

Meeting Minutes

AIA Massachusetts – Government Affairs Committee (GAC)

Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Topic: February 4, 2026 GAC Meeting Minutes

Chairs: Russ Feldman, AIA; Larry Spang, AIA

Staff: John Nunnari, Executive Director

Attendance: Approximately 40+ participants

1. Welcome and Introductions

Co-Chairs Russ Feldman and Larry Spang called the meeting to order at approximately 8:30 AM and welcomed attendees. The agenda for the meeting was reviewed.

2. Legislative Status Review – High-Level Update

Mr. Nunnari provided a high-level overview of legislative and regulatory activity:

- The Legislature remains largely in informal session, with limited formal action since November.
- Current policy focus areas include affordability, energy costs, housing production, immigration, and fiscal stability heading into an election year.
- Regulatory activity continues across multiple boards, including building and energy code-related matters.

Apprenticeship Legislation (H.5032):

- Recently engrossed by the House on a 154–1 vote and now before Senate Ways & Means.
- Would only apply to public construction projects over \$10 million.
- Establishes apprenticeship participation requirements and phased minimum apprentice work-hour thresholds.
- Includes limited, documented exemptions where qualified programs are unavailable.
- Creates a special commission to study apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs statewide.

Members discussed potential downstream impacts on public procurement, bidding, and project delivery.

Interior Design Registration Legislation:

- AIA MA, in coordination with IIDA New England, met with Senate Ways & Means.
- Senate leadership expressed interest in advancing the bill this session.
- No vocal opposition has emerged to date.

3. Historic District Legislation – Strategy Reset

Mr. Nunnari reviewed the intent and current status of the historic district commission modernization bill, which was referred to study in November, effectively ending consideration this session.

Key points discussed:

- The bill is intended as an optional toolkit for municipalities, clarifying authority, procedures, and enforcement tools.
- Opposition from parts of the preservation community centered on perceived state preemption and concerns around demolition delay.

- Legal review has identified potential refinements to address substantive concerns.

Next Steps:

- Re-engage interested stakeholders to distinguish substantive concerns from issues of framing.
- Conduct targeted outreach to preservation organizations and practitioners.
- Build a broader coalition in advance of a potential refiling in the 2027–2028 legislative session.

Several members expressed interest in participating in future discussions and outreach efforts, including Lori Ferris, Mike Roughan, Sarah Oakes, Deb Crossley, Doug Rand, Chris Milford, Adrienne Cali, and Miranda D'Oleo.

4. Embodied Carbon / ECICC – From Recommendations to Readiness

Mr. Nunnari provided an overview of the Embodied Carbon Intergovernmental Coordinating Council (ECICC) Embodied Carbon Reduction Plan and areas of alignment with AIA MA's prior advocacy.

Areas of Alignment:

- Phased, data-driven implementation.
- Emphasis on building reuse and early design decisions.
- Use of whole-building life-cycle assessments (WBLCA) for larger projects.
- Importance of education and capacity-building.

Key Discussion Topics:

- Material-specific versus whole-building GWP limits.
- Data availability, benchmarking, and modeling tool consistency.
- Budget and fee implications for design teams.
- Potential impacts on small firms, smaller projects, and public housing work.
- The need for coordination with DCAMM on implementation, contract language, and compensation.

Members emphasized the importance of:

- Clear guidance and training for both practitioners and state agencies.
- Avoiding unfunded mandates.
- Monitoring cost and schedule impacts as requirements evolve.

Participants who expressed interest in continued involvement on embodied carbon-related discussions and education included Michelle Lambert, Brian Sanford, Gary Brock, Andrea Love and Miranda D'Oleo.

5. New Business

No additional new business was raised.

6. Next Steps and Adjournment

- Staff will continue monitoring legislative and regulatory developments.
- Follow-up discussions with DCAMM and other agencies will be explored.
- Members interested in participating in historic preservation or embodied-carbon-related working efforts were encouraged to contact staff.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:00 AM.