

MWRC Minutes
Thursday September 28, 2023
8:00-9:30 am
Via Zoom

Attendees

Ashland: Yolanda Greaves; Alvaro Espararza, Town staff

Framingham: Rick McKenna; Simon Alexandrovich, DPW

Holliston: Tina Hein

Natick:

Marlborough: Katie Robey

Southborough: Meme Luttrell

Wayland: Mary Antes; Robert Hummel, Planning

Wellesley: Colette Aufranc

Weston: Laurie Bent; Imaikalani Aiu

Associate Members: Susan Nicholl, Office of Senate President Karen Spilka; Jason Palitsch, 495/MW Partnership

MAPC staff: Camille Jonlin, Travis Pollack, Leah Robins

Guests: Georgia Barlow, Alison Felix, Barry Keppard, Sasha Parodi, Sharon Ron (MAPC)

Call to Order and Welcome

Camille (cjonlin@mapc.org) and Travis (tpollack@mpac.org) introduced themselves as the new MWRC co-coordinators.

There was not a quorum, so no Call to Order or Roll Call was taken.

MWRC Updates, Events, & Look-Ahead

Events in next few months (Camille)

- **October 10, 9-1pm, Worcester – MARPA annual conference.** Link to register [here](#). Leah suggested coming to the first part with Lt. Governor Driscoll if you cannot make the entire day.
- **October 13, 9-2pm, Holliston – regional trails creative placemaking** – RSVP to Anchana Menon at amenon@mapc.org. The workshop is part of the [Regional Trails Creative Placemaking Strategy](#) project that MAPC's Arts & Culture and Transportation Departments are currently working on with the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) and MWRC subregions, as well as with the Town of Acton and the Town of Holliston. Tina noted we're looking for regional appointees to attend and participate. The goal is to have new art installation along the trail, via call for artists. There's no limit to the number of participants for each community, but would like to have at least two from each community.
- **October 26, 8:30-12pm, Framingham: MW Landline trails forum** – see invite from David Loutzenheiser (dloutzenheiser@mapc.org).
- **October 24, 9-10am: MPO discussion** jointly with MAGIC Subregion – Contact Camille or Travis if you did not get an invitation to this.
- **November 30, 8-9:30am: MWRC workplan** & respond to interests that each community has shared in one-on-ones with new MWRC Coordinators; community share as always. Potential for additional topics.

Camille and Travis will also be reaching out to each community for a one-on-one between now and the end of the year.

Discussions and Vote on MWRC Bylaw Revisions

Yolanda noted there was no quorum today. Southborough has not had appointed member for a while; Wayland still needs second representative, but this may be coming soon. Alvaro may be appointed for Ashland soon. Framingham has only one appointee. Marlborough has one appointee.

Noted Bylaw changes, which reflect how MWRC has changed over the years, including being staffed by MAPC rather than MWRC itself.

- To add Sherborn to MWRC membership,
- To clarify that Mayors or Mayoral Designees have voting privileges,
- To allow designees of Select Board members, planning board members, or Mayors to be on the Executive Committee,
- To allow virtual and hybrid meetings,
- To discuss the next year's workplan in the spring and adopt it in the fall, and
- To establish a voting quorum by appointed members rather than full (potentially unfilled) membership.

Katie asked if page 2 text could be clarified as Mayors; two members are cities with mayors. Anticipated vote will happen at November meeting. Any other changes, please contact Yolanda, Travis, or Camille. Bylaws might be revised again, likely via another subcommittee that developed these changes and revisions. Tina thanked those who created these proposed revisions.

Project Spending

MAPC is working on two projects in the MetroWest Region that have proposed MWRC funding for FY23.

Electric School Buses: Guest Alison Felix gave an overview on efforts for regional school fleet electrification procurement efforts being undertaken by MAPC. Participants include some in MWRC subregion and others outside MWRC.

Questions were raised about the whether the program will consider vehicle to grid/vehicle to building re-power options, how the program might work with contracted/third part vendors for districts, and the varied ownership/operation models for the 21 participating school districts and municipalities, Alison noted that the program will consider these questions. Other questions were raised whether parental feedback surveys, impacts to budgets, and collaborating with other municipal fleets could be considered. MAPC was asked to keep MWRC updated, since school districts are sometimes separate from municipal government. Contact Alison at afelix@mapc.org for more information.

No vote on project funding for this due to lack of quorum. The proposed action is for MWRC to approve \$18,500 of Collaborative funds to help fund this Electric School Buses project.

Metro West Climate Equity: Guests Sharon Ron and Barry Keppard of MAPC discussed this partnership with Ashland, Framingham, and Natick. Phase 1 was funded through another grant and was about connecting Environmental Justic (EJ) communities with climate resiliency efforts. Phase 1 was 1.5 years and they worked with groups in EJ neighborhoods, including outreach and survey in multiple languages. Results showed a desire for local action. There is local interest in working with climate liaisons for

implementation, particularly with preparing for climate emergencies. MAPC was awarded a small second national grant to maintain with community liaisons on how to be prepared with climate emergencies, including heat, storms, etc. People wanted physical resources – flyers, magnets, in multiple languages on resources listing who and how to contact during climate emergencies. More information <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/metro-west-climate-equity/>

No vote was taken due to lack of quorum. The proposed action is for MWRC to approve \$12,500 in Collaborative funds to continue this work.

Yolanda noted that the Collaborative has \$59,640 of unallocated funding from previous fiscal years, primarily due to projects and MWRC business being suspended during COVID.

Community Exchange

MAPC Government Affairs: Guest Georgia Barlow discussed how MAPC has been working with regional communities to understand how they work with recent immigrant arrivals, including MetroWest. MAPC is coordinating the Municipal Immigrant Support Network (MISN), with Georgia as the lead MAPC staff person. This year there are 6,500 new families in Massachusetts in 80 municipalities (including MW), and more migrants will likely continue to arrive. MISN is working with the state as well on support for cities and towns to support new migrant families in their communities. Bi-weekly MISN meetings are on Tuesdays, 4 pm. You can register here.

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAKdO2gqjouG9zzg0J_Ot8ktNyxX_Cef1RI#/registration

Leah noted that communities can contact Georgia (gbarlow@mapc.org) with questions and on ideas on how they can help.

Ashland (Alvaro) – Two new development projects will start construction. Susan noted that Ashland commuter rail station is still closed. Other stations' parking lots are now filling up again, so re-opening it is needed.

Holliston (Tina) – Blair Square opened. It's a beautiful space, like a new Town Common. TC Scoops is next door. Oct. 16 will be the Town Meeting. Holliston is also involved in new outreach/events with Safe Routes to Schools, these are great ways to improve safe pedestrian infrastructure for schools.

Framingham (Rick) – Framingham is working hard on internal and external trails, including purchase of some new land. Fireworks show in July was brought back this year, with 15K people participating. Mayor Sisitsky was appointed to MBTA Board by Governor Healy. New School and Community Center in pipeline. Looking at boosting life sciences work force pipeline in MetroWest.

Southborough (Meme) – Working on MBTA Communities compliance, including a meeting last night. Next steps are mapping and bylaw. Three new 40B projects have begun the permitting process.

Wayland (Robert) – New COA building permitted, was a long process to get permit started. Also working on MBTA 3A process. New 40B project permitted; Town is now at 10% affordable housing.

Weston (Laurie and Imai) – Had first meeting of Unified Planning Committee last night to begin Master Plan process, and look at issues facing Town. Water tanks continue to be an issue, including where to site. Josiah Smith Tavern has been restored, and interviewing restaurateurs. Also looking at how to bring a newspaper to Town. Imai noted developers looking at senior/age-restricted housing. Curious if others are seeing similar inquiries, and if others have special zoning.

Wellesley (Colette) – Town is doing deep dive on financial policies. New positions open, hired new ED director. Have other open positions. Similar to Weston, have had recent interest in a number of denser housing projects. Town Meeting in December.

Marlborough (Katie) – City Council and new Mayor election upcoming (Mayor not running for re-election). Issues are housing related, new DT zoning to allow mixed-use development by-right. Three new projects on Main Street; other new affordable housing issues continue. Utility work and new park in DT.

Yoland asked if there was interest in 3A MBTA Communities discussion, with many noting a desire to discuss this at a future meeting.

Jason Palitsch, Executive Director of 495/MW Partnership noted that they are hosting Housing Secretary Edward Augustus, Jr. at a virtual forum on November 8. Register at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nRPu7g9KRnK7TT_NYZebcw#/registration

Other business not known

None raised.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 am.