

Minutes of the September 13, 2023 meeting of the Government Affairs Committee

Location                      Teleconference via Zoom

<u>Present</u> (*AIA MA board members) (**GAC Co-chairs)	Ahmed Idris Andrew Mitchell Catherine Babbidge Christine Clements Craig Olsen David George David Silverman Dorrie Brooks*	Ellen Watts* Eric Reinhard Gary Brock Helen Fantini Jacob Knowles Jean Carroon John Nunnari Kate Jessup	LaTriece Pleasant Laurence Spang** Ludmilla Pavlova-Gillham* Pasqualino Pannone Rand Lemley Russel Feldman** Thomas Hartman*
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Legislative, Regulatory Updates:

- See attached write-up from John Nunnari
  - Legislative:
    - RF: note if any members want to attend scheduled hearings on specific bills, contact John Nunnari.
  - Regulatory:
    - RF: 10th Edition delay - does administration see the urgency and effect on practitioners? JN: not really, plumbing and building code still in administrative review since last year, no evidence that it's being expedited. Admin & Finance department focused on migrant housing cost issue.
    - RF: send MA AIA letter to make the case to release the code updates to the public review process, JN will do.

Plumbing Code, all gender facilities:

- Proposed amendment to 248 CMR Plumbing code Section 10.10 (15) (h). Plumbing Board approved new language to 10.10 in Sep-2022 which is still in admin review and awaiting public hearing, so actual wording is not available yet. JN presented a new proposed amendment about gender neutral toilet facilities, asked members to comment on impact to practice, fixture counts, etc:
  - Areas of confusion in new language:
    - TH: unclear when single-user gender neutral toilet rooms are required
    - GB: language needs clarification, full-height partitions change sprinkler layout, i.e. cost implications. VT did gender-neutral bathrooms through health code not plumbing.
    - Fixture count parity for urinals vs water closets not addressed; still need variance to eliminate urinals?
    - 300' max distance for gender-neutral from gendered rooms
    - KJ (education planner): relation of toilet fixture count vs sinks, in schools best practice to locate ganged sinks in view of adults for safety/security. Locker rooms need more complex solutions.
    - DB: in discussions with Sen Comerford, Rep Domb communicated generally positive but clarity still needed.

- o LP-G: full-height partitions additional cost of ventilation, note different replacement costs in western MA vs eastern MA.
- Next action by MA AIA? DB: need public hearings by plumbing board. Encourage members to speak up at hearings. JN: legislative hearing not yet scheduled, note Nov-15 adjournment, then back January to February only when all unheard bills.
- KJ: offers access to research, studies, white papers on inclusive design for school facilities.
- LS: members with specific comments please send to JN for consolidated response.

Stretch and specialized energy codes:

- What are members hearing/saying in either support or opposition to the stretch and specialized energy codes (225 CMR 22.00 and 23.00)
  - o LS: how are practitioners and communities responding? How can AIA and GAC help practitioners implement? Comments from members welcomed.
  - o TH: DOER's failure to publish a consolidated version of the code, rather than separate lists of changes. Note that "Upcodes" can generate consolidated code, not official but valuable resource to understand code intent. JN: Secretary of State is in control of code publishing.
- DB: are there examples where stretch code, especially for existing buildings, discourages clients to develop projects?
  - o RL: yes, have lost projects due to BERDO requirements, e.g.
  - o JN: as with MAAB, difficult to get owners on the record about deciding not to proceed with projects due to regulation. RL has done work as developer and may be able to share specific cases. DB: can do test studies to walk through challenges as examples. LS: can anonymize data also,
  - o JK: DOER could include clear guidance in codes to address some of fears about interpreting the code, administrative challenges, fees, campus district energy rules, etc. MA AIA could be a platform to discuss with DOER to improve guidance documents. JN will request informal preliminary copy of guidance document.
  - o PP: better incorporated directly into the building code rather than extra requirements, inconsistently enforced. JN: AIA always advocated for that, rather than now three codes - base, stretch, municipal opt-in.
- DB: challenges of verification of building tightness. LS: more contractors' work than design vs architects' responsibility for affidavits. RF: example of 18 months to achieve compliance. JK: did Passive House projects, pre-certification led to tighter communication between builders and designers, need more consultants and had some difficulties, but future growth and learning is possible,

Other business:

- DB: found Oct-03 proposed date for legislative hearing on bathroom bill.

Upcoming meeting topics, speakers:

- Amy Dain invited, awaiting confirmation that she can join Oct-11. If not, maybe commissioner of DPL or former director of MAAB
- New Climate Secretary Melissa Hoffer possible future speaker, could discuss the possibility of state-wide consolidation of rules.
- *Tom Hartman has a program/learning unit on carbon education, can publicize/offer to members.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Christine M Clements, AIA  
Secretary, Government Affairs Committee

The next meeting of the Government Affairs Committee will be held on October 11, 2023 at 8:30 am via teleconference. You may register in advance using this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUkc-mqrT8oHtK1H2LEI9fmWqhEuG4b-Fu>

An email reminder with directions on how to RSVP will also be sent to those all AIA members in Massachusetts and via the BSA's knowledge committee announcements.

Distribution:

AIA MA Board

*Note: Items in italics are carried over from prior minutes.*

Attachments:

[https://www.aiama.org/files/ugd/9ad40d\\_9985ecbcb2bd47399f3ffb69e488b73c.pdf](https://www.aiama.org/files/ugd/9ad40d_9985ecbcb2bd47399f3ffb69e488b73c.pdf)

End of Minutes