

Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Present were:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Daryl Amaral	MassDOT District 2	Alexis Hosea-Abbott	MassBike
Dan Murphy	Town of Easthampton	Betsy Johnson	Pedestrian Rep/WalkBike Springfield
Matt Chase	VHB	Van Kacoyannakis	VHB
Tom Kulig	Town of Russell	Michael McManus	McMahon
Nick Dines	Town of Williamsburg	Mike Fisher	BL Companies
Bill Dwyer	Town of Hadley, JTC Chair	Linda Leduc	Town of Belchertown
Tori Halloran	Outreach Coordinator - SRTS	Paul Burns	PVTA
Stuart Beckley	Town of Ware	Connor Knightly	Town of West Springfield
Claudia Lefko	Resident Northampton	Dena Grochmal	Town of Wilbraham
Thomas Ruta	MassDOT Highway - 2	Peter Frieri	MassDOT Highway - 1
Dan Banister	Town of Williamsburg	Geoff McAlmond	Town of Ware
Timothy Keane	Town of Longmeadow	Mark Berman	Town of East Longmeadow
Andy Krar	City of Springfield	Carolyn Misch	City of Northampton
Randall Kemp	Town of Southampton	Matt Smith	Town of Chesterfield
Dawn Scaparotti	Goshen Town Administrator	Robert Taddia	Town of East Longmeadow
Dawn Nims	MassDOT Highway -2		
PVPC Staff			
Andrew McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	Gary Roux	Principal Planner/Traffic Manager
Jeffrey McCollough	Senior Transportation Planner	Carl Jackson	Principal Transit Planner
Dana Roscoe	Principal Planner/Transportation Manager		

1. Open Meeting

William Dwyer opened the October 11, 2023 meeting at 10:00 am, and stated that the meeting was being recorded. Senior Transportation Planner Andrew McCaul took roll call.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting – July 9, 2023 Minutes

Mr. Dwyer requested a motion to approve the July 9, 2023, JTC minutes.

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS, SECONDED BY CONNOR KNIGHTLY, TO APPROVE THE JULY 9, 2023 JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING MINUTES. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no questions, Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 3.

3. Update from the Director of Economic and Municipal Services

Eric Weiss provided an overview of the Department of Economic Development. Mr. Weiss reported that the EDA supports economic development efforts, works with municipalities, receives funding from the DLTA every December to complete different projects with municipalities, such as working on a shared accounting program, supports digital equity efforts plans, and supports municipalities' efforts to access state and federal grant programs. The goals broadly were to assist communities and be economically focused where possible. The current efforts were presented. We received a grant through the Casino Mitigation Funds to look into economic equity, significant efforts at the state level to look at creating municipal digital equity strategic plans to ensure there is equal access to the internet as needed, working on strategic economic development plans for specific

communities, working with Emerald Cities to create a pipeline of development of green jobs for women and minorities, and working on a new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region. Mr. Weiss explained the Municipal Digital Equity planning process. The process involved creating a core planning group comprised of community representatives, collecting community data, engaging with individuals in the community, creating a municipal profile, conducting a needs assessment, developing short- and long-term strategies, and exploring different funding opportunities. The Municipal Digital Planning Effort focuses on six main areas, including infrastructure availability, affordability and accessibility for residents, digital literacy, safety and security awareness, and access to appropriate devices.

There being no questions, Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 4.

4. Review FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. McCaul reported that the newest TIP began on October 1st. The current proposed schedule of advertisements for FY2024 was presented. There was one project scheduled for advertisement in quarter one, and it was a state-wide project that had no impact on local money. MassDOT does advertisements based on project readiness and availability of funding. There were three projects scheduled for advertisement in quarter two, including resurfacing and related work on Route 116, reconstruction and related work on Route 143, and bridge replacement in Monson. There were three projects scheduled for advertisement in quarter three, including a bridge preservation project in Cummington, a bridge replacement in Ludlow, and Robinson Park Elementary School Improvements in Agawam. There were two projects scheduled for advertisement in quarter four, including reconstruction in Wales and reconstruction in Springfield. There were buffers on all projects, and all projects were required to be advertised by September 30, 2024.

Mr. McCaul presented the funding for FY2024 and reported that there was just under \$1 million available for FY2024.

Mr. McCaul reported that there was \$100,000 available in FFY 2025. He discussed the projects planned for FFY 2025, which included a large amount of bridge projects. Mr. McCaul reported on the projects planned for FFY 2026, which included more bridge projects, reconstruction in Williamsburg, reconstruction in South Hadley, traffic sign replacement in Springfield-Chicopee, resurfacing in Agawam, Mountain View School Improvements, and installation of a shared-use path in Easthampton-Northampton. Mr. McCaul reported on the projects planned for FFY 2027, which included further reconstruction of Mountain Street in Williamsburg, reconstruction in Chesterfield, further Downtown Complete Streets improvements, resurfacing in East Longmeadow, intersection improvement in Westfield, more bridge projects, resurfacing on Route 10 and Route 202, an intersection project in Holyoke, safe routes to schools, and further work on the Greenway Rail Trail. Mr. McCaul reported on the projects planned for FFY 2028, which included Route 10 reconstruction, Route 5 work, rehabilitation and reconstruction in Southampton, resurfacing in Monson, additional bridges, construction of the Mill River Greenway shared use path, intersection improvements in Springfield, and another phase of the Mill River Greenway project.

Mr. McCaul noted that there was a potential for significant changes to be made due to funding and the costs of the projects. It was discussed that the PVTa had a large amount of funding dedicated to vehicles.

There being no questions, Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 5.

5. FY2020 FHWA Urbanized Area Boundary Update

Gary Roux provided an update on the urbanized area boundaries. He reported that the urbanized area boundary definition was changed for 2020, and for the first time, there was a separate urban area in the region called

Amherst-Easthampton-Northampton Urban Area. One of the processes included identifying what the urban area was through the census and working to smooth out the urban area while considering development that would happen in the next ten years, areas that should be urbanized, and seeing the impact that there is on the roadway re-classification system. MassDOT asked for comments to be submitted in a draft form by November 3rd, and they must submit by the end of the calendar year 2023. Once the urban area is reviewed, it will encompass additional reviews based on the roadway re-classification system, which is expected to change over the calendar year 2024. There were seven functional class systems, and the minor collector class can be considered for funding through the TIP but cannot be considered if outside the urban area. Between 2010 and 2020, the population range changed. In 2010, an area of 2,500 or greater was considered an urban cluster. In 2020, the urban area population had to exceed 5,000, with at least 2,000 housing units. The urban clusters were no longer distinguished from urban areas. Information on the Authority for Adjusting Urbanized Area Boundaries was presented. The boundaries should encompass one contiguous area, and they should follow municipal boundaries or other physical features. The boundaries of the previous urban area and the proposed changes were presented. The Springfield Urban Area was shown, which extends into Connecticut. The new Springfield Urban Area no longer extended as much into Connecticut. In the north, the Springfield Urban Area was separated into the Amherst-Easthampton-Northampton Urban Area. It was recommended that the Springfield Urban Area expand to overlay all of Ludlow and South Hadley and to expand to include southern Amherst.

It was asked what the ramifications of separating into two different urban areas were, along with what the impacts on the funding would be. Mr. Roux reported that there should not be any ramifications but that there would be a collaboration with Franklin County since it was now included. Mr. Roux reported that there were no significant impacts to the TIP funding, but rural minor collector areas will no longer be eligible for federal funding. However, everything was still within the metropolitan planning organization boundaries. It was asked for any feedback to be sent by the end of October so a draft version could be sent to MassDOT by November 3rd. An update will then be provided, and it will be taken to the MPO meeting. It was asked for comments to go through an elected official if possible.

There being no questions, Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 6.

7. Other Business

Dana Roscoe reported that a meeting of the MPO will be required for the amendment to a project on the TIP. It will be held on October 24th. Mr. Roscoe welcomed Linda Leduc as the new Director of Public Works. Mr. McCaul stated that the FY2024 began, and the new Unified Planning Work Program began. It was discussed that there were specific times where comments could be received for documents and that there had been many unsolicited comments on transportation documents recently. Everyone was reminded that if individuals had comments they wanted to submit, they should wait until there were actionable items available for comments.

8. Adjourns

There being no further business to conduct, Mr. Dwyer adjourned the meeting at 10:56 am with no objections.

Relevant documents distributed at this October 11, 2023, JTC meeting:

- Joint Transportation Committee October 11, 2023 Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of July 9, 2023, Joint Transportation Committee Meeting

Respectfully Submitted by Minutes Services