

Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

60 Congress Street, 2nd Floor Large Conference Room

Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

Present were:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Bill Adams	Cummington	Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Glenn Barrington	UMass	Dick Grannells	Southwick
Eric Bernardin	Fuss & O’Neill, Inc.	Jeff Hoynoski	MassDOT District 2
Mike Bolduc	MassDOT District 2	Andrew Krar	Town of Longmeadow
Randy Brown	Southwick	Nick Lapointe	Fuss & O’Neill, Inc.
Dan Call	Westfield	Dan Murphy	Easthampton
Maggie Chan	Northampton	Dawn Nims	Town of Agawam Engineering
Matt Chase	VHB	Bryan Pounds*	MassDOT Office of Transportation
Michelle Chase	Town of Agawam	Jim Reidy	South Hadley
Jeremy Cigal	Westfield	Jason Skeels	Amherst DPW
Mark Cressotti	Westfield	Matt Smith	Chesterfield
Jim Czach	West Springfield DPW	Matt Sokop	Springfield
Michael Fisher	BL Companies	Marvin Ward	MassBike
		*On Speaker Phone	
PVPC Staff			
David Elvin	Senior Planner	Dana Roscoe	Principal Planner
Amir Kouzehkanani	Principal Transportation Planner	Gary Roux	Principal Planner
Andy McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	Lynn Shell	Admin Support
Jeff McCollough	Senior Transportation Planner		

1. Introductory Remarks

Jim Czach opened the JTC meeting at 10:18 a.m. and he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. Czach asked for a motion to approve the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) minutes of January 11, 2017.

MOVED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD, SECONDED BY JIM REIDY OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY, TO APPROVE THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 11, 2017. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Czach then moved to take up agenda item 3.

3. Review Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting (MPO) – January 31

(1) Propose MPO Structure Change

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe noted that for the past 10 years, the Economic Development Council (EDC) of Western Mass has been an ex-officio member of the MPO. He stated that there had been discussions about making the EDC a voting member and this was put out for public review at the July 25, 2016 MPO meeting. Mr. Roscoe reported that at the January 31st MPO meeting, the MPO voted to enter into discussions with MassDOT on

making the EDC a voting member, noting that MassDOT has expressed reservations about bringing in additional MPO voting members who are not elected officials. Mr. Roscoe stated that PVPC Executive Director Timothy Brennan is negotiating with MassDOT's Executive Director Dave Mohler on some type of agreement that would allow the EDC to vote at the MPO meetings.

(2) TIP Amendments

Mr. Roscoe reminded JTC members that a project in the Town of Goshen was moved from 2017 to 2016 using redistribution funds and he noted that this fiscal year began with just over \$6 million unprogrammed on the table. Mr. Roscoe noted that there is another Goshen project that is ready to move forward and there were also some cost increases on two or three projects in District 2, which leaves just under \$1 million unprogrammed in the 2017 element. Mr. Roux then asked Peter Frieri from MassDOT District 1, to provide an update on the West Street Reconstruction project in Goshen. Mr. Frieri stated that they anticipate a 75-100% submission from Goshen's consultant on February 20th. He believed the cost of this project will be approximately \$4 million and he noted that the town is working on the right of way and environmental clearance. Mr. Roscoe stated that in the event there are opportunities to program additional projects, there is a MassDOT Rail and Transit Division rail platform extension project at the Northampton station that does not require any right of way. Mr. Roscoe stated that the TIP is out for a 30-day public review period. Given that the MPO meeting took place on the 31st of January, Mr. Roscoe stated that the review period will continue into March therefore MPO members will not be voting on the TIP amendments at the February MPO meeting.

(3) Public Participation Plan

Mr. Roscoe reported that at the January 31st MPO meeting, it was proposed that we reduce our public participation notice from 30 days to 21 days. He explained that when an MPO meeting happens at the end of January, 30 days may not transpire before the next MPO meeting in February. However, a 21-day public comment period would allow us to vote to release for public comment at the end of one month and then vote to adopt the changes at the end of the following month. Mr. Czach pointed out that unless there is no agenda, the MPO will now be meeting monthly on the fourth Tuesday of the month. In response to a question from Mr. Ward, Mr. Roscoe stated that any change to the public participation process requires a 45-day public review period. He noted that this proposal is currently out for a 45-day public review and it will be voted on at the March MPO meeting. Mr. Czach stated that he let the MPO know that the first meeting of the Chapter 90 subcommittee will take place following today's JTC meeting and that he would update them as information becomes available.

4. Regional Freight Route Planning

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux stated that Massachusetts is currently developing a statewide Freight Plan that is necessary as part of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Mr. Roux stated that we will now have a new funding category specifically for freight under this FAST Act and in order to be eligible for the funding we need to have a state Freight Plan. Mr. Roux stated that the first meeting of the advisory committee for the state Freight Plan took place last month. He noted that there will be another meeting at the PVPC on April 24th to discuss the draft plan and the idea is to complete the plan sometime this summer.

Mr. Roux reported that the PVPC has been asked to designate critical rural and urban freight corridors in our region. He explained that under the FAST Act we have a primary highway freight system which is basically all the interstates, however, he noted that in the vicinity of West Springfield we have a small piece of our system that leads into the CSX yard that is designated as a primary freight access route. Mr. Roux stated that we are being asked to put together a draft of the roads that could potentially be part of this freight system which in turn could be eligible for funding. Mr. Roux pointed out that we must meet at least one of the requirements listed on a document he had

distributed entitled, *Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors*, noting that the mileage that we can designate in our region is 7.3 miles for the urban areas and a little over 34 miles in rural areas. Mr. Roux explained that the idea would be for the PVPC to complete some draft recommendations for the JTC and for MassDOT to review by the end of this month. He noted that his goal would be to provide JTC members with a table or a map that identifies the regional roadways that the PVPC believes should be part of this system and then the JTC members would provide their comments. Mr. Roux stated that we would ask the MPO at their March meeting to release the draft for a 21-day public review and comment period and then it would be adopted at the April MPO meeting.

Mr. Cressotti suggested that the Pioneer Valley Railroad System should be included in the initial vetting. Mr. Roux thanked Mr. Cressotti for his comment. Mr. Roux stated that he and Mr. Roscoe have a good sense of the urban areas that should be looked at and he then listed several locations that the group should talk about. Mr. Roux also asked JTC members to let him know if there are other areas that they think PVPC should be looking at, especially in the rural communities. Mr. Roux pointed out that all areas will have to be vetted to meet at least one of the requirements defined by the Federal Highway Administration. Mr. Roscoe remarked that we were not given enough urban miles and we will need to prioritize, adding that most of our rail network is in our urbanized area. Mr. Roux stated that he did not know if every region will need all of their miles and he suggested that it may be possible to get a little more mileage if we can make a case for it. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Roux stated that JTC members will be provided with a draft to review before the March JTC meeting at which time they will be asked to make a recommendation to the MPO. Mr. Czach then asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Roux. There being none, Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Roux for his report and he moved to take up the next agenda item.

5. Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) – Current Activities

PVPC Senior Planner David Elvin stated that he is reporting on behalf of Joshua Rickman, PVTA Director of Operations and Planning, who was unable to attend today's JTC meeting. Mr. Elvin announced that PVTA Administrator Mary MacInnes will be retiring from the PVTA at the end of April, noting that Ms. MacInnes has been working at the PVTA since 2006. Mr. Elvin stated that several key projects will be taking place in April including the transition to Springfield Union Station on April 17th, the opening of the Westfield Transit Pavilion which is due to happen during the following week, and the start of construction on the new PVTA Operations and Maintenance Facility on Cottage Street. With regard to other PVTA updates, Mr. Elvin reported that there will be public hearings in the Towns of East Longmeadow, Longmeadow and Hampden on February 23rd, 27th and 28th to discuss the transition of the Senior Dial-a-Ride service from PVTA back to those communities, noting that the communities will operate the service more cost effectively than the PVTA. Finally, Mr. Elvin noted that in the Towns of Ware, Palmer and Belchertown there is a new transit service, namely the Quaboag Connector, which is intended to transport people to work and school and he noted that it is similar to the Dial-a-Ride service. Mr. Elvin stated that this service is not operated by the PVTA.

Mr. Czach then thanked Mr. Elvin for his update and he moved to take up agenda item 6.

6. Top High Crash Locations by Municipality – Report Layout

Mr. Roux stated that he has been talking to JTC members over the past months about the layout for our *Top High Crash Locations by Municipality*. Mr. Roux then referred to two handouts entitled, *Pioneer Valley Safety Compass Westfield (2012-2014)* and *Pioneer Valley Safety Compass Huntington (2012-2014)* and he noted that the reports include updated maps for those communities. Mr. Roux stated that after today's discussion he would like to ask the JTC for a motion and a recommendation to move ahead with this format. Mr. Roux explained that he would like to avoid having to go back and redo any of the data analysis which would be very time-consuming to do for each of the 43 communities, although he noted that he can answer questions about a specific data set and quantify it more.

Mr. Roux stated that the final report will be designed in a landscape format so that when opening the report, everything for the community will be on one page. As regards the summary for the City of Westfield, Mr. Roux explained that the *Non Fatal Crashes* and *Fatal Crashes* have been color coded to clearly indicate where those crashes have occurred in the top locations. Mr. Roux stated that the smaller communities will likely not have ten top locations and he noted that he will summarize the top locations wherever it makes sense to do so. He also pointed out that the section entitled *Key Findings* is an area we can continue to expand on.

Mr. Roux stated that he also agreed to send each community a shapefile of their crashes as well as an Excel spreadsheet that has all the data that the PVPC is using to develop the report. He informed Mr. Cressotti that he will send him the Westfield data set and he asked him to give it to the appropriate individuals at the City of Westfield to see if it will work for them. Mr. Roux then offered to answer specific questions about the layout of the reports and he remarked that he would like JTC's approval to move forward with this format.

Mr. Czach called for a motion to approve the formats that Mr. Roux had provided on the Pioneer Valley Safety Compass for both the rural and the urban communities which would then allow the PVPC to move forward with the *Top High Crash Locations by Municipality*.

MOVED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD, SECONDED BY MATT SMITH OF THE TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD, TO APPROVE THE FORMAT ON THE PIONEER VALLEY SAFETY COMPASS FOR BOTH THE RURAL AND THE URBAN COMMUNITIES IN ORDER FOR THE PVPC TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE TOP HIGH CRASH LOCATIONS BY MUNICIPALITY.

Mr. Czach asked if there were any other comments regarding the subject motion. PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Jeff McCollough pointed out that in the earlier version there was a table for bicycle and pedestrian crashes. Mr. Roux referred to the second page of the summary for the City of Westfield and he stated that Ms. Parmar has indicated that she can include that information on that page. Mr. Roux stated that the information will be added just for the urban areas, noting that there are not many bicycle/pedestrian crashes in the rural areas. Mr. Roux noted that we are still looking at the data and if we find a problem in a rural community we can add it as a bullet point.

Mr. Czach asked if there were any other questions regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Roux for his update and he then moved to address item 7.

7. 2018-2022 TIP Development Schedule

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner, Andy McCaul referred to a document entitled, *2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Schedule* and he reported that this handout was included in today's meeting packet to provide JTC members with a summary of important dates to be aware of over the next couple of months with respect to the TIP process. Mr. McCaul then reviewed each of the items listed on the schedule. As regards the MassDOT TIP Days which will take place on February 16th, Mr. McCaul explained that he and Mr. Roscoe will go to District 2 where they will be teleconferencing with Boston to discuss every project that has been proposed on the previous TIP and any projects that MassDOT would like to move forward. Mr. McCaul pointed out that the deadline for returning the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) forms is Friday, February 24th and he asked JTC members to return them by that date if they had not yet done so. He noted that our yearly TEC review meeting will take place on March 1st at the PVPC, adding that this is on a first-come/first-serve basis. Mr. McCaul

stated that the following week is the March 8th JTC meeting at which time we should have our “Zebra Sheet” list of projects with new rankings and updated project status and on March 28th the JTC will present the MPO with some scenarios. Mr. McCaul stated that the JTC will meet again on April 12th to work on final recommendations for the MPO and he asked JTC members to mark this date on their calendars given that the JTC will present the recommended draft 2018-2022 TIP to the MPO for review on April 25th. Mr. McCaul pointed out that in order to meet MassDOT’s schedule to align the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Capital Investment Plan (CIP), we need to have our TIP document out for public review and comment in April.

At this point, Mr. Cressotti stated that he discovered that projects for the City of Westfield which are on the TIP do not show up on the CIP and he asked if there is any reason for this. Mr. Pounds noted that the TIP process came after the CIP last year therefore it is possible that projects were added into the TIP that were not in the CIP. He pointed out that this is one of the reasons for having the TIP and the CIP aligned this year. Mr. Pounds asked Mr. McCaul to email him with any particular questions about a project. Mr. Pounds then responded to several questions raised by JTC members regarding the CIP. In response to a question from Mr. Roscoe, he confirmed that if a project in Year 1 of the TIP is not in the CIP, the CIP will be adjusted. Mr. Pounds also explained that the STIP is a component of the CIP and if a project is in the STIP it should show up in the CIP. Mr. Pounds stated that if a project is not currently on the TIP it could still be added to the CIP, noting that there are always projects that are up for consideration. Mr. Pounds explained that the CIP is the governing document for our program. Mr. Czach suggested that JTC members review the CIP document to see if there is a project that should be there and if it is not, he recommended they obtain something in writing as soon as possible so that it is documented. At this point, Matt Bolduc, MassDOT District 2, stated that he can see only one project in the City of Westfield that is actually on the TIP that is not in the CIP, however, Mr. Cressotti stated that he searched on the CIP website by the project numbers and none of them came up. Mr. Pounds asked Mr. Cressotti to send him a list of the projects he is concerned about and he would look into it. Both Mr. Czach and Mr. Cressotti thanked Mr. Pounds for his responses. Mr. Pounds asked the JTC to email him if there are any other questions and he would be happy to help.

Mr. Czach then highlighted some key dates regarding the TIP development schedule. He pointed out that the JTC will need a quorum for the April 12th JTC meeting and he also reminded JTC members that TEC sheets are due by February 24th. Mr. Czach noted that the TIP subcommittee will proceed with the information we have on March 1st and he underscored that anything not reviewed at the March 1st meeting will not be reviewed at the April JTC meeting. Mr. Czach then moved to address agenda item 8.

8. Other Business

Mr. McCollough reminded everyone that Bay State Bike Week will take place May 13th – 21st and he encouraged everyone to participate. Mr. McCollough stated that the first organizational meeting will be held soon in Holyoke for local organizers who are interested in being active and involved. He asked JTC members to see him after today’s meeting if they are interested in participating.

PVPC Senior Environmental Planner, Patty Gambarini, introduced herself noting that she facilitates the Connecticut River Stormwater Committee. Ms. Gambarini stated that for the members who are here today, packages may be picked up in the PVPC reception area for the communities of Granby, South Hadley, Southwick, West Springfield and Westfield and she noted that she will quickly put together packages for Longmeadow and Agawam. Ms. Gambarini explained that the packages contain messaging. She stated that they are starting to do compliance on the new MS4 permit and this is to collect baseline data to understand where people are with pet waste.

Gary Roux reported that on Tuesday, April 4th there will be a Federal Highway Administration all day workshop on

Incorporating On-Road Bike Networks into Resurfacing Projects which will be held at the PVPC and he noted that a flyer with additional information will be sent out to the JTC shortly. Mr. Roux stated that this will be a good opportunity and he encouraged JTC members to attend.

Mr. Czach stated that MassDOT is putting together a statewide Chapter 90 working group and he was asked to be a participating member to go over part of the Chapter 90 process. He stated that they are hoping to compile some information and have a recommendation within 60 days. Mr. Czach stated that this is not related to changing the Chapter 90 formula but it is to make it more user-friendly and to look at issues such as expanded equipment and material purchases. Mr. Czach stated that he might ask the Planning Commission to send out a survey to JTC members in order to gather some ideas. At this point, Mr. Cressotti stated that the City of Westfield was approved to build a portion of our greenway, namely a bike trail, but when submitting for reimbursement, the City was denied reimbursement for benches. Mr. Cressotti stated that he was told that this was a statewide prohibition but he did not understand why Chapter 90 funding would not be applicable to accommodations for pedestrians on a greenway or multi-use trail, noting that there is a need for benches for senior citizens who are recognized as users of the greenways. He stated that he did not know why he can utilize the funds for transportation to build a bikeway but not a pedestrian way. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Czach stated that he would bring forward Mr. Cressotti's comment. Mr. Czach asked the JTC to let him know as soon as possible if there is anything that they want to do through Chapter 90 that they feel they should be eligible for. He also noted that they might receive a survey and he asked them to take the time to complete it, adding that this is our opportunity to have our voices heard in Boston.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Czach called for a motion to adjourn today's JTC meeting.

MOVED BY MARVIN WARD OF MASSBIKE, SECONDED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD, TO ADJOURN THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING OF FEBRUARY 8, 2017. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

This JTC meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Relevant documents distributed at this February 8, 2017 JTC meeting:

- Joint Transportation Committee February 8, 2017 Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of the January 11, 2017 Joint Transportation Committee Meeting
- Critical Rural and Urban Freight Corridors
- Pioneer Valley Safety Compass – Westfield (2012-2014)
- Pioneer Valley Safety Compass – Huntington (2012-2014)
- 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Schedule