

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization
(SMMPO)**

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Held at the SRPEDD offices, Taunton, MA

Acting Chairman David Mohler called the meeting to order at 3:13 pm.

The following MPO Members were in attendance:

Kevin Dumas, Mayor of Attleboro – Vice Chair of the MPO

Francis Gay, GATRA Administrator

Susan Peterson, SRPEDD Commission Chairman

Jack Healey, Town of Freetown,

Representing Jean C. Fox

Ronald H. Labelle, City of New Bedford

Representing Mayor Scott W. Lang

David Mohler, EOTPW

Representing Secretary Aloisi

Byron Holmes, City of Fall River

Representing Mayor Robert Correia

Timothy Kochan, MHD-District 5

Representing Commissioner Paiewonsky

Ex-Officio members of the MPO in attendance:

Lee Azinheira, JTPG Chairman

The following were also present:

Rachel Bain, EOT/Planning

Kenneth Fiola, City of Fall River

Bill Abramson, Standard-Times

Roland Hebert, SRPEDD

Steve Smith, SRPEDD

James Hadfield, SRPEDD

Stacy Sousa, SRPEDD

Jacqueline Schmidt, SRPEDD

1. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 10:11 am by Acting Chair David Mohler. Introductions were made.
2. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made to approve the minutes of February 25, 2009 meeting of the MPO meeting held at the SRPEDD Offices in Taunton. The motion was seconded and approved UNANIMOUSLY.
3. **JTPG Recommendation to make changes in the Federal Functional Classification network in Fall River and Freetown as part of the Route 24 Exit 8 ½ interchange project** – Mr. Hebert gave a brief overview of the Route 24 Exit 8 ½ interchange project. The project would involve adding an interchange on Route 24 between exits 8 and 9 to better facilitate industrial development in Freetown and Fall River. The project will be funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The addition of the interchange would involve connecting Route 24 to Industrial Park Drive, Riggerbach Road and Airport Road, which are currently not functionally classified. As the project is adding an interchange to Route 24, the interchange must connect to an urban collector at minimum.

Ms. Bain and Mr. Mohler relayed guidance from FHWA which states that the progress of the project will not be delayed by the functional classification, and that the roads could be classified after completion. Discussion of the timing of the functional classification ensued, resulting in the decision that if the MPO approved the changes in the functional classification system, the resolutions would be forwarded to EOT, who would then decide the appropriate time to forward the resolutions to FHWA.

Mr. Hebert further explained that there are mistakes in the highway functional classification in Fall River. The bridge (Industrial Park Road) and ramps in the southwest quadrant of Exit 8 at Airport Road are incorrectly coded as “local streets” instead of Urban Collectors. Airport Road and the part of Riggensbach Road connecting Airport Road to Wilson Road should also be coded as Urban Collectors. The MPO should ask the EOT and FHWA correct these mistakes in the Federal Aid Highway System.

Mr. Kochan raised a question regarding whether or not the functional classification mileage would need to be balanced based on the addition of new mileage. Mr. Hebert clarified that guidance was received by FHWA stating that the balancing of mileage would not be necessary.

A motion was made to include Industrial Park Road, Airport Road, Riggensbach Road between Airport Road and Wilson Road, and the Route 24 Ramps in the Federal Functional Classification as Urban Collectors, as a correction to the System. The motion was seconded and approved UNANIMOUSLY.

A motion was made that the new Interchange 8 ½ with its connection to relocated South Main Street and that portion of relocated South Main Street, Executive Park Drive, and Riggensbach Road north of the intersection with Airport Road be designated as Urban Collectors pending the completion of construction. The motion was seconded and approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Mohler said that he would process the first motion that offered a correction to the System as soon as he received a letter from the MPO. He would process the second motion when he felt that the time was appropriate.

4. Discussion and vote to present Amendments to the FFY 2009 year of the 2007 to 2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for public review and comment -

Mr. Hebert introduced the following changes to the 2007-2010 TIP:

- Cost increase for the Marion/Mattapoisett I-195 resurfacing project from \$6.7 million to \$12.6 million in the FFY2009 year of the 2007-2010 TIP.
- Move the Fall River I-195 resurfacing project from FFY09 to FFY10.
- Cost increase for Lakeville Route 79 Relocation from \$3.2 million to \$3.8 million.
- Cost decrease for Dartmouth Street Reconstruction from \$3 million to \$2.7 million.

Mr. Hebert explained the need to increase the cost estimate for the Marion/Mattapoissett I-195 resurfacing project from \$6.7 million to \$13.3 million and as result of the increase in project cost, the Fall River I-195 resurfacing project would need to be delayed from FFY2009 to FFY2010.

A question was raised regarding whether or not Fall River I-195 project should receive the funding first. It was clarified that the Marion/Mattapoissett I-195 project was more ready, and construction at various locations in Fall River would impede the I-195 reconstruction project.

A question was raised of the progress of the construction under Fall River City Hall. The project is scheduled to be completed in the Spring of 2010.

Mr. Hebert announced that as a result of Fall River being a part of the Providence/Pawtucket Urbanized Area, SRTA has negotiated with RIPTA for an additional \$2.6 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The following projects should be added to the TIP to account for the additional funding:

- Fall River Terminal – Architect/Engineer, Site Assessment, Environmental Review, Preliminary Design, Site Acquisition and Construction (\$2 million)
- Purchase Supervisory Vehicles (\$80,000)
- Miscellaneous Support Equipment (\$527,985)

If the Fall River Terminal action does not go as planned, the funding can be reprogrammed if needed.

Mr. Mohler stated that EOT will not support the purchase of supervisory vehicles that could be sport utility vehicles. Guidance for types of vehicles that can be purchased will be sent to SRTA, and a list of vehicles intended for purchase by SRTA will be forwarded to EOTPW. Mr. Hebert responded that he thought that the supervisory vehicles were intended to be pick-up trucks that could be used for maintenance. Mr. Mohler said that EOT does not have a problem with pick-up trucks being purchased.

A motion was made to approve and release the amendments to the FFY2009 year of the 2007-2009 TIP for a 30 day public comment period. The motion was seconded and approved UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **Update on Transportation Reform and Revenue** – Mr. Mohler gave a brief update of the status of the current issues regarding transportation reform and revenue in Massachusetts. He explained that the House bill passed, but that the Governor issued a letter stating that reform of the current transportation system must come before revenue increase, and that a gas tax increase was preferred over a dedicated sales tax, meaning that the governor will veto a general sales tax increase without reform first. More information on this matter can be found at EOTPW's twitter page: http://twitter.com/mass_trans, or Governor Patrick's twitter page: <http://twitter.com/MassGovernor>.

- 6. Other Business** – Ms. Peterson requested information regarding policies related to the distance a tree can be planted with respect to the road. Mr. Kochan will contact Ms. Peterson and Mr. Hebert with the answer. Mr. Hebert discussed a handout related to the current status of the Accelerated Bridge Program.

Mr. Hebert announced the draft release of SRPEDD's I-495 Corridor Study. There will be a public meeting and presentation at the next JTPG meeting, which will be held at the Middleborough Town Hall (10 Nickerson Avenue, Middleborough, MA) on May 13, 2009 at 2 pm. SRPEDD is potentially looking for MPO approval of the study, which includes analysis and recommendations for the I-495 interchanges with Route 44 and the Middleborough Rotary.

Mr. Hebert introduced the draft 2010-2013 TIP. The projects placed on the 2010-2013 TIP were placed based on readiness, and SRPEDD is looking for input on these placements. Projects for FFY2010 include:

- Construction of a New Ramps from Route 140 to I-495 SB in Mansfield (\$2.1 million). This is also listed in the FFY 2009 TIP year, but its advertising may slip past September.
- Resurface Route 152 (Central Ave.) and Bakers Corner in Seekonk (\$3.3 million)
- Safety Improvements (Roundabout) at County St., Chase Rd., and Mason Rd. in Freetown (\$1.5 million)
- Pollution Mitigation for the Nemasket River (GRRIP) Middleborough (\$368,000)
- Central Village Pedestrian, Bicycle and Traffic Safety Project in Westport (\$285,400)
- Construct Signals and I-495 Ramps with Route 105 in Middleborough for CMAQ funding (\$1 million).
- Reconstruct Bridge Street at Alden Road in Fairhaven using HSIP funding (\$896,010)

Targets for FFY2010 are approximately \$2 million under the Draft Regional Target, and could potentially be approximately \$4 million if FHWA's issues with the Mansfield Route 140/I-495 ramp are cleared up and the project goes out to bid in FFY2009. CMAQ funding for FFY2010 is also under budget for FFY2010, leaving room for potential projects.

- 7. Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting** – The next MPO meeting will be held at the Mansfield Town Hall (6 Park Row, Mansfield, MA) Thursday June 4, 2009 at 3 pm.
- 8. Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm by Acting Chair David Mohler.