

Meeting Minutes

AIA Massachusetts – Government Affairs Committee (GAC)

Date: September 10, 2025

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Topic: Embodied Carbon Council & Advocacy Priorities

1. Welcome and Introductions/ Agenda Overview

Russ Feldman outlined the focus of the meeting:

- Discussion of embodied carbon and AIA MA's comments to the Massachusetts Embodied Carbon Intergovernmental Coordinating Council (ECICC).
- Presentations by invited panelists, followed by Q&A.
- Routine GAC updates and other business deferred to the end, depending on time

2. Presentations

John Nunnari (AIA MA Executive Director)

- Reviewed Section 73 of the climate legislation creating the ECICC.
- Council's statutory charge includes: measuring and reducing embodied carbon in public projects, requiring environmental product declarations (EPDs), promoting low-carbon materials (focus on concrete, steel, glass, asphalt, wood), setting global warming potential (GWP) limits by Jan. 2026, and aligning with operational carbon and building code goals.
- Council must hold quarterly meetings and public hearings; first hearing held in August, next scheduled for Sept. 29 at UMass Amherst.
- Emphasized why AIA MA prioritized this issue: embodied carbon is a growing share of emissions, particularly with expected school and housing construction. The Council allows Massachusetts to lead nationally rather than follow.

Michael Gryniuk (Structural Engineer, Council Member)

- Provided perspective on Council operations: monthly meetings, three subgroups, and a writing team led by DCAMM and the Climate Chief's office.
- Council reviewing other states' approaches and material-specific policies (concrete, steel, timber).
- Recommendations due January 2026; draft proposals to be released at Sept. 29 hearing.
- Urged GAC members to participate in hearings and submit comments, stressing all feedback is reviewed.
- Council leaning toward data collection beginning 2026, with phased transition to enforceable requirements.
- Primary audience for recommendations is the Legislature; secondary, state agencies like DCAMM and MassDOT, which already influence large segments of construction.

Suni Dillard & Nicole Voss (Carbon Leadership Forum Boston/New England)

- Discussed state-of-the-art research and practices in embodied carbon reduction.
- Highlighted role of CLF in professional education and advocacy.

Kate Bubriski (Arrowstreet; AIA MA Board)

- Presented case study on specifying and implementing low-emission concrete in practice.
- Noted challenges in procurement but emphasized successful outcomes as proof of feasibility.

3. Discussion & Q&A

- Christine Clements moderated questions submitted via chat.
- Topics included feasibility of proposed thresholds, equity considerations for smaller firms, and alignment with national code changes expected by 2027.
- Broad agreement on importance of proactive advocacy, technical education, and coalition-building with allied organizations.

4. Next Steps

- Encourage members to attend the Sept. 29 ECICC public hearing at UMass Amherst (with hybrid option).
- AIA MA to draft formal comments for Council consideration.
- Continued monitoring of Council progress, with GAC updates at upcoming meetings.

5. Adjournment

- Meeting concluded following the Q&A session.
- Routine legislative and regulatory updates held for future session if time permits.