

**HARVARD TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 14, 2021**

Gabriel Medjanis called the meeting to order at 6:00pm virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, under M.G.L. Chapter 30A S20 and Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 125

Members Present: Stacia Donahue, Bruce Leicher, Gabriel Medjanis, Jim Lee, Kara Minar, Pam Marston, Beth Williams, Suzi Allen

Others Present: Chris Ryan (Director of Economic Development); Neil Angus (Devens Enterprise Commission)

Discussion of MassTrails Grant Projects and Logistics

Old Mill to Devens connector: CRyan gave an update as there has been a lot of movement on this connector in the last month.

CRyan reached out to Harvard's usual engineering firm (TEC) to get a rough estimate for engineering work to design the connection. This is needed to determine what the 20% match amount from the town would need to be per the requirements of the MassTrails grant application. TEC estimated \$87,000 for engineering only cost based on a preliminary guess at the scope of work. The break out would roughly be 60% Devens and 40% Harvard as the more difficult topography being on the Devens side of the boarder. The \$87,000 is for the engineering effort only and construction funds would need to be estimated and requested in a separate future grant when the exact scope is known.

CRyan noted that the Town Administrator suggested that TAC use reserve funds transfer to cover the cost of our 20% match that is required as part of the MassTrails grant application. This has already been submitted to FinCom and CRyan will be meeting with FinCom later this week to discuss the request.

DEC clarified that in-kind services do count toward the grant match since DEC has their own engineering in-house. CRyan noted that in-kind does count so that's helpful to DEC and possibly Harvard as using the DEC in-house engineering might be less expensive to the town.

TAC questioned the cost of the engineering estimate. The initial estimate is based on some early assumptions that may not hold up as the design moves forward. For example, the preliminary scope includes parking spaces which may or may not be necessary. The design and scope need to be clarified.

DEC noted that MassDev has run into some hurdles with existing easements and connecting to the trail systems on Devens. There is about a ¼ mile distance between the end of this proposed trail and the existing trail system on Devens. DEC will continue to press MassDev to work toward resolutions. Additionally, the redesign of Patton Road (which would be the connecting road on Devens) is underway so DEC is pushing to have this connection considered in the design of that project.

The 2022 deadline for the MassTrails grant application is in February 2022. DEC is concerned that MassDev is not ready to move forward with this project that quickly. TAC is also concerned that February 1 deadline is too close to get the public outreach portion of the project done properly.

DEC noted that MassTrails grant is not the only grant that could be used to make this connection. CRyan wanted to know if he should continue to try to get the FinCom approval for the reserve funds transfer. All TAC members present feel that moving forward is the best plan as it shows our commitment to the project and there could be other grant opportunities that fit the timing of our project better. If not, then we will be in good position for application to MassTrails in the 2023 cycle.

TAC will continue the Harvard side of the work by putting the neighborhood meeting together. CRyan asked for help pulling the neighborhood meeting together. GMedjanis will help as it's in

his neighborhood. KMinar will also help as she was involved during the last outreach meeting for this connection. SDonahue will help with any pictures and/or graphics needed for slides. NAngus will be present at the meeting as well to speak for Devens and answer any questions from the Devens side of the discussion. CRyan will send a DoodlePoll to determine which times for early to mid January will work for the group.

Depot to Lancaster Country Trail: BLeicher and JLee walked the Depot to Lancaster County Trail with Marissa Flynn from Park & Rec and noted that the trail is in really good condition after Park & Recreation Commission work and the Boy Scouts upgrade to the bridge. They feel there is no longer needed to chase special grant funding to fix this trail, but that the Town should be asked for a modest amount to complete the maintenance and then set aside an annual amount for future maintenance so that the trail does not fall into disrepair again.

Other Business

BLeicher motioned to approve minutes from 11/15/21 and 11/17/21. Jim Lee seconded.
Approved unanimously.

Adjournment:

JLee motioned to adjourn. Unanimous agreement. Adjourned at 7:05pm.

Next meeting: February 3, 2022

Signed: _____ Stacia Donahue, Clerk