

DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE

## **Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO)**

**Tuesday May 17, 2011**

Held at Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD)

88 Broadway, Taunton, MA

The meeting was called to order by acting chairman Clinton Bench at 1:07pm.

The following SMMPO Members were in attendance:

Jean Fox, Town of Freetown

Randal Kunz, SRPEDD Commission Chair

Francis Gay, GATRA Administrator

Arthur Frank, Acting SRTA Administrator

Steven Ouellette, Town of Westport

Zeb Arruda

Byron Holmes

Clinton Bench, MassDOT

Pamela Haznar, MassDOT

Representing Mayor Lang, New Bedford

Representing Mayor Flanagan, Fall River

Representing Jeffrey Mullan, Secretary of MassDOT, SMMPO Chair

Representing Acting Administrator DePaola, MassDOT Highway

Ex-Officio Members in attendance:

Lee Azinheira, JTPG Chair/Town of Mansfield

Paul Maloney, FHWA-MA

The following were also present:

Trey Wadsworth, MassDOT Planning

Jim Hadfield, SRPEDD

Linda Lally, SRPEDD

Adam Recchia, SRPEDD

Jacqueline Schmidt, SRPEDD

Tim Kochan, MassDOT Highway Division District 5

Paul Mission, SRPEDD

Lisa Estrela-Pedro, SRPEDD

Angela Azevedo, SRPEDD

Introductions were made.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:07 pm by Acting Chairman Clinton Bench.
2. **Approval of Minutes – March 15, 2011 and April 19, 2011:** A motion was made to approve the minutes for the March 15, 2011 meeting of the SMMPO held at the SRPEDD Offices in Taunton. The motion was seconded and approved UNANIMOUSLY. Minutes for the April 19, 2011 meeting of the SMMPO were informal due to the lack of quorum present at the meeting and were provided for informational purposes only.
3. **Discussion and vote on proposed TIP Amendment to the FY11-14 TIP regarding SRTA changes and additions to FY11-FY14:** Mr. Bench gave a brief explanation of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Hadfield discussed amendments to SRTA Section 5307 funding for FY2011-2014. He explained that the amendments included purchasing five (5) demand response vehicles instead of four (4) and cost changes. He further explained that there were changes made to FY2012-2014 of the TIP, which will be covered in the FY2012-FY2015 TIP, but need to be made in FY2011 to insure proper funding.

Mr. Bench clarified that the cost changes to the TIP are updates to funding sources to make sure that we are properly reflecting the use of toll credits versus RTA Capital Matches and that the change to purchase 5 demand response vehicles instead of 4, was due to the state providing additional funds for another bus. He further clarified that the addition of the "Rehab Brayton Ave Maint Facility (drainage & structure)" project in FY2011 was to account

for outstanding required environmental mitigation related to parking expansion at the facility. He also pointed out that construction of a new Fall River terminal is programmed for FY2012, and asked if the construction would utilize American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. Mr. Frank explained that the ARRA funding was used for demolition at the new terminal site and Ms. Lally explained that the new terminal would be funded with a combination of funds left over from the sale of the original terminal site and the accumulation of other funds. Mr. Frank gave a brief update on the new terminal. He explained that SRTA is meeting with the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) with respect to the terminal and that the programming of the new terminal in FY2012 is important to move the project forward. SRTA hopes to continue the discussion with the Department of Environmental Protection in regards to demolishing the current building.

Mr. Hadfield discussed amendments to the highway section of the FY2011-2014 TIP that need to be released for a 30 day public comment period. He explained that previously there was an unallocated balance of \$1.2 million for FFY2012, but that the balance has been reduced to \$312,520 as a result of increasing project costs. He further explained that the JTPG had voted previously to add the "Maintenance on sections of Route 44 and Route 138 in Raynham and Taunton" project to the TIP for FFY 2011, but the project has not been added as there is no funding available due to the increase in project costs. The following changes to the FY2011-2014 TIP were discussed:

- Middleborough Signalization of Route 105 and Interstate 495 Ramps - The Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding for the project increased by \$1.15 million due to rising project costs and a decrease in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding for the project by \$133,027 as a result of an increase in the project cost for the New Bedford Multi-modal Shore Side Electrification project.
- Fairhaven Safety Improvements Route 6 at four intersections – Increasing STP funds for the project by \$53,440 per new cost estimate.
- New Bedford Reconstruction of Mill Street – Decreasing STP funds for the project by \$152,060 per new cost estimate.
- Middleborough Nemasket River Stormwater – Mr. Bench explained that there had been a shift in funding sources for this project from federal to state funding to make use of a GreenDOT enhancements program match.
- New Bedford Shore Side Electrification Project – Increasing CMAQ funds for the project by \$133,027 per new cost estimate.
- Attleboro Tiffany Street Phase II – Ms. Haznar discussed a change to the Attleboro Tiffany Street project under Section 1C of FY2011. She explained that the design has been contracted for \$125,000, and that the portion of the earmark being used in FY2011 should be changed from \$844,240 to \$125,000 to reflect this change. Mr. Bench explained that the change will be put in as a comment during the public comment period. Mr. Maloney inquired about the timeline of the project, as the design is programmed in FY2011 and the construction was not programmed until FY2014. He explained that FHWA requires projects to be programmed continuously, and that if the projects are not programmed this way it looks like the TIP is being used for cash flow purposes. Mr. Bench explained that this will be looked into during the public comment period and changes will be made if necessary. Mr. Maloney called attention to the fact that Attleboro Tiffany Street Phase II project has different numbers for the design and construction programming. Mr. Bench said that the project numbers will be clarified during the public comment period.

A motion was made to release the amendments to the FY2011 TIP for a 30 day public comment period. The motion was seconded and approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Hadfield reminded the group that there are many important action items that will need to be voted on in upcoming meetings and that it is very important to attend these meetings to ensure quorum is met.

4. **Status Report on Projects in the FY11-14 TIP:** The following projects and updates for the FY2011-2014 TIP were discussed:

## FY2011

- Middleborough Signalization of Route 105 and Interstate 495 Ramps – Ms. Haznar explained that the project is at the 75% design phase and the plans are under review. She explained that the project involves the signalization of the two Interstate 495 ramps at Route 105 in Middleborough and will be tied into the relocation of Route 79.
- Fairhaven Safety Improvements Route 6 at four intersections – Ms. Haznar explained that the project is at the 75% design phase and that a technical meeting was held for the project and the design is moving towards 100%.
- New Bedford Reconstruction of Mill Street – Ms. Haznar explained that this project is at the 100% design phase and that the advertising date is scheduled before October 1, 2011, with construction to being in next spring. Mr. Arruda asked when MassDOT expected to break ground on this project. Ms. Haznar replied that the project will be advertised before October 2011 and that any extensive work would most likely begin next spring.
- Middleborough Nemasket River Stormwater – Ms. Haznar explained that the project is at 25% design status and that MassDOT Highway Division District 5 (District 5) is awaiting 75% design plans, which should be submitted within the next couple of weeks.
- New Bedford Shore Side Electrification Project – Ms. Haznar explained . Mr. Maloney asked if an updated scope was available for the project. Ms. Haznar replied that she will check on the status of the updated scope and that the city was aware that they need to update the scope.

## FY2012

- New Bedford Route 6 at Route 140 and Brownell Avenue – Ms. Haznar explained that Boston Project Management is working with the designer to finalize the project scope. She explained that MassDOT is concerned about the project being ready in time for funding because the project is at pre-25% design and is not as developed as they would like it to be for programming in FY2012. Mr. Hadfield further explained that the project cost has increased from \$1.5 million to \$3.1 million and may not fit within the fiscal constraints for FY2012.
- Mansfield Route 106 Reconstruction – Ms. Haznar explained that the project is at 25% design, and that District 5 is awaiting 75% design plans.
- Fall River Plymouth Avenue – Mr. Kochan explained that the project is at 25% design, and that MassDOT Headquarters has received ROW plans. Mr. Hadfield explained that the project is including most of the recommendations from SRPEDD's corridor study, and that the focal point of the project is the intersection of Rodman Street and Plymouth Ave that is ranked the most dangerous intersection in Massachusetts. He explained that while the project is addressing many important problems along the corridor, the project should focus on the Rodman Street intersection and the problems at the I-195 interchange, and should consider breaking the project up into phases to best address the problems with the amount of available funding. Mr. Holmes clarified that the current estimate is just under \$7 million and that the city is looking to scale back the project limits.
- Westport Central Village – Ms. Haznar explained that District 5 is waiting for 75% design plans.
- Berkley Bridge Replacement, Padelford Street over Route 24 – Ms. Haznar explained that 25% design plans were just received for the project.
- Berkley Dighton Bridge Replacement – Ms. Haznar explained that the project is very well developed and that they are looking to extend roadway work to improve accommodations to the nearby Bristol County Agricultural High School.
- Fall River Veterans Memorial Bridge – Ms. Haznar explained that the bridge should be open for two way traffic this summer.
- New Bedford Flaherty Drive – Ms. Haznar explained that District 5 is waiting for 75% design plans.

FY2013

- Raynham Signal and Intersection Improvements at Route 44 & Raynham Route 44 Bridge over Route 24 – Ms. Haznar explained that a meeting was held to coordinate design on these projects to avoid duplicating work as much as possible. She further explained that the Intersection project is identified for FY2013 and the Bridge project is on the contingency Accelerated Bridge Program list.

GATRA – Mr. Gay explained that GATRA has Nitsch Engineering on board working for the Attleboro Intermodal Center, and that GATRA has just advertised for renovations to the Taunton Bus Terminal. He further explained that they are moving ahead with a planning study with the Town of Plymouth for an intermodal center and that a public meeting will be held June 8, 2011 regarding potential sites for the center.

SRTA – Mr. Frank discussed challenges that SRTA has had with falling concrete SRTA Terminal in New Bedford. He explained that the falling concrete was limited to the parking garage and has not affected the operation of the terminal. Mr. Bench inquired if the parking deck was still closed. Mr. Frank replied that he believed that to be the case.

5. **Regional Transportation Plan Update – Discussion of Projects:** Mr. Hadfield discussed progress on the FY2011 Regional Transportation Plan (2011 RTP). Mr. Hadfield explained that due to recently released financial numbers from the State, the predicted level of funding is down 30% for years 2016-2020 and that reduction in funding has made selecting projects for the 2011 RTP challenging. He further explained that SRPEDD is looking at which projects will fit fiscal constraint for the FY2011 RTP, and that during this process, projects from previous Regional Transportation Plans that have not been completed are being examined to determine if the project should continue to be included in the current plan. Previously included projects that were discussed included:

- Potential widening of Route 24 from Route 140 north to Interstate 495 from 2 to 3 – This project may possibly be excluded from the FY2011 due to improvements at the Route 140 interchange and a reduction in traffic due to South Coast Rail.
- Replacement of the Middleborough Rotary – This project may not be required contingent upon the effectiveness of interim improvements. Ms. Fox asked what the interim improvements entailed. Mr. Hadfield explained that the interim improvements included a five approach signalized intersection, a modern roundabout, and a flyover configuration. He further explained that the improvements are intended to improve safety and efficiency. Mr. Bench clarified that the previous study had a broader scope and that there have been changes to environmental mitigations rules since the previous study which limits the project area. He further clarified that the latest look focuses on the rotary facility itself and improvements to flow and safety.
- Faunce Corner Road Bridge Project - Mr. Hadfield discussed a previous commitment from the JTPG in which the group deemed the project to be significant enough to potentially devote one year's target allocation to the project if the State agreed to fully fund the project. Currently the Wareham Route 6/28 project is programmed in FY2013 and FY2014 as an advance construction project. This project requires a tremendous amount of land takings that may not be completed in time for funding in FY2013. Mr. Hadfield inquired if there was any progress with furthering the project within MassDOT. Mr. Bench discussed a meeting between District 5 and headquarters. He explained that the state would be willing to increase the priority of the project if the region uses part of the target to fund the project and that the bridge could be eligible for Accelerated Bridge Program funding but there are many other bridges with a much higher priority for that funding. He further explained that there has been some pushback from the designers about the timeline for the project, and that they consider 2014 to be the earliest reasonable time for funding. Ms. Haznar discussed the scope of the project and that the project encompasses many different sections including design, environmental permitting, right of way, and a number of permits. She explained that right of way for the project was fairly significant due to the amount of land takings required for widening and adding turn lanes. She stated that the project is currently at 25% design and

that sketch plans are under review. She explained that District 5 thinks that 2014 is reasonable to get through the whole project. Mr. Wadsworth said that it would be a good 2015 project. Mr. Hadfield discussed the Wareham Route 6/28 project and SRPEDD's concerns over the significant right of way requirements for the project. He explained that both projects are a high priority for the region and that the Faunce Corner Road Bridge project should be expedited in case Wareham is not ready in time. Ms. Haznar agreed with that suggestion and recommended that they should try to have another project in case neither project is ready.

Mr. Hadfield announced that SRPEDD will be looking for input from the JTPG and from local communities as to which projects fit the region's priorities.

Mr. Bench inquired about the schedule for the TIP. Mr. Hadfield replied that the draft TIP will be ready for the JTPG next month and that there are plans to have the TIP ready for a vote in July to release the TIP for a 30 day comment period with SMMPO endorsement by August 15, 2011 at the latest.

**6. Discussion of the FY12 Unified Planning Work Program:** Mr. Hadfield announced that SRPEDD is in the process of developing the FY2012 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). He explained the UPWP describes the scope and cost of the work tasks of the SRPEDD transportation and transit staff, and also serves any use of federal highway, federal transit or MassDOT funding for planning purposes. Mr. Hadfield discussed the following projects/programs:

- 3C Process – provides professional transportation planning staff support to the MPO, the JTPG, the SRPEDD Commission, MassDOT, the GATRA Advisory Board, the SRTA Advisory Board, and to the cities and towns in the region.
- Public Participation and Environmental Justice – encourage public participation in transportation planning issues through the JTPG, to educate, solicit, review, rank and select regional projects under the Transportation Enhancement Program and to insure that there is equity in the distribution of transportation resources in the region.
- Transportation Improvement Program – maintain a program of transportation improvement projects that is consistent with transportation plans and regulations.
- Data Management and GIS – develop, update and maintain transportation related information and data to ensure that transportation recommendations and decisions are based on the most current and complete information possible.
- Regional Modeling – develop and maintain the TransCAD Regional Travel Demand Model.
- Regional Traffic Counting – continue to conduct automatic traffic counts at various locations throughout the region including MassDOT identified coverage count stations and at locations deemed necessary to maintain adequate data for regional planning purposes.
- Transit Data Maintenance/NTD – maintain data for transit authorities for use in NTD reporting for FTA.
- Congestion Management Studies – update the status of projects identified in the current Congestion Management Plan for the region and to examine and propose improvement alternatives to regional traffic patterns and existing or projected congested roadways, traffic corridors, public transit and intermodal facilities.
- Safety Management Studies – continue assistance to local officials in the review of safety issues within their communities including crash report analyses, signal/stop warrants analyses, speed studies, site plan review, etc. Suggested projects for FFY2010 include:
  - Pedestrian Corridor Safety Audits
  - Intersection Safety Audits
- Pavement Management – continuance of a three year process to update the regional survey of pavement conditions for the region as part of a federal directive.

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning – increase efforts in this task including evaluation of bike plans, ADA compliance, event organization and public outreach. Mr. Mission discussed an increased effort in this area with the inclusion of planned pedestrian safety audits and an increase in bicycle planning efforts due to popular demand.
- Geographic Roadway Runoff Inventory Program (GRRIP) – continue effort to inventory roadway drainage structures in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Special Projects – SRPEDD is seeking input for specific projects that are unique to the area from cities and towns that have a problem that they would like to have studied. For any input or study ideas please contact Jim Hadfield by email at [jhadfield@srpedd.org](mailto:jhadfield@srpedd.org) or by calling 508-824-1367 extension 230.
- Transit Projects – Mr. Bench reminded that the UPWP also programs transit planning items for GATRA and SRTA and to work with SRPEDD on any projects in this area.

7. **Other Business:** No other business was discussed.

8. **Date, Time, Place for Next Meeting:** It was determined that the upcoming SMMPO meetings will be held as follows:

- June 21, 2011 at 1 pm
- July 12, 2011 at 1 pm
- August 16, 2011 at 1 pm

9. **Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:09pm by Acting Chairman Clinton Bench.