

Green Buildings Advisory Committee

Draft Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 | 9:00 AM

McKenna Conference Room (1st Floor), 560 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick, RI 02886
Members of the public were allowed to join remotely via Zoom

Members in Attendance: Justine Brown, Jon Willumson, Rachel Calabro, Ken Filarski, Michael O'Brien Crayne (arrived at 9:36 a.m.), Mark Winslow, Tim Carroll, Patrick Crowley, Jim Cambio, William Fazioli

Others in Attendance: Eli Bossin, Brittany Becker, Steven Chybowski, William Owen, Scot McFarlane (virtual), Amanda Barker (virtual), Karen Verrengia (virtual), Bill Nash (virtual)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Filarski called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and conducted a brief round of introductions.

2. Office of Energy Resources Administrative Announcements

Mr. Chybowski announced that the University of Rhode Island will be hosting a lecture on energy efficiency and electrification on Wednesday, October 18th with in-person and remote participation options. Over the coming months, the Office of Energy Resources (OER) is expected to receive federal Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant funding which will be able to help fund municipal investments in energy efficiency.

3. Vote on September 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Crowley motioned to approve the September 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Committee Member Calabro seconded. Committee Members Filarski, Calabro, Winslow, Carroll, Crowley, and Cambio voted in favor. Committee Members Fazioli, Willumson, and Brown abstained, and the Meeting Minutes were approved.

4. Chair Announcements

Chairman Filarski shared with the Committee that he had attended the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) and gave a briefing on the Green Buildings Act (GBA) during public comment, and that there was a mutual exchange of invitations between Director Terry Gray and the Green Buildings Advisory Committee (GBAC). Additionally, the American Planning Association would welcome a presentation on the GBA at a future meeting. Lastly, the American Planning Association of Rhode Island had recognized the GBA with an award for sustainability and resilience.

5. Update on the Study of the Green Buildings Act

Mr. Bossin from the Energy Efficiency Group re-introduced himself and the Energy Efficiency Group and explained the research that they are conducting on behalf of the Green Buildings

Advisory Committee. This study will include looking at green building policies in jurisdictions outside of Rhode Island and gather a baseline of awareness of the law within Rhode Island. The Rhode Island assessment will include both interviews with key stakeholders and surveys with a broad audience. The Energy Efficiency Group intends to provide a deliverable with recommendations for implementing the law moving forward. Mr. Bossin offered to tailor their research and support based on any feedback provided by the Committee Members.

6. Discussion of the Green Buildings Certification Process

Chairman Filarski asked Committee Member Winslow to provide an overview of the process for LEED certification. Committee Member Winslow explained the online registration and fee process, as well as the LEED Online portal to track a project's credits. Through this process, users are able to do both a pre-construction and a construction review. Users are also given an opportunity to respond to the reviewer's questions and comments. The fee structure is based on the square footage of the facility. Mr. Filarski added that the process is similar for the LEED for Neighborhood Development and SITES certifications.

Chairman Filarski proposed that one way to implement the GBA would be to create scorecards that project managers could use to check off on the components that they are including in their project and submit those scorecards to the Committee for review. Committee Member Cambio also inquired if there would be a role during the permitting process to check for GBA requirements.

7. Review and Potential Vote on the Green Buildings Act Rules and Regulations

Mr. Chybowski of the Office of Energy Resources presented on the existing Rules and Regulations for the GBAC. He explained that much of what was previously in the Rules and Regulations has now been directly incorporated into the legislation. The Committee may want to consider what other types of standards may be equivalent to the listed standards for consideration and GBA compliance. Mr. Willumsen raised the point that the Committee may want to re-establish an appeals process as well.

Chairman Filarski tabled any action on this item until the next meeting to give staff time to incorporate elements discussed during today's meeting.

8. Review and Potential Vote on Template Green Buildings Act Request for Proposal Language

Mr. Chybowski shared the redlined template RFP language that can be included in project procurement processes by public entities, what the potential RFP language could consist of, how roles were addressed in the language. Committee Member Winslow clarified that Northeast CHPS projects are certified directly by the School Building Authority and that the Green Globes certification is done through the Green Building Initiative. Chairman Filarski proposed that the template RFP language may be able to be provided to the Department of Purchasing for inclusion in RFP templates that they provide. Chairman Filarski proposed that the Committee revisits this topic at the next meeting.

9. Discussion and Potential Vote to Reschedule 2023 Committee Meetings

Mr. Chybowski from Office of Energy Resources facilitated a discussion regarding the scheduling of the remaining Committee meetings for 2023 to avoid potential conflicts with holidays. The Committee will have the option to vote to reschedule the remaining meetings.

Committee Members expressed no preference for the scheduling of the remaining 2023 Committee meetings.

Chairman Filarski motioned to move the remaining meetings for 2023 one week earlier than initially scheduled, and for the meetings to be on the second Tuesday of the month. Mr. Crowley seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

10. Updates from Committee Members

Mr. Crowley commented that the website needed to be updated to reflect that Mr. Fazioli has replaced his predecessor on the Committee.

11. Public Comment

None.

12. Adjourn

Committee Member Willlumsen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m. Committee Member Crowley seconded. All in favor, none opposed.