



Minutes of the March 08, 2023 meeting of the Government Affairs Committee

Location                      Teleconference via Zoom

Present  
(\*AIA MA board members)

Megan Altendorf	Rebecca Hatchadorian	Rafael Posada
Michael Bellefeuille	Tim Houde	Courtney Prentiss
Gary Brock	G. Drake Jacobs	Gretchen Rabinkin
Kate Bubriski	Hank Keating	Edward Ransom
Jean Carroon	Jacob Knowles	Donald Respress
Christine Clements	Andrew Kollar	Daniel Russoniello
Senator Jo Comerford	Andrew Mitchell	Jon Seward
Lisa Cunningham	John Nunnari	Donald Walter
Thomas Ellis	Sarah Oakes	Ellen Watts
Russel Feldman	Jason Olsen	Laura Wernick
Lori Ferriss	Pasqualino Pannone	Douglas Wohn
Jane Galli	Ludmilla Pavlova-Gillham*	Zhen Wu
David George	Ben Peterson	Andrea Yoder
Thomas Hartman*	Lara Pfadt	Micaela Younger

Legislative Advocacy for Architects:

- Presentation by Sen. Joanne Comerford on the overall legislative process, what makes a bill successful and what makes for effective advocacy.
  - 2 year cycle for bills, vs budget cycle every year
  - Process cycle:
    - Queuing up the bills, Aug-Dec before the next session starts
    - Co-sponsorship - opportunity to advocate directly to legislators
    - Committee Referral/Public Hearing - opportunity at hearings
    - Committee Reporting - opportunity to apply public pressure
    - Debate & Vote - “engrossment” = bill moves to other chamber
    - Reconciliation and Approval - bill is signed and enacted
  - Hard stop for bills = 2nd February of 2nd year of session
  - Advocacy: “Get the right information to the right person at the right time”
    - Define and document the need, real stories
    - Share a personal narrative, demonstrate impact
    - Propose and describe the solution, name benefits, timeline
    - Impact of action, whether money and/or proposed policy
- Questions for SenJC:
  - LP-G: how can we support getting the rest of the way on K-12 funding, expand to higher ed, gender neutral bathrooms? SenJC: track the bills, constituents contact legislators, attend hearings (now easier online), can submit written testimony but personal appearance is more powerful. Packed attendance at hearings helps legislators see strong support from experts. Continue to follow up with urgency.



- JN: Green & Healthy Schools Bill passed (covered K-12), SenJC filed a new bill to expand into higher education. SenJC (now Chair of Higher Ed Committee): hearings in May/June, encourage constituents to support.
- EW: would it help to get 3 related embodied carbon bills into the same committee? SenJC, JN: not likely to happen.
- SenJC is a member of the senate-only Global Warming & Climate Change committee. Pushing to get an oversight hearing on carbon accounting. Issue is at the nexus of affordability and climate needs.
- EW: how to eliminate the cap on the number of communities that can participate in fossil-fuel-free pilot (10 communities)? Note 300% difference in utility cost across communities in FFF pilot program, changes the calculation for financial viability/payback.
- SenJC: agency involvement, AIA member participation really matters.

**MA AIA 2023**  
**Legislative**  
**Bills reviewed:**

- Tim Houde bills reviewed:
  - SD 2336, to study financing for green initiatives, recommend support
    - JN: recommend track, see which committees assigned, could be an item for GW&CC committee hearing proposed by SenJC.
  - SD 2370, stronger emissions limit (move 2050 goal to 2045)
    - JN: unlikely to advance, just passed climate bill, no appetite for more, recommend no action
- Tom Hartman bills reviewed:
  - HD 2177, protect historic buildings from fire using \$10k tax credit, recommend we track, curious why filed.
    - ZW: agree \$10k not enough to motivate change, renovations require sprinklers anyway
    - JN: connected to Tony Cabral historic preservation bill, see how that bill progresses then connect to this bill
    - RF: remember that sponsors of bills like this can be allies on other legislation important to AIA.
  - SD 1859, solar energy systems in historic buildings
    - Complicated to read and understand which lines of the existing law are affected. How to get line references of existing laws? JN: go to the state house library in person, or buy a \$25k subscription to Lexisnexis. SO: can call the state house librarian and ask.
    - Recommend no action, but track
- Jean Carroon bills reviewed:
  - HD 3907, separate carbon accounting for natural and working areas for out-of-state offsets, not relevant to architecture, recommend no action.
  - SD 2254, labor and safety aspects of transition to all-electric infrastructure, recommend no action.
  - **New business:** HD 3050, SD 703 coming up this year, Martha's Vineyard housing bank, rally on March 23 to statehouse in support affordability.
- Sarah Oakes, bills reviewed to be discussed next time:
  - HD 2474
  - SD 1324
  - SD 2395
- In chat, EW requests AIA MA letter to the Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change to suggest topics for their oversight hearing. Big picture, it has



yet to be demonstrated how MA can meet the 2030 emissions reduction limit for the building sector.”

- In chat, HK requests discussion of SD500 / HD776 the establishment of a \$300m Zero Carbon Renovation Fund.

**Other agenda items:**

- See attached write-up from John Nunnari:
  - Legislative update
  - Regulatory update
    - JN: late spring/early summer for 10th Edition public hearings
    - JN: lots of organizations are offering training, based on their interpretations of the stretch code, TEDI process, but DOER is not offering official training yet, even though required to.
    - TH: can DOER print blended code with ICC? JN: they won't until 10th Ed code is issued. TH: note the definition of “Level 3” covers only work that changes egress, easily circumvented.
  - Historic Preservation Legislation update
  - Freshmans Legislators' Breakfast
  - AIA Leadership Conference

**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 April 12, 2022 at 8:30 am via teleconference. You may register in advance using this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZErdOCsrDkvGtVYg5GrVbBaqcxLqauDjdGI>

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 030723.docx](#)

End of Minutes



**MEMORANDUM**

To: AIA MA GAC  
From: John Nunnari  
Date: 03/07/2023  
Re: Legislative and Regulatory Update

**Legislative Update:**

On Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> the Speaker and Senate President announced their committee and leadership assignments. While the Senate President kept the entire leadership team in place from last session and shuffled around some committee chairs, the Speaker elevated Rep. Mike Moran to be the new Majority Leader – with Rep. Alice Peisch taking the Asst. Majority Leader post previously held by Mike Moran. Owing to the retirement of Rep. Joe Wagner, Rep. Frank Moran was elevated from Third Division Chair to 2<sup>nd</sup> Asst. Majority Leader. Rounding out the Division Chair shuffle, Rep. Paul Donato and Rep. Danielle Gregoire were both elevated to the leadership posts.

On Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> Gov. Maura Healey filed a \$55.5 billion budget - her first. The state is sitting on record reserves and the Governor proposes to use some of those savings to finance a generous spending plan while also delivering nearly \$1 billion in tax relief. Her budget proposes to inject new money into K-12 and higher education, early education and care, energy and environment initiatives, human service provider rates, housing programs, and more. It also puts to use \$1 billion in new state revenue expected to come in from the surtax on income in excess of \$1 million.

Supplementing the states revenue picture, on March 6<sup>th</sup> the Dept. of Revenue reported that for the first eight months of FY '23, tax collections of \$23.6B are running 0.2% behind the record FY '22 haul but are outpacing the state's benchmarks by about \$1 billion, or 4.4% which, along with a new income surtax, is helping to support the Governors proposed spending increases.

This month, the House Ways and Means Committee will begin reworking the Governor's budget by holding eight hearings across the state, and while the Governor and Senate President Spilka continue to talk about tax relief, Speaker Mariano - who is among a small number of lawmakers who have been through lean budget years and had to slashing spending mid-year - has expressed concern about enacting any tax relief. The House generally passes its budget proposal in April, followed by the Senate in May with much of June spent reconciling the difference before lawmakers agree to a compromise version. The state's budget is statutorily required to be enacted by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

On March 1<sup>st</sup> the House passed a \$353M supplemental budget, which also includes \$585 million worth of bond authorizations, and the authorization to extend remote meetings for public bodies till March 31, 2025. On March 9<sup>th</sup>, the Senate is expected to take up the House engrossed supplemental budget, and has included language in their base bill to also extend remote meetings for public bodies till March 31, 2025. Lastly, AIA MA has been working with Sen. Comerford to offer her gender neutral bathroom bill (SD 316) - written by AIA MA – as an amendment for consideration during the Senates debate Thursday on the supplemental budget.

**Regulatory Update:**

Board meetings:

- Wed., March 1<sup>st</sup> - Examiners of Plumbers and Gas Fitters
- Thur., March 2<sup>nd</sup> – Board of Fire Prevention Regulations
- Mon., March 13<sup>th</sup> - MA Architectural Access Board
- Tues., March 14<sup>th</sup> - Board of Building Regulations and Standards
- Tues., March 14<sup>th</sup> - Board of Elevator Regulations
- Wed., March 15<sup>th</sup> - Board of Examiners of Sheet Metal Workers

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the Central Massachusetts Chapter of the AIA and the Western Massachusetts Chapter of the  
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- Wed., March 15<sup>th</sup> - Bureau of Pipefitters, Refrigeration Technicians, and Sprinkler Fitters
- Tues., March 21<sup>st</sup> - Board of Elevator Regulations
- Mon., March 27<sup>th</sup> - MA Architectural Access Board
- Mon., March 27<sup>th</sup> - MA Board of State Examiners of Electricians
- Tues., March 28<sup>th</sup> - Board of Elevator Regulations

### **BBRS**

At the Feb. 14th meeting, three items were discussed:

- Executive Director Report on the Draft 10th Edition;
- Policy Guidance for inter-departmental permitting; and
- Procedures for future code cycles

### **Executive Director Report on the Draft 10th Edition**

10th edition has cleared the Building Code Coordinating Council (BCCC). BBRS Exec. Director Greer Spatz reported that they received no questions from their internal agency review, but noted that because EO 562 has expired, the process to get to public hearing is now a bit fuzzy. ED Spatz is assuming the Healy Administration will continue with the “old process” until told otherwise. Board members asked questions as to whether there will be any changes to the BBRS’s public comment or change requests process, but it appears nothing will change.

### **Policy Guidance for inter-departmental permitting**

Chief of Inspection Baldacci noted that having a permit in hand has nothing to do with starting construction. All municipal/state reviews (con com/zoning/planning) must be cleared before construction can begin. This also extends to demolition permits. The Chief’s comments will be included in latest edition of [Codeword](#)

### **Procedures for future code cycles**

11th edition – Board discussed the statutory requirement to review/update the building code every five years vs. the energy code which is required every three years. Some members expressed concern about trying to complete a code review within a three year schedule. Some expressed concern that holding off for five years would mean the next edition would be based on the 2027 I-codes. All agreed to continue conversation. ED Spatz is going to get guidance from Administration on three year cycle vs. five year cycle and what DoL staffing for the BBRS is projected to look like.

### **Other Updates:**

#### **Historic Preservation Legislation**

AIA MA is still working with counsel to fine tune the bill. Once ready, and based on existing conversations, AIA MA will work with the legislative delegation from Newton to introduce the bill

#### **Freshman Legislators Breakfast**

Was cancelled to due weather. Next Freshman Breakfast will occur at the beginning of the 194<sup>th</sup> General Court Session which will begin in January 2025. In the meantime, I am scheduling individual meetings with all the new legislators, and will work to identify AIA members who live in their districts, and work to have them attend the meetings with me.

#### **AIA Leadership Conference**

Held on Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 400 plus architects went to Capitol Hill to lobby Congress on behalf of AIA National. This year we advocated for two issues:

- The *Democracy in Design Act* – which is a bipartisan piece of legislation that will ensure that communities across the country maintain a voice in the design of federal buildings in their areas.
- Support for the Resilient AMERICA Act, which would increase allocations to FEMA’s Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) Program and make key

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improvements to the federal government's ability to prepare communities to be more resilient.