

Minutes of the July 14, 2023 meeting of the Government Affairs Committee

Location Teleconference via Zoom

Present

(*AIA MA board members)

(**GAC Co-chairs)

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| Andrea Yoder | John Nunnari | Micaela Younger |
| Andrew Kollar | Julie Rahilly | Robin Greenberg |
| Christine Clements | Kate Bubriski* | Russel Feldman** |
| Edward Ransom | Kerry Bartini | Thomas Ellis |
| Ellen Watts* | Lauren Gunther | Thomas Hartman* |
| Gary Brock | Laurence Spang** | Upasana Patel |
| Greta Eckhardt | Ludmilla Pavlova-Gillham | |
| Gretchen Rabinkin | Megan Altendorf | |

Legislative, Regulatory Updates:

- See attached write-ups from John Nunnari:
 - Legislative:
 - JN: 25 bills had hearings in June, see summary
 - EW: Any bills heard high priority to MA AIA? JN: yes, the interior design was reported out of committee as “favorable”, sent to Senate Ways and Means. All bills go through W&M for financial impact
 - Regulatory:
 - JN: last Fri/Jul-07 met with Reps. Keefe, Duffy Sen. R. Kennedy, re: 30% threshold in MAAB regulations, discussed history of issue and AIA position, provided info about projects that didn’t go forward due to threshold. The three are interested in pursuing regulation changes, JN will prepare memo for their use in presenting to Gateway City conference.
 - TH: recommend \$100k and \$500k be separate from 30% threshold - easier to adjust dollar figure for inflation, doesn’t see 30% as a problem. Can get own assessor to challenge the value that 30% is based on. JN: note no draft legislation yet to react to, discussing concepts. Possibility of sliding scale across the state east-west different property values. TH: consider based on cost per square foot instead of fixed cost threshold.
 - RF: equity topic: east-west property value differential due to land value vs cost per square foot construction cost. TH: MAAB basis of 30% is building value not including land value.

**MA AIA 2023
Legislative Bills
reviewed:**

- **Ellen Watts: four pairs of climate bills, considers all four to be high priority:**
 - **HB 764, SB 2090:** embodied carbon predicted to outstrip (construction) carbon, to incorporate into stretch energy code. (JN: House and Senate clerks determine which committees review the bills.) Already >100 embodied carbon laws in US and Canada, MA should join. AIA MA board agreed.
 - TH: AIA should support.
 - AK: which are buildings covered by bill? Not sufficient expertise among practitioners on how to quantify embodied carbon. EW: bill doesn't require anything non-quantified, creates advisory board to define the target, including how to quantify, can establish training program. JN: advisory committee will make recommendations to boards with authority including DOER. Most recent energy code process recognised that gaps still need to be filled including embodied carbon. TH: message to legislators "please don't give me another thing to be responsible for that I don't get paid for".
 - RF: profession needs to develop the capacity to manage carbon impact, need cross-discipline discussion to develop guidelines that make sense.
 - GB: is there a goal for this proposed committee? Are they just making recommendations? What is the timeline? Is uncertain about the rapidly changing circumstances and doubts whether a particular committee will be able to make clear recommendations soon. IECC is considering including carbon in future national updates, a crucial but challenging move due to the current lack of rigorous understanding and reliable industry information
 - JN: note that contractor industry will oppose any new regulation.
 - JN: have submitted AIA recommendation and testimony.
 - **HB 3002, SB 1982:** implement clean concrete specifications for public projects. EW: will advance architectural best practices, improved characteristics, cost neutral, leading by example.
 - JN: recommend Medium priority, legislative path will take longer, recommend regulatory path, be prepared if becomes legislation.
 - JN: Executive order 594 already looking at regulatory. May already be in DCAM specifications. DOER developing new LEED 2.0 standard, addresses embodied carbon. Pursue parallel path with DOER and DCAM, not rely only on legislative solution.
 - LP-G: process slow, need more education in the profession, Embodied Carbon 101 presentations online, need also construction and procurement industries on board, existing buildings.
 - EW: informing the public also. Medium priority = sending a letter of support.
 - RF: reach out to allied associations ACEC, etc, on support letter for more impact.
 - **HB 3035, SB 1981:** "Buy Clean" state procurement low-carbon versions of seven materials. Recommend Medium support, logical extension of efforts concrete. JN: board submitted testimony, Medium support. Recommend parallel track with regulatory agencies.

- RF: are those seven industries working on it, as concrete is? EW: should find out before sending support letter.
- JN: note insulation requires filed sub-bids, will interact with new regulations.
- JN: many materials structural, need input from engineers

- **HB 3227, SB 2093:** (TUE) hearings this afternoon for testimony, expanding demonstration project for fossil-fuel-free new construction/renovations. Original ten communities in, four more want in (including Boston). Recommend High Priority.
 - RF: allows communities to opt-in to the fossil-fuel-free code, no state-wide requirement. EW: simple straightforward compliance pathway.
 - JN: recommend Medium priority, hearing is today, will know soon how likely to move forward. AIA priority has always been one code; pilot program was to get data on cost impact, data needed to develop new regulations/laws. Let the pilot get data before changing the program.
 - EW: note big development pressure, especially with large lab/commercial projects in Boston area could be covered. Reports show high return on investment.
 - JN: homebuilder report notes upfront cost does concern, someone has to pay, more incentives and clear information about incentives needed.
 - RF: note should get data from participating communities by end of year.
 - LS: need to pay attention to homebuilder response.
 - GAC priority: support at Medium level.

- Jane Galli (by email) requests more discussion about the Interior Design legislation status. LP-G supports remaining neutral. RF: AIA has submitted in opposition. JN: will discuss more at September meeting.

Upcoming meeting topics, speakers:

- *Tom Hartman has a program/learning unit on carbon education, can publicize/offer to members.*
- *Invite Amy Dain (5 part series for Commonwealth, formed basis for housing choice initiative) as future speaker, re: zoning, housing, MBTA policy. Ask members for architects who serve on local zoning boards to participate.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Christine M Clements, AIA
Secretary, Government Affairs Committee

The next meeting of the Government Affairs Committee will be held on September 13 2023 at 8:30 am via teleconference (No August meeting). You may register in advance using this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMtd-CspzspE9NyrPDAqto6lF8gQ-xYSE47>

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: [Legis and Reg update_071223.pdf](#)

End of Minutes