

Glenn Cannon

From: Glenn Cannon
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2015 1:00 PM
To: 'Stephen Buckley'
Cc: Lisa Dillon
Subject: RE: FHWA's Public Involvement Plan for Massachusetts

Hi Stephen,

MPO Agenda Items are topics that are required of the committee (UPWP, TIP, RTP, etc) or topics that are of interest of the committee (Canal Area Study, etc.).

I will ask the MPO Chairmen (MassDOT) about your request. We occasionally get request for vendors to appear on the MPO agenda and the MPO has NOT been in favor of allowing private entries on the agenda.

As always, you can comment under the "Public Comment" agenda item.

Again, I will ask MassDOT about your request.

Glenn

Glenn Cannon
Director of Technical Services
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Barnstable, MA 02630
(508) 362 - 3828

From: Stephen Buckley [mailto:sbuckley@igc.org]
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2015 12:25 PM
To: Glenn Cannon
Cc: Lisa Dillon
Subject: RE: FHWA's Public Involvement Plan for Massachusetts

Hi Glenn,

Would you please let me know the process for adding an item (like the one below) to the MPO's meeting agenda. If it is a simple request, then please consider this message as that request. (If Lisa answers, instead, that is fine with me.)

Hopefully, I'll get a reply from FHWA on this subject before the next meeting.

thanks,

Stephen Buckley
Chatham, Mass.
<http://twitter.com/openchatham>
(508) 348-9090

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At 09:04 AM 3/6/2015, Lisa Dillon wrote:

Good Morning Stephen,

I have saved this file and it will be included in the packet at the next MPO meeting on March 16, 2015.

- Lisa

From: Stephen Buckley [<mailto:sbuckley@igc.org>]
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 11:28 PM
To: Lisa Dillon
Cc: Glenn Cannon
Subject: Fwd: FHWA's Public Involvement Plan for Massachusetts

Hi Lisa,

Please include this message in the information package for those attending the MPO meeting of March 16, 2015.

thanks,
Stephen Buckley
Chatham, Mass.
<http://twitter.com/openchatham>
(508) 348-9090

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Date: Wed, 04 Mar 2015 19:39:18 -0500
To: Leah Sirmin - FHWA/Mass.ofc <leah.sirmin@dot.gov>
From: Stephen Buckley <sbuckley@igc.org>
Subject: FHWA's Public Involvement Plan for Massachusetts
Cc: Pamela Stephenson - FHWA/Mass.ofc <pamela.stephenson@dot.gov>, Michael Chong - FHWA/Mass.ofc <michael.chong@dot.gov>, Jody McCullough - FHWA/HQ <jody.mccullough@dot.gov>, Michelle Noch - FHWA/HQ <michelle.noch@dot.gov>, Lorrie Lau <lorrie.lau@dot.gov>

Dear Leah,

The purpose of this message is to request clarification about the FHWA's requirements for the Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT) concerning "public involvement" in the development and design of any transportation-related project.

I know that you usually attend but, at the last two meetings of the Cape Cod MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) this past December and February, I spoke about a letter that I had received from the Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT) which stated that the actions described in the MassDOT "Project Development and Design Guide" for public involvement (see Chapter 2) are only "suggested". That is a curious statement, since the Guide itself (see p. 2-2) says the actions are "required".

But then, almost at the same time, I came across the **"DOT Public Involvement Reference Tool"**

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/reference_tool/

... in which I see "Y" (Yes) for Massachusetts having both a Statewide and a NEPA Public Involvement Plan (PIP). They are described at the following link (and in text, further below):

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/reference_tool/aboutpirt.cfm

So, in order for me to speak accurately at the next meeting of the Cape Cod MPO (Monday, March 16th),

please help with this question:

Where can I find the "Public Involvement Plans" (both Statewide and NEPA) that were approved and required by FHWA for use by Massachusetts (MassDOT)?

I am wondering if either of these plans were supposed to be covered by MassDOT's "Project Development and Design Guide".

<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/DoingBusinessWithUs/ManualsPublicationsForms/ProjectDevelopmentDesignGuide.aspx>

Also, please "reply all" to this message, so the "DOT Public Reference Tool" can be updated (i.e., with web-links) for Massachusetts.

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/

Your response will also help in better understanding of how to improve the FHWA's program for public involvement, especially in light of the White House's ongoing interest in hearing from the public (like me) about the "best practices and metrics" for public participation. See here:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/open> (see link to "Join the Conversation about Open Government")

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/11/25/help-shape-public-participation> ("Help Shape Public Participation")

Thank you for your attention. If there are any questions, or a chance that you may not reply before the MPO meeting of March 16, please let me know.

sincerely,

Stephen Buckley
collaboration engineer
Chatham, Cape Cod, Mass.
24/7 phone: (508) 348-9090

<http://www.opengovmetrics.com>

<http://www.openchatham.com>

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excerpt from http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/reference_tool/aboutpirt.cfm
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About DOT Public Involvement

Welcome to the **Public Involvement Reference Tool**. The **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** has developed this reference tool as a technical resource for transportation professionals and the public. The reference tool is designed to help you find specific public involvement documents, discover and **share best practices**, and to assist State transportation agencies (STAs) to improve their **transparency, efficiency, and accountability**. The reference tool encourages more **open governmental** decisionmaking that facilitates citizen **participation and collaboration**.

- **Statewide Planning Public Involvement Process**
 - 23 U.S.C. §135 (f)(1)(C) -The State must provide a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed plan.
 - 23 CFR §450.210 - The State is required to develop and use a documented public involvement process that provides opportunities for public review and comment at key planning decision points.
- **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Public Involvement Process** - 42 U.S.C. §4331 et seq. NEPA's procedural requirements apply to all Federal agencies in the executive branch. NEPA requires agencies to undertake an assessment of the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. Two major purposes of the environmental review process are better informed decisions and citizen involvement.
 - 40 CFR §1506.6 (a)-(f) requires the following efforts:
 - Involving the public in preparing and implementing NEPA procedures;
 - Providing public notice of hearings or meetings and the availability of environmental documents;
 - Holding public hearings or meetings;
 - Soliciting appropriate information from the public;
 - Explaining where interested persons can get information on environmental impact statements (EISs); and
 - Making EIS comments available to the public.
 - 23 CFR §771.111 (h) stipulates that each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement-public hearing program.