



**MINUTES**

**Thursday – October 19, 2017**

- 1. Call to Order** - Chairwoman Park called the meeting to order at 7:00pm
- 2. Roll Call** –Secretary Ramsdell called the roll and declared a quorum present. The following Commissioners and Staff were in attendance:

**Commissioners**

Boxford	Jim Barnes, Treasurer
Georgetown	John Cashell
Groveland	Robert Arakelian
Haverhill	April Der Boghosian
Lawrence	Theresa Park, Chairwoman
Methuen	Kevin Hagerty
Newbury	John Weis
Newburyport	Ed Ramsdell, Secretary
Rowley	Joe Perry
Salisbury	Lou Masiello
Rep-at-Large	Brad Buschur

**Staff**

Karen Conard, Executive Director  
 Joe Cosgrove, Environmental Program Manager  
 Tony Komornick, Transportation Program Manager  
 Mike Parquette, Economic Development Program Manager  
 Jen Dunlap, Finance Administrator  
 Nancy Lavallee, Office Administrator  
 Jim Terlizzi, Sr. Transportation Engineer

**Guest Speaker – Melissa Cryan – Grant Program Supervisor**  
**Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs**  
**Guest - Nabil Boghos, Jessica’s Bakery**

**3. Adoption of September Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were reviewed and recommended for adoption.

***Vote:* There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Hagerty to approve the September meeting minutes. The September minutes were unanimously approved.**

**4. Adoption of the September Warrant**

Treasurer Jim Barnes reported that the September warrant was reviewed favorably and recommended the Commission’s authorization for adoption.

***Vote:* There was a motion by Commissioner Hagerty and second by Commissioner Weis. The September warrant was unanimously approved.**

## 5. Chairwoman's Report

Chairwoman Theresa Park reported on the following activities since the last meeting in October.

- Welcome our newest Commissioner from the Town of Merrimac, replacing John Thomas is Mr. Keith Pollman. Welcome Keith!
- This evening, we are joined by Nabil Boghos of Jessica's Brick Oven and Melissa Cryan from the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Welcome and we look forward to hearing from you momentarily! Our topic of discussion this evening will be a review of the CEDS Process and we will hear what the staff has been up to in preparation for the 2018 update.
- FYI the Personnel Committee is meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup> at noon to discuss performance evaluations. Thanks to Bob Snow and Kevin Hagerty for serving with me on this effort.
- Looking ahead to the next few meetings, we plan to hear from Tony Komornick and his team at the November Commission meeting on the subject of Complete Streets and Performance Measures as being redefined by the federal and state powers that be. In December, we will enjoy a holiday dinner that will be a Chinese buffet in honor and appreciation of our outgoing Commissioner and friend Bob Lavoie and we will see a preview of the GIS Department's Regional Open Space Plan Storymap. In January, we will hear from Northern Essex Community College President Lane Glenn on the topic of Workforce Development, and in February we will talk about the recently wrapped up year-long Regional Housing Plan effort conducted by Mike Parquette and Angie Vincent with an assist from the entire staff.

## 6. Executive Director

Executive Director Karen Conard reported on the following activities since the last meeting in September.

### Meetings with Community Leaders

- October MARPA meeting topics are scheduled to include 2018 DLTA programming, MA Global Warming Solutions regulations update for the reduction of Greenhouse Gases and the FY18 Planning Assistance Grants offered by the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
- Priority Development Area (PDA) Task Force Meeting #2
- Internal bi-weekly meetings to support the Regional Housing Plan (Conard, Parquette, Vincent and Whitten)
- Round 2 of Community Housing Workshops (goals and strategies conversation) in Newburyport, Lawrence, Methuen and Newbury. The remaining workshops will take place before Thanksgiving
- Submitted a grant in collaboration with the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments for the Affordable Access Regional Coordination funding
- Attended Georgetown Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss the disposition of a municipally owned property along with MassDevelopment and the MA Office of Business Development
- CEDS Meeting – focus was on natural resources, held at the Firehouse Theater in downtown Newburyport
- Harry Korslund, SVP Commercial Lending at Haverhill Bank regarding multiple economic development opportunities
- Amazon HQ2 team participation: tour of the five communities (Andover, North Andover, Haverhill, Lawrence and Methuen) with consultants, assisting with data, reviewing drafts of material to be submitted (both written and video)
- Regional Open House #2 in support of our Regional Housing Plan – over 85 attendees at Barking Dog in downtown Haverhill
- Attended Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) training at NECC
- Attended a bidders' conference in advance of the FY18 Planning Assistance Grant submission (October 23<sup>rd</sup>)

- Interviewed with Chairwoman Park and Tony Komornick with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Panel studying the benefits of a North-South Rail Link
- Hosted the monthly DPW Directors Meeting, with topics including an Illicit Discharge Detection Model Project (Microbial Source Tracker Tool) presentation by Geosyntec and sidewalk inventory/conditions analysis conversation as it related to grant opportunities and the Regional Transportation Plan
- Attended the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce's Annual Dinner with Governor Charlie Baker as guest speaker/Lane Glenn as honored guest
- Attended the Emmaus Annual Giving Event at NECC
- Hosted Pictometry training sessions at NECC, both of which were "sold out"; a webinar is planned for later this month
- Met with UMass Lowell Innovation Hub officials to discuss ways to partner
- Hosted a training with the MA Office of Technical Assistance and Training on Chemical Safety and Community Resilience at NECC
- Reviewed performance evaluations and in process of preparing my comments and salary recommendations

### **Coming Attractions**

- 10/24 – Quarterly Meeting of the MVWIB
- 10/24 - Press Event for our EDA Lawrence Textile Innovation Grant
- 10/24 – Andover Housing Workshop #2
- 10/25 – October MVMPO Meeting
- 10/27 – MVCC Public Safety Presentation with all area Police and Fire Chiefs
- 10/27 – Lawrence Partnership Meeting
- 10/30 – Boxford Housing Workshop #2
- 11/1 – Monthly DPW Directors Meeting
- 11/6 – Groveland Housing Workshop #2
- 11/8 – Rowley Housing Workshop #2
- 11/9 – Personnel Committee Meeting
- 11/13 - Citizen Training Planning Collaborative (CTPC) session: Roles and Responsibilities of Planning and Zoning Boards
- 11/13 – Amesbury Housing Workshop #2
- 11/14 – West Newbury Housing Workshop #2
- 11/15 – Stormwater Management Presentation for all 15 member communities: Chief Elected/Appointed Officials, DPW Directors, Engineers and Water/Sewer Superintendents
- 11/15 – North Andover Housing Workshop #2

### **Merrimack Valley Mayors & Managers Coalition (MVMMC)**

- Numerous meetings and phone calls regarding the Amazon HQ2 RFP
- Andover hosted our October Mayors and Managers Meeting, with guest speaker Secretary of Administration and Finance Michael Heffernan
- November's meeting is a session on Stormwater Management – 11/15 at NECC
- December's meeting will be about the branding and marketing effort

### **Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System**

MVPC, along with 6 other RPAs, received a letter from the Retirement systems stating that after 42 years of being members of the State retirement system, MVPC is now required to contribute to the system. MARPA has appointed Janet Pierce, the Executive Director of CMRPC, to represent them on the committee required in the 2016 budget to resolve this issue.

## **UPDATE:**

We presented to Nick Favorito (State Retirement Board) and A&F Undersecretary Jennifer Sullivan on August 15th at the MARPA meeting to present further information educating them on our uniqueness and fiscal challenges. The next meeting of the working group was set for September 7<sup>th</sup>. It was subsequently cancelled with no rescheduled date offered as of yet. **(still true as of 10/19/17)**

### **7. Guest Speaker: Melissa Cryan, Grant Programs Supervisor, Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs**

Ms. Cryan gave a very informative presentation to the Commission regarding the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) that is updated every five years. She explained that the purpose for SCORP is to find out what communities want to see in their state and recreation parks that could be provided through grant funding known as LWCF (Land and Water Conservation Fund). The Commissioners are very interested in the Plan and shared what their communities would like to see. The most trending in communities are rail trails, their impact with conservation land, can MassDOT/MVPC tap into the funding, easements, water trails along the Merrimack River, maintenance, handicap access relative to paved areas for power chairs and baby strollers, workout stations, bicycle repair stations, concerns about safety during hunting season. Ms. Cryan left the Commissioners with a positive note that most of their concerns could be considered within the scope of the funding. She will send Karen Conard, MVPC Executive Director, a list of land and water properties relative to trails in the Merrimack Valley.

### **8. Welcome and Acknowledgement – Nabil Boghos, Jessica’s Brick Oven**

Mike Parquette, Comprehensive Planning Manager, updated the Commissioners on the Merrimack Valley Economic Development (MVED) Revolving Loan Fund program. He introduced the owner of Jessica’s Brick Oven, one of MVED’s clients, Mr. Nabil Boghos. Mr. Boghos thanked the Commissioner’s for the opportunity to speak and thanked them for the financing provided his company. The funds provided have greatly helped with needed capital to buy equipment and supply working capital that helped increase production of his product and create many local jobs for the region. Mr. Boghos addressed the commission telling how he started in the bakery business working in his family’s business, Joseph’s Mid-East bakery in Lawrence. Mr. Boghos decided to go out on his own and in 2008 acquired Jessica’s Brick Oven Bakery located in Woburn. He moved the company to Osgood Landing in North Andover in 2009. When Jessica’s first started selling organic bread to Market Basket it was at a rate of 147 loaves per month. He now sells over 136,000 loaves per month to Market Basket. He also sells to other food chains such as Trader Joe’s, Hannaford, Costco, and Whole Foods. Mr. Boghos also discussed his marketing and distribution efforts and how he teams with other local food product companies for the economy of scale it provides. Jessica’s will be moving from North Andover to Methuen in 2018 and the company being purchased by Mr. Boghos for which MVED is providing financing, HP Cookie, will be manufacturing the product at the Methuen location. Mr. Boghos is looking forward to moving to the new location in Methuen, which is the former Dannon Yogurt facility.

Mr. Boghos noted that he has a 25-28% turnover of employees during the summer months with employees leaving for higher paying jobs. They often return in the winter months but the turnover rate is problematic. Also, employees are faced with lack of direct public transportation getting to work and need to rely on family or other employees to carpool. MVPC’s Transportation Program Manager, Tony Komornick, offered to look into public transportation options available to the Methuen location. Most employees who work at Jessica’s are from Haverhill and Lawrence.

When asked how Jessica's Brick Oven got its name and Nabil replied that the original owner's daughter died in an unfortunate and tragic automobile accident at a young age and he named it after her – Jessica.

## 9. Contracts

The following Contracts and Proposals request the authorization of the Commission.

- **\$70,000 - Economic Development Administration Annual Partnership Planning Grant** - This is the second year of a three-year grant which is used to develop and implement the Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and to pay the salary of MVPC's Economic Development Planner.
- **\$40,765 - Economic Development Administration Planning Assistance Grant** - Lawrence Textile Innovation Center Feasibility Study - This grant will be used to determine the feasibility of developing a Textile Innovation Center in Lawrence. MVPC has partnered with Salem State University in this effort.
- **\$3,000 (no match) - City of Lawrence Mobile Parks Inspector**- The funds will be used for MVPC's GIS staff to develop and host a mobile application to facilitate the inventory of City parks in Lawrence.
- **\$60,750 - Regional services provider subgrant agreement with the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs** - For the FY18 North Shore work plan of the MassBays National Marine Estuary Program.
- **\$45,000 - Municipal Energy Technical Assistance grant from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for FY18 Green Communities Program** - Planning/technical assistance with communities of Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen, Newbury, North Andover, Salisbury and West Newbury.
- **HP Cookie RLF Loan** - Comprehensive Planning Manager Mike Parquette asked the Commission to ratify the loan made recently to HP Cookie, a company based in Everett purchased recently and now co-owned by Nabil Boghos, owner of Jessica's Brick Oven in North Andover. Mr. Parquette explained the details of the \$250,000 loan to the Commission last month, the loan has been made, and ratification of said loan is requested. Mr. Boghos' presentation earlier this evening also explained this new addition to his business operations. A motion was made by Mr. Barnes to approve the loan, it was seconded by Mr. Weiss, and the Commission voted unanimously to approve a loan in the amount of \$250,000 to HP Cookie."

**Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Hagerty and second by Commissioner Barnes. The above-mentioned contracts were unanimously approved.**

## 10. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

Angela Vincent, MVPC's Economic Development Planner, presented a PowerPoint updating the Commissioners on all the activity that has taken place with development of the CEDS.

## 11. Local and Regional Issues

Brad Buschur, Rep-at-Large, announced that there is a Placemaking Happy Hour fund raising event on Nov 8<sup>th</sup> at El Taller in Lawrence. The Mass Development Program will match dollar for dollar up to \$50,000 for a placemaking project. The City of Lawrence is looking to change the Façade of the Buckley Transportation Center with this funding.

The EOEAA grant for a sidewalk inventory and analysis will be submitted on Monday, October 23. This includes the cities/towns of Amesbury, Andover, Georgetown, Lawrence, North Andover, Methuen, and Salisbury.

12. Other

**13. Adjourn**

**There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Der Boghosian 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 October 19, 2017.

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Ed Ramsdell, Secretary