

MEETING MINUTES

Under the provisions of G.L. c. 30A, MetroWest Moves conducted an Open Meeting on
Tuesday, July 21, 2015
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
MetroWest Health Foundation
Suite 202
161 Worcester Road
Framingham, MA 01701

I. Call to Order

- a. **Meeting convened:** July 21, 2015 at 9:35 a.m.
- b. **Members present:** Sam Wong
- c. **Others in attendance:** Maria Evora-Rosa, Janie Hynson (MetroWest Moves Coordinator), Barry Keppard, Alex Mello, Tim Reardon, Kerin Shea

- II. Community Innovation Challenge (CIC) Project Results:** Barry Keppard and Tim Reardon (MAPC) shared about the final results of the CIC project, which is a Complete Streets prioritization tool.

***A video of Tim's presentation is available. Please contact the Coordinator (jhynson@jsi.com) if you would like to view the video.

a. Background on prioritization tool development:

- In their literature review, MAPC found that many other tools use proximity to measure the value of street segments, so they applied a network analysis/modified travel demand model instead.
- The tool focuses on three trip purposes: 1) going to school, 2) going shopping, and 3) going to the park. The next potential trip purpose to be incorporated would be going to transit, particularly for Framingham which has a commuter rail stop.
- MAPC developed trip generation rates using results from the MA Household Travel Survey (2010-2011) to estimate the number of household trips per day. This is a survey of about 15,000 households conducted over about 15 months; each household provides a travel diary for the survey day as well as household composition characteristics.
- MAPC also collected information on distribution of destinations based on Infogroup business listings, school enrollment, and open space/recreational data (from the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs [EEA]/Mass GIS).
- Travel modelling software, *Cube Voyager*, was used to generate and distribute the trips to various destinations and assign them to the roadway and off road network. This was not limited to street



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segments based on current pedestrian infrastructure to determine where there is latent demand for pedestrian facilities. This tool reflects “could be”/latent demand NOT actual demand. This is based on land uses and resident proximity even if right now the facilities/conditions may not be in place.

- This tool modified “four step travel demand modeling” where trips are generated and distributed to various destinations. Traditionally there is a mode choice model – based on where the trips are going there is a set of formulas that determine if the person will drive, bike, or take transit. In this case, MAPC assumed that all trips within a specified distance were happening by walking/biking. Conventional travel demand modelling is intended to simulate current conditions. In this case, we are trying to estimate the relative distribution of walking/biking trips on the existing network if the infrastructure was available and if people were choosing to walk/bike.
- The overall goal was to identify segment by segment those streets with the highest utility. The output was 18 maps, which include three different trip purposes, two different modes, and each of the three municipalities. These are combined into an overall utility score. In developing the overall utility, MAPC weighted trips to shopping/errands higher than walking to school which was ranked higher than walking to outdoor recreation. About 50% of the score is based on walking to shops/errands, about 30% for walking to schools, and 20% for walking to parks. Pedestrian utility was then weighted higher than bike utility. Road utility is indicated by the thickness of the line on the map. Utility information cannot be attained through other sources such as crash data.

b. Potential tool modifications/considerations:

- In the future, looking at sidewalk infrastructure could be helpful for operations such as snow clearing.
- The current tool uses 2010 Census data. MAPC will be adjusting the model to include large residential developments that are underway, which would add more households/school-aged children to see how this changes the demand on the network/distribution of trips.
- This is just one type of data that local decision-makers can consider when setting priorities. For example, based on this map, Route 9 has a high demand for biking but in reality, people probably do not want to bike on Route 9. Other considerations could be vehicular flow, perceived safety issues, etc. That is why this is a measure of



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- latent but given the land uses and proximity to destinations a route actually might be the most convenient route to walk and bike even though now it is inconvenient due to characteristics of the road.
- This could be compared with investments to determine if investments are being put toward high or low utility streets or whether there are other forces pulling investments to lower utility streets (e.g., safety concerns, political demand, advocacy for specific neighborhoods, etc.)
 - A DPW survey showed that a high percentage of decisions/ investments are made based on residents' complaints rather than connectivity, number of street users, and other considerations. Hudson, for example, reconstructs about 1-2 roads per year and then does small repairs/upkeep on other streets as budgets are limited. When there are limited resources, this is an important source of data.
 - Potentially this could be combined with other tools to create a comprehensive score which would also consider safety, existing conditions of infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks), etc. A new tool came out with this purpose but it is missing utility; so this tool is intended to fill in that missing piece that you cannot get from crash data, pedestrian counts, or by surveying infrastructure. Pavement condition data could be provided by VHB. The rest would have to be filled in with local knowledge or over time by doing speed tests (travel volume, speed, right of way width you could pull from GIS parcel data, but there are some challenges).
 - Completeness, feasibility, and/or cost could also be incorporated. For example, you want to identify streets that have a lot of utility but low completeness.
 - The tool does not include places of worship because it is harder to get comprehensive data (ex: many people walk to the Catholic Church in Hudson, but the route lacks sidewalks. Right of way width is there but there is not enough funding). Places of worship could be added to the tool as well as walking/biking to transit as mentioned previously.
 - A regional approach was taken to develop this tool; abutting cities/towns (beyond Framingham, Hudson, and Marlborough) were included in the maps to understand if people were traveling into or out of the study area. Sam Wong asked if a similar map could be produced for Northborough. The limitation would be that if Westborough was not included, trips coming from Westborough into Northborough would not be included. However, MAPC is also hoping to expand this tool statewide.



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c. Updating the maps:

- The tool is not currently user updatable, but with more funding, MAPC hopes that it could be hosted on a web service which users could modify/update. The end user should be able to update the information; otherwise, strong working relationships should be developed with DPW/planning department staff so that they will provide regular updates to MAPC. It is important for the tool to be seamless and user friendly for municipal staff to use. Another option would be to create a set of maps for each municipality in the state.
- MAPC tracks residential and commercial developments through their development database, school information is collected on an annual basis for the Safe Routes to School survey, and parks are updated through EEA and GIS so perhaps MAPC could update the maps with this information. It likely depends on the town whether or not they would want to be able to modify the maps. In some towns, DPW staff are looking to planners to identify where bike lanes, for example, should be added.

d. Requests for the tool:

- A DPW staff person on the North Shore has been awaiting the CIC prioritization tool.
- MassDOT has also expressed interested in using the tool for the state's pedestrian plan.

e. Next steps/additional information:

- Tim Reardon asked for input about the maps; contact him (treardon@mapc.org) if you notice anything which seems inaccurate.
- This information will hopefully be useful for communities to incorporate in their FY17 capital plans.
- When MAPC analyzed municipalities' capital plans, "above average" referred to a good/higher utility score. The average was of all of the street segments within the municipality.
- The CIC results will be presented to the DPW directors, town/city engineers, and Planning Directors for their input in early Fall 2015. MAPC would also like to learn more from municipalities about whether utility does or could influence decision-making/investments.

- III. **Complete Streets in Framingham:** Alex Mello shared about Framingham’s process for passing a Complete Streets Policy, preparation to apply for the Complete Streets Funding Program, and updates about the application process/timeline.

***Please contact the Coordinator (jhynson@jsi.com) for a full audio recording of Alex’s presentation.

- a. **Process for passing a Complete Streets Policy:** On January 6, 2015, the Town of Framingham passed a Complete Streets Policy after a vote by the Board of Selectmen. Planning Board, Health Department, Community & Economic Development, engineering, capital improvement, and DPW Staff worked together to develop the Policy. To read the policy visit: <http://bit.ly/1BK0Qnl>
- Complete Streets is incorporated into Framingham’s Master Plan as well as their Open Space/Recreation plan. DPW had no objections to a Complete Streets Policy, but wanted planners to be aware that Complete Streets does not make sense in all settings. Therefore, they wanted there to be exceptions (e.g., safety hazards, cost, threat to public safety, etc.). In other communities, it may be more difficult to get DPW buy-in.
 - Framingham looked at Littleton and Somerville’s Complete Streets Policies as well as MA Smart Growth information (based on St. Louis and San Francisco).
 - **Timeline:** The Policy was drafted in about 3-4 meetings before it was taken to the Board of Selectmen. It was endorsed first and then approved at an overall meeting of the Board of Selectmen.
 - The overall goal of the Policy is to memorialize the Town’s commitment to Complete Streets.
- b. **Preparation to apply for the Complete Streets Funding Program:**
- Need to establish mode share goal – Chris Kuschel proofread Framingham’s Policy and believes that it will qualify for the Complete Streets Funding Program.
 - Framingham is now going through recodification and revised site plan review. Subdivision control regulations are next on their list (plan to be completed in the next year or so). The traffic roadway/safety committee in Framingham reviews traffic rules and regulations, which may potentially need to be modified.
 - Framingham does not regulate residential parking.
 - DPW is writing up a few bids for capital projects which will require contractors to look into bike/ped improvements. They will have to build these improvements unless they meet exceptions. However, there is no penalty for DPW, so this may need to be amended.

- The “Community Compact Cabinet” program may provide helpful sample language.

IV. **Other Complete Streets updates:** Hudson voted at Town Meeting to opt in to Chapter 90I.

V. **Administration**

- a. **Approval of meeting minutes:** The Steering Committee did not vote on whether the meeting minutes from August 2014-April 2015 can be approved. Approval will be postponed until the next meeting.
- b. **Next meeting date/time:** The Steering Committee will transition to having quarterly meetings and a scheduling poll will be distributed to select the next meeting time. In between meetings, the Coordinator will continue to meet with communities individually.

VI. **Action Items**

- Following the meeting, the Coordinator sent out a draft of the new MetroWest Moves workplan (for July - December 2015). The strategies (Complete Streets, Healthy Dining, and Safe Routes to School) are the same, but there are new/updated activities listed for each strategy. Steering Committee members were asked to review the workplan and provide feedback/edits to the Coordinator before it is due on 8/14.
- Please review the CIC maps available here: ftp://ftp.mapc.org/CIC_Complete_Streets/MetroWest_Moves/. Contact Tim Reardon (treardon@mapc.org) if you notice anything which seems to be inaccurate.
- The Coordinator is developing a new Active Living/Complete Streets Newsletter. Please send recent updates and photos from your community related to Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, or any other active living activities by Friday, August 14th. The newsletter format will be similar to our Winter newsletter found here: <http://metrowestmoves.org/files/2015/02/MetroWest-Moves-Active-Living-Newsletter-Winter-2015.pdf>
- Please send the Coordinator information about any upcoming events happening in your community related to healthy eating/active living so they can be shared on the website/social media.

VII. **Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.