

Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting

Wednesday, July 11, 2018

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 2	Nick Lapoint	Fuss & O'Neil Inc.
Dan Call	Westfield Columbia Rail Trail	Jennifer Lee	Stavros/PVRCC
Matt Chase	VHB	Krystal Oldread	PVTA Director of Operations
Michelle Chase	Town Engineer, Agawam	Bob Peirent	Engineer, Holyoke
Jeremy Cigal	Engineer, Westfield	Dan Murphy	City of Easthampton
Jim Czach	West Springfield DPW	Meg Robertson	Mass Commission for the Blind
Nick Dines	Town of Williamsburg	Matt Sokop	City Engineer, Springfield
Michael Dionne	Mass Commission for the Blind	Matt Smith	Chesterfield Highway
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1	Marvin Ward	MassBike Easthampton
Betsy Johnson	Walk/Bike Springfield		
PVPC Staff			
Rana Al-Jammal	Senior Transportation Planner	Jeff McCollough	Sr. Transportation Planner
David Elvin	Principal Planner	Dana Roscoe	Principal Planner
Amir Kouzehkanani	Principal Transportation Planner	Gary Roux	Principal Planner
Andy McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	Louise Sullivan	Admin Support

1. Introductory Remarks

Jim Czach opened the JTC meeting at 10:22 a.m. and he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Czach stated that because there was not a quorum present at today's meeting, the approval of the May 9, 2018 Joint Transportation Committee meeting minutes will be postponed until the next JTC meeting scheduled for August 8th.

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

3. 2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Project Update

Senior Transportation Planner Andy McCaul began by saying he would cover two topics. First, he called the JTC members attention to the distributed spreadsheet entitled *2018 TIP Project Status*. Mr. McCaul explained that this spreadsheet is a brief overview of the status of the FFY 2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects and it is part of the tracking tool which ensures that all TIP projects are advertised by the end of September 2018. Mr. McCaul stated that if a TIP project is not advertised by the end of September, it is removed from the FFY 2018 TIP and returned to the universe of TIP projects. Mr. McCaul further stated that none of the local TIP projects have been advertised yet but that all of these projects have met their requirements except the *Northampton Bridge Reconstruction (606552)* Project. He underscored that if any of the JTC members' TIP projects are listed on this *2018 TIP Project Status* spreadsheet, they should collaborate with their consultant to ensure that the TIP project will be ready to be advertised before the end of September.

Mr. McCaul stated that his second topic is that there will be an action item concerning air quality standards introduced at the MPO meeting scheduled to be held on Tuesday, July 24th at 10:00 a.m. Mr. McCaul explained that the Pioneer Valley Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is updated every four years and work will begin soon on the next four-year plan. However, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D. C. Circuit recently issued a decision which struck down portions of the 2008 Ozone NAAQS SIP Requirements Rule concerning the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone. Mr. McCaul indicated that as a result, an amendment has to be made statewide to the Transportation Improvement Programs' air quality, transportation conformity determinations. The state, he said, has to be provided with additional information about current and future TIP projects so that the TIP projects can be analyzed for their air quality conformity to current air quality standards. Mr. McCaul noted that the new analysis indicates that the Pioneer Valley TIP projects do conform to the current air quality standards. However, he emphasized that an air conformity document needs to be put out for public review and comment then endorsed for inclusion in the draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Mr. McCaul underscored that if the air conformity document doesn't conform to the federal requirements, the TIP won't conform, and the TIP program will no longer be eligible for federal funding.

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux noted that not long ago, previous versions of the TIP and the RTP were required to make an air quality determination in order to assess the air quality impacts of TIP projects and transportation plans. Mr. Roux stated that one of the factors of that assessment is to demonstrate that changes in the transportation system will not cause any area to exceed motor vehicle emissions milestones set by the EPA and the local air quality agency. Mr. Roux explained that PVPC staff members will identify the TIP projects and send them to MassDOT and the MassDOT officials will make a determination using the statewide air quality model. Mr. Roux reported that the statewide air quality models have been run and there is no negligible difference in emissions for our area. Furthermore, he reported that the PVPC's budget compares favorably with the budget developed in consultation with the EPA and MassDOT. Mr. Roux underscored that it is very unlikely that there will be any problems in our region because there are not many projects that might add a significant capacity to the regional transportation system. Mr. Roux added that the air quality impacts on TIP projects will just mean that there will be a change in how the reporting is done in the RTP and other transportation documents.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. McCaul and Mr. Roux for their presentations and he moved on to agenda item 4.

4. Valley BikeShare Launch <https://www.valleybike.org/>

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux reported that the ValleyBike Share program has been funded with CMAQ funding as part of the FFY 2017 TIP. He commented that a soft launch of the ValleyBike Share program was held in Northampton on June 28th but it's not yet totally operational because there are still more stations to be constructed and more bikes to be added to the docking system throughout the region.

Mr. Roux called the JTC members' attention to the large projection screen displaying the www.valleybike.org website's interactive map with blue icons signifying active ValleyBike docking stations and yellow icons indicating the locations of future docking stations under construction but not yet active. Mr. Roux explained that if an icon is selected, it will reveal how many bikes are available at that location. The electric-assisted bikes can be picked up and returned at any of the docking stations. Mr. Roux stated that the bicycles are available at 50 stations in five communities: Amherst, including the University of Massachusetts campus, Northampton, South Hadley, Holyoke and Springfield.

Mr. Roux announced that ValleyBike Share is offering founding memberships that provide an unlimited number of 60-minute rides during the first year for \$90.00 with an additional fee charged for any rides that last more than an hour. Mr. Roux added that an unlimited number of rides of up to 45 minutes will cost \$80.00 a year or \$20.00 a month; Day passes will cost \$6.00; and a single ride of up to 45 minutes will cost \$2.00. Senior Transportation Planner Jeff McCollough distributed business cards with a code for a free ride to all the meeting attendees. Mr. Roux pointed out that there is also an 800 number on the business cards for customer service. He noted that there is a maintenance and restocking crew that can redistribute bikes and replace bikes needing repair. Mr. Roux indicated that later this year, there should be usage and tracking data available that will impact how the bikes are being distributed. Meg Robertson asked if tandem bikes or hand-propelled bikes have been considered for use in the ValleyBike Share program. Mr. Roux replied that the electric-assist model manufactured by Bewegen Technologies was selected because the rider doesn't have to work as hard when riding it. He said that he would have to ask about tandem and hand-propelled bikes.

5. Dockless Bikeshare companies / Model Ordinance

Mr. Roux, after displaying a video explaining the ValleyBike Share program, cautioned the JTC members about unregulated, dockless, bike-share providers allowing bikes to be left in places where they are causing problems and littering the landscape. He said Dallas City Council members are discussing requiring annual permits and new regulations concerning their bikeshare program. Mr. Roux underscored that JTC members should feel free to call the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission if they have any questions or concerns about the ValleyBike Share program.

Mr. Czach moved on to take up the next agenda item.

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

Krystal Oldread, PVTA Director of Operations and Planning, reported that the PVTA Advisory Board implemented the fare increases as planned on July 1st and there have been very few problems. Ms. Oldread reported that there is a new operator for the para-transit service and the PVTA officials are pleased with its performance. She reported that a consultant for the Transit Asset Management Plan has been hired and the PVTA goals and objectives need to be approved by the Pioneer Valley MPO before the Transit Asset Management Plan can be finalized by the end of September 2018. Ms. Oldread announced that a consultant has been hired for the

conversion of the current Operations and Management facility on Main Street in Springfield which was used for bus storage and is now being converted to van garage. Ms. Oldread reported that the PVPC is assisting this summer in a system-wide inventory of bus stops and in updating the PVRTA's database.

Ms. Oldread announced that Massachusetts is the only state that has not yet finalized its budgets. The hope is that the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives will approve \$84 million for the 15 Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs) plus an additional \$4 million which is at the discretion of MassDOT. Ms. Oldread reported that the PVRTA's deficit was \$3.1 million but it was lowered to \$2.9 million. She further reported that the ¾ mile charge for the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) population was implemented and there are some additional changes planned which may result in cost savings. Ms. Oldread added that there were some PVRTA public hearings scheduled for this month but they've been pushed back to early August since the Massachusetts state budget has not yet been finalized and to allow time to prepare an update of the changes that were made.

Mr. Czach thanked Ms. Oldread for her update moved on to take up the last agenda item.

7. Other Business

Mr. Roux announced that the amendment to the RTP regarding air quality will be presented at the July 24th MPO meeting and released for a 21-day public comment period. Then on August 28th, the MPO members will be asked to endorse the amendment and to address any additional action items.

Senior Transportation Planner Jeff McCollough announced that the Friends of Northampton Trails and Greenways will be holding a summit called the Golden Spike 2018 Conference on Friday and Saturday, July 27-28 in Northampton. Mr. McCollough explained that all communities are welcome and the 2-day event will feature speakers and tours at the intersection of the East-West trail and the Northampton to New Haven trail.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Czach announced that the next JTC Meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 8th and the next MPO meeting is scheduled for July 24th. Mr. McCall stated that the primary action items for the July 24th MPO meeting are to release the Air Quality Conformity Determination update for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and to self-certify that the MPO is following the 3C Process and the Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act. Mr. McCall said if you have any questions or concerns prior to next week's meeting, please don't hesitate to contact him or Tim Brennan.

There being no other business, Mr. Czach adjourned this July 11th meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Relevant Documents Distributed at this May 9, 2018 JTC Meeting:

- *Joint Transportation Committee July 11, 2018 Meeting Agenda*
- *Minutes of the May 9, 2018 Joint Transportation Committee Meeting*
- *Memorandum – Subject: Interim Guidance on Conformity Requirements for the 1997 Ozone NAAQS*
- *Dallas Leaders Mull Dockless Bike-share Regulations*
- *TIP 2018 TIP Project Status*