

Meeting Minutes

AIA Massachusetts – Government Affairs Committee (GAC)

Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Topic: December 10, 2025 GAC Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Approximately 56 registered; over 40 present during meeting

Chairs: Russ Feldman, AIA; Larry Spang, AIA

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Co-Chairs Russ Feldman and Larry Spang called the meeting to order and welcomed members. The Chairs noted that, given the legislative calendar and the informal session period, the meeting would focus on status updates, emerging policy themes, and identifying areas for future GAC engagement.

2. Legislative & Regulatory Overview

Presented by John Nunnari. Key points included:

- A high-level update on the status of the legislative session and AIA MA's bill tracking;
- The Legislature is in recess and will reconvene in January; all bills have now met Joint Rule 10 hearing requirements.
- Focus areas for the coming months include affordability, the state budget, healthcare, and housing-related policy.
- AIA MA continues to prioritize targeted advocacy, concentrating on a limited set of high-impact bills rather than broad engagement across all filings.

Priority Bill Tracking Summary

- **High Priority Bills:** Strong forward momentum, with several bills reported favorably and moving to House or Senate Ways & Means. AIA MA has played a visible technical advocacy role, often serving as a lead or sole expert voice.
- **Medium Priority Bills:** Active but slower-moving; monitoring continues with a neutral posture to avoid unintended consequences.
- **Low Priority Bills:** Limited relevance to architectural practice; minimal testimony and no proactive advocacy recommended.

Overall: AIA MA's focused engagement strategy is yielding measurable results.

3. Housing Policy Working Group Update

Mr. Nunnari summarized the work of the GAC Housing Policy Working Group, which reviewed dozens of bills and advanced a targeted set of housing priorities:

- **Chapter 40R Expansion ([H.309](#) / [S.1021](#); rolled into [H.4759](#)):** Supports increased incentives and expanded eligibility for smart-growth districts. (link to AIA MA letters [H.309](#) and, separately [S.1021](#))
- **Social Housing Revolving Loan Fund ([H.1478](#)):** Establishes a state-backed loan fund for mission-driven, net-zero housing. ([link to AIA MA letter](#))
- **Permanent Supportive Housing & Shelter System Reform ([H.1515](#) / [S.988](#)):** Modernizes emergency shelter and supportive housing delivery, including modular and adaptive reuse strategies. ([link to AIA MA letter](#))

- **Comprehensive Zoning Reform (H.1516):** Requires by-right multifamily zoning on a portion of developable land statewide; AIA MA offered technical feedback to align with existing ADU law. ([link to AIA MA letter](#))
- **Land-Use Board Training (S.981):** Establishes baseline training for municipal board members; supported in principle with noted implementation questions. ([link to AIA MA letter](#))

Members discussed the tension between accelerating housing production and addressing siting, resilience, and long-term risk considerations.

4. Single-Stair Legislation Update (H.1542/S.964)

Mr. Nunnari reported on the [status of the two companion single-stair bills](#):

- Both bills propose a study commission to evaluate legalization of single-stair, mid-rise multifamily buildings.
- Original funding provisions were removed; the bills are now unfunded studies.
- Both bills have been reported favorably and are pending in House and Senate Ways & Means.
- The BBRS is aware of the legislation and has sent regulatory proposals to their TAC's for review. BBRS is likely to defer substantive regulatory action while the legislative process continues.

5. Interior Design Practice Legislation (H.324/S.254)

An [update](#) was provided on the negotiated interior design registration bill developed with IIDA New England:

- Both House and Senate versions have been reported favorably and are now in their respective Ways & Means committees.
- AIA MA has testified in support, participated in legislative meetings, and continues to coordinate with IIDA.
- A meeting with the Chair of Senate Ways & Means is scheduled for January.
- Members discussed anticipated implementation timelines, including the future establishment of a registration board and rulemaking process.

6. Historic District Commission (HDC) Legislation (S.1428)

Mr. Nunnari reported that the HDC modernization bill was sent to study, effectively ending consideration this session.

Key points:

- Significant opposition emerged from segments of the preservation community, often based on perceived intent rather than bill language.
- Legal counsel has reviewed submitted comments and identified potential revisions to address substantive concerns.
- Planned next steps include:
 - Refining bill language with counsel in early 2026.
 - Renewed outreach to Preservation Massachusetts and other stakeholders.
 - Broader coalition-building through engagement at preservation-focused convenings.
 - Preparation for potential refiling in the 2027–2028 legislative session.

Members were invited to participate in future outreach and strategy efforts.

7. Energy Bill Update (H.4744)

Mr. Nunnari [summarized the House's energy legislation, The Affordability, Clean Power, and Competitiveness Act](#), and the broader political context:

- The bill emphasizes affordability and cost impacts, including proposed changes to Mass Save, clean energy procurement, and emissions-related mandates.
- House leadership has indicated the bill is being deliberately slowed in response to stakeholder feedback.
- Affordability concerns are being driven by rising energy costs and broader cost-of-living pressures statewide.
- Members discussed risks associated with policy uncertainty, impacts on long-term planning, and the importance of strategic engagement once Senate language emerges.

Consensus was that continued monitoring is appropriate at this stage, with targeted engagement anticipated as the bill evolves.

8. Embodied Carbon Intergovernmental Coordinating Council (ECICC)

Mr. Nunnari provided an [update on the ECICC's forthcoming recommendations](#), due January 1, 2026:

- Anticipated recommendations include whole-building life-cycle assessments for large state projects, EPD requirements for key materials, deconstruction and reuse strategies, and establishment of a technical advisory committee.
- The Council's work signals a shift from exploratory discussion to implementation-focused policy.
- Potential AIA MA next steps discussed included:
 - Submitting a formal letter acknowledging the Council's work and offering implementation support.
 - Developing architect-focused guidance on WBLCA and EPD documentation.
 - Briefings for legislative leaders and member education initiatives.

9. Additional Emerging Issues

Members briefly discussed:

- Federal proposals affecting architectural education and professional degree recognition.
- The importance of ongoing coalition-building and strategic positioning for future legislative sessions.

10. Next Steps and Adjournment

- Staff will continue tracking priority legislation and provide updates as activity resumes in January.
- Members interested in historic preservation, energy policy, or embodied carbon implementation were encouraged to contact staff.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately **10:02 am**.