

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO)

Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, November 30, 2022 – 12:00 p.m.

Attending:

Voting Members:

David Mohler, representing MassDOT Secretary Jamey L. Tesler

Brian Fallon, representing MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver

Jerrard Whitten, Executive Director MVPC

Noah Berger, Merrimack Valley Transit

John Pettis, representing Haverhill

Dan McCarthy, representing the City of Lawrence

Neil Harrington, Salisbury, representing MPO Subregion #1

John Cashell, Georgetown, representing MPO Subregion #3

Paul Materazzo, Andover, representing MPO Subregion #4

Others Present:

Anthony Komornick, MVPC

Betsy Goodrich, MVPC

Tony Collins, MVPC

Matt Coogan, Boxford

Jerry Klima, Salisbury

Dave Langlais, Hoyle & Tanner

Alex Loncarevic

Andrew Port, Newburyport

Tim Paris, MassDOT District 4

Geordie Vining, Newburyport

Derek Shooster, MassDOT

Andrew Shapiro, North Andover

Kathleen Lambert, MeVa

Chris Timmel, FHWA

Andrew Levine

Mayor Sean Reardon, Newburyport

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order

David Mohler called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and stated that he was representing Transportation Secretary Jamey Tesler. Mr. Komornick then announced that there was a quorum.

Agenda Item No. 2: Opportunity for Public Comment

Mr. 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 October 26, 2022 MVMPO Meeting

Vote: Jerrard Whitten motioned to accept the October 26, 2022 MVMPO Meeting Minutes. Paul Materazzo seconded the motion.

The motion to accept the October 26, 2022 Virtual MVMPO Meeting

Minutes passed by a roll call vote of 8 in favor and none against.

Agenda Item No. 4: Status of Ongoing and FFYs 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Projects

a. Status of TIP Roadway and Bridge Projects

Tim Paris of MassDOT District 4 reported on the following changes in the status of MassDOT projects in the MVMPO region:

- Lowell-Dracut-Methuen Route 110 resurfacing – received the 25% design and received updated estimates.
- Haverhill I-495 over the Merrimack River Bridge Replacement – TIP years were changed.
- Amesbury Riverwalk to Ghost Trail Connector – updated cost estimate.
- Georgetown-Boxford-Border to Boston Trail – Updated TIP year to 2024.
- Lawrence-Lawrence Manchester Rail Trail Corridor – Has gone to 75% design. TIP years were changed. Updated TIP estimates.
- Methuen-Intersection Improvements at Riverside Drive and Burnham Road has gone to 100% design.
- Salisbury Reconstruction of Route 1 – updated total construction cost.
- The following projects are under construction and have updated completion percentages:
 - Haverhill Intersection reconstruction on Rt 108 and Rt 110- 66% complete.
 - Lawrence Intersection Improvements at South Broadway and Mount Vernon – 77% complete.
 - Andover-Tewksbury Highway lighting system rehabilitation and repairs at interchange of I 93 and I 95 – 49% complete.
 - Danvers-Topsfield-Boxford-Rowley interstate maintenance on I-95 – 60% complete.
 - Haverhill-Bradford Rail trail Rt 125 to Railroad Street – 86% complete.

Geordie Vining asked a question about the status of Project #608494, Newbury-Newburyport-Salisbury Resurfacing and Related work on Rt 1. The Bid opening was November 8, 2022, and Mr. Vining would like to know where it stands. Brian Fallon said that they are going through the process of making sure there are balanced bids. They are in the award process.

b. Status of Transit Projects

Noah Berger reported that additional buses are slated to be delivered early in the next calendar year. Mr. Berger said that they are unable to procure the vans that they wanted because the vans that would best serve the region do not exist on the market right now. They are instead hoping to engineer and develop a quality low floor cutaway for the vans are available for purchase. Mr. Berger also updated the MPO on the plans to transition the MeVa Lawrence hub from Buckley Station to McGovern Station. They are working with a design firm to maximize the space at McGovern to best serve the community. There will be an effort to activate the space and make it welcoming for transit users. Mr. Berger stated that they are in the process of switching from a flag system to a bus stop system. He stated that they are in the process of rolling out the newly wrapped buses. He also stated that fixed-route bus service has shown a ridership increase of 121.3% and the on-demand service ridership increased 50.4%. He also stated MeVa is the only transit authority in the northeast whose workforce has grown, not shrunk. He then provided an update on the riverbank stabilization, which is progressing thanks to the MPO for flexing additional funding to support the project. He said that MeVa is continuing to optimize its bus routes and is currently looking to reimagine their service in the Amesbury, Salisbury, Newburyport area.

Chris Timmel asked a question about the status of the project for Lowell-Dracut-Methuen resurfacing and related work on Route 110. Derek Shooster informed Mr. Timmel that the project is on the Statewide TIP and is not on the Merrimack Valley TIP.

Agenda Item No. 5: Discussion and Potential Action to Approve a TIP adjustment

Tony Komornick asked the MPO to approve a TIP adjustment to make an administrative name change of the Haverhill-Methuen Bridge replacement project to include reference to the fact that it is also M-17-031 from the Methuen standpoint. The project begins in FFY 2024 and continues through FFY 2028.

Vote:

Motion to Approve made by John Pettis and was seconded by Jerrard Whitten.

The motion to approve passed with 9 votes to approve, 0 to oppose.

Agenda Item No. 6: UPWP Amendment

Mr. Komornick reported that these amendments are a result of the MPO's action earlier this year in dropping 3 Road Safety Audits from the 2022 UPWP that were unable to be completed due to staffing turnover. Two of the three road safety audits will need to be carried over to the current UPWP for FFY 2023. These are the RSA at the Woodland Street/Elm Street intersection in Methuen and the RSA at the Merrimack Street/Parker Street intersection in Lawrence. One RSA, at the intersection of Hampshire Street and Center Street in Lawrence, is no longer needed because improvements have already been made, which have eliminated most crashes at the intersection. To facilitate this change, MVPC staff recommended removing the study of Bicycle and Pedestrian Access along Route 114 in North Andover. That study could be included in the region's FFY 2024 UPWP.

Vote: Motion to release the amendment for 21-day public review made by John Pettis. Paul Materazzo seconded the motion.

The motion to release the adjustment passed by a vote of 9 for and none against.

Agenda Item No. 7: Other Business

David Mohler announced Tony Komornick's retirement from MVPC. The MPO members and those in attendance applauded Tony's work.

Vote: Noah Berger made a motion to recognize Mr. Komornick's years of service to the MPO. Jerrard Whitten Seconded.

The motion passed 9 votes for and 0 against.

Agenda Item No. 8: Other

Neil Harrington asked about the amount of funding being dedicated to the Rt. 114 project. David Mohler noted that the state did not have an answer yet.

Agenda Item No. 8: Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn by John Pettis and seconded by Neil Harrington

The motion passed by voice vote.

The meeting was Adjourned at 12:35 pm.