

**Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD)
Joint Transportation Planning Group (JTPG) Meeting
DRAFT Minutes for the Meeting Held on Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 1:00 PM
Jointly with the SMMPO**

Held Remotely via Zoom due to the State of Emergency in Massachusetts due to Covid-19.

The following were in attendance:

Lee Azinheira, Chair	Town of Mansfield
Joe Callahan	Town of Berkley
Paul Foley	Town of Fairhaven
Mark Hollowell	Town of North Attleborough
Leeann Bradley	Town of Middleborough
Manuel Silva	City of New Bedford
Alan Slavin	Town of Wareham
James Hartnett	Town of Westport
Franklin Moniz	Town of Lakeville
Fred Cornaglia	City of Taunton
David Cabral	Town of Seekonk
Nancy Durfee	Town of Somerset
Ed Buckley	Town of Raynham
Norman Hills	Town of Marion
Thomas Ferry	Town of Dighton
Bryan Pounds	MassDOT
Bob Wheeler	MassDOT
Stephanie Crampton	City of New Bedford
Bill Roth	City of Taunton
Shawn McDonald	Town of Dartmouth
Mark Sousa	GATRA
Andrew Reovan	FHWA
Kevin Dumas	Town of Mansfield
Mary Ellen DeFrias	MassDevelopment
Janine Peccini	At-Large, City of Taunton
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT
Michelle Ho	MassDOT
Cheryl Senior	MassDOT
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT
Lisa Sherman	CDM Smith
Shawn Syde	City of New Bedford
Jeff Oakes	SouthCoast Bikeway
Joe Federico	BETA Group
Sid Kashi	GPI
Phil Viveiros	McMahon Associates
Jamie Pisano	VHB

Lloyd Mendes	Member of the Public
Karen Porter	SRPEDD
Paul Mission	SRPEDD
Gregory Guertin	SRPEDD
Guoqiang Li	SRPEDD
Lisa Estrela-Pedro	SRPEDD
Lilia Cabral-Bernard	SRPEDD
Jackie Jones	SRPEDD
Luis de Oliveira	SRPEDD
Jen Chaves	SRPEDD
Benjamin Menezes	SRPEDD

Handouts:

DRAFT JTPG October 14, 2020 Minutes

JTPG BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call:

Chairman Lee Azinheira called the meeting to order at 2:04 PM and asked for a roll call. Ms. Cabral-Bernard reminded the participants that this part of the meeting was for the JTPG group business meeting and then called the roll.

Town of Berkley	Yes
Town of Dighton	Yes
Town of Fairhaven	Yes
Town of Lakeville	Yes
Town of Mansfield	Yes
Town of Marion	Yes
Town of Middleboro	Yes
City of New Bedford	Yes
Town of North Attleborough	Yes
Town of Seekonk	Yes
Town of Somerset	Yes
City of Taunton	Yes
Town of Wareham	Yes
Taunton At-Large	Yes

2. Approval of Minutes – October 14, 2020 (Materials Attached and Roll Call Vote needed)

Chairman Azinheira called for a motion to approve the minutes of October 14, 2020. The motion was made by Alan Slavin of Wareham and seconded by Manny Silva of New Bedford. Ms. Cabral-Bernard then called the roll:

Town of Berkley	Yes
Town of Dighton	Yes
Town of Fairhaven	Yes
Town of Lakeville	Yes
Town of Mansfield	Yes
Town of Marion	Yes
Town of Middleborough	Yes
City of New Bedford	Yes
Town of North Attleborough	Yes
Town of Seekonk	Abstain
Town of Somerset	Yes
City of Taunton	Yes
Town of Wareham	Yes
Taunton At-Large	Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Election of JTPG Officers: (Member List Attached)

Paul Mission explained, that with the pandemic going on, the election of JTPG officers was missed, and he apologized for that. He explained that the current officers are Lee Azinheira Chairman, Dave Cabral, Vice Chair, representing the GATRA Bristol County area, Alan Slavin, Vice Chair, representing the Plymouth County, and the Vice Chair for the Bristol County SRTA area is vacant, which was occupied by Gloria MacPherson who was the previous town planner in Fairhaven. He explained that the group could move the slate of existing or current vice chairs and chair and vote on that, and then have a separate vote, with a nomination from the JTPG for a new Vice Chair to represent the SRTA Bristol County area that was originally held by Gloria MacPherson. That needs to be somebody from a town in Bristol County, that also covers the SRTA service area including Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Fall River, Freetown, New Bedford, Somerset, Swansea, and Westport.

A suggestion was made to vote the slate of existing officers. Mr. Mission then asked if any of the current Vice Chairs or Chair was opposed to that idea. They all indicated no.

A motion and a second were called for to approve the slate of existing offices. Alan Slavin of Wareham made the motion and Thomas Ferry of Dighton seconded. Ms. Cabral-Bernard then called the roll:

Town of Berkley	Yes
Town of Dighton	Yes
Town of Fairhaven	Yes
Town of Lakeville	Yes
Town of Mansfield	Yes
Town of Marion	Yes
Town of Middleboro	Yes
City of New Bedford	Yes
Town of North Attleborough	Yes
Town of Raynham	Yes
Town of Seekonk	Yes
Town of Somerset	Yes
City of Taunton	Yes
Town of Wareham	Yes
Taunton At-Large	Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Mission continued by informing the group that they needed to fill the Vice Chair vacancy and this would be for communities served by SRTA bus service in Bristol County including Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Fall River, Freetown, New Bedford, Somerset, Swansea, and Westport.

A nomination for Manuel Silva of New Bedford to fill the vacant Vice Chair position was made by Lee Azinheira and that motion was seconded by Paul Foley of Fairhaven. Ms. Cabral-Bernard then called the roll:

Town of Berkley	Yes
Town of Dighton	Yes
Town of Fairhaven	Yes
Town of Lakeville	Yes
Town of Mansfield	Yes
Town of Marion	Yes
Town of Middleboro	Yes
City of New Bedford	Yes
Town of North Attleborough	Yes
Town of Raynham	Yes
Town of Seekonk	Yes

Town of Somerset	Yes
City of Taunton	Yes
Town of Wareham	Yes
Taunton At-Large	Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Date and Time for the Next Meeting

Mr. Mission announced the date and time for the next meeting as Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 2PM, held virtually.

GENERAL MEETING AGENDA

1. Public Comments-Opportunity for the public to address the SMMPO and the JTPG -

Chairman Pounds opened the general meeting to public comments, and offered the opportunity for the public to address the joint board, the MPO and the JTPG. He explained that would wait a few minutes to see if any members of the public had a comment.

Jeff Oakes, the town of Marion's representative on the South Coast Bikeway Alliance had some questions regarding the town of Marion's shared use path, regarding phase one, which is currently under review by the DOT. He explained that he had spoken with the project engineer last week who indicated the 75% submittal would be presented on December 18 and includes the highway design plan and the right-of-way plans. His question was, in consideration of that 75% submittal by the end of the year, is there anything that the South Coast Bikeway Alliance and the town of Marion could do to accelerate the construction funding, which is currently slated for 2024? Is there anything in addition to those submittals that might expedite that?

Bob Wheeler responded that they'll be able to better answer that question once they see the documents which are due next week.

Chairman Pounds further explained that the STIP is a live document and they come back and revisit it every year. They look at updated design schedules, and if projects that are programmed in the TIP are still on track to advertise in the year they are in. So, if they do feel like a project is ahead of schedule, they do take that into consideration when revising the TIP. So, there is an opportunity in the upcoming months to discuss the project and the status.

Mr. Oakes asked a second question involving Phase 2 of the Shared Use Path project in Marion, which has the preferred alternative route on County Road. He explained that given the past feasibility study of Route 6 and ongoing work in the town of Wareham, it looks as though

incorporating the shared use path connector from Marion to Wareham along the Route 6 corridor from Point Road to the town line on the Weweantic Bridge might be a better alternative than trying to pursue County Road route. He then asked, given that, is there anything the South Coast Bikeway Alliance and/or that town of Marion should do to promote or try and get the connector along Route 6 as our preferred alternative for phase 2?

Mr. Wheeler responded that there isn't a good answer for that. He explained that the developing plans for the Marion/Wareham Route 6 bridge over the Weweantic includes bike accommodations on that bridge. He continued by saying that how that will connect with Point Road, they'll have to discuss as the plans are further developed.

Mr. Oakes asked if there is there some point along that planned development where input can be offered regarding the incorporation of the shared use path from Point Road to the Wareham line and when would be the best point to try and interject or get involved?

Mr. Wheeler responded that once the first plan submission is in, they will provide comments on the plans and have a comment resolution meeting and at that time we could bring that issue up.

Ms. Jackie Jones offered to comment on the process, explaining that they would need the town and the Southwest Bikeway Alliance to change the routing by some sort of formal vote, and then forward the information to SRPEDD so that the routing and the plans can be updated, and then that will inform state plans as well. Because currently the County Road routing is somewhat problematic and Point Road is about a half mile from the Weweantic River.

2. Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) Report – RTA Updates

Mr. Mark Sousa of GATRA informed the group that this Saturday from 10:00 to 2:00, GATRA, working with a local nonprofit, was holding an event to stuff a bus with toys, similar to the Toys for Tots program, but local. He explained that anyone could stop by with a toy donation and staff would be there passing out candy canes. He finished by saying that projects are continuing and they continue to deal with COVID-19.

There was no one present from SRTA for an update.

3. TIP Development

a. Project Updates - Bob Wheeler of MassDOT provided the following updates:

In FFY 2021-

New Bedford- Intersection Improvements and Related Work at Rockdale Avenue and Allen Street Design is currently at 75%. 100% plans are due this week and the ad date is in March. This will need a TIP Amendment soon.

Raynham- Taunton- Resurfacing & Related Work on Route 138 - At 100% submission. The PS&E are due in February, with an ad date in July.

Non-Target 2021 Projects:

Rehoboth - Reed Street over Palmer River – This is at 100% design.

Seekonk - Resurfacing of Route 44 – The design is at 75%. The 100% submission will be sent in next week.

Fall River - Weaver Street over the Coastal Mass Railroad - The plans are at 75%. The 100% design is scheduled to be submitted next week.

Acushnet - Hamlin Street over the Acushnet River - The review of the final 100% PS&E plans was completed and that's on schedule to be advertised in 2021.

In FFY2022-

New Bedford- Intersection Improvements on Acushnet Avenue at Peckham Road/Sassaquin - Working toward 25%. The 25% plans are scheduled to be submitted on January 8.

Rehoboth- Intersection Improvements & Related Work at Winthrop Street (Route 44) and Anawan Street (Route 118) - A roundabout design currently at 75%. The 100% plans are due next week.

Taunton- Reconstruction of Route 44 (Dean Street), From Arlington Street to Route 104 (South Main Street) - At 75% design, currently under review.

Attleboro – Intersection Improvements at Route 1 (Washington Street)/Route 1A (Newport Avenue) and Route 123 (Highland Avenue) - At 75% design, the 100% design plans are due next week.

Swansea- Route 6 at Gardener's Neck Road - 75% design plans are under review.

Regional Non-Target 2022 Projects:

Fall River- Route 79/Davol Street - Public information meeting is scheduled for next June and 25% design is due in July.

Norton-Mansfield - Rail Trail - At 25% design. The 75% design is due in January.

Marion/Wareham - Route 6 Bridge Project over Weweantic River – The 25% submission is due in January.

In FFY 2023-

Dartmouth - Corridor Improvements on Dartmouth Street and Prospect Street – We received revised concept plans for Prospect Street. A utility meeting and a design public hearing are next.

New Bedford - Corridor Improvements and Related Work on County Street from Nelson Street to Union Street - Currently at 25%, but is pending approval of a Design Exception Report. Once approved, design public hearing can be held.

Dartmouth - Tucker Road, Including Intersection Signalization – MassDOT received concept plans for a redesign to eliminate ROW takings and plans are under review.

Non-Target 2023 projects:

Plainville - Intersection Improvements at Washington Street (Route 1) And George Street - The 25% plans are due March 13.

New Bedford – Route I-195 ramps over Route 18 – The 75% plans expected January 28, 2022.

In FFY 2024-

Wareham - Construction of Bike Lanes Along Narrows Road and A Shared Use Path Adjacent to Minot Avenue Including Related Work – At 25% design and currently under review.

Mansfield - Reconstruction on Chauncy Street (Route 106) – The 25% plans are due March 4.

Wareham – Route 6 at Swift’s Beach Road - The 25% design is expected April 1.

Taunton- Corridor Improvements and Related Work on Broadway (Route 138), from Purchase Street to Jackson Street (Phase 2) - Waiting for the 25% design plans in January.

Non-target 2024 projects:

Swansea - Signal and Safety Improvements at Route 136, Maple Street, and Route 118 - The 75% plans are due March 30.

Marion - Shared Used Path Phase 1 – The 75% design plans are due next week.

In FFY 2025-

Plainville - The Reconstruction of Route 1A (South Street) – This is at 25% design.

Mattapoisett- Corridor Improvements and Related Work on Main Street, Water Street, Beacon Street and Marion Road – the 25% plans are due December 21.

Ed Buckley from Raynham asked a question concerning the start of construction on the Route 138 project and Mr. Wheeler responded that it's going to be advertised July 31, so construction may begin three or four months later.

b. Development of FFY 2022-2026 TIP Discussion-

Ms. Lisa Estrela-Pedro began by giving a quick update that staff has begun looking at projects internally, for the draft FFY2022 to 2026 TIP, and have met with District 5 staff to discuss project statuses. TIP readiness days will be taking place sometime in February with the Boston Office and District 5, and feedback is given then, from all the departments, including environmental, right-of-way, so we can get a good handle on where projects should be programmed in the TIP. This is to ensure that everything gets advertised when it's supposed to. Staff will be reaching out to communities to request new project schedules if they have not received any, and reaching out to those with new projects that have gone through the project review committee to attend the JTPG meeting in January to present their projects, so that we can become more familiar with those to assist staff in completing the evaluation criteria, as well as seeing if there is placement for them in the FFY2022-2026 TIP.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro further stated that as a snapshot for the current FFY2021 to 2025 TIP, there are three projects in FFY2022 that have increased in cost, one significantly, which is the Taunton Route 44 Dean Street project, causing our target to be over budget by almost \$5 million. Due to this, some of the projects that are currently in this year are going to have to be pushed out, so there will be a ripple effect when this happens. At the next meeting in January, we're hoping to have some scenarios so that the JTPG can be focusing on the development of the new TIP.

Chairman Pounds announced that TIP readiness days will be on February 9 and 10 for SRPEDD, so after these meetings, Lisa will have a better idea where things are in the TIP.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro continued by saying that there are a lot of variables, so it's ever changing, and that the Marion Shared Use Path project discussed earlier in the meeting is currently programmed in FFY2024 and that project is actually being programmed with state wide funds. This means that the SMMPO doesn't have any control over those funds, since MassDOT programs these projects. She said there was no reason to be discouraged, however, since there may be the opportunity for that project to be funded sooner and move up. There are no guarantees, but just keep the project moving on. That's all we can really do at this time.

Chairman Pounds continued by explaining that the statewide program goes through the same process as far as readiness is concerned. They are not just covering the MPO regional target projects that Lisa is showing here, but also the statewide projects.

Mr. Manuel Silva of New Bedford then informed the group that the New Bedford project in FFY2022 was on schedule and will be in on time.

4. Shared Winter Streets and Open Spaces Program Discussion

Mr. Muller of MassDOT informed the group of the Winter Shared Streets Program. The second of four rounds of applications for these programs are due January 5, with additional rounds later in January and February. Projects through this program would have to be complete and in place by the end of May. This program is a follow-up from the Shared Streets and Spaces grant program which provided about \$10 million. These grants are between \$5,000 and \$300,000 to do quick build improvements to streets and to off-street parking lots, with added incentive for projects that add safe outdoor winter activities, and bonus points for access for seniors and students, for

equity populations, for transit improvements, and for investment in new or expanded bike share or other micro mobility programs. Towns may also apply to make previous installations more permanent, regardless of the original funding source. Mr. Muller recommended a website for the city of Edmonton that looks at making the public space a year-round asset during the winter months, including incorporating exercise into public space in the winter. If your town needs guidance, reach out to SRPEDD or to the program managers of the shared streets program. <https://www.mass.gov/shared-winter-streets-and-spaces-grant-program>

5. SRPEDD Trails Mapping Presentation

Jackie Jones explained that SRPEDD had launched a trails-mapping program in June to map and collect information on unpaved trails in the region and the goal is to have a consolidated statewide trail database. This effort can also assist communities with trail data needs and potentially help fill some gaps in our multimodal network, and has the potential to assist with tourism efforts.

Staff has thus far collected information on 120 miles of trail, conducting boots-on-the-trail data collection and has added over 200 miles to the database of map trails, some of it through partnerships with municipalities and groups such as the Buzzards Bay coalition, that provided GPS data. Staff uses a collector app that allows the use of phones and tablets to collect the data on the trail. This tool is used to record GPS data on previously unmapped trails that only exist on paper and verify the actual trail. Data collected includes surface type, trail condition, parking available and several other factors. Data shows that the majority of trail surface is natural surface, that 64% of trails has been in really good shape and that 41% of the trails have trail markers. It also shows that the large majority (70%) is appropriate for beginners, and can be used by a wide range of hikers, or mountain bikers.

The next steps are a year-end report that will be released in January, and staff is also planning on doing a public outreach campaign. We also have a website if you're interested in more information.

Mr. Lee Azinheira asked why the town Mansfield is not on the trail map. Ms. Jones replied that it was only because we don't have any data as of yet for Mansfield.

Mr. Mark Hollowell asked about the collector app being used and Ms. Jones responded that it is Esri Collector.

6. Freight Action Plan Presentation and Discussion

Mr. Gregory Guertin gave a brief presentation on the freight action plan. He explained that the intent of this effort is to analyze and incorporate global, national, and statewide goals and trends

into the framework of southeastern Massachusetts; assess how growing and changing freight movements may impact communities and infrastructure assets, and to equip our communities and business leaders to respond to and mitigate the effects of those potential impacts.

He explained the incorporation of NCHRP guidebook for freight policy planning in producing our freight plan, conducting self-assessment, establishing our freight planning directive, and drawing up a regional freight profile. Staff will also review existing planning documents to better understand how freight is already incorporated with our agency's goals, objectives and policies.

There have been over 9000 truck crashes, including 35 fatalities since 2010, staff will consider setting goals to reduce or eliminate these fatalities. In February of 2021, staff would like to have a discussion with any of you who are interested in participating in our efforts, so please feel free to email him at gguertin@srpedd.org.

7. Federal Certification Review Discussion

Mr. Paul Mission explained that staff is in the midst of federal certification, conducted every four years. It involves Federal Highway and Federal Transit reviewing the planning process with the MPO and with SRPEDD staff in the interactions with the communities, as well as our state and other agencies throughout the Commonwealth. It is typically conducted after the development of a Regional Transportation Plan, which was released last year.

This is an evaluation with our federal and state partners to see how we can improve, it's constructive criticism of where we need to focus on for the next round of planning for the four years leading up to development of the Regional Transportation Plan. The federal certification hearings will be conducted in January via Zoom. We will have discussions on the planning process with the MPO, JTPG and other bodies that are part of the MPO process. The next JTPG meeting is on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 2pm, and the next MPO meeting is on January 19, 2021 at 1pm. Following the MPO meeting, we will have a public meeting, hosted by Federal Highway and Federal Transit, to invite any member of the general public to come in and comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the MPO planning process from the past four years. Essentially, it's open to anyone within our region to come in and discuss this process.

The actual certification review typically is conducted in one day in our office, with members of the MPO and various agencies present to talk about different aspects of planning, in coordination with the JTPG and the MPO. The usual one-day meeting will be broken up over three days, on Tuesday, January 26, from 1pm to 4pm; on Wednesday, January 27th from 9am to 12pm; and then on Thursday, January 28, from 9am to 12pm.

Mr. Mission further explained that in early January there will be an agenda of topics of discussion that will be distributed to the MPO, the JTPG, and state partners, as well as neighboring RPAs and

MPOs, and they will be invited to come in to participate in that discussion on the planning process. We encourage everybody to come in and participate in this process.

8. Other Business

Other business included reiterating the dates and times for the upcoming JTPG meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 2pm and the next SMMPO meeting, which will be held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 1:00 pm.

9. Adjourn

Chairman Pounds asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Alan Slavin of Wareham and was seconded Shawn McDonald of Dartmouth. With no objections, Chairman Pounds adjourned the meeting at 2:23 PM.