

Minutes of the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Tuesday, May 23, 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 Turocy	City of Pittsfield (Representing Mayor Linda Tyer)
Sarah Vallieres	Berkshire Regional Transit Authority
Steve Woelfel, Chair	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (Representing Secretary Pollack)

Others Present:

Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Nat Karns	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Emily Lindsey	BRPC
Andy McKeever	iBerkshires
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1
Gabriel Sherman	MassDOT
Brandon Wilcox	Federal Highway Administration

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Woelfel 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 APRIL 25, 2017

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Hanlon, seconded by Mr. Huebner, to approve the meeting minutes for the April 25, 2017 meeting of the Berkshire MPO, as presented.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORT FROM THE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 16, 2017

Mr. Kus provided the MPO with a brief report on the discussion at the TAC meeting on May 16, 2017. Mr. Kus also summarized the comments received during the public comment period for the draft FFY 2018-2022 TIP.

5. APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT #2 TO THE FFY 2017-2021 TIP

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

- o 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

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Hogeland, seconded by Mr. Hanlon, to approve Amendment #2 of the FFY 2017-2021 TIP.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

6. APPROVAL OF THE FFY 2018-2022 TIP

Ms. Koirala presented the draft FFY 2018-2022 TIP and briefly summarized the comments that were received during the 21-day public comment period. Ms. Koirala noted 49 comments were received regarding the Mohawk Bike/Ped Trail, 23 against the alignment in North Adams, and 26 in favor of the project being completed as soon as possible.

Mr. Kus clarified that those comments against the alignment were in North Adams, and the project as proposed stops at the Williamstown line and does not impact these folks. Mr. Woelfel clarified that what is contentious is the second phase, and the first phase is what is in the TIP.

Mr. Hogeland inquired about whether there would be a response from the MPO to those who took the time to provide comments. Mr. Kus noted there had not been a response from staff as of today.

Mr. Lovejoy noted the reason the Mohawk Bike/Ped Trail project was moved to FY 2019 was because it wasn't ready to go earlier. In fact, it was in an earlier iteration of the draft FFY 2018-2022 TIP in FY 2020, and based on comments was moved earlier to FY 2019. Mr. Moore noted it didn't fit within the statewide CMAQ pool in FY 2018, which is why it is in FY 2019. Mr. Karns said the design schedule looked tight for FY 2018.

Mr. Hogeland expressed his desire to see responses go out to those that commented on the draft FFY 2018-2022 TIP. Mr. Woelfel suggested asking staff to reach out to designers to keep things on schedule for the FY 2019 timeframe and he suggested adding another column to the comment summary spreadsheet for a staff response. Mr. Karns suggested mailing out letters to those who commented. Mr. Hogeland suggested adding the response to the appendix of the document. Mr. Lovejoy expressed support for a response, because traditionally there are so few comments, the MPO should respond to those who took the time to participate in the comment period. The MPO concluded they would both (1) include the response in the appendix of the TIP and (2) mail out response letters to those who provided comments.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Lovejoy, seconded by Mr. Huebner, to approve the FFY 2018-2022 TIP.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

7. APPROVAL OF CRITICAL URBAN AND RURAL FREIGHT CORRIDORS

Ms. Lindsey presented the proposed network, which included the full apportionment of miles, plus additional Critical Rural Freight Corridor mileage from the available rural mileage in the statewide pool. Ms. Lindsey reported there were no comments received during the 21-day public comment period.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Hanlon, to approve the Critical Urban and Rural Freight Corridors.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

8. RECEIVE THE DRAFT 2018 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AND INITIATE A 21-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Kus presented the MPO the focus area summary 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 noted the draft document was e-mailed out to members in its entirety.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Lovejoy, seconded by Mr. Hogeland, to release the Draft 2018 UPWP for a 21-day public comment period.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

9. DISCUSSION ON BRTA TRANSIT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Mr. Kus briefly reviewed the performance based planning framework emphasized by the current federal transportation legislation, the FAST Act. Mr. Kus noted it was required for the MPO to adopt transit asset management performance measures, and he introduced BRTA's adopted measures. Ms. Vallieres described the transit asset management (TAM) concept, and the associated rule from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). She outlined the goal of their TAM Plan and reported their overall rating for their all their assets was 3.29 on a scale of 1 to 5.

Mr. Lovejoy inquired about how this information was tracked. Ms. Vallieres reported that BRTA uses ThingTech software to track the useful life and mileage across all of their asset classes. She said that data beyond these inputs was coordinated between BRTA and their maintenance folks. Mr. Woelfel noted that industry standards generally dictate useful life.

Mr. Lovejoy inquired about the values derived from the software, and Ms. Vallieres said it was used to track all assets, not just rolling stock/vehicles.

Mr. Woelfel inquired if this was the same software other RTAs use across the commonwealth, and noted that this data is being collected across the state and would be good to combine all of the RTA data at the state level for better analysis. Ms. Vallieres said she thought other RTAs used a different software and offered to get more information about the data inputs to provide to Mr. Lovejoy.

10. STATUS REPORTS FROM MEMBER AGENCIES

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

Mr. Kus provided a handout that looked at the high-level tasks and accomplishments of staff in the recent months. He highlighted major accomplishments by focus area.

Ms. Lindsey alerted the MPO of the opportunity to provide comments that will be used to develop the MassDOT Statewide Bike Plan encouraged members to share the announcement with their stakeholders.

Mr. Wilcox shared the announcement of two new sets of performance measures focusing on (1) pavement and bridge condition and (2) CMAQ, Freight Movement, and NHS. He noted there are two upcoming webinars about the topics on 5/31 and 6/1. Mr. Woelfel said that since these rules are now effective, we must all work together to better understand and report these performance measures.

Mr. Woelfel noted there was a MassDOT CIP meeting in Lenox today at 6:30pm.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

12. NEXT MEETING DATE/MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The next MPO meeting will be on June 27, 2017. Mr. Woelfel adjourned the meeting at 4:47 PM.

Materials Distributed:

- Agenda
- FY 2018-2022 TIP Comments Received
- Proposed MPO Response to Commenters
- Critical Rural/Urban Freight Corridors Map/Table
- FY 2018 UPWP Focus Areas/Budget
- BRTA Transit Asset Management Plan
- Berkshire MPO Work Activities
- MassDOT District 1 Project Status Report
- MassDOT Bike Plan Flyer