

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

October 22, 2009 Meeting

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM, State Transportation Building, Conference Room 5, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

David Mohler, Chair, representing James Aloisi, Executive Office of Transportation & Public Works (EOT)

Decisions

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

- Approve the minutes of the meetings of September 10 and 24

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

State Representative Jonathan Hecht spoke in support of the *Newton, Watertown, Boston – Nonantum Road Improvement* project and requested that the MPO amend the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2010 – 2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include the project. He noted that the project has the support of residents and legislators of the three municipalities. (See the attached letter from legislators from those three municipalities.) He also noted that the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) contributed \$400,000 toward the project design and the project is now ready. He explained that the project will address public safety issues on this roadway (by narrowing the roadway, making geometric improvements, and improving safety for pedestrians) and create a multi-modal transit link.

Rick Corsi, DCR, Project Manager for the *Nonantum Road* project, added that there has been strong public support for the project going back to 2000, including in discussions of the Charles River Master Plan. He emphasized that the project is needed to improve safety, as there have been fatalities on the road, and that it has the benefit of creating a multi-use trail.

State Representative William Brownsberger thanked the MPO for including the *Belmont—Trapelo Road* project in the Amendment to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He expressed support for including a bike path project linking from the Mystic River to Alewife MBTA Station in the FFYs 2010 – 2013 TIP. He said that it would be a valuable link in the regional bikeway network.

George Bezkorovainy, Town of Weymouth, requested that the MPO consider providing stimulus funding for a project to improve the intersection at Middle Street and Libby Industrial Parkway in Weymouth. The roadway is the main access road to Libby Industrial Park and it is a high accident area, he said. The project, which is estimated at \$1 million, would add turning lanes and improve signalization at the intersection. The

town is working with MassHighway to finalize its 100% plans and expects the project will be ready for advertising in February 2010, in time to receive funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

David Watson, MassBike, expressed MassBike's support for the *Alewife Brook Greenway* project, noting that the project would create a multi-modal transportation connection and provide safer access to Alewife Station. He also expressed MassBike's support for the *Nonantum Road* project, noting that the project would make important safety improvements.

Doug Straus, National Development, provided an update on the Meadow Walk development in Lynnfield, which includes interchange improvements at exits 42 and 43 on Interstate 95. The 75% drawings have been submitted to MassHousing and are expected to be complete by January, he said. He requested that the MPO support the \$5.6 million project by programming ARRA funds for it.

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

There was none.

3. Subcommittee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council – *Laura Weiner, Regional Transportation Advisory Council*

The Advisory Council hosted a tour of the Alewife MBTA Station this past week. About 25 people attended and discussed planned access improvements.

At the last Advisory Council meeting, a representative from U. S. Representative Michael Capuano's office, John Lenicheck gave a presentation on the new federal surface transportation bill. He reported that many think the bill may not pass before the end of 2010.

Also at the last meeting, the Advisory Council changed its bylaws to require that members attend the majority of meetings each year to maintain their membership. Either a member or his/her alternate must attend.

5. Director's Report – *Arnie Soolman, Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)*

Marc Desmarais, Manager of Information Technology and Services at CTPS, will be retiring on November 20. His last day of work will be November 13. CTPS has advertised his position. If members know of any potential candidates they are asked to let A. Soolman know.

6. Amendment to the FFY 2010 Element of the FFYs 2010 – 2013 Transportation Improvement Program – Hayes Morrison, MPO Staff

This agenda item was set to amend the FFY 2010 element of the FFYs 2010 – 2013 TIP to add projects that would be funded with the second round of federal economic stimulus (ARRA) funding. D. Mohler reported that the Patrick Administration is still developing the list of potential ARRA-funded projects. Members were unable to take action on this item at this time.

Jim Gillooly, City of Boston, distributed copies of a letter that Boston Mayor Thomas Menino and state legislators serving Boston districts sent to Governor Deval Patrick to request support for the programming of \$21 million of ARRA funds for a project to resurface federal-aid funded roadways in Boston. (See attached letter.) The project was originally programmed in the FFYs 2009 – 2012 TIP, and the City would like the project re-programmed in the new TIP. The City reports that the project will be ready within the next month, in time to receive ARRA funds. In response to a question from Mary Pratt, Town of Hopkinton, J. Gillooly stated that the City is using Chapter 90 monies for other repaving projects and that the City will be using all of its Chapter 90 monies this year.

Eric Bourassa, MAPC, asked MPO staff for an update on the list of potential projects for ARRA funding that staff was directed to prepare. This list was to be based on project readiness and include DCR projects. D. Mohler replied that EOT is working with MassHighway and the MPO to develop this list, which is not yet finalized. He informed members that they will be provided with this list along with the list of recommended projects being developed by the Administration.

L. Weiner, Advisory Council, asked if proponents of potential ARRA-funded projects are being contacted. D. Mohler noted that the Governor's Office is contacting some proponents.

Members then discussed the possible need to hold an abbreviated public comment period for the Amendment to the FFY 2010 element of the FFYs 2010 – 2013 TIP.

E. Bourassa asked about the point at which the project list could be changed. Mohler stated that EOT, working with the MPOs, will take an assessment by the end of December to determine which programmed ARRA projects have not been advertised and which ones are unlikely to be ready by February. At that time, there will be an opportunity to substitute projects that will not meet the February deadline for advertising.

M. Pratt raised the issue that projects that have air quality impacts must be programmed in the RTP. D. Mohler stated that that EOT will not be recommending any projects with air quality impacts that are not already included in the RTP.

7. Minutes – Pam Wolfe, Manager of Certification Activities, MPO Staff

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 10 was made by J. Gillooly, and seconded by John Romano, Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 24 was made by J. Gillooly, and seconded by Christine Stickney, Town of Braintree. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Work Program for Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections – Karl Quackenbush, Deputy Technical Director, CTPS

Members were provided with copies of the work program for *Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections*. This study, which is in the FFY 2010 Unified Planning Work Program, is the third in a series of studies that MPO staff has been conducting to identify improvements to address safety and operational problems at intersections.

For this study, staff will identify 25 intersections across the region as candidates for study by considering crash data from the Registry of Motor Vehicles, and performance data from the Congestion Management Plan. MPO members will have the opportunity to review that list and provide input before the list is narrowed down to 12 locations for study.

The rationale behind this work is that improving safety and level of service at intersections generally improves level of service on the connected arterial roadways. Staff conducts these studies with an eye toward improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure as well. Staff will aim to select locations in municipalities where there is a local interest in implementing the recommendations of the study.

Members discussed the work program.

M. Pratt raised the issue of how the MPO implements study recommendations through the TIP and raised a concern that improvements recommended in the MPO's *Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements in Town Centers* study for the Town of Southborough have not yet been programmed on the TIP. K. Quackenbush noted that lack of funding is sometimes an impediment to implementing study recommendations. Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority, noted that the MPO had the opportunity to develop an RTP program for implementing such projects but that it did not happen.

David Koses, City of Newton, expressed concern that the work program budget may be too small to study 12 intersections, which he said are likely to be complicated intersections. He suggested that staff consider reducing the number of intersections to be studied or eliminate Task 1 (which describes the process for selecting candidate intersections) and ask the MAPC subregions for suggestions on intersections to study. He also recommended including public participation as an element of the work program.

K. Quackenbush explained that staff is taking steps to avoid selecting the more complicated intersections to ensure that the study can be done within budget. He noted that a broader outreach effort might be useful in the intersection selection process, and

that, in fact, two of the nine intersections currently under study in the existing intersections project were identified in MAPC's outreach efforts.

E. Bourassa expressed support for including outreach to the subregions.

M. Pratt advised seeing if municipalities would contribute funding for the study. Michelle Ciccolo, Town of Hudson, also recommended that the MPO encourage municipalities to contribute funding to such studies.

Sue McQuaid, Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce, reminded members that a Route 1 corridor study was recently completed, which studied intersections and land uses on the Route 1 and I-95 corridors from Dedham to the Rhode Island border. She suggested that this study might have an overlap with the study the MPO staff is proposing.

K. Quackenbush suggested that the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) line item in the TIP might provide an opportunity to program funds for intersection improvements.

Staff was advised to revise Task 1 of the work program to reflect members' comments. Members will vote on the work program at the next meeting.

9. Briefing on MassDOT – Jamey Tesler, Incoming Deputy Secretary for Legal, Planning and Policy, EOT and MassDOT

J. Tesler's briefing on MassDOT did not take place since the speaker was scheduled for later in the day and was not available at this time.

D. Mohler answered some of the members' questions about the reorganization of the state transportation agencies into MassDOT and the MPO's recertification process. He explained that MassDOT will have three representatives to the MPO representing the areas of MassDOT currently covered by the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, EOT, and MassHighway. The MBTA will continue to operate as its own political entity. Regarding the recertification of the MPOs, EOT Planning will be evaluating whether the MPOs in Massachusetts are appropriately sized.

10. Members Items

Members discussed the tight schedule for amending the TIP to add ARRA projects and for holding a public comment period. Several members expressed that they should have sufficient time (as much as a week) in order to review the project list. The possibility of holding two public review periods – one for the highway portion of the TIP and another for the transit portion – was raised in order to allow the MBTA to meet its schedules for the completion of its planning documents.

11. Adjourn

Transportation Planning and Programming Committee Meeting Attendance
Thursday, October 22, 2009, 10:00 AM

Member Agencies

EOT

City of Boston

City of Newton
City of Somerville
Federal Highway
Administration
MAPC
MassHighway
MassPike
MassPort
MBTA
Regional Transportation
Advisory Council
Town of Braintree
Town of Framingham
Town of Hopkinton

Representatives and Alternates

David Mohler
Rachel Bain
Jim Gillooly
Thomas Kadzis
David Koses
Michael Lambert
Michael Chong

Eric Bourassa
Rachel Bain
John Romano
Lourenço Dantas
Joe Cosgrove
Laura Wiener
Steve Olanoff
Christine Stickney
Ginger Esty
Mary Pratt

MPO Staff/CTPS

Maureen Kelly
Hayes Morrison
Sean Pfalzer
Karl Quackenbush
Arnie Soolman
Mary Ellen Sullivan
Alicia Wilson
Pam Wolfe

Other Attendees

Lynn Ahlgren

Richard Azzalina
Roland Bartl
George Bezkorovainy
William Brownsberger
Michelle Ciccolo
Rick Corsi

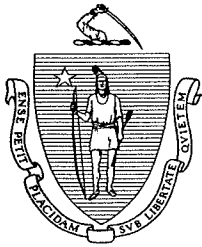
Jonathan Hecht
Steve Herron
Judy LaRocca
Doug McGarrity
Sue McQuaid

Paul Ripp
Pete Sorensen
Doug Straus
David Watson

MetroWest Regional Transit
Authority
Fay, Spofford & Thorndike
Town of Acton
Town of Weymouth
State Representative
Town of Hudson
Department of Conservation &
Recreation
State Representative
Office of Representative Hecht
Town of Concord
Foley Hoag LLP
Neponset Valley Chamber of
Commerce
City of Revere
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
National Development
MassBike

Wig Zamore

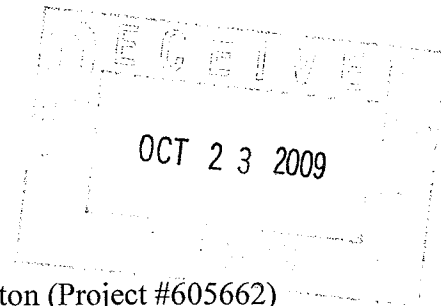
Somerville Transportation Equity
Partnership/Mystic View Task
Force



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE GENERAL COURT
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

October 20, 2009

Ms. Hayes Morrison
Transportation Improvement Program Manager
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116



Re: Nonantum Road Improvements Newton/Watertown/Boston (Project #605662)

Dear Ms. Morrison,

As the members of the Newton, Watertown, and Boston delegations, we write to request the inclusion of the Nonantum Road Improvement Project (MassHighway Project #605662) in the Amended FFY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Nonantum Road, which runs between Galen Street near Watertown Square and Soldiers Field Road in Brighton, has long been in need of the improvements contained in this proposed project. In addition to the undersigned elected officials, the project has the full support of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, MassHighway and the adjoining communities. It also has very strong public support, as seen at numerous well-attended meetings in our communities and at hearings held by DCR and MassHighway in March and June 2009.

We and the residents of our communities are constantly reminded of the urgency of this project. Nonantum Road has been the site of numerous serious and even fatal accidents. As recently as last winter, a young woman was killed when her car skidded off Nonantum Road and into the Charles River. In 2006 alone, three local residents were killed in accidents on this stretch of road. Unless and until the road is improved as proposed in this project, the hazardous conditions that exist there will continue to put motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists at risk.

In addition to these serious public safety concerns, the current layout of Nonantum Road creates barriers to pedestrians and cyclists seeking to access the Charles River pathways and prevents the road from fulfilling its role as a link to the neighboring communities, local businesses and the banks of the Charles River. The project before you will address these deficiencies by providing for safe crosswalks, designated bike lanes, and expanded paths and open space along the river. The project also calls for LED lighting, improved storm water infrastructure, and strengthened retaining walls that will make Nonantum Road sustainable and cost-effective to maintain.

The proposed improvements to Nonantum Road have been in development for many years. The concept of narrowing the road from four travel lanes to two was included in the 2002 Master Plan for the Charles River Basin. In 2006, the DCR commissioned a traffic study that confirmed that the narrower configuration is sufficient to handle current and projected traffic volumes. The

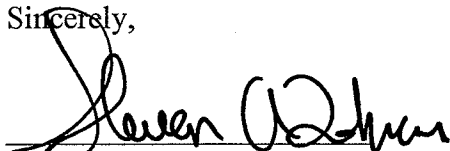
current proposal builds on that prior work, has been thoroughly vetted by the DCR and MassHighway, and incorporates input from residents and local officials.

In February, federal funding for this project (through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) was first programmed in Amendment 2 of the FFY 2009 Element of the FFY 2007-2010 TIP. There is no other identified funding source for the project. As final designs will be completed this month, we formally request that this project be included in the Amended FFY 2010-2013 TIP.

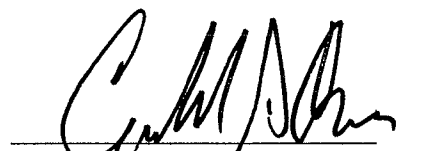
The Nonantum Road Improvement Project is of the highest priority to us and the communities we represent. It will significantly improve public safety, enhance access to the Charles River pathways, and improve the transportation links among the adjoining communities. In addition, the project will support job creation within the engineering community, construction industry and related suppliers.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact us should you have any questions.

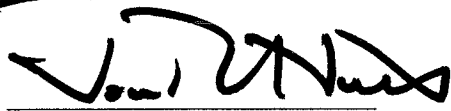
Sincerely,



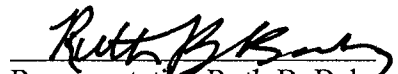
Senator Steven A. Tolman
2nd Suffolk & Middlesex District



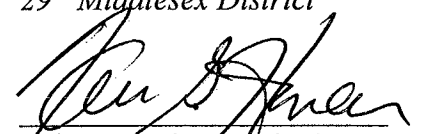
Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
1st Middlesex & Norfolk County




Representative Jonathan Hecht
29th Middlesex District




Representative Ruth B. Balsler
12th Middlesex District




Representative Kevin G. Honan
17th Suffolk District



Representative Kay Khan
11th Middlesex District



Representative Peter J. Koutoujian
10th Middlesex District



Representative Michael J. Moran
18th Suffolk District



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THOMAS M. MENINO

October 21, 2009

Governor Deval Patrick
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State House, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick,

We are writing to express our commitment to the quick implementation of transportation projects in the City of Boston, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). As you may know, the Boston MPO included the Resurfacing of Federal Aid Roads within the City of Boston in its fiscal year (FY) 2009 TIP, but the Executive Office of Transportation was unable to advertise the project before the October 1, 2009 deadline. As a result, we strongly urge you to support the inclusion of this project in the TIP Amendment that will be taken up by the Boston MPO as early as Thursday, October 22, 2009. This TIP Amendment will add a number of projects to be undertaken with ARRA funds during this current fiscal year.

This project will provide for the repaving of a number of streets in Boston's various neighborhoods and will also include the installation of modern ramps so that we can better serve our disabled residents and visitors. Additionally, bike facilities will be added to many of the streets being repaved under this project. The estimated cost of this entire project is \$21 million, which was allotted within the FY 2009 TIP.

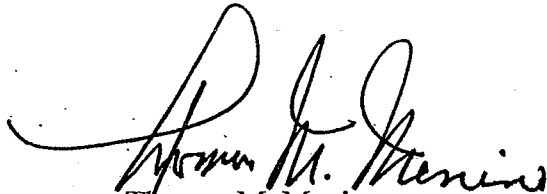
Along with a number of other projects slated to receive the FY 2009 ARRA funding, Boston's Resurfacing Project is now in jeopardy of losing these dedicated funds and must now be included in the FY 2010 TIP to proceed from design into construction.

As you know, the deadline for committing ARRA funds through public advertisement is February, 2010. Boston's Resurfacing Project will be shovel-ready within the next month, which ensures that the funding committed to this project will not be forfeited by the Commonwealth. Other projects competing for ARRA funding may not be as advanced in design and Massachusetts would run the risk of losing ARRA funding if these projects are programmed to receive funds but are not ready for construction.


Your support for including \$21 million for "Resurfacing of Federal Aid Roads within Boston" in the upcoming TIP Amendment by the Boston MPO will be greatly appreciated. I am confident that you and your entire Administration are committed to the goals of the Recovery Act so that we can invest in our transportation infrastructure while creating jobs. Your leadership is critical as we continue to put people back to work in our City.

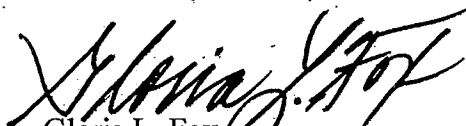
Thank you for your attention to this issue.

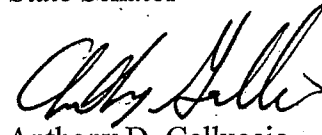
Sincerely,



Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston



Jack Hart
State Senator


Martin J. Walsh
State Representative



Gloria L. Fox
State Representative


Anthony D. Galluccio
State Senator

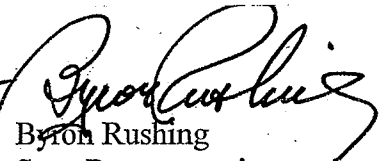

Kevin G. Honan
State Representative



Steven A. Tolman
State Senator



Liz Malia
State Representative



Aaron M. Michlewitz
State Representative


Willie Mae Allen
State Representative


Byron Rushing
State Representative


Michael F. Rush
Chair, Boston Delegation


Anthony W. Petruccelli
State Senator


Sonia Chang-Diaz
State Senator

cc: Jay Gonzalez, Secretary, Administration and Finance
James Aloisi, Secretary, Executive Office of Transportation
Jeffrey Mullan, Incoming Secretary and CEO, MassDOT