

Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

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

Present were:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Mike Bolduc	MassDOT District 1	Nick Lapointe	Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.
Randy Brown	Southwick DPW	Dan Murphy	Easthampton
Michelle Chase	Town of Agawam Engineering	Dawn Nims	Town of Agawam Engineering
Mark Cressotti	Westfield	Bryan Pounds*	MassDOT Office of Transportation
Jim Czach	West Springfield DPW	Jim Reidy	South Hadley
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1	Josh Rickman	PVTA
Betsy Johnson	Walk/Bike Springfield	Dave Roberts	Town of Granville
Andrew Krar	Town of Longmeadow	Matt Sokop	Springfield
PVPC Staff			
Rana Al-Jammal	Senior Transportation Planner	Dana Roscoe	Principal Planner
David Elvin	Principal Planner	Gary Roux	Principal Planner
Andy McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	Louise Sullivan	Admin Support
Jeff McCollough	Senior Transportation Planner		

***on speaker phone**

1. Introductory Remarks

Jim Czach opened the JTC meeting at 10:20 a.m. and he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. Czach postponed a motion to approve the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) minutes of April 12, 2017 and April 18, 2017 until the end of the meeting. (see page 5)

Mr. Czach then moved to take up agenda item 3

3. Metropolitan Planning Organization Membership Update

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe reported that Jeff Boyle, who has been representing the 17 rural communities in the western tier of the Pioneer Valley region for the past ten years, recently resigned from his selectman's seat in Hatfield which left his seat as a MPO representative vacant. Mr. Roscoe indicated that invitations for MPO membership were mailed to all the communities in that region and two candidates expressed interest: Selectman Roger Fuller from the Town of Chesterfield and Selectman Charles Kaniecki from the Town of Southampton. Mr. Roscoe noted that ballots were sent out to all 17 towns and Selectman Kaniecki received the most votes. Mr. Roscoe stated that Mr. Kaniecki will attend the May 23rd MPO meeting representing those 17 communities and Roger Fuller will be the alternate.

4. Proposed Amendments to the FFY 2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Available for Review and Comment until May 19, 2017

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe reported that the proposed amendments to current FFY 2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are as follows:

- the *Southwick Congamond Road Reconstruction (604033)* Project had a cost increase of approximately one million dollars
- the *Agawam-West Springfield Bridge Replacement Over the Westfield River (605384)* had a cost increase from \$23.1 to \$29.3 million
- the *Amherst-Bridge Replacement Over Mill River (607528)* had a cost increase from \$2 million to \$3 million

Mr. Roscoe underscored that all of these cost changes were accommodated and the FFY 2017 highway element is in fiscal constraint. He reported that on the transit side, there were several Section 5307 funding changes from one category to another and there were changes in maintenance procedures that are being addressed. Mr. Roscoe then asked Bryan Pounds, who was on speaker phone, if there were any more transit changes forthcoming. Mr. Pounds replied that that he was not aware of any changes at this time and Joshua Rickman, PVTA Director of Operations and Planning, reported that that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) does not have any changes. Mr. Roscoe then stated that this afternoon, he will release the agenda for the May 23rd MPO meeting based on what was presented at today's JTC meeting.

5. Draft 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (Available for Review and Comment until May 19, 2017)

Mr. Roscoe reported that at the last JTC meeting, recommendations were made for the FFY 2018 – 2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) but before these recommendations were presented to the MPO members at their April 25th meeting, there was a cost increase to the proposed Resurfacing & Related Work on Longmeadow Street (Route 5) in Longmeadow from the Connecticut State Line to Converse Street (607430) Project. Mr. Roscoe noted that this cost increase resulted in the TIP exceeding fiscal constraint; therefore, this Longmeadow project, (607430) was removed from the FFY 2021 TIP. Mr. Roscoe stated that the removal of the Longmeadow project brought the FFY 2018 – 2022 TIP back into fiscal constraint and the TIP was released by the MPO for a 21-day public review period. He added that FFY 2021 is currently programmed for \$21,987,696 and this Longmeadow project is in limbo along with other projects not currently programmed.

Andy Krar, Longmeadow Engineer, asked a series of questions, namely: were there TIP projects other than Longmeadow's #607430 project that could have been shifted around to maintain fiscal constraint; were there projects on the TIP project list that were less advanced; and did the MPO consider the Technical Evaluation Criteria (TEC) scores of the projects on the TIP list. Mr. Roscoe replied that compared to the Longmeadow project, there were TIP projects that were less advanced, not as far along on design stage and projects that had a lower TEC score. Mr. Roscoe said that the MPO didn't consider the TEC score or the design status of the other projects on the list. He underscored that that MassDOT District 2 believed that the cost of the Longmeadow project was over inflated at \$5.9 million and the district wanted to keep the project on the TIP list at its previously noted cost of approximately \$3 million. Mr. Roscoe added District 2 staff will contact the Town of Longmeadow to try and pinpoint a reliable cost estimate for this project but the Longmeadow project was removed from the FFY 2021 TIP.

Mr. Czach advised Mr. Krar that the FFY 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is currently out for comments during the required 21-day public review period and he recommended that Mr. Krar put his comments in writing and that he attend the upcoming May 23rd MPO meeting to advocate for his Town's project. Mr. Krar stated that as far as the JTC is concerned, the JTC members have endorsed this Longmeadow project. Mr. Czach replied that he agreed.

Mr. Czach indicated that he is going to meet with PVPC staff and MassDOT Districts 1 and 2 to discuss what a true 25% design stage actually is because everyone seems to have a different idea. Furthermore, he said that milestones that everyone can agree on need to be set especially since there are a great many projects that are at the pre-25% or the 25% design stage.

Mr. Czach then called on PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux to present an update on the rural and urban freight corridors.

6. Regional Freight Route Planning – Draft Critical Freight Linkages

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux called the JTC members' attention to the handout document entitled "Draft Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors" and the map, entitled "Draft Freight Corridors" which identifies the locations of each of the potential freight corridors delineated in the handout document entitled "Draft Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors." Mr. Roux reported that the MPO released the "Draft Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors" document for a 21-day public review on April 25th and there have been two comments received to date regarding the proposed rural and urban freight corridors during that public review period. One comment, he said, was from the Palmer Town Manager on behalf of the Palmer Town Council and the other was submitted by a Palmer trucking firm.

Mr. Roux pointed out a red line indicating the proposed Route 8 on the Draft Freight Corridors map which is circled in red. Mr. Roux stated that the preferred truck route for the Industrial Park in Palmer runs through downtown Palmer and the length of that route from the Industrial Park to the Massachusetts Turnpike is 5 miles while the Critical Urban Freight Corridor (CUFC) target for urban freight corridors is 9.7 total miles. As a result, Mr. Roux asked that the Town of Palmer prioritize the section of the Palmer freight corridor that is the most important. Mr. Roux pointed out on the map that the freight corridor appearing in orange is 1.6 miles in length from Route 20 to Exit 8 on the Massachusetts Turnpike which means that a portion of the Palmer CUFC needs to be eliminated because the CUFC target of 9.7 miles can't be exceeded. Mr. Roux stated that there are 4 options from which to choose in order to achieve that 9.7 total mile CUFC target, namely:

1. Delete priority routes #4 and 9 (total length of 1.82 miles) and add the proposed Palmer Route
2. Delete the existing Palmer Route #8 and add in 1.2 miles along the proposed Palmer Corridor (comprised of Rt. 32 and part of Rt.181/20)
3. Delete the existing Palmer Route #8 and Chicopee Route #9 and add in 1.49 miles along the proposed Palmer Corridor (Rt. 32/part of 181/20)
4. Delete the existing Routes #7, 8 and 9 and add in 2.2 miles along the proposed Palmer Corridor (for all of their request + .55 miles on Rt. 181)

Mr. Roux encouraged the JTC members to provide him with any comments or suggestions they may have. He added that assuming there are no other comments or changes during the required 21-day public review period, the Draft Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors document can be presented to the MPO at their May 23rd meeting for their approval. Mr. Roux explained that the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or FAST Act provides funds for freight planning that will be programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and, therefore, there is a need to designate potential, critical urban and rural freight corridors that could be eligible to receive monies from FAST Act funding which totals about \$21 million dollars.

Mr. Czach said that the JTC members didn't have to vote on the four options from which to choose in order to achieve the CUFC target of 9.7 miles but Mr. Roux had indicated that if a vote wasn't taken, the MPO members would have to make a decision by choosing one of the four options. After a short discussion, the JTC members indicated that the best option was #2 which resulted in Jim Reidy making a motion.

MOVED BY JIM REIDY OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY, SECONDED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD, TO RECOMMEND OPTION 2 OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT VERSION OF THE PIONEER VALLEY

REGION'S LISTING OF CRITICAL RURAL FREIGHT CORRIDORS (CRFCs) AND CRITICAL URBAN FREIGHT CORRIDORS (CUFCs) WHICH RECOMMENDS DELETING THE EXISTING PALMER ROUTE #8 AND ADDING IN 1.2 MILES ALONG THE PROPOSED PALMER CORRIDOR. THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

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

7. Draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Roux explained that the Draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is currently out for public review and at this point, no comments have been received. Mr. Roux reminded the JTC members that one of the items in the UPWP is a proposed safety study that has been developed in coordination with the JTC. Mr. Roux said that the JTC members could discuss changes or additions to the UPWP or leave it as it is and then the members can recommend the UPWP for endorsement by the MPO at their next JTC meeting. There being no questions or comments, Mr. Czach moved on to the next agenda item and he called on Joshua Rickman, PVTA Director of Operations and Planning.

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

Joshua Rickman, PVTA Director of Operations and Planning, reported that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) has hired Sandra Sheehan as its new Administrator. Mr. Rickman stated that for a few more weeks, Ms. Sheehan will continue her job as Director of Grants and Contract Administration for the Greater Hartford Transit District in Connecticut and previously, she was PVTA's Director of Transit and Procurement from 1994 to 2007. Mr. Rickman added that Ms. Sheehan will take office in late May or early June and the PVTA staff is looking forward to having her on board.

Regarding the PVTA's budget, Mr. Rickman reported that since 2014, the PVTA had received a 3% cost of living increase in funding each year but for the past three years, there has not been a 3% funding increase and that has created a deficit and a budget shortfall of \$1.3 million. Mr. Rickman explained that the PVTA has two options: either operate under a deficit budget or institute service cuts by possibly removing some of the services that were implemented in 2013. Mr. Rickman explained that Governor Baker's budget has allocated \$80 million to the Massachusetts Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) which is \$6 million less than initially proposed. Mr. Rickman stated that if this funding amount isn't increased, a \$1.8 million shortfall may result in transit service reductions and as a result, the PVTA is working to have its funding restored.

On a positive note, Mr. Rickman reported that the PVTA will begin operating out of the newly renovated Union Station in downtown Springfield on June 25th and there will be public outreach to 6,000 – 7,000 PVTA riders from June 12 – June 23. Mr. Rickman explained that the PVTA riders will be informed of routes and bus stop locations and public safety will be emphasized. Mr. Rickman added that along with the PVTA, Peter Picknelly, Chairman and CEO of Peter Pan Bus Lines, has also contracted to relocate to Union Station.

Mr. Rickman reported that the Olver Transit Pavilion in Westfield is now operational and major retailers to be located in the Pavilion have been identified. Mr. Rickman also reported that the Pavilion has advanced technology such as the ability for riders to "Skype" customer service representatives. He added that the PVTA now has a "real time" bus information sign in Northampton equipped with a touch screen which reflects real time departure times. Mr. Rickman said that the system works with GPS technology and allows PVTA to track the buses and provide real-time departure information.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Rickman for his update and he then moved to address Agenda Item #9

9. Other Business

Before taking up any other business, Mr. Czach stated that there was now a quorum and he called for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2017 and April 18, 2017 Joint Transportation Committee Meetings.

MOVED BY DAN MURPHY OF THE CITY OF EASTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY JIM REIDY OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY, TO APPROVE THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 12, 2017 AND APRIL 18, 2017. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

PVPC Senior Planner Jeff McCollough reminded the JTC members that Bike Week 2017 will be held on May 13-21 and he urged the JTC members to pick up a Bike Week poster on their way out. Mr. McCollough asked Mr. Rickman about the importance of bicycles to the Union Station. Mr. Rickman reported that there will be a bicycle repair shop and a bicycle parts vending machine located in Union Station.

PVPC Senior Planner Andy McCaul informed the JTC members that they will be receiving an informational email from him regarding the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the MassDOT Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

10. Adjourn

Mr. Czach called for a motion to adjourn today's JTC meeting.

MOVED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD, SECONDED BY DAN MURPHY OF THE CITY OF EASTHAMPTON, TO ADJOURN THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING AT 11:25 A.M.. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

Relevant documents distributed at this May 10, 2017 JTC Meeting:

- Joint Transportation Committee May 10, 2017 Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of the April 12, 2017 and April 18, 2017 Joint Transportation Committee Meetings
- Draft Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors – (Pioneer Valley)
- 2017-2021 TIP Comments Received During Public Review — May 2017
- Draft Freight Corridors (Map)
- Bay State Bike Week — May 13 – 21, 2017 Poster