



MINUTES

Thursday – September 17, 2015

- 1. Call to Order** - Chairman Byers 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

Amesbury	Robert Lavoie
Haverhill	April Derboghosian
Merrimac	John Thomas
Methuen	Kevin Hagerty
Newbury	John Weis
Newburyport	Ed Ramsdell
North Andover	Richard Byers, Chairman
Rowley	Robert Snow
Salisbury	Lou Masiello
West Newbury	Brian Murphey
Rep-At-Large	Brad Buschur

Alternate Commissioner

North Andover	Jean Enright
---------------	--------------

Staff

Dennis DiZoglio, Executive Director
Anthony Komornick, Transportation Program Manager
Joe Cosgrove, Environmental Program Manager
Mike Parquette, Comprehensive Planning Program Manager
Jen Dunlap, Finance Administrator
Nancy Lavallee, Office Administrator

3. Adoption of May Meeting Minutes

The May minutes were reviewed and recommended for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Weis and second by Commissioner Murphey to authorize the May Minutes. The May Minutes were unanimously approved.

4. Warrants for May, June, July and August

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

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

- Treasurer Robert Snow reported that the June 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 June warrant was unanimously approved.

- Treasurer Robert Snow reported that the July warrant was reviewed favorably and recommended the Commission's authorization for adoption.

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

- Treasurer Robert Snow reported that the August warrant was reviewed favorably and recommended the Commission's authorization for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Murphey and second by Commissioner Ramsdell. The August warrant was unanimously approved.

5. Chairman's Report

Chairman Richard Byers reported on the following activities since the last meeting.

- As you know MVPC traditionally holds its Regional Planning Day event in June. You may recall we did not hold the event this year due to our inability to get a commitment from the new Administration to come and speak about their Community Compact Initiative. Over the summer we worked with the Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce to hold a summit on the benefits and potential of using the Merrimack River as a catalyst for the development of the region. The event entitled "Rising with the Tides" will be held on October 16th at the Roma in Haverhill. I have included an agenda in your packet. Because it is a Chamber sponsored event they will be charging for the breakfast and admission. If any Commissioners are interested in attending please let Nancy know and she will sign you up as an attendee.
- At our last meeting we confirmed Dennis' Appointment of Heidi Murphy as our new Economic Development Coordinator. I want to welcome Heidi who is here tonight and wish her good luck.
- Nancy has updated the Commissioner handbooks and she has created new binders with all updated information including the Commissioner list, MVPC Staff Directory and Org Chart, and the Conflict of Interest Section. There are no Personnel changes; therefore there is no need to authorize the changes. For those who already have 3 ring binders 3 hole punch copies are also available.
- As you know MVPC has a facebook page and we have been using it to keep folks in the region abreast of our activities and issues facing the region. We are taking actions to expand our use of this social media and if you are a user of facebook please consider friending us. If you have anything you would like to post please let Nancy know.
- MVPC also has a Twitter account - @MVPCPlanning

6. Director's Report

Executive Director Dennis DiZoglio reported on the following MVPC activities since the last meeting.

Meetings with Community Leaders

- On April 28th I attended the WIB quarterly meeting as well as the planning committee meetings on April 21st and May 19th. At the May 19th meeting I introduced the CEDS workforce development objective, which was well received and it was decided to forward it on to the full Board for consideration.
- On April 21st Staff and I met with MassDOT officials regarding Title VI compliance.
- On April 24th I attended the monthly MARPA meeting

- On April 27th Staff and I met with MassDevelopment and EOHEd officials regarding the TA connector, an effort to coordinate technical assistance from the state and the RPAs.
- On April 30th I attended the Asset Management Advisory Council meeting in Boston.
- On May 5th I meet with Noah Koretz, the new Transformative Development Fellow assigned by MassDevelopment to assist Haverhill on the revitalization of Merrimack Street in Downtown as a gateway community. I offered office space to MassDevelopment to forge a partnership with this effort.
- On May 8th I attended the semi-annual meeting of the MVEDC. Secretary Jay Ash was the guest speaker.
- On May 12th we held our quarterly regional planners meeting. We discussed the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the potential to work together to use of the Merrimack River as the natural resource to promote economic development, recreation and tourism.
- On May 15th I attended the Harbor Place leasing announcement as well as the Transformative Development partnership with MassDevelopment and Mass Technology Collaborative. Our offer to house the Fellow was acknowledged.
- On May 20th I represented MVPC at the MPO meeting.

Regional Planning Day (RPD)

- As you know we usually hold our annual RPD event in June. Unfortunately we have not had any confirmation from the new administration as to their participation. As you may recall we had hoped to do the event to launch the administration's Community Compacts initiative. Because of this delay we have decided not to hold our RPD this June. We are currently exploring the idea of a RPD in September in partnership with the area chambers and the Greater Haverhill Foundation to promote the Merrimack River initiative discussed at the regional planners meeting. Tentative title for the event "Rising with the Tides"

Merrimack Valley Mayors & Managers Coalition (MVMMC)

- At the May 6th DPW meeting we continued to focused on the new EPA stormwater draft regulations and our regional stormwater collaborative effort. We had as a guest speaker Tim Chorey, Mass Department of Fish and Game, Stream Continuity Specialist. Tim discussed the permitting guidelines for constructing culverts.
- Ameresco, the region's ESCO provider has completed projects in Merrimac, North Andover and Lawrence. Salisbury is under construction. Methuen and Haverhill are adjusting their programs to deal with the net school spending issues. Methuen has expanded their program to include retrofitting their streetlights. Lawrence is considering a second phase and the Greater Lawrence Technical High School has started an IGA.
- Electric aggregation is moving forward with Newburyport, Haverhill and Methuen.

Legion Condo

- Unfortunately I have to report that the building suffered another break in this month. The alarm did its job in that nothing was taken and the perpetrator was arrested however not before he broke a window at RAM Engineering and our window to gain access. In our victim statement we are requesting restitution and hope to be reimbursed for our costs. The pre trial hearing is scheduled for June 9th.

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. A meeting was held with the State retirement Board and MARPA. Corrective legislation has been drafted and I met with Representative Dempsey seeking his help. Representative Dempsey office is recommending that we engage the administration in this discussion. I had a good discussion with Eric Rebello, ANF budget Director, who will take it up with in-house Counsel.

Executive Director DiZoglio also noted an upcoming event for Communities at Holy Cross on November 12, sponsored by MARPA and geared to inform communities about the Community Compact Initiative from the BAker/Polito Administration.

7. Contracts

- **Amesbury**
 - A contract to update the zoning dataset and creation of open space maps for \$4,750
 - A contract for the development of GIS data supporting their DPW and the production/operation of a mobile application to assist their inventory of water system features for \$12,200
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$1,500
- **Andover**
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$4,000
- **Georgetown**
 - A contract to prepare their annual parcel update for \$6,000
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$3,000
- **Groveland**
 - A contract to update their parcel mapping for \$1,250
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$1,500
- **Haverhill**
 - A contract for \$1,000 to extend of their existing mobile recycling application for 6 months
- **Lawrence**
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$1,500
- **Merrimac**
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$1,500
- **Methuen**
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$2,000
- **Newbury**
 - A contract to update their parcel mapping and Annual MIMAP subscription for \$4,000
- **Newburyport**
 - A contract to conduct a GPS data collection project of the Plum Island sewer system for \$10,800
- **North Andover**
 - A contract to update their parcel mapping for \$6,800
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$3,000
- **Salisbury**
 - Annual MIMAP contract for \$1,500
- **West Newbury**
 - A contract to update their parcel mapping and Annual MIMAP subscription for \$4,000
- Social media has become a useful and effective way to interact with the public and our stakeholders to advance our policy initiatives. To successfully take advantage of this new communication tool we are proposing a contract with Angela Vincent, Sustainability Planner, to develop a social media Strategy and train staff on how to implement the strategy. She will be compensated at \$35/hour for a maximum amount of \$5,500.
- As part of our coastal preservation management program we have secured the services of Geoffrey Walker at \$50/hour to help remove Phragmites for the Great Marsh up to a maximum of \$20,000.
- As part of our partnership to implement the Sandy Grant awarded last year we need to renew the annual contract with the Office of Coastal Zone Management funding our role as the Regional Service Provider for the MassBays National Estuary Program for \$60,750.

- A contract with Boxford for Stormwater Management Plan Development with Boxford for \$15,000
- A contract with Fish & Game Grant Agreement for the Great Marsh Restoration and Coastal Resiliency work for Plum Island for \$79,514.
- Renew Annual Contract with EDA that funds MVPC's Economic Development Coordinator for \$70k

Vote: Commissioner Lavoie made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned contracts as presented. Commissioner Hagerty seconded the motion. The contracts were unanimously approved.

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

VALLEY SUPPORT TEAM

Methuen: An Urban Land Institute - Technical Assistance panel comprised of experts in the fields of architecture, development, design, planning, and transportation convened on June 18 for an all day study of downtown Methuen. The panel's final report, which will be available soon, will address issues of marketing, planning and design, feasibility and financing, and management and implementation. The panel interviewed Dennis and Mike Parquette. Also, Methuen has decided to pursue a 40R District for the downtown, and we have been assisting them with an application for funding through the PATH program to secure funds to complete the application and create the zoning for the district. We have also been asked to update the housing section of their Master Plan and analyze their housing needs and conditions - a requirement for the 40R application.

Merrimac: We have entered into a contract with Merrimac to prepare for them a Housing Production Plan. A previous Plan was completed in 2010, prior to new census data being available. A "housing needs assessment" has been completed over the summer and reviewed by the Affordable Housing Trust. A full draft of the Plan will be completed in October.

Groveland: Mike met with Groveland officials (Assessor, Fire Chief, Planning Board members, and a Select Board member) to discuss permitting issues. A proposal to Groveland to develop a Permitting Guide was developed and we entered into a contract in June. A draft Guide was developed over the summer and submitted to the Town for their review. We await their comments and questions on the draft and plan to meet again on October 20th.

DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH/MAPC GRANT - Worked with Betsy and Todd to prepare a grant application for funds to incorporate "health initiatives" into a current project or study. We were successful in receiving \$8,000 to prepare a public health planning template for integrating healthy housing principles into Housing Production Plans. This project was completed by the end of June, and Mike presented the study at a public forum at CMRPC in Worcester on July 16th.

MVED - On July 15, MVED closed on a loan in the amount of \$115,000 to Janitech, Inc., a janitorial services business headquartered in Methuen with a satellite office in Nashua, NH. Janitech provides nightly service to 125 customers with over 8.5 million square feet of commercial space. The client base varies from corporate headquarters, high tech manufacturers, medical facilities, R&D facilities, and educational institutions. Operations include janitorial services, cleaning, floor stripping and refinishing, carpet cleaning, flood response, window cleaning, and window restoration. Janitech employs 234 people. This loan is subordinate debt to the primary lender, United Growth Capital. They provided \$650,000. This financing will provide a restructuring of debt that will increase cash flow and increase profitability, thus allowing the company to grow.

MERRIMACK VALLEY MEANS BUSINESS/EDA GRANT - As reported earlier, we submitted a grant application to EDA to obtain funds for updating and marketing the MVMB website which has been a goal of the Mayor's/Manager's Coalition. We were not successful with the grant, and are seeking other funding avenues. Heidi has been working to keep the website populated with all the commercial/industrial properties in the region listed for sale or lease.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT - Heidi has developed an "economic development toolkit" on the MVPC website. The goal is for it to be a resource for not only our member communities, but hopefully for municipalities throughout the commonwealth to utilize. Instead of having to wade through and research numerous state agencies, the goal is to find everything at the MVPC.org website. Heidi is not simply linking to other sites, but will have examples of approved applications and grants or regulations on our website.

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) - On June 1st, MVPC submitted a CEDS update document to the U.S. Economic Development Administration. We are required to do this annually. The update highlights initiatives from the past year to support the Commission-approved five year CEDS, such as our industry cluster analysis, Valley Support Team, continued regional Brownfields assistance, reviving our Merrimack Valley Means Business marketing effort, and new Census data from the latest American Community Survey. The updated Strategy was approved by the EDA.

EDA PLANNING GRANT (2015 Federal Assistance for a Partnership Planning Program Investment) - On June 12th we submitted our annual EDA Planning grant application. This year was the third year of a 3-year grant award. The new application was approved, and we executed a new contract in July.

CITIZEN PLANNER TRAINING COLLABORATIVE, 2015 - On October 26 MVPC will host a CPTC workshop titled - "**Site Plan Review**". This course explains the difference between site plan approval and special permits; the review process; the types of conditions a board may impose; reasons for disapproval; the appeal process and the types of information a town can require to be shown on a site plan. On November 16 MVPC will host "**The Next Chapter of 40B - Targeted Training for Board Members**". Topics will include the following: reviewing the initial application for compliance with 40B eligibility and submission requirements; noticing and conducting the required public hearing; scheduling a site visit; retaining Peer Review consultants; securing sufficient project information to make an informed decision; holding deliberation sessions; drafting and issuing the Comprehensive Permit decision; and managing the Comprehensive Permit. The course will be taught by past and present Zoning Board members familiar with the 40B review process through their prior direct 40B experiences. The curriculum has been prepared by a team of 40B experts led by the Citizens Housing and Planning Association's 40B Training Committee in cooperation with CPTC.

MEETINGS -

- June 4 - Met with consultants for Merrimack Street redevelopment project
- June 16 - Met with Lower Acre neighborhood organizer
- June 18 - Methuen ULI Technical Assistance Panel
- June 23 - MVMMC met in Newburyport
- July 9 - MEMA Grant Debriefing
- July 14 - Leah Zambernardi, West Newbury Planner
- July 16 - CMRPC - "Housing and Health" study presented
- July 23 - Merrimac Affordable Housing Trust/Board of Selectmen
- July 28- Chris Lombard - RLF Debriefing
- August 19 - Dennis, Heidi, and Mike met with Congressman Moulton's staff
- August 26 - MVMMC met in Amesbury
- September 9 - Deb Webster - Groveland
- September 10 - Merrimac Affordable Housing Trust
- September 15 - EPA, Habitat for Humanity, SAK Environmental, Joe Cosgrove
- September 16 - Town Administrators/Finance Directors, Dennis
- September 17 - CoStar, Dennis, Heidi

Environmental Program Update

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

Merrimack Valley DPW/Stormwater Collaborative:

- Launched www.merrimackvalleystormwater.org website tool providing stormwater management public education resources and community information updates.
- Water quality monitoring probe equipment available for member communities.
- FY15 CIC grant closeout for funding awarded first year support of Collaborative. Grant provided organizational support, training workshops;
- Statewide Stormwater Coalition of regional groups is being organized with MassDEP facilitation. Initial meeting held June 23rd and second meeting held afternoon Sept. 17th in Worcester.
- Work scope in development for Town of Boxford Stormwater Management Plan program.
- EPA reports that it intends to issue final MS4 permit for Massachusetts by mid-2016.

Massachusetts Bays Program:

- All Sandy Resiliency Funding subgrants have been executed with Woods Hole Study Group, Boston University, and Massachusetts Audubon Society. Initial progress reporting due to National Wildlife Federation in October.
- FY16 MassBays Work Program approved July 2015 and \$60,750 contract executed with Commonwealth.

Brownfields Program:

- Assessment program extension approved to Sept. 2016.
- RLF Program has received application for financing of petroleum cleanup from Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity for cleanup at 100 Parker Street/Lawrence. Preliminary indication of approval for program eligibility received from MassDEP 9/15/2015.
- Program inquiries received for properties in Amesbury, Haverhill and Newburyport.
- Staff participated in training/workshop at National Brownfields Conference, Aug. 31 to Sept. 4th.
- EPA intends to issue announce funding availability for Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund and Hazard Materials/Petroleum Site Assessment programs later this Fall with application deadlines by end of calendar year.

Open Space & Recreation Plan:

- Boxford Draft Open Space & Recreation Plan recommended for Commonwealth approval as revised/updated.

NorthEast Energy Direct Project--Tennessee Gas/Kinder Morgan Pipeline:

- Prepared GIS mapping and resource impact analysis of proposed Kinder-Morgan lateral lines in Andover and Methuen.
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) extended comment period to October 16th, 2015 on scoping of NEPA environmental review.

Merrimack Valley Region Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan:

- Review comments on February draft document received from FEMA/MEMA. Edits responding to comments are being prepared and revised draft to be completed and submitted.
- Staff participated in 2-day training on MEMA hazard mitigation planning, July 21-22, 2015.

Mr. Cosgrove requested the Commission's authorization for the following:

- NFW (National Fish & Game & Wildlife) Grant Agreement for the Great Marsh Restoration Project and Coastal Resiliency Work on Plum Island for \$79,514
- Contract with Boxford for Stormwater Management Plan and Development Scope

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Hagerty and second by Commissioner Weis to authorize the NFW Grant Agreement and the Boxford Stormwater Management Contract. They were unanimously approved.

Transportation Report Update

MVPC's Transportation Program Manager, Tony Komornick, reported on the following transportation activities.

Merrimack Valley MPO

The MVMPO met in May, June and July and approved the region's **FFYs 2016-2019 TIP, FFY 2016 Regional Transportation Plan, and FFY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program**. Copies of all three documents are available here at MVPC and on the MVPC website.

The MVMPO also approved a series of **transit amendments to the FFYs 2015-2018 TIP** to allow the MVRTA to advance the advertising date for a number of capital improvement projects.

Todd Fontanella is preparing an update to the MVMPO's Public Participation Plan that will be due to MassDOT at the close of 2015, and is working with neighboring MPOs to revisit and update several Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) in accordance with USDOT and MassDOT oversight.

Studies

Jim Terlizzi is working with the Lawrence Police Department to complete the safety analyses needed to conduct a **Road Safety Audit at the intersection of Route 28 (Broadway) and Route 110 (Haverhill Street)**.

Staff also collected Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) counts along Hampshire Street and Amesbury Street in Lawrence as part of the **Downtown Circulation Study**.

Other

Jim participated in the MassDOT Road Safety Audits that were held in Lawrence for the I-495/Route 114 Interchange and the Commonwealth Drive/Marston Street/Ferry Street intersection.

Provided information to MassDOT and participated in CMAQ Review Committee Meeting in support of securing CMAQ funding for the **Park Street/Lawrence Street Intersection** reconstruction project in Lawrence.

Betsy Goodrich completed her work in assisting the City of Haverhill in developing a draft **Complete Streets Policy**. MVPC staff assisted the City in preparing the grant application that secured the funding needed to complete this project.

Betsy also made a presentation on Complete Streets for the Lawrence City staff at the Department of Community Development on June 5th.

Todd completed preparation of the **MVMPO's Title VI Annual Report** activities. This report was submitted to MassDOT in August.

Todd also hosted the **Georgetown Branch Rail Trail Study Advisory Committee** meeting that was held on June 9th.

Provided comments to MassDOT on 25% Design Plans for **Salisbury Rail Trail** project.

Submitted comments to MassDOT on the preliminary findings and recommendations of the **Project Selection Advisory Council**.

Tony and Betsy participated in the **Year One Haverhill Bike/Ped Safety Follow-Up Meeting** with MassBike and WalkBoston that was held at Haverhill City Hall on July 9th. Subsequent to that meeting, Betsy and Tony have been working with the Haverhill City Engineer to identify bike/ped projects that could be completed using funding that is available through MassDOT.

Betsy and Joe attended the **Health and Transportation Workshop** that was held in Worcester on July 16th.

Betsy participated in a walk of the **Spicket River Greenway** in Lawrence that was sponsored by supporters of the **Shawsheen River Greenway** in Andover as a way to promote the continued implementation of that project.

Todd attended the June, July, August and September meetings of the **Merrimack Valley Regional Coordinating Council**. The Council is developing concepts for short videos to educate the public about safe transit, walking, and bicycling that will involve elders, persons with disabilities, and youth in the region. Assisted the City of Haverhill in starting the 2nd year of the **Haverhill Bike/Ped Safety Program**.

Technical Assistance

Met with Haverhill City Engineer John Pettis to discuss proposed changes to the design of the **Bradford Rail Trail** project.

Staff is assisting the Town of Georgetown in identify streets that could be candidates for **Truck Exclusions** in the residential/industrial area located off Tenney Street just west of I-95.

Hosted meeting with consultant team working for the City of Lawrence in developing a **Merrimack Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan**. Todd also attended the presentation made by that consultant team in Lawrence on July 16th.

MVPC completed an analysis of the potential traffic impacts on the Route 1 Rotary and surrounding roadways that would result from build out development under the proposed **40R District in Newburyport**.

Tony and Jerrard Whitten are preparing a scope of services that will allow MVPC to assist the Town of **Newbury** in updating its **Master Plan**. It is anticipated that MVPC will provide mapping services and complete the Transportation Element of the document.

Researched status of **roadways on Plum Island** in Newbury.

Betsy worked with the Mayors Health Task Force in Lawrence through the summer to assist in the planning for and the conduct of the **Ciclovia** that was held on August 2. This included designing the evaluation component of the program. She also assisted in the planning for the second **Ciclovia** that was held in the City on August 29th.

Upcoming Meetings

- DPW Directors Meeting (October 3rd);
- Boston UZA Planning at NMCOC Offices (September 24th);
- MVRTA Advisory Board Meeting (September 24th);
- Merrimack Valley Transportation Committee (October 7th (tentative));
- MVMPO Meeting (Mid October - TBD);
- Moving Together Conference in Boston (November 4th)

8. Local and Regional Issues

Salisbury's Commissioner Lou Masiello invited all to attend the Grand Opening of the new Salisbury Library on Monday September 21. Mr. Masiello added that Salisbury has the building of a new Police Dept.headquarters and commented that the work on the Salisbury State Park Jetty is complete.

Amesbury's Commissioner Robert Lavoie invited all to attend the Ribbon Cutting at Amesbury's Heritage Park in October (no date available)

Amesbury's Commissioner Robert Lavoie made note that there is a lot of construction at Routes 95/110 and Route 150 is all dug up creating traffic issues.

9. Other - None

10. Adjourn

There was a motion and a second to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

I hereby certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission meeting held on September 17, 2015.

Ed Ramsdell, Secretary