfacing Project | Add (605150) Goshen West Street Reconstruction |
| Remove (608253) Palmer Route 67 Resurfacing | For FFY 2018: Remove (608253) Palmer Route 67 Resurfacing |

Mr. McCall reported that the transit amendments for FFY 2017 for the Westfield Intermodal Terminal consist of:

- Westfield – Intermodal Terminal (section 5307), Move \$165,569 in funding from Local Funds to State Funds. Total funds remain unchanged \$827,843
- Reduce local funds from \$840,000 to \$674,431 and move to State Funds for a State Funds total of \$1,033,162. New Total funds available is reduced from \$1,971,379 to \$1,805,810

• **Public Participation Plan**

- Reduce public participation notice from 30 days to 21 days

Mr. McCall stated that MPO Structure Change, the 2017 – 2021 TIP Proposed Amendments and the Public Participation Plan will be discussed and ultimately endorsed at the March 28th MPO meeting. Mr. McCall asked the JTC members to review the above three documents before the MPO meeting and he urged the JTC members to attend the meeting especially if they have a project on the current TIP or proposed TIP.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. McCall for his report and he moved to take up the next agenda item.

4. Regional Freight Route Planning

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux called the JTC members’ attention to the document entitled *Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors* and he stated that the JTC needs to designate urban and rural freight corridors in our region in order to comply with the *Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act*. Mr. Roux stated that funds will be available through the FAST ACT but in order to be eligible for funding, a state Freight Plan has to be developed first and potential, designated freight corridors need to meet at least one of the requirements listed in the *Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors* document. Mr. Roux indicated that a draft listing of potential freight corridors appears on the back side of the *Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors* document. He said that the potential freight corridors listed can be advanced to the MPO to be released for a 21-day public comment period which would provide MassDOT with the information they need. Mr. Roux reported that there are more freight miles in rural areas than in urban areas with a PVPC CRFC target for rural freight corridors of 22.92 total miles and a CUFC target for urban freight corridors of 9.7 total miles.

Mr. Roux noted that in the second table, West Springfield appears as the top line item, showing the primary freight access route of Park Avenue to Union Street to Day Street from the CSX Railyard to Interstate I-91. Mr. Roux stated that he needs to obtain clarification from MassDOT as to whether this corridor of 1.4 miles needs to be included in the 9.7 total urban miles or if the 1.4 miles is in addition to the 9.7 mile total. Mr. Roux explained that there are many locations in the urbanized area that can be designated as critical urban freight corridors but when there’s a target total of less than 10 miles, it’s difficult to include all of them. Mr. Roux said that he’s tried to identify the freight corridors that are significant because they encompass a lot of industrial areas that are being served by truck traffic or because the road is a major truck portal. Mr. Roux further explained that there’s a very small section of Burnett Road that connects into the Massachusetts turnpike via Exit 6 that has a lot of truck traffic and there’s a ½ mile section designated in Agawam that connects to Route 57 where there is also a lot of industry. Mr. Roux stated

that MassDOT is asking for a draft document listing the roads in the region that could potentially be part of this freight system which in turn could be eligible for funding. Mr. Roux then spoke about several other urban freight corridors and he asked the JTC members to provide him with their feedback.

Mr. Czach asked for a motion to recommend that the draft document entitled *Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors* be approved to be released for a 21-day public comment period with the understanding that this document is likely to change.

MOVED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD, SECONDED BY MARVIN WARD OF MASSBIKE, TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF THE LISTING OF CRITICAL RURAL AND URBAN FREIGHT CORRIDORS IN THE DRAFT DOCUMENT ENTITLED *CRITICAL RURAL AND URBAN FREIGHT CORRIDORS* FOR A 21-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Roux for his report and he asked Mr. Roux to take up the next agenda item.

5. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Development Schedule

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux explained that the joint approval schedule for the *Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)* and the TIP is going to be followed even though the TIP's been expedited this year. Mr. Roux indicated that a draft UPWP will be presented at the April 12th JTC Meeting for release at the April 25th MPO meeting. Mr. Roux stated that approval of the UPWP will be sought at the May MPO meeting. He explained that implementing a UPWP this early in the fiscal year means there's a greater chance it'll have to be amended before year end, but it makes more sense not to run the UPWP on a separate schedule than the TIP. Mr. Roux underscored that if JTC members have a project that they want included in the UPWP for the next federal fiscal year, they need to notify PVPC staff. He said most welcome would be bike and pedestrian safety programs and green streets planning such as a study of bike/pedestrian traffic. Mr. Roux reported that the emphasis areas from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) haven't been received yet but once they arrive, there will be a need to look for projects that address those emphasis areas.

Mr. Czach then thanked Mr. Roux for his update and he moved to take up agenda item 6.

6. Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) – Current Activities

Joshua Rickman, PVTA Director of Operations and Planning, reported that the new PVTA Operations and Maintenance Facility on Cottage Street in Springfield will be breaking ground in the spring with 132 buses scheduled to be operating in and out of it. Mr. Rickman also reported that the PVTA's North Main Street garage will become the paratransit garage and the Westfield Transit Pavilion will be opening at the end of April. He added that the transition to Springfield Union Station on April 17th will result in 6500 – 7000 riders going in and out of the Springfield bus station where PVTA's customer service will be located along with bus shelters. Mr. Rickman explained that at the same time, the technology for the PVTA's Fast Break Smart Card, a "smart card" that you simply tap on the farebox, will be set up in Union Station. Mr. Rickman stated that all three of PVTA's electric buses are now on the road and once Union Station is open, PVTA's second electric charger station will be operational there.

Mr. Rickman next gave an update on the city of Springfield's Bus Stop Consolidation Project. He explained that there are twice as many bus stops in the City than are needed which creates problems because buses pulling out more often into traffic cause longer, interrupted, bus rides for the riders. In addition, Mr. Rickman noted that

reducing the number of stops would create parking spaces in the City at no cost. He stated that the PVTA has exactly 814 stops in the city of Springfield where some stops are just 400 feet apart. Mr. Rickman stated that 814 stops are about twice as many as an intracity bus line needs to have in a city this size. Mr. Rickman indicated that the PVTA hopes to cut the number of Springfield stops by more than 45 percent to just 442 stops.

Mr. Rickman reported that there are 12 new bike racks and pads now in Northampton and he said to contact him if any of the JTC members' communities need them installed in their communities.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Rickman for his update and he then moved to address item 8. (See page 1 for Agenda Item #7)

8. Other Business

Mr. Roux called the JTC members' attention to the yellow and black flyer distributed at today's meeting entitled *WORKSHOP: Incorporating On-Road Bicycle Networks into Resurfacing Projects*. Mr. Roux reported that there are 22 people currently registered for this workshop. He added that this flyer is being released to surrounding communities and this workshop can accommodate 50 people.

Jeff McCollough, PVPC Senior Transportation Planner, reported that Bike Week 2017 will be held on May 13-21. He added that the first organizational meeting for Bike Week has been held and everything is on track. Mr. McCollough asked the JTC members to see him after today's meeting if they are interested in participating.

Andy McCall, PVPC Senior Transportation Planner, reported that the Commonwealth Conversation scheduled to be held at the PVPC following the March 28th MPO meeting has now been rescheduled and will be held at the UMass Center at Tower Square. He added that the UMass Center is just a short walk from the PVPC so the JTC members can park here for free and walk.

Mr. Czach stated that he is part of the statewide Chapter 90 Working Group to improve the efficiency of the Chapter 90 process to make it more user-friendly. Mr. Czach stated that Chapter 90's current 10-year contract is going to expire and rather than continuing to renew the contract annually, the statewide Chapter 90 Working Group is thinking about extending the contract for another 10 years. Also, Mr. Czach stated that the working group is looking at making it easier to submit forms, improving the Chapter 90 website and introducing electronic submittals. At some point, Mr. Czach indicated that he may create a short survey that Mr. McCall will email to the JTC members. Mr. Czach urged the members to take the time to complete the survey, adding that this is an opportunity to have their voices heard in Boston.

9. Adjourn

Mr. Czach adjourned today's JTC meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Relevant documents distributed at this March 8, 2017 JTC Meeting:

- Joint Transportation Committee March 8, 2017 Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of the February 8, 2017 Joint Transportation Committee Meeting
- Draft Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors – PVPC Region
- 2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- STP Project Priority Ranking
- 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Schedule
- FFY 2018 as Programmed in FFY 2017-2021 TIP