

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

**Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO)
Merrimack Valley Planning Commission(MVPC) Offices
Haverhill, MA**

Wednesday January 24, 2018 – 12:00p.m.

Attending:

Voting Members:

Stephen Woelfel, MassDOT, representing MassDOT Secretary Stephanie Pollack
Frank Suszynski, representing Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver
Carlos Jaquez, representing the City of Lawrence
Karen Conard, representing the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
Joe Costanzo, representing the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority
Neil Harrington, Salisbury, representing MPO Subregion #1
John Pettis, representing the City of Haverhill

Others Present:

Jim Babbin, Amesbury	Gregory Jones, Newburyport
Mary Kay Beninati, MVPC	Anthony Komornick, MVPC
David Chandler, FHWA	Derek Krevat, MassDOT
Betsy Goodrich, MVPC	Connie Raphael, MassDOT District 4
Donna Holaday, Newburyport Mayor	Jim Terlizzi, MVPC

Agenda Item No.1: Call to Order

Mr. Woelfel called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm and asked all attendees to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item No. 2: Opportunity for Public Comment

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any members of the public present who wished to speak to the MVMPO. No one came forward to do so.

**Agenda Item No.3: Adoption of Minutes of the November 29, 2017
MVMPO Meeting**

Vote: There was a motion to approve the November 29, 2017 MVMPO meeting minutes. ***The motion to accept the November 29, 2017 minutes was seconded and approved.***

Agenda Item No.4: Status of FFYs 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

a. Status of TIP Roadway and Bridge Projects

Ms. Raphael updated the MVMPO on the status of the following FFYs 2018-2022 TIP projects:

2018

- Lawrence/North Andover – Resurfacing of Route 114: Design is at 75%. The scope has changed and will be addressed in Agenda Item #6. The project is scheduled to be advertised in February 2018.
- North Andover – Intersection at Route 125 and Mass Ave: Design is at 75%.
- Andover – Stormwater Improvements at Rte 28/Route 495 in Andover, Lowell and Chelmsford: Design is at 25%.
- Salisbury – Borders to Boston Rail Trail: Design is at 75%.
- Haverhill – I-495 Bridges over the Merrimack River: Project was advertised January 13, 2018. Proposals are due March 28, 2018. Notice to proceed is expected in June 2018.

2019 - 2022

- Groveland – Community Trail – The 75% Design Plans have been submitted to MassDOT for review. The trail is narrower due to the turtle issue.
- Haverhill – Bradford Rail Trail – the 25% Design Plans have been submitted to MassDOT for review.

b. Status of TIP Transit Projects

Mr. Costanzo updated the MVMPO on the status of the following FFYs 2018-2022 TIP projects:

2018

- Replace eight (8) model year 2012 engines with rebuilt engines
- Replace one (1) supervisory vehicle
- Six buses will be delivered in June 2018
- Starting next year (i.e. FFY 2020), bus replacements will be discussed every year through FFYs 2029

Agenda Item No. 5: Discussion and Potential Action to Approve Proposed FFYs 2018-2022 TIP - Amendment #2 (Tabled at November 29, 2017 Meeting)

MVPC's Anthony Komornick noted that there is a pending proposed TIP amendment for a project to replace the superstructure of the Route 114 bridge over the Shawsheen River in Lawrence. The project would be added to the FFY 2022 element of the existing TIP. The City of Lawrence had commented that this bridge needed to be replaced with a wider structure and had requested that the proposed TIP amendment should be approved and MassDOT should pursue obtaining the additional funding needed to change the project from a superstructure replacement to a bridge replacement.

Frank Suszynski further elaborated that the superstructure replacement project for this bridge was proposed by the Bridge Maintenance section using District 4's annual Federal Aid allotment (\$2.2m). Currently 15% of the bridge decks in the state are Structurally Deficient and need attention. FHWA has a threshold at 10% so MassDOT is focusing its bridge funding to reducing the square footage of Structurally Deficient deck surface which is the reason for proposing the replacement of the superstructure of this bridge. The Bridge Engineer has stated that failure of the bridge it is not imminent. This project was an effort to try to reduce some Structural Deficient square footage, which is a performance management goal. MassDOT is comfortable with the bridge inspection reports and is confident that the bridge can be kept in satisfactory condition beyond FFY 2022.

The MPO's Corridor Study from 2010 indicates not only that this bridge should be widened but that the connecting roadway should be widened as well. This would be the second phase of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the study, with the first phase improvements now under design and the project appearing in the TIP.

Since the project description as a superstructure replacement is not the correct description for the project being requested by the MPO and the funding source is neither appropriate or sufficient, Mr. Suszynski recommended that the proposed bridge project be dropped. The District is now looking to upgrade the Structurally Deficient deck for another bridge for FFY 2022.

The MPO would have to use its own target funding to move forward with the superstructure replacement project or larger projects to build a wider bridge and wider section of Route 114 as identified in the Route 114 Corridor Study. MassDOT is not ready to commit to these latter options because the necessary funding is not available but would support them were funding to become available.

Carlos Jaquez of Lawrence asked about the current condition of the bridge deck and Mr. Suszynski replied that it is currently rated a 4 and should be OK for another 4-5 years with routine maintenance. If that was not the case and the bridge showed a need for more frequent repairs, the Department would recommend proceeding with the superstructure replacement project.

Mr. Woelfel stated that the MVMPO should consider the need to move forward with the second phase of the Route 114 Corridor improvements that would include the construction of a new, wider bridge at this location and the widening of Route 114 during the upcoming FFYs 2019-2023 TIP development process.

Vote: *There was a motion and a second to remove Project #608852 (Lawrence-Replace Superstructure of Bridge L-04-021 Route 114 over Shawsheen River from Amendment #2. **The motion was unanimously approved.***

Agenda Item No. 6: Discussion and Potential Action to Approve Proposed Adjustment to FFYs 2018-2022 TIP

(Reduce Total Federal Participating Cost shown for Lawrence-North Andover-Resurfacing and Related work on Route 114 (#608809) in FFY 2018)

Mr. Komornick requested the MPO's approval to make an administrative adjustment to the federal funding amount shown for this project in the FFYs 2018-2022 TIP. The estimated construction cost of this project is now \$2,123,453 which is much lower than the \$8,722,560 amount shown in the FFY 2018 element of the current TIP. He noted that this change could be made by the MPO through an administrative action and not a full TIP amendment since the estimated cost of the project was being reduced and the project advertising date was remaining the same.

Vote: *There was a motion and a second to make the adjustment on the FFYs 2018-2022 TIP as stated. **The motion was unanimously approved.***

Agenda Item No.7: Development of Draft FFYs 2019-2023 TIP / Draft FFY 2019 UPWP

Mr. Komornick reported that the Draft FFYs 2019-2023 TIP is in the beginning stages of being updated with information provided by MassDOT. TIP Readiness Day will be held in February 2018 at which time the MPO will review and discuss the status of each project that could potentially appear in the document. A list of TIP projects will be ready for the next MPO meeting in February. Following TIP Readiness Day, these projects will be re-evaluated and scored using the MPO's Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria.

A draft of the MVMPO's FFY 2019 UPWP will be developed concurrently with the FFYs 2019-2023 TIP. Local officials and MPO Stakeholders will be contacted and provided the opportunity to suggest analyses and studies they would like to see included in the document. Both the Draft FFY 2019 UPWP and the FFYs 2019-2023 TIP are scheduled to be released for public Review and Comment in April and approved by the MVMPO in May.

Agenda Item No. 8: Discussion of MassDOT and MVMPO Safety Performance Targets

As a follow-up to Derek Krevat's presentation of MassDOT's Safety Performance Measure Targets at the last MPO meeting, Mr. Komornick presented information on how the MVMPO region stacks up against other regions in the state on these Safety Performance Measures as well as the statewide trends for these measures.

In his PowerPoint presentation, he noted that overall the Merrimack Valley is doing quite well in comparison to the other regions in the state in terms of its fatal crash rate and rate of incapacitating injuries. However, he noted that the rate of decline for these measures was lower than the rate being used by the state to establish its Safety Performance Measure Targets for 2014-2018. This was likely due to a higher proportion of travel in the MVMPO region being carried on Interstate highways compared to other parts of the state. These roadways are generally safer than arterials and collector roads.

Despite these differences, it would be more time consuming and costly for the Merrimack Valley to establish its own Safety Performance Targets and to track and report on how well the MPO is doing in meeting these targets. He recommended that the MPO endorse using MassDOT's Safety Performance Targets instead.

Vote: *There was a motion and a second to endorse the state target trendlines. The motion was unanimously approved.*

Agenda Item No. 9: Other

MVPC's Betsy Goodrich reported that Bicycle parking program is continuing. More information can be found on the MVPC website, including a list of participating vendors that provide bicycle parking at a discounted rate.

Mr. Woelfel announced that the Draft State Rail Plan should be released on Friday and that there will be a public meeting on the document held on Monday in Worcester.

Agenda Item No. 10: Adjourn

Vote: *There was a motion to adjourn at 12:45pm. **The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.***