



MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2022

7:00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

HANDOUT

FITCHBURG CITY CLERK

Mar 25 2022 9:10 am

1. Open Meeting, Introductions, and Announcements

Chairman G. Corbosiero called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. G. Corbosiero stated in accordance with Governor Bakers Covid-19 Executive Order regarding the Open Meeting Law and remote participation, votes will be taken through Roll Call.

2 Approval of February 3, 2022, MRPC Minutes – Approvals of Commissioners Requested

B. Swartz moved that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approve the February 2022 minutes as written. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed:

- G. Corbosiero- yes
- A. Butland- abstain
- J. Telepciak- yes
- J. Kranz- abstain
- K. Nartowicz- yes
- L. Shifrin- yes
- R. Swartz- yes
- R. Hoyt- yes
- S. Donohue- yes
- B. Oelfke- yes

3. Cash Schedule – February 2022 – Approvals of Commissioners Requested

L. Shifrin read the February 2022 cash schedule. Opening balance \$466,792.07, total receipts this month \$315,618.18, total cash on hand before this warrant \$782,410.25, less amount of this warrant \$104,874.81, balance after this warrant \$677,535.44.

L. Shifrin asked what the circled numbers were on the second page of the spreadsheet. L. Quinlivan confirmed those numbers added up to be the payroll total.

R. Swartz moved to accept the cash schedule as presented subject to audit. The motion was seconded.

Roll call vote followed:

G. Corbosiero- yes

A. Butland- yes

J. Telepciak- yes

J. Kranz- yes

K. Nartowicz- yes

L. Shifrin- yes

R. Swartz- yes

R. Hoyt- yes

S. Donohue- yes

B. Oelfke- yes

4. Guest Announcements and Questions

No announcements or questions at this time.

5. Nominations to the Nominating Committee

G. Eaton stated we need three people who would be willing to meet at 6:30 pm on April 7, 2022. Before the meeting, G. Eaton or H. Ford will send out an email with a list of the current Executive Committee. G. Eaton stated what we need to do is find out if the current committee members would like to continue in their current positions and also find out if there are others interested in holding a position. If the nominating committee members would like assistance, staff can assist with reaching out to members.

J. Telepciak suggested that staff reach out to members to see who wants to be on the Executive Committee and the nominating committee can take it from there. J. Telepciak also commented on the benefits of being on the committee.

R. Swartz, J. Telepciak and K. Nartowicz volunteered to be on the nominating committee.

G. Corbosiero encouraged members to reach out to the nominating committee if they are interested in a position, they do not need to wait until they are approached.

6. Administrative Matters

6.1 Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA), Annual Planning Grant Proposal, Matching Funds Request of Commissioners

REPORT

Annually, MRPC applies for and receives \$70,000 in Economic Development Planning Grant funds from the Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA). The Executive Director is in the process of completing this year's grant application. The term of the grant commences each April 1st and ends on the following March 31st.

EDA requires a dollar-for-dollar match in order to receive this annual entitlement planning grant. ~~In recent years, MRPC staff have recommended the use of:~~

- ~~• \$52,500 in DLTA program funds for projects that are related to economic development planning (i.e. infrastructure analyses, downtown zoning projects, and housing planning services); and,~~
- ~~• \$17,500 from the MRPC's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) line item (Municipal assessment fund - this agency's LTA account).~~

G. Eaton requested to dismiss the two bullet points listed. This was a holdover from a copy and paste and is not relevant.

The use of DLTA funds (not LTA as presented in original handout) as matching funds for this annual planning grant would increase the organization's overhead rate. The Executive Director recommends that no LTA funds be used this year, especially as there are a sufficient number of DLTA project requests that have been submitted to the MRPC for the Commissioners' approval, this evening. Specifically, they are:

- Groton, Shirley, Sterling, Townsend, and Westminster: Assistance complying with the new Chapter 40A, Section 3A for MBTA Communities at an estimated cost to be no less than \$40,000 (or approximately \$8,000 for each of the five communities);
- Royalston: Assistance with zoning amendments for Assisted Living/Multifamily housing needs and potential small business opportunities at an estimated cost to be no less than \$7,000;
- Shirley: Assistance with a 40R Housing District evaluation at an estimated cost to be no less than \$7,000;
- Townsend: Assistance to the Townsend Affordable Housing Trust (THAT) developing a five-year Action Plan for creating mixed-income affordable housing on Trust-owned parcels and assistance with implementation of goals in Townsend's Housing Production Plan at an estimated cost to be no less than \$9,000; and,
- Winchendon: Completing a Housing Production Plan for submission to the Department of Housing and Community Development at an estimated cost to be no less than \$7,000.

The above projects are directly related to providing affordable and market-rate housing for the workforce and expanding business opportunities in our region which are included within the scope of services for the EDA Annual planning grant.

The DLTA contract was fully executed in January 2021, its funding will be available during the period of performance of the EDA planning grant, and the funds are not conditioned or encumbered in any way that may preclude its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. (These are requirements of the EDA and MRPC is in full compliance.)

MRPC's DLTA contract with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts states as an example of eligible activities "Planning Ahead for Growth: Planning and implementation activities that encourage and support economic development opportunities," to promote economic development in the Montachusett Region utilizing DLTA funds. MRPC's planning services to be delivered to the aforementioned communities complement the EDA planning grant program and our scope of services.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approves of the Executive Director's request to use \$70,000 (+/-34%), of the total DLTA award of \$207,000, as matching funds against the annual EDA planning grant.

K. Chapman pointed out that the DLTA award is actually \$207,475, not \$207,000 as stated above.

J. Kranz moved to accept the motion with the change to the dollar amount awarded. The motion was seconded.

Roll call followed:

J. Telepciak- yes

J. Kranz- yes

K. Nartowicz- yes

L. Shifrin- yes

R. Swartz- yes

R. Hoyt- yes

S. Donohue- yes

B. Oelfke- yes

G. Corbosiero- yes

A. Butland- yes

6.2 Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA), Future Industrial Lands for Long Term Economic Resiliency (FILLTER) Grant Proposal, Matching Funds Request of Commissioners

REPORT

MRPC is in the process of preparing a competitive, Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) grant application to be submitted to the Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) before March 31, 2022. The proposal is entitled Future Industrial Lands for Long Term Economic Resiliency (FILLTER). The purpose of the grant will be to fund a multidisciplinary analysis of the lands most suitable for business development throughout the entire region, leading to the retention and creation of jobs for inhabitants of the entire region, thus benefitting all communities. This is intended to be a two-year grant proposal, ideally from the summer of 2022 through the summer of 2024. The Executive Director is assembling this grant proposal.

EDA requires a dollar-for-dollar match in order to receive this annual entitlement planning grant. MRPC's Executive Director recommends the use of the following, existing State contract dollars plus a portion of the in-kind salary of the Executive Director which totals \$273,185 and is broken down as follows:

- \$121,423 from two contracts with the State funding the Planning Assistance Grant (PAG) program providing relevant planning assistance in Athol, Hubbardston, Sterling, and Townsend
- \$79,335 from the existing contract between MRPC and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT, where only a portion of the 20% in State matching funds will be used as matching funds) for the completing of transit and transportation planning projects related to moving the workforce and goods and services through the region supporting the regional economy);
- \$50,000 in existing DLTA program funds from the FY22 MRPC's Budget (DLTA Program Year 15) for projects that complement this proposal (i.e. planning assistance to the "MBTA communities," downtown zoning, economic development planning in one of our rural communities, and transportation circulation planning); and,
- \$22,427 in in-kind funding for a portion of the Executive Director's salary to oversee the project and provide guidance to MRPC employees throughout this planning project.

The use of LTA funds as matching funds for the FILLTER grant is not recommended at this point. Using these funds would contribute to a small increase in the agency's overhead rate.

The MassDOT contract was executed last fall, the DLTA contract was fully executed in January 2021 as was the PAG contract. Matching dollars from these, three contracts will be available during the beginning period of performance of the EDA planning grant, and the funds are not conditioned or encumbered in any way that may preclude its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. (These are requirements of the EDA and MRPC is in full compliance.)

The EDA requires a dollar-for-dollar match for its planning grants. As a total of \$273,185 can be raised by the MRPC in matching funds, the total amount of the grant proposal will be equal to this amount.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission approves of the Executive Director's request to use the matching funds, as detailed above, to be used as matching funds against the agency's FILLTER grant proposal.

R. Swartz moved to accept the motion as presented. The motion was seconded.

Roll call followed:

- A. Butland- yes
- G. Corbosiero- yes
- J. Telepciak- yes
- J. Kranz- yes
- K. Nartowicz- yes

- L. Shifrin- yes
- R. Swartz- yes
- R. Hoyt- yes
- S. Donohue- yes
- B. Oelfke- yes

6.3 Other Administrative Matters Related to Office Management Under the Covid-19 Pandemic

Most employees continue to work exclusively remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Director has been following advisories issued by the Federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the State Department of Public Health concerning the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the decline in cases, the relaxation of mask mandates, and related issues. All staff will return to the office at some point in the future; that date has yet to be determined.

The internal office space mandate for mask-wearing in all common spaces will be lifted at 5:00 PM, Friday, March 4, 2022.

The general public and local officials may visit the staff on an appointment basis, only.

Small meetings may, or may not be allowed, inside the building on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Executive Director. All parties are hereby informed that protecting the MRPC's employees, their families, and any visitors to the interior office space is of paramount importance.

G. Eaton stated he would like to see more data before requiring staff to work in the office or before allowing any large meetings to be held within the office.

7. Staff Presentation(s) (If Any)

7.1 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

No updates at this time

7.2 Planning & Development - Reviews and Awards for Services: District Local Technical Assistance REPORT

In response to a first solicitation, on or before March 1, 2022, a total of nine (9) proposals were received for use of District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) resources to provide a variety of services. The proposals received are as follows:

- 1. Groton:** Assistance complying with the new Chapter 40A, Section 3A for MBTA Communities.

2. **Royalston:** Assistance with zoning amendments for Assisted Living/Multifamily housing needs and potential small business opportunities.
3. **Shirley:** Assistance complying with the new Chapter 40A, Section 3A for MBTA Communities in conjunction with a 40R District evaluation.
4. **Sterling:** Assistance complying with the new Chapter 40A, Section 3A for MBTA Communities.
5. **Sterling:** Assistance with Regionalization/Shared Services Best Practices.
6. **Townsend:** Assistance complying with the new Chapter 40A, Section 3A for MBTA Communities.
7. **Townsend:** Assistance to the Affordable Housing Trust developing a 5-year Action Plan for creating mixed-income affordable housing on Trust owned parcels and assistance with implementation of goals in Townsend's Housing Production Plan.
8. **Westminster:** Assistance complying with the new Chapter 40A, Section 3A for MBTA Communities.
9. **Winchendon:** Completing a Housing Production Plan for submission to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

K. Chapman stated there is an error, there should be ten proposals listed. Harvard should be listed as well.

Of the ten proposals, six are MBTA Communities. We also have Harvard with an update to their Open Space and Recreation Plan, Royalston with assistance with zoning amendments for Assisted Living/Multifamily housing needs and potential small business opportunities, Sterling with assistance with Regionalization/Shared Services Best Practices, Townsend with assistance to the Affordable Housing Trust developing a 5-year Action Plan for creating mixed-income affordable housing on Trust owned parcels and assistance with implementation of goals in Townsend's Housing Production Plan and Winchendon with completing a Housing Production Plan for submission to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) recommends that #1 through #9 of the above-named project requests for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA), if eligible, be conditionally awarded based upon further communication/ clarification/ negotiation with the applying communities and approval from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Moreover, all activities in some applications may not be awardable under the DLTA program: MRPC staff reserves the right to negotiate an awardable detailed scope of services and budget amount.

Those requests conditionally awarded (#1 through #9) are subject to the conditions listed below.

1. The services to be delivered to the communities will be completed commencing no earlier than a fully executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the subject (lead) community and the MRPC.

2. Services will be delivered to the subject community(ies) during the implementation of the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program year (2022).
3. The award of services from the MRPC is subject to the:
 - a. Funding available to the MRPC during the program year (2022);
 - b. Successful negotiation of a detailed scope of services, schedule for the completion of the tasks identified in the scope of services, and budget utilizing DLTA and other funds, if available and eligible for the aforementioned project;
 - c. Execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MRPC and the community(ies); and,
 - d. The MRPC's receipt of a letter from the Chief Elected Official (CEO) of all of the affected communities indicating agreement to this proposal and willingness to participate in this analysis. (Communities may agree to participate in this analysis after the full execution of the MOU between the subject (lead) community and the MRPC but must agree to participate in order to receive the results of the report.)
4. Where and when possible, the MRPC will deliver the tasks related to "analysis, preparation and presentation ... report(s) ..." as indicated above. The MRPC and the community requesting services will "outsource" consulting services only when absolutely deemed to be necessary by both the lead community and the MRPC.
5. This is an award of services from the MRPC to the applicable community(ies). This is not a cash award.
6. If at any time DHCD determines that the project is ineligible, the award of services will be null and void.
7. The municipality and all municipal departments shall provide MRPC with cooperation/access/assistance to public data applicable to the DLTA project including the provision of such materials. Related costs associated with this (data collection, photocopying, etc.) will be at the expense of the municipality(s).

S. Donohue moved to accept the resolution as presented. Motion was seconded.

Roll call followed:

- A. Butland- yes
- G. Corbosiero- yes
- J. Telepciak- yes
- J. Kranz- yes
- K. Nartowicz- yes
- L. Shifrin- yes
- R. Swartz- yes
- R. Hoyt- yes
- S. Donohue- yes
- B. Oelfke- yes

G. Corbosiero reminded everyone that there is a CPA Seminar March 4th in the afternoon.

K. Chapman stated she is working on the DHCD MBTA Communities Guidelines. It is difficult to find a lot that doesn't have wetlands on it which will be one of the things we expand on. Also, in the statute that talks about having a safe and convenient access to transit stations from pedestrians and bicyclists however with the exception of Groton, there are no safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists. We will also make a general comment that they should allow waivers for rural communities that it could be less than the 750 unit capacity and maybe require affordable housing in the statute even though we can put it in our local district by-law.

If anyone has comments they want to send before the draft is done, please reach out. Once the draft is done, it will be sent out to all communities. S. Donohue stated the Harvard Planning Board has put together a draft letter on the comment period. She will forward a copy to K. Chapman.

7.3 Transit & Transportation

No updates at this time

8. New Business

This time is being reserved for topics that the chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.

9. Adjournment

R. Swartz moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded.

Roll call followed:

A. Butland- yes
G. Corbosiero- yes
J. Telepciak- yes
J. Kranz- yes
K. Nartowicz- yes
L. Shifrin- yes
R. Swartz- yes
R. Hoyt- yes
S. Donohue- yes
B. Oelfke- yes

This meeting will be recorded by GoToMeeting app and will be made available for viewing on <https://www.youtube.com/user/MontachusettRegion/videos> .

This notice is subject to change with reasonable notice provided to all.

Meeting Attendance					
<u>Name</u>	<u>M/A</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Janssens, Leo	A	Ashburnham	7.2021		X
Hoyt, Roger	M	Ashburnham	7.2011	X	
Stacy, Wayne	A	Ashby	7.2021		X
Pease, Alan	M	Ashby	7.2001		X
Bialecki, Rebecca	A	Athol	7.2017		X
Doherty, Jacqueline	M	Athol	7.2020		X
Copeland, Shaun	A	Ayer	7.2020		X
Kranz, Jonathan	M	Ayer	7.2021	X	
Vacant	A	Clinton			X
Duffy, Phil	M	Clinton	12.2011		X
Lowitt, Peter	N/V	DREZ	7.2001		X
Bohart, Mary Jo	A	Fitchburg	7.2021		X
Alyne Butland	M	Fitchburg	7.2020	X	
DeRoy, Jessica	A	Gardner	7.2021	X	
Swartz, Robert	M	Gardner	7.2019	X	
Haddad, Mark	A	Groton	7.2021		X
Burke, Russell	M	Groton	7.2016		X
Minar, Kara	A	Harvard	7.2021		X
Donahue, Stacia	M	Harvard	7.2018	X	
Stauder, Michael	A	Hubbardston	7.2020		X
Livdahl, Alice	M	Hubbardston	7.2021		X
Jackson, Carol	A	Lancaster	7.2021		X
Williston, Russell	M	Lancaster	11.2018		X
Vacant	A	Leominster			X
Valliere, Dean	M	Leominster	7.2019		X

Marino, James	A	Lunenburg	7.2020		X
Brenner, Matthew	M	Lunenburg	7.2020		X
Allen, Nancy	A	Petersham	7.2015		X
Vacant	M	Petersham			X
Telepciak, John	A	Phillipston	10.2001	X	
Vacant	M	Phillipston			X
Barclay, James	A	Royalston	7.2017		X
Nartowicz, Kyle	M	Royalston	7.2015	X	
Oelfke, William	A	Shirley	7.2020	X	
Yocum, Barbara	M	Shirley	8.2017		X
Kilcoyne, John	A	Sterling	7.2014		X
Page, Patty	M	Sterling	7.2019		X
Bennett, Jeff	A	Templeton	7.2020		X
Rich, Dennis	M	Templeton	7.2017		X
Kell, Veronica	A	Townsend	7.2021		X
Shifrin, Laura	M	Townsend	7.2018	X	
Buckman, Gregg	A	Westminster	7.2021		X
Smith, Michael	M	Westminster	7.2019		X
Ward, Rick	A	Winchendon	7.2019	X	
Corbosiero, Guy	M	Winchendon	7.2011	X	

Guests: Randy Williams- Ashburnham DPW

Staff: Glenn Eaton, Holly Ford, Karen Chapman, Jason Stanton, Linda Quinlivan, Brad Harris

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING:

February 3, 2022 Minutes

March 3, 2022 Agenda

March 3, 2022 MRPC Meeting Handout

Current Grant Opportunities