



Minutes of the January 11, 2023 meeting of the Government Affairs Committee

Location                      Teleconference via Zoom

Present  
(\*AIA MA board members)

Michael Bellefeuille	Thomas Hartman*	Eric Peterson
Gary Brock	Tim Houde	Courtney Prentiss
Dorrie Brooks*	G. Drake Jacobs	Michael Proscia
Karl Brown	Andrew Kollar	Edward Ransom
Kate Bubriski	Roger Lipman	Neil Silva
Jean Carroon	Patrick Martin	Anne Walters
Christine Clements	Nathaniel May	Michael Waring
Glenn Davis	Jack Moran	Ellen Watts
Taylor Fasanello	Alan Mountjoy	Laura Wernick
Russ Feldman	John Nunnari	Margaret Wood
Lori Ferriss	Conn O'Farrell	Zhen Wu

**Legislative update:**

- Legislators just sworn in, new Healey administration filling cabinet posts: will be 12 secretariats, four appointed so far. Housing and Economic Development, formerly one will be split into two. HED includes licensure division, so which new one will cover licensure is still to be determined. New Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer. Admin+Finance agreed on Jan-24 for consensus revenue hearing, needed for state budget due Mar-01.
- FY2023 budget of \$39.6B. Building start index dropped 4% from last year. ABI Nov-22 46.6, down from 47.7, 50 considered good. Slowing growth, rising costs, possible recession all contribute.
- Mid-Feb committee assignments. Jan-20 bill-filing deadline. Over 7000 bills filed each year, plenty get filed after the deadline.

**Regulatory update:**

- BBRS met yesterday, for new building code edition BCCC will meet 3rd Thu for review of conflict/overlaps, once passed goes to HED sec'y review, then to Admin+Fin, to Gov Healey, then to Sec'y for public hearings. Typically no new legislation by new governor in first year, but MA AIA talked w/Lt Gov about importance of code update. Target adopt by Jan 2024. DOER guidance document about new stretch code, have put out for public comment. Also for public comment = the 10 community pilot program.
- MAAB subcommittee considering changes, see state website for details.
- New fire code regulations recently, JN will send notifications
- Thomas Hartman: need blended energy code, not acceptable for provisions to be spread over multiple codes
- EW: update stretch codes and special opt-in refer to 10th Edition code, not yet issued, how can comply? MA amendments approved? JN: approved base energy code provisions chapter by chapter, not in effect until entire updated code is in force.



- BBRS starting to look at 11th Edition, state supposed to update to latest ICC within one year.
- Dorrie Brooks: will MA AIA collect comments? JN: can convene a session to collect and draft a letter, or can notify members of deadline and encourage to comment directly.
- JN: note state required to provide training on new code to code officials, hasn't happened
- Kate B: upcoming opportunities to learn:
  - BSA sessions to educate practitioners:  
<https://www.architects.org/events/558258/2023/01/20/doer-critical-stretch-code-series>
  - BE+ 19th Roundtable (scroll towards bottom to register)  
<https://builtenvironmentplus.org/event/carbon-and-energy-roundtable-2022-04-21-2022-05-19/2023-01-19/>
- EW: resources on stretch code, NEEP 2-page FAQ
  - <https://neep.org/massachusetts-commercial-stretch-code-comparison>
  - Building Electrification program also has resources

**Historic Preservation Legislation Update:**

- RF: have engaged Noble, Wickersham for recommendations, have one-page summary of proposal, mostly low-hanging fruit as proposed by AIA board: updating fines, new tools for local historic commissions, opportunities to support resiliency and efficiency for historic structures, though no good metrics yet.
- JN: suggest Rep Tony Cabral, New Bedford, house chair and interested in historic preservation, asking if any members have connection to him for support.

**Freshman Legislators Breakfast Planning:**

- JN: looking for private room to hold, public spaces in state house are the only available, like open grand stair which doesn't work well. Possibly Carrie Nation restaurant, frequent fundraiser venue.
- AK: usually attended by aides rather than actual legislators, better attendance when offsite? JN: the same, but best when a senior legislator gives introduction.
- DB: challenge for members outside Boston, online version was well-attended, consider again? JN: legislator attendance was about the same as in-person.
- Quick survey preferred off-site in person. TH: can offer to walk legislators from their offices over to the venue.

**MA AIA 2023 Legislative Goals Discussion:**

- MA AIA board finalized the committee's policy priority document 2023-2024 Goals\_GAC final.pdf, comments from participants?
- EW: goals are good, what's needed are strategies to achieve.
- JN shared new administration priorities, comparing Governor/Speaker/Senate, comments from participants?
- RF: all three prioritizing housing, not much consensus on education.
- Alan Mountjoy: housing + transit priorities connected, transit-oriented housing needs improved public transit. RF: some communities backing away as a result.
- EW: prioritize climate, housing, education. Climate not on administration priority, push for training. Climate Action Plan published Dec-24-2022.



- DB: more AIA connection to legislators to educate/inform. There is momentum but risk of fracturing/dissipating, need to offer creative solutions, address renovation/existing building needs.
- Lori Ferriss: equity and access not addressed on priorities. RF: BSA has a committee to develop specific actions. EW: needs to be woven into all priorities, e.g. how can architects help identify the public lands targeted for housing development in Gov's priority? RF: once Housing Secretary appointed, MA AIA can engage with to help identify; probably state will want to identify first before going for public comment likely to get pushback from communities wanting to keep open space/resisting higher density. RF: could be GAC focus within 6 month timeframe, allowing time for Housing Secretary appointment and ramp up.
- GDJ: state land for housing will be hampered by zoning restrictions/NIMBY.
- AM: how can architects help communities embrace transit-oriented housing? RF: some resistance due to MBTA guidelines that don't allow ground-level commercial, could advocate to change MBTA guidelines.
- Zhen Wu: hesitant to push clients towards sites as long as transit not working well.
- JN: same conversation as Romney-Patrick transition re: state surplus land to housing, locations need more than just transit to function - without other commercial services people have to drive everywhere anyway. Opportunity: note MEPC study on 175 communities at transit stations, build on to generate recommendations. Disposition of state lands = either market to developers, or state develops, can contribute recommendations.
- RF: other priorities important to the practice of architecture:
  - Embodied carbon. EW: prefer education, studies before new regulations. JN: DOER has more expertise on the issue, not in current stretch/opt-in code, interested for next iteration. JC: Vancouver has adopted "CARE" (?) simple tool for evaluating embodied carbon, tied to equity. Focus more on consumption than emissions, construction consumes a lot of materials. JC will work on one-page summary.
  - State-wide building energy disclosures

**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 speaker for Feb or Mar, 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 February 08, 2022 at 8:30 am via teleconference. You may register in advance using this link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ1vdeCrqzoiGdU61iSH5P2M\\_JdQHTGR5C2I](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ1vdeCrqzoiGdU61iSH5P2M_JdQHTGR5C2I)



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: none

End of Minutes