



MINUTES

Thursday – December 1, 2016

- 1. Call to Order** - Chairman Lavoie called the meeting to order at 7:10pm.
- 2. Roll Call** –Secretary Ramsdell called the roll and declared a quorum present. The following Commissioners and Staff were in attendance:

Commissioners

Amesbury	Robert Lavoie, Chairman
Andover	Lisa Schwarz
Boxford	Jim Barnes
Georgetown	Heidi Murphy
Groveland	Robert Arakelian
Haverhill	April Der Boghosian
Merrimac	John Thomas
Methuen	Kevin Hagerty
Newbury	John Weis
Newburyport	Ed Ramsdell, Secretary
Rowley	Bob Snow, Treasurer
Salisbury	Lou Masiello
Rep at Large	Brad Buschur

Staff

Joe Cosgrove, Environmental Program Manager
Mike Parquette, Comprehensive Planning Program Manager
Tony Komornick, Transportation Program Manager
Jerrard Whitten, GIS Manager
Jen Dunlap, Finance Administrator
Nancy Lavalley, Office Administrator
Jim Terlizzi, Transportation Engineer
Betsy Goodrich, Sr. Transportation Planner
Angela Vincent, Economic Development Coordinator

Guest: Karen Sawyer Conard
Bernard Lynch, Community Paradigm Associates, LLC

3. Adoption of October Meeting Minutes

The October minutes were reviewed and recommended for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Ramsdell and second by Commissioner Weis. The October Minutes were unanimously approved. Georgetown's Commissioner Heidi Murphy abstained.

4. Warrant for October

Treasurer Bob Snow reported that the October warrant was reviewed favorably and recommended the Commission's authorization for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Snow and second by Commissioner Hagerty. The October warrant was unanimously approved.

5. Chairman's Report

Chairman Robert Lavoie reported on the following activities since the last meeting in October.

- Chairman Lavoie introduced MVPC's new Executive Director Karen Sawyer Conard at the Mayors and Managers meeting in Andover this morning. The meeting went well and was congratulatory to the Commission with the Search Committee recommendation.
- The new Merrimack Valley Region branding was presented at the Mayors and Managers meeting.

6. Executive Director's Search Committee

As Chair of the Executive Director's Hiring Committee Robert Lavoie briefed the Commission on the committee's hiring process over the summer to current date with coming to a unanimous decision to making a recommendation to the Commission to offer Karen Sawyer Conard the Executive Director position at MVPC upon the Commission's authorization and approval and subject to reaching an acceptable contractual term to be renewed annually. The committee consisted of five Commissioner members and two staff members.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Hagerty and second by Commissioner Snow. All in favor of the motion by 13 attending Commissioners. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Conard thanked the Commission for recommending her for the Executive Director position at MVPC and looking forward to working with the MVPC staff. She addressed the Commission on her working experience with MVPC in the past and positions at the municipal level in Methuen and Peabody.

7. Personnel Committee

Executive Session

Vote: There was a motion by Chairman Lavoie to go into Executive Session and second by Commissioner Snow. The motion was unanimously approved.

Roll Call –Secretary Ramsdell called the roll and declared a quorum present. The following Commissioners were in attendance.

Amesbury	Robert Lavoie, Chairman
Andover	Lisa Schwarz
Boxford	Jim Barnes
Georgetown	Heidi Murphy
Groveland	Robert Arakelian
Haverhill	April Der Boghosian
Merrimac	John Thomas
Methuen	Kevin Hagerty
Newbury	John Weis
Newburyport	Ed Ramsdell, Secretary
Rowley	Bob Snow, Treasurer
Salisbury	Lou Masiello
Rep at Large	Brad Buschur

Guest: Bernard Lynch, Community Paradigm Associates, LLC

Contract Negotiations

Vote: There was a motion to discuss the Executive Director Contract negotiations by Commissioner Ramsdell and second by Commissioner Snow. The motion was unanimously approved.

Vote: There was a motion to include Bernard Lynch of Community Paradigm Associates, LLC by Commissioner Snow and second by Commissioner Der Boghosian. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **Personnel Committee Meeting**

The Personnel Committee met for their annual meeting on November 9. The minutes are as follows.

Meeting called to order 12:05 pm

Members Present: Ed Ramsdell and Kevin Hagerty

Motion made by Commissioner Hagerty, seconded by Commissioner Ramsdell to accept the minutes from November 12, 2015 personnel committee meeting, unanimously approved.

The Committee reviewed the Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook and there are no recommended changes.

The Committee reviewed the job descriptions and there are no recommended changes.

The Executive Director reviewed staff evaluations with the Committee. The Commission had authorized up to 3.5% for salary adjustments in FY 2016 Budget. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index from September 2016 averaged an inflation rate change for all items of 1.2% from the previous year. After discussion with the Executive Director and listening to his recommendations, the Committee recommended a series of salary adjustments based on the staff evaluations:

- 12 – Very Good 2.0%
- 2 – Good 1.0%

It was also pointed out that all the recommended raises would increase the annual salary account by 1.63%. A motion was made by Commissioner Hagerty and seconded by Commissioner Ramsdell to approve the recommended salary adjustments, unanimously approved.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:30pm

Vote: There was a motion to adopt recommendations by the Personnel Committee by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Thomas. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Contracts

- Credere Associates LLC (Brownfields) – 5-year contract/nte \$95,000

Vote: Commissioner Weis made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned contract as presented. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion. The contract was unanimously approved.

- Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. (Brownfields) – 5-year contract nte \$50,000

Vote: Commissioner Masiello made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned contract as presented. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion. The contract was unanimously approved.

- Boxford – Parcel Update and MIMAP - \$2800

Vote: Commissioner Weis made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned contract as presented. Commissioner Snow seconded the motion. The contract was unanimously approved.

- Groveland – Parcel Update - \$800 (plus use of LTA)

Vote: Commissioner Weis made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned contract as presented. Commissioner Snow seconded the motion. The contract was unanimously approved.

9. Comprehensive Planning Update

Mike Parquette, MVPC’s Comprehensive Planning Program Manager reported on the following Comprehensive Planning activities.

COMMUNITY COMPACT CABINET: The "Community Compact Cabinet" is designed to elevate the Administration’s partnerships with cities and towns, and allows the Governor’s Office to work more closely with municipal leaders. The Cabinet champions municipal interests across all executive secretariats and agencies, and develops in consultation with cities and towns, mutual standards and best practices for both the state and municipalities. The creation of Community Compacts creates clear standards, expectations and accountability for both partners.

In our region, 12 municipalities have signed "community compacts". Two communities, Lawrence and Newburyport have community compact reports completed for "best practices" in the field of financial forecasting. MVPC is currently (or in the coming months) working with Salisbury on Comprehensive Water Resources Management; Georgetown on Complete Streets bylaw; and with North Andover and the MVMMC on job creation and retention.

For this coming year, the administration has announced the new “Efficiency and Regionalization Grant Program.” The purpose of this program is to provide financial support for governmental entities interested in implementing regionalization and other efficiency initiatives that allow for long-term sustainability. MVPC just recently (Nov. 15) submitted an application for funds to complete a Merrimack Valley Regional Housing Production Plan. We should hear soon whether we will receive funds. We applied for \$189,000.

MERRIMACK VALLEY REGIONAL MARKETING PROJECT: MVPC is well under way on the MVMMC marketing project. Numerous meetings have been held with local businesses and individual communities as well as a “roundtable” meeting in order to determine the effectiveness of the existing MVMB “brand”, and to better understand what makes the valley attractive to businesses, residents, and visitors. Currently, 3-4 logos and taglines have been developed and these were presented to the MVMMC on December 1 to solicit their opinion and advice as they will be key players in owning and selling the marketing slogan and logo. The tagline and logo will also be presented to the “roundtable” committee on December 12. After all parties agree on a tagline and logo the next step will be to develop a strategy and seeking funds for rolling out the new marketing campaign.

MASSWORKS REVIEW: Seven of our communities applied for MassWorks Street and Roadway improvement funds. As in the past four years, MVPC has reviewed the applications and submitted our comments to EOHED on the proposed use of the MassWorks funds for our region. Communities applying include: **Andover** - \$6,000,000 for Dascomb Road Improvements; **Haverhill** - \$9,480,000 for infrastructure support for the Merrimack Street Transformative Development project; **Lawrence** - \$5,950,000 for improvements to western section of Merrimac Street; **Merrimac** - \$500,000 to replace existing failing culverts on Bear Hill Road; **Newburyport** - \$880,000 for public safety improvements in the smart growth 40R district; **North Andover** - \$3,300,000 for infrastructure improvements along the

Main Street corridor; **Salisbury** -\$4,500,000 for sewer and sewer pump stations on Route 1. Requests for our region total **\$30,610,000**. The only community in our region receiving funds for 2016 was the City of Haverhill. They received \$8,980,310.

DLTA: In October, a DLTA Quarterly Report was submitted to DHCD and the Division of Local Services. As we reported last month, the DLTA program faces potential elimination. State revenues have not met expectations so the program may not be funded. If this happens, MVPC's budget will be compromised. We are currently seeking alternative sources of revenue.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S MEETING: On November 30, we met with this region's city and town planners and/or economic development directors along with a wider range of city/town planners from the northeastern part of the state. Over 40 people were in attendance. The focus of the meeting was a MassDevelopment presentation a new initiative called the Commonwealth Site Readiness Program. "The Site Readiness program aims to boost the Commonwealth's inventory of large, well-located, project ready sites; accelerate private sector investment in industrial and commercial projects; and support the conversion of abandoned sites and obsolete facilities into clean, actively used, tax generating properties."

CITIZEN PLANNER TRAINING COLLABORATIVE, 2016: The October 24 CPTC workshop titled - "**Reading a Subdivision Plan**" was cancelled due to low enrollment. On November, 28 MVPC hosted "**Creating Master Plans**". In this course local officials will learn why and how to prepare, adopt, and implement the master or comprehensive plan described in MGL Chapter 41, Section D. The session identified the sections of a master plan and specific steps by which the plan will be carried out.

MEETINGS:

- October 25th – Interview Brownfields Consultants
- October 26 – Interview Brownfields Consultants
- October 27th – Office of Technical Assistance and Technology at Mark Richey Woodworking - Newburyport
- November 2nd – MVMB Marketing Project Meeting
- November 2nd – MassWorks Award Ceremony at Harbor Place
- December 1st – Mayor's/Managers Meeting – Andover

10. Environmental Program Update

MVPC's Environmental Program Manager, Joe Cosgrove, reported on activities since the last meeting in October.

Region Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning:

- Organizing annual meeting of regional hazard mitigation planning team including municipal emergency managers for January 2017.

Brownfields Program:

- MVPC procurement selection team conducted finalist interviews for technical environmental services consultant. Highest ranked teams for task order Contract awards recommendation are Credere Associates and Weston & Sampson Engineering.
- Assessments grant application due Dec. 22 to EPA.
- City of Lawrence has completed Phase II environmental assessment of the Tombarello site at Marston Street. Public meeting to review contamination scope and cleanup alternatives was held Nov. 30 at Redeemer Lutheran Church on East Haverhill St. in Lawrence.

Green Communities:

- Meetings with West Newbury Energy Advisory Committee to collect data/information for Town's Green Communities Annual performance report being submitted to the state by December 2 deadline.
- North Andover Energy Reduction Plan by Peregrine Energy Group Inc. has been completed and submitted to state EOEEA.

Stormwater Collaborative:

- MV DPW Stormwater Collaborative November meeting included presentation and discussion with Andrea Briggs of MassDEP regarding potential regional partnerships with Commonwealth academic institutions on pollution control research and stormwater management practices. In addition, group received update on Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Boards on upcoming training and employment placement in Public works. Next meeting of the Collaborative is December 7 at MVPC.
- New England Stormwater Finance Forum organized by the Environmental Finance Center network and including participation of Collaborative members was held Nov. 15-16th at University of New Hampshire. Presentations included demos of best management practices and discussion of financing strategies for MS4 compliance.

Great Marsh Management:

- Peter reports he is wrapping up 2016 assessments at the 23 Marsh Edge Erosion sites in advance of the winter erosion season. This past month he held two green crab-marketing events in Ipswich and Faneuil Hall market place. In addition, he has been working with the "Support the Pink House" nonprofit to identify repurposing the building as a marsh research facility.
- 5th Annual Great Marsh Symposium held November 17th at Woodman's in Essex. More than 100 attended event for which MVPC was a partner sponsor.
- MVPC has been awarded Smart Communities Innovation Challenge award from ESRI/Leica Geosystems. Award of GPS/GIS hardware and software technology will be used to monitor Great Marsh conditions and invasive species management and undertake stormwater infrastructure inventory.

Upcoming Events:

- MARPA meeting Dec. 16th in Boston. Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton invited to discuss upcoming Municipal Vulnerability Planning Program.
- Mass. Health Impact Assessment Conference at Federal Reserve Bank, Boston on December 8th.
- PIE Rivers Partnership Annual Meeting Dec. 6th in Byfield.

11. Transportation Report Update

Mr. Komornick briefly touched upon some of the following tasks and activities that have been completed or undertaken by transportation staff since the last Commission meeting in May.

Merrimack Valley MPO (MVMPO)

Tony attended today's **MARPA QUARTERLY MEETING WITH MassDOT OFFICIALS**. Key outcomes of this meeting include:

- Asked MPOs to establish recurrent meeting dates for their meetings. Coupled with this would be a **change in the length of the review and comment period for MPO documents from 30 days to 21 days**, which would enable the MPO to release documents for public review and incorporate comments received in time to take action at an MPO Meeting 30 days later;
- Set forth a new schedule by which MassDOT and the MPOs could work in concert in developing **MassDOT's 2018-2022 Capital Investment Plan and the MPOs' FFYs 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs)**. The new schedule would have the MPO's endorsing their TIPs a month earlier than usual (May vs. June);
- Need for MVMPO to amend its current TIP to include \$20,315 in 'repurposed' SAFETEA-LU earmark funding for **the Route 125/Massachusetts Avenue reconstruction project** in FFY 2018. These funds were originally to be used to rehabilitate/pave Parker River Road in Newbury;
- MassDOT is reviewing community applications under its **Municipal Small Bridge program**. MassDOT will begin notifying communities whose applications have been approved starting early next year.
- MassDOT's **Capital Management Committee** is looking into option of requiring greater local contributions for state-funded transportation projects and evaluating establishing a MassDOT policy that would require communities to be responsible for certain types of project cost overruns.

Studies

Mr. Terlizzi continued to prepare the Road Safety Audit (RSA) Report for the **River Street/Lowell Avenue Traffic Study in Haverhill**. A tentative date (December 20th) and location (Haverhill City Hall – Room 301) for the RSA have been developed

Mr. Komornick has been working with Newbury Town Planner Martha Taylor and the **Newbury Master Plan Transportation Subcommittee** in putting together the draft Transportation Element Goals and Objectives for the Plan.

Other

Ms. Goodrich has been working with the **City of Haverhill** in developing and implementing a **Complete Streets Policy**.

Mr. Komornick has continued to provide information to the **City of Haverhill and the City of Lawrence** to assist them in identifying options for developing TIP projects that could be advertised using FFY 2017 MVMPO Target Funds. Ms. Goodrich oversaw the selection of consultant to translate the MVMPO's 'Quick Tip', the Executive Summary of the FFY 2016 Regional Transportation Plan, and a Summary of the FFY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program into Spanish and Traditional Chinese.

Technical Assistance

MVPC collected additional vehicle turning movement and Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) counts in and around the **Loring Street/Salem Street intersection in Lawrence**. The City requested that MVPC analyze this intersection as part of their effort to change the signal from flashing to multiphase operation.

Staff is working with MassDOT, a local resident and the City of Methuen to review the feasibility of adding a **crosswalk on Pleasant St. near its intersection with Stillwater Rd.**

Upcoming Meetings

- DPW Directors: December 7th – 8:30 a.m. @ MVPC Offices
- River Street/Lowell Avenue RSA: December 20th – 10 a.m. @ Haverhill City Hall – Room 301.

12. Local and Regional Issues - None

13. Other – None

14. Adjourn

There was a motion and a second to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

I hereby certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission meeting held on December 1, 2016.

Ed Ramsdell, Secretary