

Minutes of the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Tuesday, April 25, 2017 4:00 PM

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) Office

1 Fenn St., Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA

MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

Larysa Bernstein	City of North Adams (Representing Mayor Alcombright)
Kyle Hanlon	BRPC
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Tinlin)
Andy Hogeland	North Berkshire Towns Representative
Jim Huebner	Southeast Berkshire Towns Representative
Jim Lovejoy	Southwest Berkshire Towns Representative
David Mohler, Chair	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (Representing Secretary Pollack)
Laurel Scialabba	North Central Berkshire Towns Representative
David Turocy	City of Pittsfield (Representing Mayor Linda Tyer)
Sarah Vallieres	Berkshire Regional Transit Authority

Others Present:

Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Nat Karns	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Emily Lindsey	BRPC
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1
Mike Nuvallie	City of North Adams
Gabriel Sherman	MassDOT
Brandon Wilcox	Federal Highway Administration

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Mohler called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 28, 2017

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Hanlon, seconded by Mr. Turocy, to approve the meeting minutes for the March 28, 2017 meeting of the Berkshire MPO, as presented.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORT FROM THE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 18, 2017

Mr. Kus provided the MPO with a brief report on the discussions at the TAC meeting on April 18, 2017. Notably, since the TAC meeting, based on discussions about moving the Williamstown Mohawk Bike/Ped trail forward, MassDOT can accommodate it in FY 2019, and the updated draft TIP shows that change.

5. CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT #2 TO THE FFY 2017-2021 TIP AND INITIATE A 21-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Koirala reviewed the proposed Amendment #2 to the FFY 2017-2022 TIP which includes:

- Highway #607254, North Adams-Williamstown, Mohawk Bike/Ped Trail, add statewide CMAQ funding source (\$625,000) for design
- Highway #607559, Lee, Superstructure replacement, increase cost to \$1,674,089
- Transit Updates:
 - Add the acquisition of support vehicles (RTD0006337) \$39,117
 - Purchase XL Hybrid systems for 3 mini-busses (RTD0006338) \$47,700
 - Acquire surveillance/security equipment (RTD0006339) \$5,957
 - Purchase bus shelters (RTD0006348) \$23,900
 - Delete replacement bus match funding (RTD0004344) \$63,436

Mr. Wilcox inquired if the Williamstown-North Adams bike/ped trail money was for design only or construction too. Ms. Koirala confirmed this funding is for design only. Mr. Hogeland inquired if this was new/additional money and MassDOT confirmed this was just to make the design pot full again, not new/additional money.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Hogeland, seconded by Mr. Lovejoy, to initiate a 21-day public comment period for Amendment #2 of the FFY 2017-2021 TIP.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

6. CONSIDERATION OF TIP PROJECT LISTING FOR THE FFY 2018-2022 TIP AND INITIATE 21-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Koirala presented the draft FFY 2018-2022 TIP which was developed based on the MPO recommendation to proceed with Scenario 2. She began by walking through each project, by year for highway, bridge, and nonmotorized projects. She then walked through the Transit TIP, by project, by year.

Mr. Lovejoy inquired about the proposed, separate maintenance facilities in north and south county. Ms. Vallieres said there just was not enough federal funding to make that a reality, although there is still an item, albeit pushed back, in the TIP in FY 2021.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Lovejoy, seconded by Mr. Huebner, to initiate a 21-day public comment period for the FFY 2018-2022 TIP.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

7. CONSIDERATION OF CRITICAL URBAN AND RURAL FREIGHT CORRIDORS AND INITIATE 21-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Lindsey presented the proposed network, which included the full apportionment of miles, and noted the network was based on the discussions with the TAC and MPO over the last two months. She presented some potential additional CRFC mileage, based on the availability of extra rural miles in the statewide pool. She highlighted a draft priority list for the CRFC network, which prioritized projects based on their status in the TIP, then local projects, then projects with PRC numbers that have not been designed.

She said the TAC and MPO are expected to review and approve final network and priority at their May meeting after the 21-day public comment period. She reported that MassDOT did submit a list of bridges last Friday that they would like to include in the CRFC network, and that there are around 4 bridges not already covered by the proposed network. Because these bridges would constitute several very short segments she is not confident they would qualify unless mileage from elsewhere in the county was reallocated to make longer segments on the Route 7 and 8 corridors to cover these 4 bridges. Ms. Lindsey is waiting to hear back from MassDOT regarding this issue.

Mr. Lovejoy requested clarification about the prioritization recommendation. Ms. Lindsey described the process which looked at project readiness and funding opportunities. Mr. Sherman noted the prioritization will be primarily used to identify additional corridor miles, if necessary, rather than for project funding.

Mr. Hogeland inquired about MassDOT's comment which include "SD," which Mr. Kus clarified stands for "Structurally Deficient."

Mr. Wilcox inquired about the over-allocation mileage proposed, and wondered if these were proposed to close gaps. Ms. Lindsey said yes, either to close a gap, or extend to a full project extent. Mr. Wilcox asked if other MPOs were asked to submit proposed additional mileage, and Mr. Sherman confirmed they were, since after the preliminary solicitation, they saw there was extra rural mileage left on the table.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Lovejoy, seconded by Mr. Huebner, to initiate a 21-day public comment period for the draft Critical Urban and Rural Freight Corridors.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION ON THE FFY 2018 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Mr. Kus presented the MPO the focus areas for the draft FFY 2018 TIP, which includes emphasis on Special Studies, Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, Transportation Community System Preservation, Regional Transit Planning, Safety Initiatives, Climate Change and GHG Emissions, Title VI, RTP Planning and Performance Measures, and Passenger and Freight Rail Planning. Mr. Kus also presented a preliminary budget for FY 2018, noting a 4% increase.

Mr. Wilcox inquired if the TCSP task was grant-based and ongoing. Mr. Kus said the name has been carried over from long ago, but it is funded like the rest of the tasks, not a specific grant program. Mr. Karns noted the focus on access management and driveways for the Berkshire region.

Mr. Lovejoy thanked Mr. Kus for including a special study related to Chapter 90 funding and how local communities use/need this funding. He noted this data will be helpful in the lobbying efforts to increase the statewide amount dedicated to Chapter 90.

Mr. Kus said a full UPWP will be delivered to the MPO next month and he will then request release for a 21-day public comment period.

9. STATUS REPORTS FROM MEMBER AGENCIES

Mr. Frieri reviewed the project status report for Berkshire projects in FY 2017 and FY 2018.

Ms. Vallieres alerted the group that BRTA was working on their budget.

Mr. Karns applauded MassDOT's Complete Streets Program and informed the group that many communities have shown interest in the program and is demonstrated by the participation in the program by a wide-range of communities across the Berkshires. He also noted the upcoming Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Celebration on May 12, that will celebrate the opening of a new 1-mile section in Adams.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE/MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The next MPO meeting will be on May 23, 2017. Mr. Mohler adjourned the meeting at 4:43 PM.

Materials Distributed:

- Agenda
- FY 2017-2021 TIP Amendment #2
- FY 2018-2022 TIP
- FY 2018-2022 Transit TIP
- FY 2018-2022 TIP Schedule
- Critical Rural/Urban Freight Corridors – proposed Berkshire components
- Critical Rural/Urban Freight Corridors – proposed Berkshire priority
- Critical Rural/Urban Freight Corridors – MassDOT D1 comments
- FY 2018 UPWP Focus Areas
- FY 2018 UPWP Preliminary Budget
- MassDOT District 1 Project Status Report