

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO)

Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, June 23, 2021 – 12:00 p.m.

Attending:

Voting Members:

Dave Mohler, MassDOT, representing MassDOT Acting Secretary Jamey L. Tesler
Frank Suszynski, representing MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver
Jerrard Whitten, MVPC Executive Director
Joe Costanzo, MVRTA Administrator
Pedro Soto, representing the City of Lawrence
John Pettis, representing the City of Haverhill
Neil Harrington, Salisbury, representing MPO Subregion #1
Robert Snow, Rowley, representing MPO Subregion #2
John Cashell, Georgetown, representing MPO Subregion #3

Others Present:

Anthony Komornick, MVPC	Brian Fallon, MassDOT District 4
Mary Kay Beninati, MVPC	Derek Krevat, MassDOT Planning
Betsy Goodrich, MVPC	Derek Shooster, MassDOT Planning
Cassandra Ostrander, FHWA	Jonathan Freeman, MassDOT
Chris Timmel, FHWA	Michelle Ho, MassDOT Planning
Kathleen Lambert, MVRTA	David Langlais, Hoyle Tanner
Alex Loncarevic, VHB	Gus Norrbom, MassDOT Planning
Tim Paris, MassDOT District 4	Joe Johnson, Greenman-Pederson
Jonathan Rockwell, TEC	Chris Stairs, Greenman-Pederson

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order

Dave Mohler called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. stating that the meeting was being held remotely according to the Massachusetts Legislature's extension of the virtual meeting provision of Governor Baker's Executive Order related to the Covid pandemic and asked Anthony Komornick to conduct a roll call vote of members attending the virtual meeting. Mr. Komornick then announced that six members were present (Mr. Harrington, Mr. Soto, and Mr. Cashell joined the meeting soon after the roll call vote).

Agenda Item No. 2: Opportunity for Public Comment

Dave Mohler 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 May 26, 2021 Virtual MVMPO Meeting

Vote: John Pettis motioned to approve the May 26, 2021 MVMPO Meeting Minutes. Neil Harrington seconded the motion.

The motion to accept the May 26, 2021 MVMPO Meeting Minutes passed by a roll call vote of 8 to 0 with 1 Abstention (Jerrard Whitten Abstained; Neil Harrington, Robert Snow and John Cashell had all joined the meeting).

Agenda Item No. 4: Status of Ongoing and FFYs 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Projects

a. Status of TIP Roadway and Bridge Projects

Tim Paris reported the following project updates.

FFY 2021 Projects:

The Groveland Community Trail project cost has changed to \$2.9 million.

Other Projects:

A few anticipated Advertise Dates have changed. The Georgetown/Boxford Border-to-Boston Trail project's Advertise Date is now July 19, 2025. The Methuen Intersection Improvements at Riverside Drive and Burnham Road's Advertise Date is now September 30, 2022. The Haverhill Bridge Replacement of I-495 over the Merrimack River (H-12-040) Advertise Date is now April 6, 2024.

b. Status of Transit Projects

FFY 2021 Projects:

Joe Costanzo reported that in terms of asset replacement we have 16 brand new vans that are being equipped and should be ready in a few weeks. We also have four brand new Type E-2 vans which are also being equipped and will be ready in a few weeks.

Agenda Item No. 5: Discussion and Possible Action to Release Proposed Amendment to MVMPO FFYs 2021-2025 TIP

a. Proposed Amendment to Revise the Estimated Cost of the Route 108/ Route 110 Intersection Project in Haverhill

Tony Komornick stated that at past meetings we have talked about the cost of the Haverhill Intersection Reconstruction at Route 108 and

Route 110 project having increased by almost \$1.4 million, which is more than the \$1.158 million that remains of our unprogrammed FFY 2021 Regional Target funding. MassDOT has the final total project cost. Jonathan Freeman noted that the estimated total project cost is now \$3,376,282.58.

Derek Shooster stated that if the MPO decides to use the remaining Regional Target funds of \$1,158,025 added to the currently programmed \$1,980,067 for a total Regional Target spending of \$3,138,092, then MassDOT will use Statewide funds to cover the \$238,190.58 balance.

Joe Costanzo asked if the project was at 75% design. Jonathan Freeman and John Pettis answered no, it is at Final Design, so the new cost estimate is solid.

Vote: John Pettis motioned to release the proposed amendment to increase the cost of the Haverhill Intersection Reconstruction Route 108 at Route 110 project for Public Review and Comment. Robert Snow seconded the motion.

The motion to release the proposed amendment to increase the cost of the Haverhill Intersection Reconstruction Route 108 at Route 110 project for Public Review and Comment passed by a roll call vote of 8 to 0. (Neil Harrington was not present.)

Agenda Item No. 6: Discussion and Possible Action to Endorse MVMPO's Draft FFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program

Anthony Komornick noted we did receive several comments, both written and as part of the public hearings that were held on June 16th.

Anthony Komornick stated that Joe Costanzo had submitted suggested changes in the language describing the MVRTA Comprehensive Regional Transit Plan. Mr. Costanzo also suggested adding language to the UPWP that describes the status of the MVRTA's Boston Commuter Service, and a new paragraph to replace language contained in Task 4.3 – Transportation Security. All these suggested changes have been made to the final document.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) had several comments as well. These included listing all the voting members of the MVMPO on the UPWP Endorsement Sheet, modifying the requirements for amending or adjusting the UPWP to reflect federal policy, updating the list of MVMPO Studies and Technical Assistance. FHWA also requested that language be added to Task 1.2 – Public

Participation to better describe the development of the MPO's Public Participation Plan, acknowledge the development and adoption of the Percent Non-Single Occupancy Vehicle Travel and transit performance measure targets under Task 2.10 – Performance Measures. These changes have also been incorporated into the document.

From the City of Haverhill, we received a comment saying that the Mayor wants to see more electric charging stations in the city, and that they would like a task in the UPWP to map and coordinate where electric charging stations could/should be installed. Mr. Komornick noted that in Tasks 3.9.7 and 3.9.8 of this UPWP, we will address these two requests.

Another comment was that the city is looking to map more bicycle routes to create safe routes for bicycling. Mr. Komornick said that much of this request will be addressed in the Active Transportation Plan Update, which will be completed later this fiscal year.

The city also noted that it supports the Georgetown and Groveland trails that will connect Haverhill to the Border to Boston Trail. Mr. Komornick noted that the Groveland Community Trail would be advertised for construction later in FFY 2021. He also noted that MassDOT has approved a project that would create a side path along Route 97 that will link the eastern end of the Groveland Community Trail with the Border to Boston Trail, which will pass near downtown Georgetown.

And finally, it was noted that the city is seeking to create an industrial park at the old Haverhill Airport site off Route 108 and to redevelop, the former Haverhill Paperboard site in Bradford, and both sites have access issues that need to be addressed. Mr. Komornick noted that the MVMPO is available to assist the city in identifying and developing options for improving access to these two areas.

Anthony Komornick asked Derek Shooster if the MassDOT checklist needed to be included in the document? Derek replied that the checklist does not need to appear.

Vote: Robert Snow made a motion to endorse the MVMPO's Draft FFY 2022 UPWP. Joe Costanzo seconded the motion.

The motion to endorse the MVMPO's Draft FFY 2022 UPWP passed by a roll call vote of 9 to 0.

Agenda Item No. 7: Discussion and Possible Action to Adopt MassDOT Percent of Non-Single Occupancy Vehicle Travel 2022 Target

Anthony Komornick said that MassDOT has adjusted the 2022 Percent of Non-Single

Occupancy Vehicle Travel target based on new data that became available after the original target was set. The new data indicates that Percent Non-Single Occupant Vehicle Travel was 34.1% in 2017 and 34.6% in 2018. Therefore, MassDOT has revised the 2022 target from 35.1% up to 35.8%.

Anthony Komornick said that technically we do not have to adopt this target because we are an Attainment Area. However, since the MVMPO supports the idea of increasing the percentage of non-single occupancy vehicle travel in the region, we recommend adopting the new 2022 target of 35.8%.

Vote: John Pettis made a motion to Adopt the MassDOT Percent of Non-Single Occupancy Vehicle Travel 2022 Target. Robert Snow seconded the motion.

The motion to Adopt the MassDOT Percent of Non-Single Occupancy Vehicle Travel 2022 Target passed by a roll call vote of 9 to 0.

Agenda Item No. 8: Other

Tony Komornick noted that Betsy Goodrich of MVPC and Elecia Miller, both members of the Lawrence Mayor's Health Task Force, were recipients of the Nikki Tishler Safe Routes to School Award. He said they have done a lot of great work for the City of Lawrence in promoting and implementing the Safe Routes to School program.

Anthony Komornick said the next meeting will be July 28th when we will at least be voting on the TIP Amendment.

Agenda Item No. 9: Adjourn

Vote: Robert Snow made a motion to adjourn the meeting and John Pettis seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously, with no objections, by voice vote.

The meeting was Adjourned at 12:30 pm.