MEETING MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN MIDDLESEX
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
DECEMBER 2, 2020

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

In light of the COVID-19 emergency legislation authorizing virtual public meetings, the meeting was called to order at 2:00 P.M. via videoconference headquartered at the office of the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), 40 Church Street, Suite 200, Lowell, MA. Attendees included:

Voting Members:
- Stephen Woelfel, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (Representing MassDOT Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack)
- Frank Suszynski, MassDOT District 4 (Representing MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver)
- Pat Wojtas, Chelmsford Select Board, NMCOG Vice Chair, MPO Representative
- Kevin O'Connor, Lowell Regional Transit Authority Board Representative to the MPO
- Tom Bomil, Chair, Lowell Regional Transit Authority Board

Stakeholders and Other Attendees:
- Chris Timmel, FHWA
- Constance Raphael, MassDOT District 4
- Derek Shooster, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, MPO Liaison
- Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3
- Brian Fallon, MassDOT Projects Engineer
- Michelle Ho, MassDOT Planning
- Ali Bent, LRTA
- Andrew Jennings, Billerica LRTA Board Member
- Josh Trearchis, VHB, Project Manager
- Tami Gouveia, Massachusetts State Representative, 14th Middlesex District
- Ting Chang, Lowell City Engineer

NMMPO Staff:
- Beverly Woods, Justin Howard, Chris Curry, Eric Molinari and Katrina Garavanian, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
2. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 24, 2020 AND SEPTEMBER 23, 2020 NMMPO MEETING MINUTES

NMMPO members were provided with copies of the June 24, 2020 and September 23, 2020 minutes prior to the meeting. Based on a motion by Kevin O’Connor and seconded by Pat Wojtas, the June 24, 2020 meeting minutes were approved, with an abstention by Tom Bomil as he was not present for the June 24, 2020 meeting.

Based on a motion by Pat Wojtas and seconded by Frank Suszynski, the September 23, 2020 meeting minutes were approved with abstentions by Tom Bomil and Kevin O’Connor as they were not present for the September meeting. Because there was no quorum present at the September 23 meeting, the minutes will be posted for the informational purposes but will be listed as unofficial.

3. STATUS REPORT ON TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) PROJECTS UNDER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Connie Raphael updated the NMMPO regarding project information changes since the September 23, 2020 meeting:

Projects in design:

- **Andover/Tewksbury – Highway Lighting System Rehabilitation and Repair at the Interchange of Interstate Routes 93 and 495** is at 75% design and has a construction ad date of February 13, 2021.
- **Burlington to Tyngsborough Guide and Traffic Sign Replacement on a Section of US 3** is at 100% design with an ad date of December 5, 2020.
- **Dunstable – Improvements on Main Street (Route 113), from Pleasant Street to 750 Ft east of Westford Street**, is at 75% design, with an estimated cost of $4.7 million, and an ad date for construction of September 25, 2021.
- **Tewksbury – Resurfacing and Sidewalk Reconstruction on Route 38 beginning at Colonial Drive north to the Intersection of Old Boston Road**, a distance of approximately 1.5 Miles is at 75% design, with an estimated cost of $6.4 million, and with a construction ad date of September 25, 2021.
- **Chelmsford-Medford-Somerville-Stoneham – Interstate Preservation on I-93 & I-495** is at 100% design with an ad date of December 19, 2020.

Pat Wojtas asked about the Concord Road/Boston Road project construction and if the project has been awarded. Connie Raphael stated that Tropiano received the award and a notice to proceed has been issued. Construction would likely begin in the spring of 2021 with a completion date of April 2023.
4. OPEN FORUM – OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENTS FROM MPO MEMBERS, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS, AND THE PUBLIC

There were none.

5. FFY 2021-2025 TIP ADJUSTMENT 1

Justin Howard presented the Summary Narrative of Adjustment 1 to the FFY 2021-2025 TIP Program. The adjustment involves funding source changes to several TIP projects in 2021 and includes the programming of FTA 5339 program funds for two LRTA projects. These projects include the purchase of two fixed route vans and eight 35-foot diesel buses in 2021. Initially, the projects were programmed in the TIP using FTA 5307 program funds. The LRTA has been awarded the 5339 funds and the TIP needs to be adjusted to reflect the funding source changes. The administrative adjustment is necessary in order for these projects to be properly programmed and funded in FFY 2021. A summary table of the adjustment was provided in the meeting materials.

6. REGIONAL SAFETY REPORT PRESENTATION

Eric Molinari presented the 2020 Northern Middlesex Regional Transportation Safety Report. He highlighted the latest regional top 100 crash intersection list, bicycle and pedestrian crashes, preventable transit accidents, and projects aimed at addressing safety using HSIP funding in the TIP. A copy of the report is available on the NMCOG website.

7. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATES

Justin Howard gave a short presentation and informed the group that in 2018 MassDOT established and the MPO adopted two and four year targets for congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, as part of the overall performance based planning effort in the Commonwealth. New data has been made available and the State has updated the targets. Justin requested the MPO members consider adoption of an updated four-year target for non-single occupancy vehicle traffic percentages.

Based on a motion by Kevin O’Connor and seconded by Tom Bomil, the MPO voted unanimously to adopt the updated target for non-single occupancy vehicle traffic percentages.

Ali Bent provided an overview and explained updates to the LRTA Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan Targets and the Public Transit Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Targets. She requested that the MPO consider adopting 2021 updated targets for the Transit Asset Management Plan, and new targets for the Public Transit Agency Safety Plan.

Based on a motion by Tom Bomil and seconded by Kevin O’Connor, the MPO voted unanimously to adopt the Updated LRTA Transit Asset Management Plan Targets.

Based on a motion by Kevin O’Connor and seconded by Tom Bomil, the MPO voted unanimously to adopt the LRTA Public Transit Agency Safety Plan Targets.
8. MPO CERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

Justin Howard provided an update on a corrective action identified in the Certification Review, requesting that the MPO consider endorsement of the Nashua Urbanized Area Memorandum of Understanding (UZA MOU). Parts of Pepperell and Dunstable fall within this urbanized area. MPO staff, along with all agencies in the UZA, jointly worked to prepare this document which outlines the responsibilities of each agency in carrying out the planning process. Derek Shooster noted that the MassDOT Secretary, as the designated chair of each MPO, would be the sole signatory for the MPOs in Massachusetts. The Nashua UZA MOU was emailed to the MPO for review prior to the meeting.

Based on a motion by Pat Wojtas and seconded by Tom Bomil, the MPO voted unanimously to adopt the Nashua UZA MOU as presented.

9. ANNUAL OBLIGATION OF FEDERAL FUNDS REPORT FOR 2020

Justin Howard informed the group that the MPO is required to annually publicize how federal funds are spent in the Northern Middlesex Region within 180 days of the end of the Federal fiscal year. He gave a brief presentation and explained that this report provides information on the $18.7 million in transportation funding that was obligated to the region in FFY 2020, including both highway and transit funds. The report was provided to the MPO prior to the meeting and a will be posted on the NMCOG website.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Derek Shooster informed the group that MassDOT is in the process of accepting applications for the second round of the Shared Streets program, now known as the Shared Winter Streets and Places program. The first application deadline is Friday, December 4th, and another will be available in January and one in February. Derek provided a link to the group for application information and submission.

Connie Raphael stated that the Rourke Bridge public information meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 9th. Information is available on the Rourke Bridge Replacement website. She provided a link, which will be available on the NMCOG web site.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Based on a motion made by Tom Bomil and seconded by Pat Wojtas, the MPO voted unanimously to adjourn at 3:07 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2021, at 2:00 PM. Should a virtual meeting be required, a link will be sent to participants and published in the public notice.