

OLD COLONY JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC)

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Meeting Minutes of the Old Colony Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Held Virtually Via Zoom due to the Covid-19 State of Emergency in Massachusetts June 3, 2021 at 12:00 P.M.

HALIFAX TOWN CLERK

ATTENDANCE

Abington	Bruce Hughes	MassDOT District 5	Barbara Lachance
Abington	John Stone	McMahon Associates	Phil Viveiros
Avon	Bill Fitzgerald	BETA Group	Dan McCormack
Brockton	Rob May	MassDevelopment	Mary Ellen DeFrias
Easton	Dave Field	VHB	Olivia Richards
Easton	Greg Swan	OCPC	Kyle Mowatt
Hanson	Jamison Shave	OCPC	Bill McNulty
Hanson	Don Howard	OCPC	Charles Kilmer
Plymouth	James Downey	OCPC	Shawn Bailey
Stoughton	Joe Scardino	OCPC	Mary Waldron
Whitman	Dan Salvucci	OCPC	Andrew Vidal
Whitman	Noreen O'Toole	OCPC	Guoqiang Li
BAT	Glenn Geiler	OCPC	Ray Guarino
BAT	Michael Lambert		

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chairperson Noreen O'Toole called the meeting to order at 12:01 P.M. and then read the Meeting Accessibility Statement and the Title VI Notice of Protection Statement. Bill McNulty then conducted the roll call.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Minutes of May 6, 2021 Meeting

Chairperson O'Toole asked if there is a motion to approve the May 6, 2021 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made by Dan Salvucci and seconded by Rob May to approve the Meeting Minutes from May 6, 2021.

The Old Colony JTC voted unanimously via roll call to approve the May 6, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

4. Communications

Shawn Bailey reviewed the contents of the communications staff report. Included were letters of correspondence, as well as notices of workshops and conferences. They were as follows:

- MassDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Update
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Public Process Announcement
- Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grants
- TransitMatters Report: All Day Frequent Service on Old Colony Lines Can Be Achieved for \$630 Million

5. Reports

A. Brockton Area Regional Transit Authority (BAT)

Michael Lambert reported on the following:

- Eighty (80) percent of Brockton Area Transit staff are fully vaccinated, and everyone is healthy
- Federal TSA rules and regulations: masks are still required in all transit facilities and vehicles
- BAT has received discretionary grants from MassDOT to help support expanded service to Stoughton.
- An initiative between Brockton Area Transit (BAT) and the MBTA to provide reduced fare on the Commuter Rail from the three Brockton stations (Montello, Brockton, and Campello) to Boston has been extended. This program helps reduce crowding and allow social distancing on BAT Route 12 service to Ashmont.
- CapeFlyer has started up once again this summer, however the MBTA is considering removing the Brockton station stop due to low ridership.
- New bus shelters have arrived and will be distributed throughout the City of Brockton.
- The BAT Advisory Board voted to offer free fares on the weekends throughout the summer to help support communities in their return to business

Glenn Geiler reported that BAT has established their 3-year Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal. This awards an amount of eligible contract dollars to DBE's. BAT's goal has been set to 2.5% over three years, this is equivalent to about \$2 Million.

B. Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA)

Shawn Bailey reported on the following:

- GATRA is back to full service on all of their fixed routes
- An additional GATRA GO (GATRA's on-demand microtransit service) vehicle will be put into service in South Plymouth.
- GATRA will be adjusting some of their routes in the Wareham area

C. South Coast Rail Project

Shawn Bailey reported on the following:

OLD COLONY JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC)

- Track work at the Middleborough Layover Yard, including the installation of track parallel to Richmond Road from Beechwood Drive to Forge Road in Assonet, continues.
- Tree clearing from East Taunton and Myricks Junction southward continues
- On the Fall River Secondary Main Line, a contractor is installing support for excavation along Pearce Street in Fall River.
- Installation of steel sheeting for retaining walls in the railroad Right-of-Way near Collins Street in Fall River as well as in Berkley has begun
- Installation of soldier piles and precast panels for retaining walls in the vicinity of the Freetown station continues.
- Additional work completed includes site preparation, drainage and utility installation, and material delivery at stations and layover sites along the railroad right-of-way from Middleborough to New Bedford and on the Fall River Secondary.

6. Old Business**A. FFY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Implementation**

Charles Kilmer provided updates on projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). They are as follows:

FFY 2021 Projects:

- STOUGHTON – IMPROVEMENTS AT RICHARD WILKINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (SRTS) (608829)
 - Project advertised for construction bids on May 29, 2021. Bid opening scheduled for July 7, 2021.

FFY 2022 Projects:

- AVON & STOUGHTON – PAVEMENT PRESERVATION AND RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 24 (608496)
 - Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) Resubmission 2 Package received by MassDOT (5/7/2021).

7. New Business**A. Election of Old Colony JTC Officers for 2021-2022 Term**

Glenn Geiler announced that the nominating committee nominate Noreen O'Toole as Chairperson and Dan Salvucci as Vice Chairperson.

The Old Colony JTC voted unanimously via roll call to elect Noreen O'Toole as Chairperson and Dan Salvucci as Vice Chairperson.

B. Draft FFY 2022 Old Colony Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

OLD COLONY JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC)

Charles Kilmer stated that the Old Colony MPO released the Draft FFY 2022 UPWP to a 21-day public review and comment period. Charles Kilmer then provided an overview of the Draft UPWP and noted the following sections and cost estimates:

TASK 1000: MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF PLANNING PROCESS AND CERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

- 1100 – 3C Program Support (\$60,000)
- 1200 – Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (\$14,000)
- 1300 – Public Participation Program (PPP) (\$61,000)
- 1400 – Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (\$42,000)
- 1500 – Title VI and Environmental Justice (EJ) (\$44,000)

TASK 2000: DATA RECONNAISSANCE, ACQUISITION, AND ANALYSIS ACTIVITIES

- 2100 – Demographic and Land Use Surveillance (\$20,000)
- 2200 – Multi-Modal Transportation System Data Surveillance and System Monitoring (\$87,000)
- 2300 – System Planning Resource Activities (\$48,000)
- 2400 – Geographic Information System (GIS) (\$64,000)
- 2500 – Management Systems (Congestion, Pavement & Safety), and Travel Demand Modeling (\$96,000)

TASK 3000: SHORT RANGE AND LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- 3100 – Regional Transportation Studies and Intermodal Planning (\$75,000)
- 3200 – Local Highway Transportation Technical Assistance (\$85,000)
- 3300 – Road Safety Audits (RSAs) at Multiple Locations (\$88,201)
- 3400 – High Priority Corridor Study Screening Assessment (\$55,000)
- 3500 – Freight Planning and Action Plan (\$60,000)
- 3600 – Performance Based Planning (20,000)

TASK 4000: OTHER TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES, STAFF, ESTIMATED BUDGET

- 4100 – Transit Technical Assistance, and Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Support (\$40,000)
- 4200 – BAT Planning and Technical Studies (\$50,000)

Chairperson O'Toole asked if there is a motion to approve the FFY 2022 UPWP. A motion was made by Dan Salvucci and seconded by Michael Lambert.

The Old Colony JTC voted via roll call unanimously to approve the FFY 2022 UPWP.

C. FFY 2021 Road Safety Audits at Multiple Locations Project Status and Update

Bill McNulty provided an update on the FFY 2021 Road Safety Audits at Multiple Locations Project.

To date, the following Road Safety Audits have been completed under this program:

- Abington – Route 123 at Rockland Street and Elm Street
- Abington – Route 139 at Chestnut Street and Elm Street
- Easton – Turnpike Street at Depot Street

OLD COLONY JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC)

- Kingston – Route 27 at Lake Street
- Stoughton – Pearl Street at School Street

The following Road Safety Audits were scheduled in June 2021:

- Hanover – Route 53 at Broadway (June 8)
- Plymouth – Commerce Way at Industrial Park Road (June 10)
- Plymouth – Commerce Way at Colony Place (June 10)

Additional locations to be completed this program year:

- Avon – West Main Street at School Street and South Street
- Bridgewater – Route 104 at High Street and Pond Street
- Brockton – Main Street at Nilsson Street
- Brockton – Main Street at Forest Avenue
- Brockton – Pearl Street at Torrey Street
- East Bridgewater – Central Street at Union Street and North Union Street
- West Bridgewater – West Street at Manley Street
- West Bridgewater – Route 106 at Prospect Street

Chairperson O'Toole stated that she has been a part of many Road Safety Audits. It is a great experience with everyone meeting together and getting MassDOT involved.

D. Regional Traffic Volumes and Commuter Parking Trends During Pandemic and Recovery

Shawn Bailey provided a presentation on the Regional Traffic Volumes and Commuter Parking Trends During Pandemic and Recovery.

Covid-19 2021 Traffic Update:

- Traffic volumes began to increase substantially in January 2021.
- First single digit monthly increases since October 2020
- One location registered higher volumes than pre-pandemic baseline in March and May
- There was a major increase in traffic during the Easter 2021 holiday weekend from the previous year.
- With all Covid-19 restrictions lifted, traffic is expected to continue increase towards pre-pandemic levels

Commuter Rail Parking Trends:

- Old Colony Planning Council staff conducted commuter parking lot utilization counts in October 2020 and April 2021
- Plymouth station remains closed
- Transit and commuter lot utilization is anticipated to increase with continuing recovery. The MBTA is restoring service to 100% pre-pandemic levels.

Commuter Rail Results/Looking Ahead:

- Most stations had similar utilization from October 2020

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- Highest recorded utilization was at the South Weymouth station with 89 vehicles parked. The Montello station has the highest overall utilization rate at 17.9%
- Combined utilization of Commuter Rail lots on the Old Colony region was 8.5% in April 2021 (Compared to 1.3% in April 2020 and 8.4% in October 2020)
- From 2011 through 2019, average combined utilization was 61.9%
- Old Colony Planning Council plans to utilize drones to conduct lot utilization studies going forward beginning in October 2021.

Park & Ride Parking Trends

- Lot utilization data was not collected in April 2020.
- October utilization was significantly lower than historic averages
- Park & Ride usage is expected to increase with continued recovery.
- Plymouth and Brockton (P&B) bus service remained suspended in April 2021.
- Bloom bus service remained in service throughout the pandemic.

Park & Ride Results/Looking Ahead:

- Half of the lots increased, but not significantly (note that these lots are used for carpool and other commuting options in addition to Park & Ride)
- P&B bus resumed service on May 14, 2021 and expanded on May 27, 2021.
- Combined utilization of Park & Ride lots was 23.7% in April 2021 (compared to 22.8% in October 2020)
- Average utilization of Park & Ride lots was 76.5% From 2011 through 2019.

Chairperson O'Toole inquired how people continuing to work from home will impact both traffic volumes and transit ridership and commuter lot utilization. Shawn Bailey stated that we do not have much information on that right now, but lots of companies are switching to work from home to save money. Also, some offices will keep the hybrid schedule.

8. Other Business and Public Comment***A. Community Local Technical Assistance Studies***

Bill McNulty reported on the following Community Local Technical Assistance Studies:

The Town of Kingston has requested the following technical assistance:

- Assistance in request for Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion for Green Street
- Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion Feasibility Study for Smiths Lane
- Assistance and Guidance on Re-Routing Route 106 and National Highway System Segment from Main Street to Evergreen Street

The Town of Plympton has requested assistance in requesting Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion zones for several roadways in Town. Old Colony Planning Council will meet with Board of Selectmen to discuss options.

Project Status Updates

Avon

- Traffic Study for East Main Street (Route 28) at East and West Spring Street - Data analysis in progress

Brockton

- Road Safety Audit for Main Street at Forest Avenue – To be scheduled late Spring or early Summer 2021
- Road Safety Audit for Pearl Street at Torrey Street – To be scheduled late Spring or early Summer 2021

Duxbury

- Follow-up Traffic Study: Travel Speeds on Various Roadways – Data collection planned for Spring 2021

East Bridgewater

- East Street Traffic Study – Data collection planned

Kingston

- Assistance with Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion Request for Green Street – Ongoing analysis and technical assistance
- Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion Feasibility Study for Smiths Lane – Data collection scheduled for Summer 2021
- Assistance and Guidance on Re-Routing 106 and National Highway System Segment from Main Street to Evergreen Street – Ongoing analysis and technical assistance

Plymouth

- Clark Road/Beaver Dam Road Traffic Speed Analysis – Additional Data Collection planned for Summer 2021

Plympton

- Assistance with Heavy Vehicle Commercial Vehicle Exclusion Request for Several Roadways – Data Analysis in progress

Stoughton

- Turnpike Street Traffic Speed Study – Data Analysis in progress

OLD COLONY JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC)

- Walnut Street Traffic Study – Data collection planned

Dan Salvucci asked where the Town of Kingston and OCPC expect the tractor trailers carrying cranberries in the Route 106 area to go if commercial vehicles were to be banned from Main Street. Bill McNulty stated that it's just a potential option they are studying right now. The weight and resulting ground vibrations are threatening damage to foundations of historic buildings on Main Street and Green Street. There will be a level of service analysis to see how truck traffic will affect Evergreen Street and surrounding intersections.

B. Staff Reviews on ENFs, EIRs, and NPCs

Kyle Mowatt summarized the Environmental Notification Forms (ENFs), Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs), Notices of Project Changes (NPCs), and Certificates for projects within the OCPC region that are undergoing Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office review.

ENF

EEA #16373 – Aldana Road Land Swap – Halifax

The “sliver” (so-called, owned by DFG) is 39,120 sq. ft (0.898 acres) and runs along the south side of Aldana Rd. for a distance of 2,546+/- ft, with an average width of 15 ft. (Plan Bk 43 Pg 56). The “sliver” lies along the toe of the slope of Aldana Rd. The surface of Aldana Rd. is several feet higher than the adjacent wetland. The “sliver” is wetland but has negligible habitat value because of its long, very narrow configuration.

The Town of Halifax desires to acquire the “sliver” in order to create a safer layout at the location of a pronounced sharp curve in Aldana Rd., a gravel surfaced public way. This sharp curve is shown on Plan Bk 43 Pg 56.

The Town of Halifax is aware that wetlands along the toe of the slope of the south side of Aldana Rd may be impacted if the Town proceeds with any changes in the layout of Aldana Rd (i.e., roadway improvements). Currently the Town has no proposal for any such changes or improvements, no plans have been prepared, no funds have been approved, and the Town does not anticipate generating any such proposal within the next 5 years. The Town understands that if or when the Town decides to make any changes to the layout of Aldana Rd and if those changes involve wetland impacts, the Town may need to submit an ENF to MEPA, as well as obtain any other required permits, regarding wetland impacts.

EEA #16383 – Lincoln Park – West Bridgewater

The proposed project is centered around the development of a 350,000 sf warehouse with other areas of the site, potentially being used for a 100,000 sf warehouse or expanded trailer parking area. The northern most corner of the property would be used in conjunction with a portion of the existing Lincoln Street layout for a 13,000 sf retail venue on roughly 1.5 acres of land.

OLD COLONY JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC)

Development of the project is predicated on the relocation of Lincoln Street to align with Crescent Street and other improvements to West Center Street (Route 106) that are proposed as part of the project. Access to the proposed project would be provided through four driveways, one on West Center Street (Route 106) and three on Lincoln Street. The proposed improvements at the intersection of West Center Street (Route 106) and Lincoln Street/Crescent Street would improve existing traffic conditions and offset any traffic impact of the proposed project. Aligning Lincoln Street with Crescent Street and placing those approaches under traffic signal control would improve the safety of the two offset unsignalized intersection approaches. Providing additional capacity along West Center Street (Route 106) would improve the organization and flow of vehicles traveling to and from the Route 24 interchange. These proposed improvements represent a significant investment in the Town of West Bridgewater.

The project site has been designed to serve the needs of the development and the region and will be constructed in phases so as to ensure that the size of the project continues to be appropriate for the site needs in the future. The initial build program of 350,000 sf of warehouse would serve the immediate needs of the area. An appropriate amount of parking (528 spaces) and impervious area would accompany this portion of the development and allow for the eventual end user to operate efficiently. At an appropriate time, the potential for an additional 100,000 sf of warehouse and/or up to 13,000 sf of retail could also be constructed on the site and as such are included in this project review. The parking and impervious areas that would accompany the additional elements of the project would be designed to minimize environmental disturbance while meeting the needs of the specific development.

CERTIFICATES**EEA #16346 – Release of House Lot from Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) (Doten Road) – Plymouth**

This ENF is submitted in connection with the creation of a house lot on the southerly side of Dotem Road in Plymouth, its release from a 1984 APR and the Amendment and confirmation of that APR as it affects the remaining land subject to it. The purpose of this project is succession planning. The proposed house lot will be used as a single-family residence and barn. The remaining APR acreage will be farmed.

The certificate states that this project does not require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

C. Regional Concerns and Local Community Transportation Issues

Bruce Hughes stated that Lincoln Boulevard, going into the High School in Abington is an ongoing project. The Town of Abington approved the purchase of land at 0 Bedford Street for a new Fire Station.

Bill McNulty stated that the Lincoln Boulevard project is a Complete Streets Project.

Dan Salvucci stated that there is a Complete Streets project going on in Whitman at Park Street and Essex Street.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Mowatt

Kyle Mowatt

Senior Transportation Planner

List of Documents for June 3, 2021 Old Colony JTC Meeting

- Minutes of the May 6, 2021 Old Colony JTC Meeting
- Staff Report for June 3, 2021, Old Colony JTC Meeting Agenda Items