

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN MIDDLESEX  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
October 25, 2017**

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 P.M. at the office of the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), 40 Church Street, Suite 200, Lowell, MA. Attendees included:

VOTING MEMBERS:

- Stephen Woelfel, Chair (representing MassDOT Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack)
- Connie Raphael, MassDOT District 4 (representing Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver)
- Kevin O'Connor, LRTA Board Chair
- Tom Bomil, LRTA NMMPO Representative
- Roland Nutter, Pepperell Board of Selectmen, NMCOG NMMPO Representative

STAKEHOLDERS AND OTHER ATTENDEES:

- David Chandler, Federal Highway Administration
- Derek Krevat, MassDOT Planning, MPO Liaison
- Quinn Molloy, MassDOT GIS Municipal Coordinator
- Ali Sarault, LRTA
- Stephen Strykowski, Billerica Commission on Disabilities/Council on Aging
- Tracey Hutton, Dunstable Town Administrator
- Kevin Hardiman, Tewksbury Town Engineer
- Kelley Conway, Billerica Town Engineer
- Mark Hamel, Dracut Town Engineer
- Nicolas Bosonetto, City of Lowell Engineer
- Matthew Hanson, Tyngsborough Town Administrator

NMMPO STAFF:

- Beverly Woods, Justin Howard, Chris Curry, David Tilton, Carlin Andrus, Jong Wai Tommee and Katrina Garavanian, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 23, 2017 MEETING MINUTES**

NMMPO members were provided with a copy of the August 23, 2017 minutes prior to the meeting. Based on a motion made by Kevin O'Connor and seconded by Tom Bomil, the NMMPO voted unanimously to approve the August 23, 2017 minutes as presented.

### **3. OPEN FORUM – OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENTS FROM MPO MEMBERS, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS AND PUBLIC**

There were no comments.

### **4. STATUS REPORT ON TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) PROJECTS UNDER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION**

Connie Raphael updated the NMMPO on project information changes since the August 23, 2017 Meeting:

#### UPDATES ON PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDER DESIGN

- *Littleton-Westford Interstate Maintenance and related Work on I-495* is in the preliminary design stages, scheduled to be advertised December 30, 2017.
- *Lowell-Chelmsford-Andover Stormwater Improvements along Route 28 and I-495* is scheduled to be advertised in May 2018.
- *Lowell-Improvements on Route 38 at Four Intersections* is at 75% design and has a scheduled Ad date of June 2, 2018.
- *Westford-Intersection improvements at Groton Rd (Route 40) and Dunstable Road* is at 25% design. Advertisement is scheduled for August 4, 2018.
- *Lowell-Deck Replacement on Lowell Connector NB over Industrial Avenue East* has an advertisement date in November 2018.
- *Tewksbury – Intersection Improvements at Main Street, Salem Road and South Street* is at 25% design with an AD date of March 9, 2019.
- *Chelmsford – Intersection Improvements at Route 129 and Riverneck Road* is at 25% design.
- *Billerica – Yankee Doodle Bike Path Construction (Phase 1)* is at 25% design.
- *Chelmsford – Intersection Improvements at Boston Road and Concord Road* is at 25% design.

#### UPDATES ON FFY 2017 PROJECTS ADVERTISED FOR CONSTRUCTION

- *Route 3A/Allen Road Intersection Project* has been awarded and a pre-construction conference was held on October 19. Construction is scheduled to be completed in April 2020.
- *Andover-Bedford-Billerica Stormwater Improvements along I-93, Route 3 and Route 3A* bids opened on October 17. Waiting an award and notice to proceed.
- *Westford - Intersection Improvements at Groton Road and Oak Hill Road*, bids will be opened on October 31, 2017.
- *Lowell – Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Five Bridges (Tiger Grant)*, bids due 12/05/17.

- *Chelmsford – Bridge Deck Replacement and Intersection Improvements at Route 4 and I-495 (Exit 33)*, bids due January 23, 2018.
- *Lowell – Intersection and Signal Improvements at 2 Locations, VFW at Mammoth Road and VFW at Aiken Avenue*, bids due January 30, 2018.
- *Bedford-Billerica Middlesex Turnpike Improvements from Crosby Drive north to Manning Road, Phase 3*, Project awarded, preconstruction conference held September 25, construction completion date of June 6, 2023.
- *Lowell – Bridge Replacement, VFW Highway over Beaver Brook*, 19% complete. Hazmat issues are delaying the project about a year and pushing into 2019 completion date.

Nicolas Bosonetto inquired as to status of Lowell Connector at Gorham Street. Connie Raphael advised project is still in preliminary stages and is programmed in 2020 on the TIP.

Matthew Hanson requested information regarding excess funds and asked if they are reservable for projects. Beverly Woods advises that the Town forward a project scope to NMCOG and NMCOG in turn will offer guidance on submitting to MassDOT.

#### LOWELL REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY UPDATE

Ali Sarault updated the NMMPO on the two LRTA projects that are currently under construction at the Gallagher Terminal in Lowell:

- The Gallagher Terminal Lobby is undergoing renovations, with a schedule of November 2017 for completion.
- Construction of the Gallagher Terminal pedestrian bridge from the parking garage to the Thorndike Exchange property is now scheduled for completion in April 2018.

### **5. FFY 2018-2022 TIP AMENDMENT 1 – DISCUSSION/VOTE TO RELEASE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW**

Justin Howard provided a summary of FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment 1. The LRTA has received \$832,000 in Community Transit Grant Awards for the purchase of 13 minibuses. Twelve of these are replacements for an aging fleet, with one for new service with the Dracut Council on Aging. The new Dracut COA minibus is used for a more regional type service, i.e., from Dracut to medical facilities in Boston or Lahey Clinic. Of the 12 replacement minibuses, nine are for LRTA Roadrunner, two for the Billerica Council on Aging and one additional is for the Dracut Council on Aging.

Second part of the Amendment is for a deck replacement on the Lowell Connector southbound bridge over Industrial Avenue. The total cost estimate is \$2.4 million, with the northbound side already programmed in the TIP for 2019.

Based on a motion by Tom Bomil, seconded by Roland Nutter, the NMMPO voted unanimously to release the FFY 2018-2022 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 1 for a twenty-one day public review.

Beverly Woods discussed a letter that she received last week from Paul Stedman stating that MassDOT is beginning to assess the cost of work and consulting services for the Rourke Bridge project. She then inquired as to funding source and scope of work for the project. Steve Woelfel checked in with MassDOT and received an answer during this meeting that state funding will be provided, but did not have information as to what the actual work scope would entail. He will have Derek Krevat reach out to NMCOG with an update prior to next meeting.

## **6. MASSDOT PRESENTATION ON MASSACHUSETTS PROJECT INTAKE TOOL (MAPIT)**

Quinn Molloy, GIS municipal coordinator for MassDOT, gave a presentation and demonstration of the MaPIT tool, a web-based application meant to streamline the process of completing Project Need Forms and the Project Initiation Forms when initiating potential TIP projects. She provided an overview of the GEODOT Portal, which houses information compiled by MassDOT through GIS. Information includes condition of assets, mobility, transit, safety, economic, social equity and environmental conditions. With the data housed in GEODOT, MassDOT developed the MaPIT tool to accelerate and automate the project initiation workflow. MassDOT will begin using the Project Intake Tool as the primary interface for all state-funded projects in November.

A question of who has access to fill out the forms in MaPIT, led to a discussion of consultant versus municipal access. Beverly Woods reiterated that some of the smaller communities in the region and the State do not have sufficient staff and rely on their design consultants to assist in the project initiation process. Quinn Molloy replied that consultants could get access to the Tool through the municipality and that MassDOT was still determining direct access credentials for consultants. Steve Woelfel added that the Project Review Committee meeting in November has been moved to December to allow communities and MassDOT gatekeepers more time to enter potential projects into the system. Justin Howard asked about project need forms that have already been submitted to MassDOT in the paper form. MassDOT responded that either the community or the gatekeeper should submit the information into MaPIT. Further discussion commenced regarding access credentials, obtaining passwords, MPO data sharing, transit data, timeframe for PNF/PIF submissions, and the immediate need to transition to MaPIT from paper submissions.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 29, 2017, 2:30PM at NMCOG offices.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Based on a motion made by Roland Nutter and seconded by Kevin O'Connor, the MPO voted unanimously to adjourn at 3:20 PM.