REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Regional Transportation Advisory Council

April 13, 2016, Meeting

3:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Room 4, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA

Meeting Summary

Introductions

T. Bennett, Chair (Cambridge) called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. Members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 8)

Chair's Report–Tegin Bennett, Chair

Chair T. Bennett began her report with two remarks related to MPO staff's support. She commended TIP Manager Sean Pfalzer in his service to the Advisory Council as he leaves the MPO staff. She also noted that the MPO website has undergone some updates, and members are encouraged to visit the site at http://www.ctps.org/ . The Advisory Council webpage is located under the "About Us" tab.

The Chair also mentioned a couple of other topics discussed at the most recent MPO meetings. One topic was related to the repurposing of Federal earmarks from projects that have not spent those monies. Another topic was the MBTA budget, which was submitted recently to the MBTA Advisory Board. The Advisory Board voiced support of the reduced deficits that had been accomplished. Other highlights included discussion on the pension requirements, Massport's funding of some of the services, and funding of ferry service. The Draft Report for FY2017 is available at the MBTA Advisory Board website (http://www.mbtaadvisoryboard.org/reports/).

The Chair reported that the joint MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) and MassDOT Board withheld mitigation for the elimination of late-night service while exploring alternative possibilities. Also, the FMCB proposed a specific marketing plan for achieving better use of the commuter rail and to enhance the commuter rail with positive train control on commuter rail to abide by federal funding requirements. Fare

evasion strategies and next-generation fare collection design for the MBTA were also addressed at the joint meeting.

The MassDOT Draft Capital Investment Program (CIP) was reviewed by the joint boards and will be released for public review after minor changes are made.

The MPO is scheduled to receive more information on the Green Line Extension (GLX) project for the scheduled MPO meeting on April 21. The MPO is reviewing a request from MassDOT to shift the funding for GLX Phase 2 to GLX Phase 1. The FMCB and MassDOT Board are scheduled to decide on the future of the GLX project at their joint May 9 meeting. T. Bennett indicated that she will convey feedback from the Advisory Council to the MPO and asked for input from the Council.

In response to a question from M. Wellons, T. Bennett said communities adjacent to the GLX project are supportive of its completion and will likely speak in favor of the project at the MPO meeting. Project cost, contracting, and additional funding and other specific project details are being considered by the local officials.

Minutes – March 9, 2016

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 9 meeting was made and seconded. The minutes were approved with corrections noted.

Report and Discussion – Green Line Extension (GLX) Project – T. Bennett, Chair

As a continuation of the Chair's Report, members were interested in discussing the GLX project, because there will not be a chance to discuss it again until after the planned vote on GLX funding by the MPO. T. Bennett recalled that a committee meeting and previous Advisory Council meeting discussed the support for the GLX project.

Members supported keeping the line-item for GLX Phase 2 if the funds were transferred to the core project, GLX Phase 1, so that the commitment to continue to Route 16 will be memorialized. They also asked for better understanding of financial management going forward.

Members discussed a need for greater understanding of accounting and contracting, scheduling and project management. To date, there is not a formal report that fully addresses these issues.

Members discussed the complexities involved in reconsidering the many different

aspects of the project, including significant cost-engineering, project scheduling, and procurement and management specifications.

The group is distressed by the lack of information available. Members feel more information is needed to make informed decisions. There will likely not be much more data available between now and the next MPO meeting. Several members expressed that the Chair should be given the latitude vote at the MPO meeting based on the information that becomes available between now and then.

L. Dantas explained the procedures leading up to a vote on the amendment to the current TIP. He explained that the vote would have to be reflected in an LRTP amendment and would require a vote on the new FFY17-21 TIP as well.

A motion was made and seconded to direct the Chair to vote “no” in transferring funds from GLX Phase 2 to GLX Phase 1 if the vote is requested without additional information being presented. Several members expressed a need to let the Chair vote based upon her judgment at the time, and not limit her with strict constraints. The motion to require a “No” vote if posed at the next MPO meeting failed. T. Bennett asked that staff keep members updated on information regarding the GLX project that becomes available prior to the MPO and FMCB meetings in the upcoming weeks.

Member Survey Discussion — Postponed until May 11 meeting.

Transportation Improvement Program FFY2017-21 — Sean Pfalzer, TIP Manager, CTPS

S. Pfalzer briefly reviewed the TIP evaluation results. Since his last presentation in January, the MPO adopted the new evaluation criteria now being used for the development of the FFY 2017-21 TIP. In February, staff evaluated a total of 55 projects, sharing the results with the TIP project contacts. The resulting feedback from the TIP project contacts was reviewed and incorporated into the final project evaluation where appropriate; these evaluation results were presented to the MPO on April 7.

S. Pfalzer presented a summary of the evaluation results. The evaluation by project yielded a range of scores from 25 – 77 points out of a highest possible of 134 points. He noted that most projects are not able to achieve all 134 points, because they cannot be evaluated in all categories. The input received by MPO staff included bringing forth new updated information on the project as well as requesting re-evaluations based on the merits of specific criteria.

Questions and Comments:

Question/Comment		Response
M. Wellons		S. Pfalzer
Is there a pedestrian path crossing over the Grand Junction Line associated with the project on Commonwealth Avenue Project (608449)?		Does not believe there is a path crossing Grand Junction Line across the river in the Commonwealth Avenue area. This project starts at Packard's Corner out to Boston College.

Question/Comment		Response
M. Gowing		S. Pfalzer
Are the new criteria officially adopted by the MPO? All else remaining the same, will a project have a good chance of moving forward since most criteria have been updated?		Yes Yes

Question/Comment		Response
S. Larrabee		S. Pfalzer
What are the parameters of the reconstruction along Walnut St. in Newton (601704)?		This project runs from North of Rte. 9 to Homer St., near Newton City Hall, about one mile in length.
How does a project score a "minus 1" as in the (601704) reduction in CO^2 category?		This happens if a project increases a dis-attribute such as increasing CO^2. An increase in safety may have a corresponding decrease in air quality as a result of more idling at signalized intersections. This acts as a penalty.

Question/Comment		Response
J. McQueen		S. Pfalzer
Why did pedestrian safety improvement score a zero on the Commonwealth Avenue Project (608449)?		This eliminates double-counting on projects that already scored for improving existing infrastructure.
Is the Sudbury project (607249) going to be an intersection or a rotary?		The preferred alternative is to be a signalized intersection.

Question/Comment		Response
T. Bennett		S. Pfalzer
Some projects cannot score because of the way they are scoped. For example, off-street paths cannot qualify for points in certain categories.		The MPO has invested in different investment programs through the LRTP including complete streets, corridor improvements, intersection improvements, flex transit and suburban mobility, clean air mobility and shared-use paths, which are all carried forward in the LRTP as a percentage of funding-Bike-Ped improvements have 5% funding target.

S. Pfalzer continued with his presentation addressing the factors going into the staff recommendation: Recurring projects experience design, cost, schedule changes, right-of-way issues and public input. The MPO receives updated funding information each year which can result in changes to the staff recommendation. Ongoing commitments must also be considered before considering a recommendation.

There is $615 M available in 2017 increasing to $640 M in 2021 [MPO target and non-MPO funds]; however, there is a commensurate increase in financing costs for the accelerated bridge program. Available funding across the state is constant through the three main funding programs: the bridge program; statewide items, and regional targets.

MPO funds come from the regional targets. Forty-three percent of the regional target is allocated to the Boston Region MPO.

Funding for new projects is not available until the FFY2021 time band in the FFY17-21 TIP. Several potential project scheduling problems may cause some significant movement in the project funding time band from FFY 2016 through FFY 2021. Project readiness plays a significant role in keeping a project on the TIP as a project must be bid in the year it resides on the TIP. If a project is scheduled to be advertised in 2016, it should be at the 75 percent level of design completion, and the level of project readiness will vary based on the year it is scheduled to be in the TIP.

Project cost increases have a major impact on the programming of the TIP. Other projects may have to be rescheduled in the staff recommendation. New projects will be considered based on project readiness, the evaluation result, geographic equity, and MPO commitments through the LRTP.

The MPO investment programs are for: major infrastructure, bicycle network and pedestrian connections, complete streets, intersection improvements, and community transportation and parking.

Staff will make a recommendation to the MPO in the coming month, at which time the project proponents are encouraged to speak on behalf of their project. In May, the draft FFY17-21 TIP is scheduled to be released for public comment.

T. Bennett explained that the 3C Documents Committee will be meeting prior to the next Advisory Council meeting to review and discuss the TIP Staff Recommendation and to work on a comment letter the Advisory Council will send to the MPO.

Unified Planning Work Program FFY2017 — Ali Kleyman, UPWP Manager, CTPS

A. Kleyman identified eight new studies that will be presented to the MPO for inclusion in the FFY 2017 UPWP. Proposed studies are:

- Safety Effectiveness of Safe Routes to School Programs
- Study of Promising GHG-Reduction Strategies
- Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access on Subregional Priority Roadways
- Low Cost Improvements to Express-Highway Bottleneck Locations
- Addressing Priority Corridors from the Long Range Transportation Plan Needs Assessment
- Planning for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles

- Using General Transit Feed Specification data to Find Shared Segments with Excessively Irregular Headways
- MPO Staff-Generated Research Topics
- UPWP Study Recommendation Tracking Database

T. Bennett stated that the MPO's UPWP Committee was pleased with the selection of studies. She also asked A. Kleyman if the Advisory Council could coordinate with her to focus on areas of special interest where the Council might bring in speakers or develop knowledge in a particular area before next UPWP cycle on an interactive basis.

A. Kleyman noted that the initial universe of projects included over 80 projects and increased coordination would be helpful in the selection process.

Old Business, New Business, and Member Announcements

B. Steinberg announced that NY Gateway project received $70M for planning a $20B Hudson River Tunnel Project to add two tracks under the Hudson River plus a new annex at Penn Station and two more tracks between NJ and NY.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Attendance

Municipalities (Voting)

Acton	Mike Gowing
Belmont	Robert McGaw
Cambridge	Tegin Bennett
Marlborough	Tim Cummings
Millis	Bill Chisholm
Needham	Rhain Hoyland
Weymouth	Owen MacDonald

Citizen Groups

AACT	Mary Ann Murray
American Council of Engineering Companies	Fred Moseley
Association for Public Transportation	Barry M Steinberg
Boston Society of Architects	Schuyler Larrabee
Massachusetts Bus Association	Mark Sanborn
MassBike	David Ernst
MoveMassachusetts	Jon Seward
Riverside Neighborhood Association	Marilyn Wellons
WalkBoston	John McQueen

Municipalities (Non-Voting)

Boston	Tom Kadzis

Guests

Boston Resident	Des Whittlesey
Crosstown Connect	Scott Zadakis
East Boston Resident	Christopher Blackler
350MA	Susan Ringler

Staff

Lourenço Dantas	Aly Kleyman
David Fargen	Sean Pfalzer
Matt Archer	Jen Rowe