

Green Buildings Advisory Committee

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 | 9:00 – 10:00 AM
McKenna Conference Room (1st Floor), 560 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick, RI 02886

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present

Dr. Carrie Gill, Chair	Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources
Christopher Armstrong	AIA Rhode Island
Mark Winslow	Gilbane
Commissioner Jim Cambio	Building Code Commission
Josh Kessler	National Grid

Other Attendees Present

None

1. Call to order

Chairperson Gill called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

2. Announcements and introductions

Chairperson Gill offered the following announcements:

Kevin Rose, former representative for utility energy efficiency programs on behalf of National Grid, resigned in September. We thank him for his service to the committee and wish him the best of luck in his new role supporting energy efficiency for Pacific Northwest states.

National Grid filed their 2022 Annual Energy Efficiency Plan for review by the Public Utilities Commission – all materials are contained within Commission Docket 5189.

The General Assembly directed the Department of Transportation, Division of Motor Vehicles, and Office of Energy Resources to develop a plan to improve access to charging infrastructure by January 1, 2022 (H5031/S0994). Development of this plan is underway and all comments, suggestions, questions, concerns, and ideas are encouraged via a public comment portal: www.energy.ri.gov/evplan.

The 2021 Act on Climate sets mandatory greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. Commissioner Ucci (Office of Energy Resources) and Acting Director Gray (Department of Environmental Management) previewed a workplan for Act on Climate efforts at the October meeting of the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4).

3. Review and vote on August 2021 meeting minutes

There were no revisions offered on the August 2021 meeting minutes. There was no quorum, so a vote was not taken. There was no opposition to Chairperson Gill posting the meeting minutes as draft.

4. Old business

a. Stretch code development update

Chairperson Gill updated committee members that the Office of Energy Resources planned to engage Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership (NEEP) in updating Rhode Island's voluntary stretch code in 2022.

Committee Member Armstrong suggested timing the release of the updated stretch code and its underlying base code with the subsequent iteration of base code from 2018 to 2021, which is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2022. Committee Members suggested this should be a standing agenda item.

b. Updates on base code advancement

Commissioner Cambio updated committee members that there have not yet been any comments on the 2018 base code, which is a few weeks from its voting deadline. He anticipates the updated base code to be enforced beginning January 1, 2022. The 2018 base code will be digital only – it will not be printed. Pending advancement of the 2018 base code, Commissioner Cambio plans to discuss the 2021 base code in 2022.

Commissioner Cambio and Committee Member Armstrong discussed the International Green Construction Code (IGCC) as an additional compliance path option in the Green Buildings Act rules and regulations.

Committee Members discussed the role of base code adoption and updated stretch codes in achieving the greenhouse gas emissions reductions mandates set forth by the 2021 Act on Climate, and suggested monthly updates on efforts related to the Act on Climate would be appropriate as a standing agenda item.

c. Updates on other work and from committees, if any

Committee Member Winslow updated committee members on progress with East Providence High School and noted their landscaping package mimics SITES design. He will summarize design for potential inclusion in the 2021 Annual Report. Committee Members also discussed a tour as a possible training opportunity for building officials.

d. Updates on trainings, if any

Commissioner Cambio discussed a refresher training for building officials, which is in development. Such a training would leverage AIA training and will be cross-promoted by National Grid and their vendor. Commissioner Cambio also noted the need for training related to the IGCC to be potentially integrated into other trainings on base code and stretch code.

Committee Member Kessler plans to provide a notice of trainings offered by National Grid for inclusion in the meeting minutes.

5. New business

a. Discussion on 2022 activities

Chairperson Gill previewed several potential ideas for 2022 activities, including a review and potential update of the Green Buildings Act rules and regulations, outreach to municipalities, and potential leveraging of updates to the state e-permitting system for data collection in support of annual reporting requirements. Due to meeting time constraints, there was no discussion. This item will be held for the November agenda.

b. Preparation for 2021 Annual Plan

Committee Member Armstrong noted a typo in the agenda – ‘2021 Annual Plan’ should read ‘2021 Annual Report.’ This item will be held for discussion at the November meeting.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Public comment

There was no public comment.

Committee Members discussed whether future meetings could offer a remote option to join. Commissioner Cambio updated committee members that the conference room is scheduled for audio-video upgrades that would enable remote participation. A timeline for upgrades is not yet available.

8. Adjourn

Chairperson Gill adjourned the meeting at 10:06 am.