

MVMPO August 28, 2024

Voting Members Present

Brian Fallon, representing Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation Monica Tibbits-Nutt
Tim Paris, representing Highway Administrator Johnathan Gulliver
Jen Dunlap, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)
Kassandra Gove, MeVa Board Chair Mayor Kassandra Gove
John Pettis, representing Mayor of Haverhill Melinda Barrett
Daniel McCarthy, representing Mayor of Lawrence
Neil Harrington, representing Region 1
Matt Coogan, representing Region 3
Paul Materazzo, representing Region 4

Others Present

Frank O'Conner, Georgetown
Rebecca Oldham, Groveland
Kathleen Lambert, Haverhill
Rick Taintor, Newburyport
Andrew Shapiro, North Andover
Jerry Klima, Salisbury
Brent Mikael Bergeron, Salisbury
Noah Berger, MeVa
Bonnie Mahoney, MeVa
Alex Loncarevic, VHB
Kirstie Tirandazi, FTA
Tony Collins, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)
Elizabeth Maldari, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)
Jonah Williams, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)
Matt Waitkins, Nashua Regional Planning Commission
Timothy Parris, MassDOT District 4
Miranda Briseño, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Derek Shooster, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning

Item 1. Call to Order

Mr. Fallon called the meeting to order, and Mr. Reed called the roll at 12:00.

Item 2. Public Comment

Mr. Fallon asked if there was any public comment, there were none.

Item 3. Minutes

Mr. Fallow requested a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes. Mr. Pettis made the motion and Mr. Materazzo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 4. FFY2024-2028 TIP Amendment #7: MeVa Update

Mr. Reed introduced the flexed highway funds to be moved to transit project lines. Ms. Mahoney explained that this was due to not having enough flex to cover the match. The amendment covers that. Bookkeeping activity. Provided the match and showed the funds under the transit

Patrick conducted the roll-call vote. The vote passed.

Item 5. Merrimack Valley Vision Zero Plan

Mr. Reed introduced the Merrimack Valley Vision Zero Plan Efforts and Ms. Maldari gave a presentation on MV Vision Zero, the regional safety action plan which included the following points:

- Vision for zero roadway deaths and serious injuries
- Higher demand for active transportation modes.
- How to balance all modalities
- Transition to a vision zero approach. Acknowledge that traffic deaths are preventable
- Humans make mistakes and we must design for human error
- Prevent fatal and serious injuries.
- Systems approach
- Saving lives is not expensive especially the impact that an injury crash has on a community.
- We want to see all different wedges in action
- When they are going around a turn we want to see strategies that mitigate risks
- All part of the safe systems approach.
- Reach as broad of an audience as possible
- Municipal liaison meetings. Crash crowdsource mapping tool. Walk audits gave people a format to participate and get engaged. Discussions with local advocates. Safety by design events – what are we working toward. Illustrate, map, express what they want to work toward. Outreach insight – going to other events. Active transportation committee site visits.
- Engagement – chart showing how those activities relate to components of the action plan.
- Each different type of engagement was associated with our region geographically.
- High Injury Network – trends-based – life changing and fatal injury crashes. Over the time frame there was a fatality in each community and an average of 4 deaths in each community. Vulnerable road users – involved a non-motorist.
- Rated higher in a REJ+ community.
- Risk-based high injury network – random forest model. Average daily volume, road width, posted speed. Estimated design speed based on the speed limit and road width.
- Strategies for safety
- Safe speeds – police staff capacity – both from residents who want more enforcement and from police departments that are understaffed.
- Traffic stop – reduce conflict – enable equitable enforcement

- Advocate for revenue allocation to the region where they were located.
- Economic burden for people that use those roadways the most.
- Automated enforcement eliminates conflict at the traffic stop.
- Safe speeds – chart underscores percent risk at different speeds.
- Safe streets – looking at the design of the street and how we can make them safer for all mode users
- A lot of people express the desire to walk but do not feel comfortable
- Issue of not walking, not teaching their children to walk safely
- Goal is to promote safety of all road users
- Active transportation committee to locate sidewalk gaps
- 2/3s of pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries took place in REJ+ communities.
- Safe Vehicles – buses and trucks and heavier vehicles to improve visibility.
- Not just one part, but all types
- Mirrorless mirrors
- Safe culture – mindset change with advocates an initiative to enhance safety
- Industry speak is not always accessible to everyone.
- Make sure that people who want to be involved have an avenue to participate
- Emphasize the importance of collaboration
- MVPC would be leading this and would implement walk audits
- Safety Data – barriers to accessing the data. Current tools are not accessible to everyone
- Monitor vision zero progress.
- Shared central location for safety data
- Municipal Project Scores – items taken from the engagement.
- Action Item to approve

Mr. Coogan asked about the involvement of engagement from Boxford, since based on the outreach graphic there were no activities listed. Ms. Maldari noted that Boxford was involved with two municipal liaison meetings while and that there was still opportunity to participate. Mr. Coogan also asked if there was potential to adjust lists in the future based on developments in the town. Ms. Maldari affirmed that this was possible.

Mr. Shooster commended work all the hard work on the plan.

Mr. Berger thanked staff for the thorough presentation and noted that it took multiple stakeholders working in partnership and affirmed the need to achieve the goals outlined in the plan.

Mr. Fallon requested a vote to release the plan for the 21-day comment period. Mr. Materazzo made the motion which was seconded by Mayor Gove. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 6. FFY24 UPWP Adjustment #1

Mr. Reed explained that this is a quick adjustment which closes those subtasks and balances the books. He asserted that it was intended to add more funding for public engagement and supportive field services. Mr. Reed also gave a quick overview of the financials and original Budget amounts.

Mr. Fallon requested a motion which was made by Mr. Coogan with a second from Mr. Pettis.

Motion passed unanimously.

Item 7. Technical Assistance Menu

Mr. Reed reminded towns and cities that MVPC is available for technical assistance with programmed staff time and funding.

Item 8. Transportation Improvement Program Project updates

Transit

Mr. Berger announced that Sunday MeVa is moving to the new McGovern station. Mr. Berger highlighted that this is a great opportunity to optimize routing and noted that staff will be stationed at McGovern with added benefits that they now provide service to West Newbury and the west end of Newburyport.

Mr. Berger also noted that in Lawrence, route 6 is the 'health line'; serving Lawrence General and Holy Family hospitals as well as senior housing and health centers.

Mr. Berger also noted that buses will be leaving every 15 minutes and highlighted the soft launch on Sunday of the station, inviting all voting members to attend.

Highway

Tim Paris, the District 4 planner announced changes to MVMPO projects as follows:

- 613092 – name change – 2 to 3 culverts
- 612074 – bridge replacement short street ad date change
- 605305 – Haverhill bridge street ad date change pushed back a month and cost estimates went up 30 million
- 608816 – ad date change and increased project cost
- 608095 – 100% design increase by 12 mil
- 608903 – ad date change by two months and increase of .5 mil
- 610924 - ad date change by 1 month. Minor increase

Item 9. Other business

Mr. Reed noted that next month they plan to vote to close the comment period and endorse the Vision Zero Plan. MVMPO Staff will also present the Active Transportation Plan and vote to open to public comment. Mr. Reed noted that this would be the last meeting before the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Shooster announced that Moving Together is open for registration.

Mr. Materazzo noted the Route 133 Design public hearing.

Mr. Coogan made a movement to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Materazzo.