

**Memorandum for the Record**  
**Transportation Planning and Programming Committee of the**  
**Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

**February 15, 2007 Meeting**

10:00 AM –12:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Room 4, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

David Mohler, Chair, representing Bernard Cohen, Executive Office of Transportation (EOT)

**Decisions**

The Transportation Planning and Programming Committee members voted to take the following actions:

- approve funding for Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) to design the MPO's Regional Bicycle Plan and to print 500 copies
- approve the minutes of January 18

**Meeting Agenda**

**1. Public Comments**

There were none.

**2. Chair's Report – *David Mohler, EOT***

New federal planning regulations, reflecting SAFETEA-LU, have been finalized and are available on the Federal Highway Administration's website.

The public comment period for EOT's report describing the modeling assumptions and analysis methodology used in developing the proposed amendments to the Central Artery State Implementation Plan Transit Commitments ends on February 16.

**3. Subcommittee Chairs' Reports**

There were none.

**4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council – *Steve Olanoff, Advisory Council***

The Advisory Council met on February 14. The meeting featured a presentation on Harvard University's development plans for Allston over the next 50 years. Harvard has not announced its plans for the Allston rail yards yet; the university owns the rail yards, but CSX has an easement on the property.

**5. JOURNEY TO 2030 – *Anne McGahan, MPO Staff***

Members received copies of all of the draft chapters of the Plan except for Chapter 12 (Finance), which is still being finalized by EOT and the MBTA. Members discussed changes to Chapters 11 (Land Use and Economic Development) and 13 (The Recommended Transportation Plan).

### **Chapter 13 (The Recommended Transportation Plan)**

Jim Gallagher, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), recommended adding more details about the MPO's commitment to Suburban Mobility/Transportation Demand Management, Bicycle Mobility, Pedestrian Mobility, and Freight Programs in this chapter, possibly under a new heading, "Programs to Improve Mobility", and including text that states that the MPO plans to fund the programs over the next 25 years. He provided suggestions for text to be added. For describing the Freight Program, he suggested adding text stating that the MPO is committed to funding freight projects, particularly those that will reduce truck VMT and diesel emissions.

Concern was expressed by Jim Gillooly, City of Boston, that these specifics would result in "pre-programming." Anne McGahan, MPO staff, noted that discussion of these programs is included in Chapters 5 and 6.

Concern was also expressed about including the freight language since the MPO has not had a full discussion about the subject. Steve Woelfel, MassHighway, stated that there are a limited number of places in the region where freight facilities could be built and that the MPO would have to address the impact that new freight facilities would have on passenger rail service.

Joe Cosgrove, MBTA, noted that projects to improve passenger rail lines often have elements that are beneficial to freight transport. While there are potential conflicts between passenger rail and freight transport, it may not make sense to have a separate funding category for freight projects since passenger rail and freight rail projects can sometimes be integrated.

Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board, said he approves of the text as presented by staff. He expressed concern about adding the freight language and setting goals for reducing truck VMT given that there is not a lot of flexibility for dual uses of the commuter rail infrastructure.

Members noted the various places in other chapters where these initiatives are discussed in greater detail and agreed to refer readers to those texts. These initiatives are described in Chapter 5 (System Preservation, Modernization, and Efficiency) and Chapter 6 (Mobility).

They also agreed to add text noting that the MPO is particularly concerned about the region's continued loss of capacity on the freight rail system and the potential impact of freight movement on the region's highway system and to note that diverting freight from trucks to rail could improve the region's air quality.

Staff was asked to make several changes to the chapter's project description section:

- remove from the project descriptions the terms "absolute development constraints" and "partial development constraints" and references to land use ratings
- make clarifications to tables 13-2 and 13-3

- correct the project description and figure for the Bedford, Billerica, and Burlington – Middlesex Turnpike Improvements project
- note in the Canton – I95/I93 Interchange project description that the interchange as proposed can not be built without the Dedham Street ramp, but that the ramp could be built without the interchange
- correct the graphic on the Silver Line Phase III project description
- request more information about planning efforts around the Wilmington, Tewksbury, and Andover – Lowell Junction project

It was noted that the Russia Wharf project is a State Implementation Plan (SIP) Commitment of MassTurnpike. The air quality conformity determination of the Plan will not be approved if the Russia Wharf project is excluded from the Plan. A study is underway to determine if there are potential providers of ferry service to the Wharf.

### **Chapter 11 (Land Use & Economic Development)**

Members received a revised copy of Chapter 11. Staff had reorganized the text and taken out repetition.

### **Comments on Other Chapters**

Members asked staff to add information to Chapter 6 about the MPO's Walkable Community Workshop program. The program is also described in Chapter 2.

D. Mohler asked the Committee to reach consensus on the Plan, as presented and revised. If members have additional important changes, these should be relayed to staff and all members prior to the next Committee meeting. Members agreed that they were in consensus on the Plan. The Committee will focus on Chapter 12 (Finance) at the next meeting.

## **6. Action Items**

### **JOURNEY TO 2030 – Anne McGahan, MPO Staff**

Several public outreach events have been scheduled to take place over the next two weeks. Members discussed the possibility of releasing preliminary text of the Plan—without Chapter 12 (Finance)—on CD and posting it on the MPO web site prior to the official public comment period. Members agreed to release the preliminary text of the Plan. During discussion, some members expressed concern that an early release of the draft chapters would be unclear on the impact Chapter 12 could have on the rest of the document. Those involved in the development of Chapter 12 stated that it is unlikely that the highway or transit figures will differ from those previously presented to the Committee. Members of the public who receive the CDs will be informed if Chapter 12 results in substantive changes to the preliminary text.

Members directed staff to hold two more public outreach events in March, after the complete Plan is approved. An open house is scheduled for March 6 at the State Transportation Building and another event will be scheduled later in the month on the South Shore.

**MPO Regional Bicycle Plan – Scott Walker, MAPC**

At the February 8 meeting, MAPC requested that the MPO provide \$10,000 so that MAPC can print and distribute the Regional Bike Plan. A less expensive alternative was proposed. CTPS Graphics could design the Plan for a cost of about \$2,600 or \$2,700 and complete the work by the end of the month. MAPC proposed getting 500 copies printed (at about \$8 per copy) as opposed to 200 copies (at about \$19 per copy). The larger quantity would provide enough copies to take to public outreach events throughout the ten-year span of the plan. CD copies could also be printed on demand.

A motion to approve funding for CTPS to design the MPO's Regional Bicycle Plan and to print 500 copies was made by Gordon Feltman, Town of Bedford, and seconded by J. Gillooly. The motion passed with D. Mohler abstaining.

**Minutes – Pam Wolfe, MPO Staff**

A motion to approve the minutes of January 18 was made by G. Feltman, and seconded by P. Regan. The motion passed unanimously.

The minutes of January 25 were tabled.

**7. Members' Items**

J. Gillooly announced that a team from Boston University (BU) would like to brief the MPO on its conceptual plans for improvements along Commonwealth Avenue. The Chair stated that the BU team would be scheduled to present during the Plan's public comment period.

**8. Agenda for Future Meeting**

At the February 22 meeting, members will review draft Chapter 12 (Finance) and two work scopes. The meeting of March 1 is canceled. A Suburban Mobility Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for March 1, but should be rescheduled for March 15 if possible. The next Committee meeting will be on March 15.

**9. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by J. Gillooly, and seconded by P. Regan. The motion passed unanimously.

**Transportation Planning and Programming Committee Meeting Attendance**  
**Thursday, February 15, 2007, 10:00 AM**

**Member Agencies**

EOT  
  
City of Boston  
  
City of Newton  
City of Salem  
MassHighway  
MAPC  
MassPike  
MBTA  
MBTA Advisory Board  
Advisory Council  
Town of Bedford  
Town of Framingham

**Representatives and Alternates**

David Mohler, Chair  
Kate Fichter  
Jim Gillooly  
Thomas Kadzis  
David Koses  
Lynn Duncan  
Steve Woelfel  
Jim Gallagher  
Shirin Karanfiloglu  
Joe Cosgrove  
Paul Regan  
Steve Olanoff  
Gordon Feltman  
Ginger Esty

**MPO Staff/CTPS**

Maureen Kelly  
Anne McGahan  
Karl Quackenbush  
Ben Rasmussen  
Arnie Soolman  
Pam Wolfe

**Other Attendees**

Wig Zamore  
  
Mystic View Task  
Force/Somerville Transportation  
Equity Partnership