

Massachusetts Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board
Meeting Notes
Wednesday, July 20, 2016, 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Newburyport Senior Center - Main Conference Room

Welcome and Introductions: Pete Sutton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:25 PM.

Members present: Tom DiPaolo, Kurt Gaertner, Steve Heinrichs, Wendy Landman, John McQueen, Joe Repole, Pete Sutton, Jim Tozza **Members absent:** Rosalie Anders, Cameron Bain, Glen Berkowitz, Dan Driscoll, Richard Fries, Janie Katz-Christy, Rob Miceli, Steve Miller, Ben Wood **Guests present:** Betsy Goodrich (MVPC), Eileen Gunn (MassDOT), Molly Henry (ECGA), Jerry Klima (CTC), David Loutzenheizer (Metropolitan Area Planning Council), Lou Rabito (HSH), Bill Steelman (Essex Heritage), Geordie Vining (City of Newburyport) **Conference Call:** Philip Groth, Laura Hanson (MassDOT), Emily Lindsey (BRPC), Kate Masztal (MassDOT), Jeff McCollough

Overview of Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Bicycle and Pedestrian Initiatives: Betsy Goodrich opened the meeting with a presentation on Bicycle and Pedestrian transportation in the Merrimack Valley. In partnership with the city of Lawrence, one unique outreach approach to broadening the appeal of cycling and walking are holding ciclovias two times during summer. Ciclovias are open street events where several blocks of a major thoroughfare are closed to vehicular traffic and in turn are repurposed as a public space to gather. In addition to events and attractions normally related to a street fair, increasing walking and cycling are also a primary draws to these car-free events. Challenges associated with holding ciclovias are funding, particularly for paid traffic police details and other costs associated with organizing a large outdoor public event. Unlike larger cities such as Bogota and Washington DC, which hold ciclovias on a weekly basis (usually on Sundays), Lawrence has not yet landed on one formula and continues to experiment with different approaches to increase attendance.

The presentation also highlighted various off-road projects either in construction or in development – mainly shared use paths - throughout the fifteen town MVPC region totaling \$26 million. Included was a recent EOEAA Gateway Cities grant for \$2 million for trail development in Lawrence. On-road infrastructure such as additional bike lanes continues to be a strong regional desire, particularly accessing beaches. Other initiatives highlighted included recent counts on the Clipper City Rail Trail in Newburyport, a future MVPC web page displaying all current and planned bike/ped projects and any data associated with them such as counts or crashes. While voluntary manual counts are the primary method currently used, they remain labor-intensive. Electronic Eco counters are currently being deployed over the NH border in Rockingham County and may be monitored by MVPC for future use. MAPC's new online Planning for Active Streets tool was also mentioned as a possible tool for planning future active transportation infrastructure in the region.

Pete Sutton then motioned for approval of 05/25/16 Meeting Minutes and gave a brief update on this year's Moving together Conference, being held Thursday, September 29 at the Park Plaza Hotel in Boston. This year's theme "Planning for Service, Planning for People" will feature mega sessions on bike/ped safety, Complete Streets funding, de-escalating road rage and will feature new topics such as open streets, active transportation-based tourism and climate change's effect on transportation.

East Coast Greenway Status through Massachusetts – Molly Henry presented on the greenway – a nearly 3,000 mile long urban pathway system along the eastern seaboard linking local trails into a continuous route. The outlined ECGA Strategic Plan for 2020 includes seventeen miles of planned new trails in Massachusetts, including a key gap from Salisbury into New Hampshire. (see attached) Major points included advocating for the current/envisioned ECG route onto local Town/City Master Plans, advocating to get ECG way finding signs installed in individual communities and for MABPAB members and other advocacy groups to attend the ECGA 25th Anniversary conference in Providence, RI this coming Nov 11 & 12.

Update of MassDOT's Complete Streets funding program - Eileen Gunn provided an update on MassDOT's Complete Streets. Municipalities that submitted their prioritization plans by the first-round deadline of July 15 are now going through the approval process overseen by the multi-agency review committee. An online map breaks down the state by towns and cities that have: registered through the online portal (Newburyport, Georgetown and Groveland); have only submitted a letter of intent to pass a policy; scores above 80 points (Salisbury); and approved prioritization plans (Lawrence). Initial submissions have been encouraging, with many communities adopting original and creative approaches. Extra points are also being awarded to towns that have joined the statewide Community Compact initiative. This year's

Moving Together conference will feature towns that have successfully passed policy and prioritization plans. It was suggested that MassDOT encourage municipalities with high crash clusters (such as HSIP participants Brockton and Worcester) to apply for the next round of funding in September.
<https://masscompletestreets.com/Map/>

Overview on Coastal Trails Network - Jerry Klima of the Coastal Trails Coalition gave a comprehensive overview on the growing network of on and off-road paths through four communities along the Merrimack River (**Amesbury, West Newbury**) and coastal towns of **Newburyport and Salisbury**. Several MassDOT-constructed trails were highlighted, including the Clipper City, Old Eastern Marsh, Salisbury Point Ghost Trail, and the Powwow Riverwalk. Projects currently under construction include phase II of the Clipper City Rail Trail (along the old City Branch line) as well as a multi-use path being included as part of the I-95 Whittier Bridge reconstruction project. When completed, this path will be the first of its kind in the Commonwealth to run alongside an interstate highway bridge, in addition to connecting to the developing coastal trails network on both sides of the Merrimack River.

Past and current challenges to trail development were discussed, including negotiation of leases held by multiple stakeholders such as National Grid, MBTA and FHWA; liability issues between hunters and potential trail users along the future Border to Boston trail segment through a wildlife management area; and funding sources. The Coastal Trails Network attributes its continued success to having all four communities invested (particularly when funding design and engineering plans), involved and organized at the municipal level as well as the local advocacy and volunteer side. The network has become a major draw to the region from a tourism perspective as well as a public health asset.

Next Meeting: The next Board meeting is scheduled to be held at the State Transportation Building 2nd floor Boardroom (in the former library) in Boston on Wednesday, September 21, 2016 from 1 – 3 PM.

Adjournment: Pete Sutton adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM.