

# Draft Memorandum for the Record Community Advisory Council Meeting

## April 13, 2026, Meeting Minutes

2:00 PM–3:30 PM, Zoom

Caitlin Allen-Connelly, Chair, representing TransitMatters

## Meeting Agenda

### 1. Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM. Members attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 4.)

### 2. Chair's Report—*Caitlin Allen-Connelly, TransitMatters*

C. Allen-Connelly (TransitMatters) provided an overview of the agenda for the current meeting. C. Allen-Connelly summarized recent MPO meetings, including the following information:

- March Community Advisory Council meeting that focused on the Public Engagement Plan development
- Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2027–31 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development and new readiness guidelines
- FFY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) development

MPO staff are hosting office hours for Community Advisory Council members to answer any questions about the FFYs 2027–31 TIP development.

### 3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2026, meeting was made by 495/MetroWest Partnership (Jason Palitsch) and seconded by A Better City (Scott Mullen). The minutes were approved.

### 4. Advisory Council Member Information Sharing

Members from the Mystic River Watershed Association and TownGreen shared projects and initiatives with the Advisory Council.

#### *Discussion*

Karl Alexander (Mystic River Watershed Association) shared an introduction of the Mystic River Watershed Association, including program areas and goals. K. Alexander provided information about the organization's Strategic Plan and its greenway efforts. K. Alexander

shared various upcoming events including a Bike Wayfinding Audit on April 16, which is part of a larger effort to implement a cohesive wayfinding network in the Mystic Greenways. C. Allen-Connelly and K. Alexander discussed best practices for project management and success.

Maureen Aylward (TownGreen) provided an introduction of TownGreen's mission, that focuses on the growing climate challenges in Cape Ann. Greg Federspiel (TownGreen) shared information about Cape Ann MARCH (Mitigation, Adaptation, Resilient Climate Hub), which convenes regional municipalities to facilitate local and regional adaptation and resilience projects and programs. M. Aylward shared information about the Neighborhood Resiliency Project, which focuses on building relationships with local organizations to address emergency preparedness. K. Alexander and G. Federspiel discussed TownGreen's work on the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program.

## **5. Public Engagement Plan Discussion—*Michaela Grenier and Jia Huang, MPO staff***

J. Huang (MPO staff) presented on the MPO's public engagement framework and strategies that are guided by the principles of the International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation. J. Huang shared that the updated Public Engagement Plan will describe how the MPO's engagement practice has evolved to meet and exceed federal requirements and the goals outlined in the plan.

J. Huang gave an overview of the MPO's Public Engagement Program data collection and evaluation processes. J. Huang stated that these processes help MPO staff gain a better understanding of where to prioritize engagement and what strategies to use. J. Huang highlighted that using this evaluation process, MPO staff identified youth engagement as a priority area. M. Grenier led a discussion with Advisory Council members around youth engagement strategies for the Public Engagement Plan and internal guidance.

### ***Discussion***

K. Alexander emphasized the importance of meeting youth where they are, such as engaging them at youth-focused events, hiring youth interns, and intercept surveys. C. Allen-Connelly shared strategies such as participating in school events and collaborating with community-based organizations to empower youth. Maha Aslam (LivableStreets Alliance) discussed the significance of relating the work to youth experiences and by understanding their interests. Amir Wilson (A Better City) discussed the significance of field trips and interacting with the built environment to encourage engagement. Paulina Muratore (Conservation Law Foundation) emphasized engaging young people of all ages in the transportation planning process. M. Aylward shared strategies such as engaging youth through school organizations and community institutions. Galen Mook (MassBike) shared the significance of compensating

youth and encouraging youth to take on leadership roles to empower them through capacity building.

G. Federspiel and Morgan Griffiths (Town of Natick) discussed engaging with schools that require students to complete a civic project. K. Alexander and M. Griffiths discussed using design charrette and challenges to engage youth in inquiry-based learning. M. Aslam discussed youth initiatives in New York City that engage youth using social media and digital tools. C. Allen-Connelly shared Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition's guided bike ride series for youth and the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) use of social media and digital tools to engage youth. A. Wilson discussed the MPO's responsibility around implementing metrics to measure equitable engagement and success, and positioning the MPO as a resource for youth engagement for the municipal stakeholders.

## **6. Members' Items**

C. Allen-Connelly shared that the MBTA has launched its long-range transportation plan and encouraged members to participate in the public engagement process.

G. Mook shared that MassBike will be promoting bike-related events in celebration of Bike Month in May, and members should share any upcoming events on MassBike's calendar. A. Wilson shared that A Better City will be hosting its Guided Ride Series starting in April until June.

## **7. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by 495/MetroWest Partnership (Jason Palitsch) and seconded by A Better City (Amir Wilson). The motion carried.

## Attendees

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<b>Member Municipalities</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
Chelsea	Sara Han
Natick	Morgan Griffiths

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<b>Community-Based Organizations</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
A Better City	Scott Mullen, Amir Wilson
Abundant Housing MA	Jesse Kanson-Benanav
Bike to the Sea	Jonah Chiarenza
Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corp. (CSNDC)	Jacynda Epenshade
Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)	Paulina Muratore
LivableStreets Alliance	Maha Aslam
MA Healthy Aging Collaborative	James Fuccione
MassBike	Alexis Hosea-Abbott
Mystic River Watershed Association (Vice Chair)	Karl Alexander
Mystic Valley Elder Services	Meg von Lossnitzer, Sheila Buckland
Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA)	Pete Wilson
TownGreen	Maureen Aylward, Greg Federspiel
TransitMatters	Caitlin Allen-Connelly
Watertown TMA	Sophia Galimore
495/MetroWest Partnership	Jason Palitsch

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<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Maria Foster	MassDOT
Isabella MacKinnon	MBTA Advisory Board
Jon Seward	
Robert Warren	

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Richard Barard  
Annette Demchur  
Michaela Grenier  
Jia Huang  
Meghan O'Connor  
Sean Rourke  
Tegin Teich

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