

DRAFT MINUTES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL Summary of the June 13, 2012 Meeting

This meeting was held in Conference Room 4 of the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, in Boston, MA.

1. Introductions – *Steve Olanoff, Chair*

Steve Olanoff, Chair (Westwood) called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. Members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 6)

2. Chair's Report – *Steve Olanoff, Chair*

S. Olanoff briefed the Council on the June 7 MPO meeting, which was held in Lexington (one of the four MPO meetings throughout the year held in places other than Boston). At the MPO meeting, comments regarding the Draft Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2013-16 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the FFY 2013 UPWP were presented. The majority of comments received were in support of the Assabet River Rail Trail project and the Green Line Light Rail Extension project.

Prior to the today's Advisory Council meeting, at 10:00 AM, Advisory Council members took part in a field trip to the site of the Green Line Light Rail Extension project to College Avenue. Details of the tour will be covered in today's guest presentation.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2012 – *Steve Olanoff, Chair*

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes. The minutes of the May 9, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved.

4. Green Line Light Rail Extension Project Update – *Jeffrey Sarin, Project Manager, MBTA; Mike McBride & Gloria Son, HDR/Gilbane, Inc.*

Presenter Mike McBride:

- Presented information on the administrative progress of the project; the project's New-Starts approval, which authorizes projects to proceed with preliminary engineering, was given by FTA on June 11.

- Indicated that the MBTA must advance the design in the next year, and that considerable progress must be made in demonstrating a viable financial plan for the project.
- Stated that the project includes a large number of elements including seven new transit stations; 4.5 miles of railroad track with eight bridges; 1.4 miles of viaduct; a maintenance facility, power substation and roadway improvements.
- Indicated that the project begins at a newly relocated Lechmere Station running northbound into Somerville adjacent to an existing, active commuter rail right of way. One branch will extend to Union Square (adjacent to the Fitchburg Line) while the other branch continues to the planned endpoint at College Avenue in Medford (adjacent to the Lowell Line).
- Presented details of the construction process including the minimization of real estate takings, noise mitigation along the route and the overall schedule for completion of the project.
- Stated that interim milestones are Lechmere to Washington Street Station and to Union Square; these may be completed as soon as late 2016 or early 2017.
- Described the completion of the vehicle maintenance facility to support the line. It would include space for light rail vehicle storage and employee parking.
- Indicated that the third part of the project will be to continue the line from Washington St. to College Ave. The stations included in this part of the project are: Gilman Square, Lowell Street, Ball Square and College Ave.
- Stated that the Community Path is being designed in conjunction with the design of the rail line.
- Described the components that are being addressed including: drainage, retaining walls, access to stations, utility access and relocation, and bridge work. Track work and existing Lechmere Station relocation will be integrated into the construction plan.
- Identified major roadway and intersection work that must be completed at the new stations and along various roadways that are affected by bridge work. Also, retaining wall and noise walls are a major consideration along many sections of the project.

- Presented the design of the transit stations and engineering considerations that each station faces, particularly with regard to station accessibility.

All planning documents associated with this planning process are available at the following website:

<http://greenlineextension.eot.state.ma.us/documents.html>

M. McBride responded to questions posed by members:

- New Starts is a structured process that first leads to approval to enter into final design. Once the final design is approved, the commitment to fund a project is made. The remaining step to funding is the completion of the application for the full-funding grant agreement. At this stage, the project competes with all of the other New Start projects in the country.
- Seismic engineering specifications are set to current code.
- Accessibility design concerns are being addressed in the building of all transit stations including the College Avenue Station which will have a bi-level entrance.
- The design of the Lechmere Station will consider pedestrian access at this busy intersection. Will work with Cambridge and Somerville to ensure the safest possible crossing conditions.
- The design team is looking at different ways of optimizing the service for the entire Green Line system. Modeling for this is ongoing and touches on the desirability of adding transfer points to get to the new line. For example, possibly turning a service vehicle around at Government Center instead of continuing all the way to Riverside.

5. Proposed Amendment to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) –

Anne McGahan, LRTP Manager, MPO Staff

A. McGahan described the process in developing the proposed, draft Amendment to the LRTP. (The LRTP document was approved in September 2011.) It was noted that all regionally significant projects (those that add capacity to the system) and all major investment projects (those that cost more than \$10M) must be listed in the LRTP. The LRTP programs projects in

5-year time bands. Also, the MPO is required to conduct an air quality conformity determination to be consistent with MA State Implementation Plan for attaining Air Quality Standards and air quality goals.

The primary reason for the Amendment to the LRTP is the MPO's proposed programming of three projects in the draft FFYs 2013-16 TIP. This action would move these projects into an earlier LRTP time band and therefore triggers the Amendment. Other updates are also included in the draft Amendment. All the changes include:

- A. Projects moved into earlier time bands, to be consistent with the proposed programming in the draft FFYs 2013-16 TIP.
 - 1. The Hanover Route 53 project moved from the 2016-2020 time band to the 2012-2015 LRTP time band.
 - 2. The Montvale Ave. and the New Boston St. Bridge in Woburn moved from the 2021-2025 time band to the 2016-2020 LRTP time band.
 - 3. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Phase 2A was moved into the 2012-15 LRTP time band.
- B. Major Investment projects added, to be consistent with the proposed programming in the draft FFYs 2013-16 TIP.
 - 1. The Rantoul St. project in Beverly.
 - 2. The Commonwealth Ave. project in Boston.
 - 3. The Route 109 project in Medway.
 - 4. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Phase 2A.
- C. LRTP finances and project costs updated, to be consistent with the TIP.
- D. Preferred alternatives for two bridge projects (Longfellow and Casey Overpass) included in the travel demand model.
- E. Performed a new air quality conformity determination.

Response to questions:

The reason the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail project moved up and the Assabet River Rail Trail did not is that state transportation enhancement funding became available allowing this phase of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail project to be funded by MassDOT and not the MPO.

Regarding changes in service by the MBTA and those implications, A. McGahan indicated that the assumptions used at the time of the air quality conformity analysis reflect current planning assumptions. If conditions change, they will be incorporated into the travel demand model used for the air quality conformity analysis.

6. Draft of Amendment Two to the Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2012-15 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Sean Pfalzer, TIP Manager, MPO Staff

S. Pfalzer indicated that an increase in the cost of the Trapello Road project in Belmont will require an amendment to the TIP by the MPO. If the MPO decides to pursue the amendment, the draft will then be released for public review. The cost increase was related to the substitution of bus service while catenary wires are down during the construction of the road.

MPO will take final action on the draft FFYs 2013-2016TIP at the June 28 MPO meeting.

7. Committee Reports – Laura Weiner, Membership Committee

L. Weiner reported that the Committee reviewed and will recommend the removal of the restriction on MPO members from being voting members on the Advisory Council. The Committee also is recommending that the elections for Chair and Vice Chair be moved to October from September.

The Committee will present a list of potential communities and organizations that will be solicited for possible membership on the Advisory Council. Emphasis on membership will conform to the MPO policy and goals of serving diversity of opinion and background.

8. Member Announcements – TRB papers should be submitted by August, 2012.

9. Adjourn – 4:40 PM

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Agencies

MassDOT, Calli Cenizal
MassDOT – Aeronautics Division, Steve
Rawding
BRA, Tad Read
Joint Committee on Transportation, Amanda
Richard
(for Sen. McGee)
MAGIC, Franny Osman
Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Eric
Halvorsen

Cities and Towns

Acton, Mike Gowning
Arlington, Laura Weiner
Belmont, Robert McGaw
Boston, Tom Kadzis
Lexington, Richard Canale
Marlborough, Walter Bonin
Millis, Dom D'Eramo
Quincy, Kristina Johnson
Wellesley, Frank DeMasi
Westwood, Steve Olanoff, Chair

Citizen Groups

AACT, Mary Ann Murray
Association for Public Transportation, Barry M. Steinberg
Eastern Massachusetts Freight Rail Coalition, Jenna
Bernabe
Massachusetts Bus Association, Chris Anzuoni
Medical Academic & Scientific Community Organization

Regional Transportation Advisory Council
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(MASCO), Tom Yardley
MoveMassachusetts, Jon Seward
National Corridors Initiative, John Businger
Riverside Neighborhood Association, Marilyn Wellons
Route 128 Business Council, Monica Tibbits, Vice-chair
WalkBoston, John McQueen

Guests and Visitors

Ed Lowney	Romin Koebel, Fenway CDC
Jerome Graff, MassDEP	Wig Zamore, STEP, MVTF
Ellie Reisner, STEP	Michael McBride, HDR/Gilbane
Gloria Son, HDR/Gilbane	Jeffrey Sarin, MBTA
Peter Jones, Wellesley resident	

MPO Staff:

Pam Wolfe, Manager, Certification Activities
Sean Pfalzer Anne McGahan David Fargen Dan Amstutz