

MWRC Minutes

Thursday, September 26, 2024
8:00-9:30 am
Via Zoom

Attendees

Ashland: Yolanda Greaves, Amanda Hayes, Alvaro Esparza

Framingham: Rick McKenna

Holliston: Melanie Hamblin

Natick: Amanda Loomis, Morgan Griffiths, Troy Smith

Marlborough:

Southborough: Sam Stivers, Bill Cundiff, Meme Luttrell, Leah Emerson

Sherborn: Heidi Doyle

Wayland: Mary Antes, Robert Hummel

Wellesley: Colette Aufranc, Eric Arbeene

Weston: Laurie Bent, Imai Aiu

Associate Members: Susan Nicholl, Office of Senate President Karen Spilka; Jason Palitsch, 495/MW Partnership; Leah Parker-Moldover and Tracey Rogers, MetroWest Nonprofit Network; Elissa Laundre and Robert Killiam, Mass Audubon

MAPC Coordinators: Camille Jonlin, Travis Pollack

MAPC Guests: Emma Koontz, Archana Menon

Welcome & Roll Call

- Yolanda introduced herself and facilitated introductions.

Approval of April and May Minutes

- Motion to approve all minutes; Laurie 1st, Rick 2nd. Collete abstain. Motion passed.

Group Agreements

- Camille introduced the purpose of the Collaborative
- Group agreements – want everyone to feel empowered, comfortable; doing group agreements with other meetings in subregions – Listed all group agreements:
 - Everyone is here to learn, and everyone brings expertise
 - Use “I” statements
 - Take space, make space
 - Share the lesson not the story
 - One mic
- No comments or questions on group agreements
- Yolonda said this group has been polite and mindful, but good to agree on how to share the space

Community Share

- Weston

- 44 ○ Laurie: Rt 30 community path passed; now focused on water tanks and MBTA communities
45 vote Dec 3
- 46 ○ Imai: success was a historic inn rezoned for 20 units of age-restricted housing; looking to a
47 3A vote next Town Meeting
- 48 ● Wellesley
- 49 ○ Collette: finished Wellesley workplan, just hired mobility/transportation manager staff
50 person
- 51 ○ Eric: success in the spring was mostly approving MBTA communities, and the rest will be
52 voted on later for compliance; new overlay for multifamily on Rt 9 and there are two
53 upcoming multifamily projects
- 54 ● Wayland
- 55 ○ Mary: ongoing equity assessment to be completed in October, hoping to get 2000 survey
56 responses. Also no fall town meeting. Working on rezoning old landfill and former DPU
57 site
- 58 ○ Robert: AG approval for 3A/approved MBTA rules/regs; can start permitting projects.
59 Got new admin help in planning office. Working on ADUs and timing with town meeting
- 60 ○ **Yolanda – ADUs could be a topic of a future MWRC meeting.**
- 61 ● Southboro
- 62 ○ Meme: new historic district, 3A zoning headed to town meeting; working on ADUs, new
63 school project; Sam concurs
- 64 ● Sherborn
- 65 ○ Heidi: revised inclusionary zoning policy to better work with 3A; new RT 16 roundabout;
66 future new TIP project Rt 16/27 divergence and convergence
- 67 ● Natick
- 68 ○ Amanda L: created a transportation advisory committee, working with them to understand
69 roles of committee and SB and PB; future update in zoning bylaws, have ADU bylaw; not
70 just zoning but hook ups, addressing for GIS/postal, etc.; MBTA zoning this fall
- 71 ○ Morgan: Transportation Advisory Committee updated charge and purpose; Troy Smith,
72 DEI, did a mobile Town Hall to bring services out to the public especially in areas that
73 have fewer people engaging; challenge – MassDOT reconstruction of Rt 9/27 double
74 diverging diamond
- 75 ● Holliston
- 76 ○ Melanie: success was working with MAPC and Archana on art/rail trail placemaking
77 unveiling event on Tuesday; earmark this year on wayfinding maps went to ZBA and
78 proposed new signage in Town; complete streets grant on Central to link the rail trail to
79 DT; working on 3A rezoning, sewer district commission to see if it's feasible
- 80 ● Framingham
- 81 ○ Rick: brought back fireworks for the second year; DT business community trade show with
82 open streets, 80 vendors and fashion show with models at City Hall steps with local shops;
83 doing 3A workshops, Framingham has 4,000 units required; doing Model Overlay District
84 (MOD) which is going to city council, latest iteration is 7 overlays; have ADU bylaw
85 approved but only 2 possible projects so need to work on this, lots of interest in ADUs;
86 325th anniversary coming up

- 87 • Ashland
- 88 ○ Yolanda: comp plan phase 3 on goals/strategies; working on 3A community discussions
- 89 ○ Amanda H: future ADUs upcoming and 3A proposals; have two 40Bs in middle of Ashland
- 90 also coming up

91 **DEI Session Brainstorm and Vote on DEI Session Funding Request**

- 92 • In spring 2024 MWRC had the idea of doing a DEI session – DEI is a broad topic area, so we
- 93 want to brainstorm exact topics to zero in on
- 94 • DEI session brainstorm – see attached slides
- 95 • DEI is not a one and done conversation; want this to be first of several discussions. Could be more
- 96 internal or external
- 97 • Ideas/Questions: See slides for prompts. Comments:
- 98 ○ Imai – Best/emerging practices on how to approach DEI conversations with the public and
- 99 not have the first reaction be pushback/fear from public
- 100 ○ Laurie – 3A conversation with more housing brought concerns about DEI with some;
- 101 opening town up and changing town is a challenge. Housing has been exclusive and
- 102 means less diversity; more diversity of housing = more diverse population
- 103 ○ Collete – Wellesley equity survey and equity audit ongoing, can share (Wayland also
- 104 doing an equity audit)
- 105 ○ Yolanda – Ashland did equity project a few years ago, have equity group to implement;
- 106 Ashland’s diversity has changed in last 15 years; with more diverse housing, more diverse
- 107 population in town; this has led to more diverse boards; first person of color elected in SB
- 108 ○ Laurie – Weston has Asian community, but representation is still limited; language
- 109 barriers; cultural access as well
- 110 • Funding Request – \$3K of MWRC Special Assessment funds for MAPC staff time to support the
- 111 MWRC DEI discussion in January
- 112 ○ Motion – Colette 1st, Laurie 2nd
- 113 ○ Roll Call vote – Ashland both yes; Framingham Rick yes; Natick both yes; Southborough
- 114 both yes; Wayland both yes; Wellesley both yes; Weston both yes – motion passes

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117 **Project Brainstorm**

- 118 • Travis – We had many project successes last year and just over \$40,000 this year for more
- 119 projects. What are your project ideas to spend those funds as well as discussion ideas for future
- 120 MWRC meetings?
- 121 • Laurie – Local news has been a big deal in Weston, and it’s not necessarily the town government’s
- 122 job to start a news source but there is more pressure on towns to put information out there, need to
- 123 get more current with tech and communications
- 124 ○ Colette – yes we need this, Wellesley trying to get more staff capacity for
- 125 communications
- 126 ○ Yolanda – yes, public communications, dealing with social media trolls or misinformation
- 127 spreading
- 128 ○ Laurie – public information has a big impact on town government and we need to staff up
- 129 because of it
- 130 ○ Yolanda – some towns have communications directors who do regular public messages
- 131 (Ashland, Holliston, Wellesley, others)
- 132 • Colette – climate resiliency and emergency preparedness, Wellesley has Hazard Mitigation Plan

- 133 • Sam – integrating technology in town operations, related to communications but other technical
- 134 systems like AI/others and ensuring towns have skills to keep up with the tech
- 135 • Colette – vision zero important, since people often say “intersections are dangerous, can’t bike,
- 136 etc” - traffic and safety
 - 137 ○ Morgan – yes, transportation safety!
- 138 • Yolanda – we should send out a survey
 - 139 ○ Travis – yes, we will about topic areas as well as projects to spend money on
- 140 • Imai – 3A implementation challenges would be a great future discussion

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142 **Other Business Not Known at Time of Posting**

- 143 • Other introductions
 - 144 ○ Jason Pallitsch, 495 Partnership – putting together first ever housing vision, stating that the
 - 145 housing crisis is presenting an economic threat to our region, you can submit comments to
 - 146 the comment page; some priorities were achieved in the Housing Bond Bill, and there is a
 - 147 need for the Commonwealth to invest more in water and sewer; Save the Date for
 - 148 Thursday December 12 for 495 Partnership Annual Meeting
 - 149 ○ Troy Smith, Natick – Director of Diversity, Equity, and Outreach in Natick, had a great
 - 150 mobile town hall recently [https://www.natickreport.com/2024/09/natick-mobile-town-](https://www.natickreport.com/2024/09/natick-mobile-town-hall-brings-its-services-to-the-people/)
 - 151 [hall-brings-its-services-to-the-people/](https://www.natickreport.com/2024/09/natick-mobile-town-hall-brings-its-services-to-the-people/)
 - 152 ○ Leah Parker-Moldover, Executive Director of MetroWest Nonprofit Network – supporting
 - 153 and strengthening the nonprofit community with workshops, training opportunities, events
 - 154 for the nonprofit community; there are 6,000 nonprofits in the MetroWest area
 - 155 ■ Tracey Rogers – communications with MetroWest Nonprofit Network
 - 156 ○ Elissa Laundre, Community Engagement Manager for MassAudubon – committed to
 - 157 protecting the nature of Massachusetts for people and for wildlife; upcoming event on
 - 158 rodent control and pesticides; working with Archana on the MetroWest Advisory
 - 159 Committee; hope to host MWRC DEI session at Broadmoor in Natick and can share
 - 160 learnings from their DEIJ journey
 - 161 ○ Archana Menon, Arts & Culture Fellow at MAPC and MetroWest Advisory Group with
 - 162 MassAudubon – thank you for helping fund the Creative Trails Placemaking Project! Trails
 - 163 are resources for inclusive communities and connect downtowns to other areas in town; the
 - 164 project also brought together all town departments for safety, transportation, and art
 - 165 ○ Emma Koontz new MAPC Community Engagement staff
 - 166 • Check out the revamped MWRC website [https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/mwrc-](https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/mwrc-subregion/)
 - 167 [subregion/](https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/mwrc-subregion/)
 - 168 • WEMO MMA event upcoming
 - 169 • Trails Summit upcoming October 17 <https://mapc.ma/2024-metrowest-trails-summit>

170 **Motion to adjourn**

- 171 • Colette 1st, Laurie 2nd – motion approved
- 172 • Adjourned 9:21 am

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175 Attachments:

176 Approved funding request for DEI session and slides from September 26 meeting

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178 *Minutes compiled by Travis Pollack and Camille Jonlin, MAPC*

179 *Minutes approved December 5, 2024*



FY25 MetroWest Regional Collaborative Special Assessment Projects for Consideration

As of August 2024, MWRC has \$44,900 of unallocated special assessment funding. This includes special assessments collected in FY2024. Annually, the Collaborative assesses approximately \$35,000 from member communities through a per population charge.

MWRC DEI Session Preparation

Request Summary: The MetroWest Regional Collaborative is pursuing a subregional discussion on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices. This is important work that requires careful consideration to create a productive and informative session that values all perspectives and positionalities. MAPC has two on-staff experts on DEI Trainings, and they require a small amount of funding to help prepare for and facilitate the MWRC DEI session. These two staff members have facilitated similar conversations in two other MAPC subregions thus far. MWRC Special Assessment funds will allow these staff members to coordinate a valuable and comfortable session for MWRC participants.

MWRC Request	\$3,000
Communities Committed (100% MWRC members)	All MetroWest Regional Collaborative Municipalities

Purpose of MWRC

The purpose of MWRC is to:

- Provide a forum for communication and knowledge sharing between and among the MWRC municipalities about municipal planning and best practices;
- Support regional collaboration on policy and planning matters;
- Advocate for regional priorities; and
- Pursue projects of regional significance

Taken from MWRC webpage: <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/mwrc-subregion/>

Group Agreements



Everyone is here to learn, and everyone brings expertise



Use “I” statements



Take space, make space



Share the lesson not the story



One mic

MWRC DEI Session

What – Discuss DEI practices across MWRC communities

When & Where – January date TBD, potential Mass Audubon sanctuary in Natick

Why – Build an understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion as municipal representatives and learn from the practices of fellow MWRC members

Outcome – Participants have a foundation of knowledge on DEI practices for municipal representatives and are prepared for future implementation discussions

MWRC DEI Session

Topic Brainstorm – What questions do you have about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in your work or community and where do you want to start?

- Best practices to approach DEI conversations with the public given pushback & fear
- Housing & DEI – repercussions of exclusionary zoning
- Equity audits
- Diverse representation on boards and committees
- Language and cultural access

MWRC DEI Session Funding Request

Request Summary: The MetroWest Regional Collaborative is pursuing a subregional discussion on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices. This is important work that requires careful consideration to create a productive and informative session that values all perspectives and positionalities. MAPC has two on-staff experts on DEI Trainings, and they require a small amount of funding to help prepare for and facilitate the MWRC DEI session. These two staff members have facilitated similar conversations in two other MAPC subregions thus far. MWRC Special Assessment funds will allow these staff members to coordinate a valuable and comfortable session for MWRC participants.

MWRC Request: \$3,000 out of \$44,900 unallocated funds

FY24 Project Accomplishments



READY FRAMINGHAM

ARE YOU READY FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCIES?
 ¿Estás listo para las emergencias climáticas? | Você está pronto para emergências climáticas? | Eski w pare pou ljans klimatik?

911 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE Asistencia de emergencia / Assistência emergencial / Asistans ljans

211 GENERAL INFORMATION NON-EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE Información general y asistencia que no sea de emergencia / Informações gerais e assistência não emergencial / Enfòmasyon jeneral ak èd ki pa ljans

(508)872-1212 LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERN Preocupación por la seguridad pública local / Preocupação com a segurança pública local / Enkyetid lokal sekirite piblik

MY IMPORTANT NUMBERS
 Mis números importantes / Meus números importantes / Nimeewo enpòtan imvnen yo

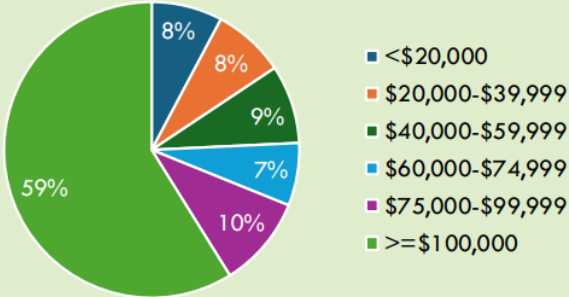
GET EMERGENCY ALERTS TEXT FRAMINGHAM TO 38276
 Reciba alertas de emergencia | Reciba alertas de emergência | Resevwa alèt ljans

LEARN MORE AT
 Más información en / Saiba mais em / Aprann plis nan
FraminghamMA.gov/ReadyFramingham

This magnet was sent to residents living in Environmental Justice neighborhoods in Framingham. It includes emergency contact numbers in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole.



Unaffordable Housing: 31% of households in MetroWest earn less than \$75,000 per year and are likely eligible for affordable housing.



O QUE FAZER EM UMA tempestade de neve?



Desastres podem acontecer em qualquer lugar e a qualquer momento. Certifique-se de que você e sua família estejam prontos.



Source: U.S. Census ACS 2018-2022 5-year Estimates.

MWRC Projects/Discussion Brainstorm

Please see the summary of active and recent MWRC projects. What else would you like to do this year? Some ideas:

- 3A Recap
- ADUs
- Wastewater
- Solar
- Tourism/Business Retention
- Transit
- Transportation Safety (Vision Zero)
- Build on current Electric School Buses project
- Call for projects from MAPC staff to work with your communities

MWRC Projects/Discussion Brainstorm Notes

- News and getting information out to the residents/public; also public participation in Town meetings
- Social media – both outreach and interacting with residents online
- Resiliency/climate change; hazard mitigation
- Technology integration with town operations; AI