

GWSA Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) Meeting

February 28, 2022, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Meeting Minutes – Approved 4/29/2022

Welcome, approving the 12/10/21 IAC meeting minutes, agenda overview

Undersecretary of Energy and Climate Solutions, Judy Chang, called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM after quorum was met. After welcoming everyone, Undersecretary Chang called for a review of the draft minutes from the December 10th IAC meeting. The draft minutes were approved by the majority (10 votes in favor) with one abstention. Undersecretary Chang then provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

2025/2030 CECP public meetings and finalization

(There were a few brief interruptions during the meeting due to “Zoom bombing” incidents.)

Undersecretary Chang summarized for the IAC public written comments submitted to EEA between October 14 and December 24, 2021 on:

- Whether EEA should set limits on gross emissions while tracking and lowering net emissions through goal setting and policy development;
- Whether EEA should set emissions sublimits to be consistent with the categories already in the statewide greenhouse gas emissions inventory; and
- Whether there are concerns regarding EEA moving forward with the described approach to complete the Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2025 and 2030 (2025/2030 CECP).

EEA received six comment letters from different organizations as well as comments and questions from six other individuals via email. A summary of the comments received is on slide 6 of the meeting slide deck.

Undersecretary Chang also provided an overview of EEA’s plan to 1) hold virtual public meetings on the proposed emissions limits, sector-specific sublimits, NWL goals, and policies and actions for 2025 and 2030, and 2) receive written comments through the end of April 2022.

Summary of questions and responses:

- Will EEA provide analysis on what the impacts of decisions on gross/net accounting on various subsectors? Will those be discussed further at the public meetings or subsequent IAC meetings? Yes, EEA will be looking at emissions accounting by subsector but not necessarily results by specific heating fuels.
- Does the law set a sublimit requirement for natural working lands? The 2021 Climate Law does not explicitly require a sublimit for NWL, but EEA does need to set NWL goals to increase sequestration.

State Updates and IAC Work Groups Report Out

MassDEP's 2020 emissions estimate and addendum to 1990 baseline update

Christine Kirby (MassDEP) presented on the preliminary estimate of state-wide GHG emissions in 2020. The preliminary estimate indicates that the 2020 GHG emissions were 28.6% lower than the 1990 baseline, meeting the 25% emissions limit pursuant to the GWSA. This is a preliminary estimate and partly a result of reduced auto travel because of COVID.

Sharon Weber (MassDEP) presented on proposed updates to the 1990 Baseline to add improvements in inventory methods. The 1990 Baseline was last updated in 2016. MassDEP was not able to finalize the 1990 Baseline update last year because it learned of:

1. Errors EPA made in estimating methane and N₂O emissions from the mobile sector
2. Changes the Energy Information Administration made in estimating jet fuel use

MassDEP proposed an Addendum to the 1990 Baseline update on Feb. 22, and is accepting comments on the proposed Addendum through March 24, 2022.

Climate Justice Working Group report out

Staci Rubin (CLF) reported that the IAC's Climate Justice Work Group has been very active. They have been participating in the MassDEP cumulative impact analysis stakeholder meetings, which have been informative and had good turnouts during the day and evening meetings. They have also been involved in the MEPA regulatory amendments, integrating environmental justice into their review. They have been working closely with the other IAC Working Groups to ensure that environmental justice concerns are integrated throughout the topic areas.

Commission on Clean Heat updates

Undersecretary Chang provided an update on the Commission on Clean Heat, which kicked off on January 12th. The independent facilitator team led by Consensus Building Institute (CBI) has been helping to facilitate the meetings. The Commission is supported by an Interagency Decarbonization Task Force, consisting of subject-matter experts from EEA, the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center.

The Commission and Interagency Task Force began meeting twice per month in January, with the initial meetings focused on sharing information with the Commission to level set everyone and establishing goals for the group and a shared vision for success. The Commission is currently working on identifying what they see as barriers and solutions to hitting the Commonwealth's decarbonization goals across key topic areas. The Commission will be providing high-level recommendations to inform the development of the Buildings Sector chapter of the 2025/2030 CECP, so the Commission is meeting more frequently now through April to ensure that they are able to provide recommendations ahead of the finalization of the CECP.

EEA will be hosting public webinars on the Commission on March 1, March 24, and April 14 (two sessions for each date). The April 14 meetings will be part of the CECP public meetings on the 2025/2030 CECP.

DPU docket 20-80, Stakeholder process and policy development after February

Undersecretary Chang provided a brief update on the DPU 20-80 Docket process where DOER, EEA, MassDEP, and the Attorney General's Office (AGO) have been participating in monthly stakeholder meetings with the local gas distribution companies (LDCs). The LDCs posted the draft Independent Consultant Report for Stakeholder feedback on February 15th and requested an extension to the original filing date of March 1st to allow for more time for stakeholder feedback on the draft report. The DPU granted the LDCs the extension through March 18th to file their final reports. The DPU will set a formal procedural schedule that will likely allow stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the complete LDC filings.

Summary of questions/comments and responses:

- There are some stakeholder concerns about the lack of transparency. Will there be additional information about the process? EEA is focused on necessary regulatory reforms. That has also resonated with the Attorney General, which is why the letter on proposed procedural timing has been presented.

Stretch and Specialized Stretch Energy Codes

Maggie McCarey (DOER) provided an overview of proposed updates to the current Stretch Building Energy Code and proposed new Municipal opt-in Specialized Stretch Energy Code, as required by the 2021 Climate Act. The straw proposal is posted on the [DOER website](#). DOER is seeking public comments on the straw proposal by March 9, 2022. The DOER will be hosting public hearing sessions between March 2nd- March 8th. See slide for details on the expected timeline for code adoption.

2022-2024 Statewide Energy Efficiency Plan

Maggie McCarey also provided an update on the Statewide Energy Efficiency Plan for 2022-2024, which was recently approved by DPU. This plan represents a significant transformation in the priorities of the energy efficiency programs, with a restructured focus on achieving long-term emissions reductions to be aligned with the Commonwealth's 2030 GHG limit.

Summary of questions and responses are below.

- One question came up was related to the issue of decoupling and whether a generic docket with the AG removed full revenue decoupling? The DPU did direct the electric companies to get rid of revenue decoupling in their next rate cases, which is currently at the DPU.

Buildings Sector Work Group report out

Cammy Peterson (MAPC) provided an update that this work group has met three times recently to dig further into the thinking around their priorities and key topic areas. Their meetings have focused on the following:

- Energy Efficiency in new and existing buildings; the group provided some suggestions such as looking at a statewide building performance standard (like BERDO), cost effective electrification, considerations for affordable housing, etc.
- Financing and funding opportunities and thinking through how best to get funding for building decarbonization efforts- including, alternative compliance payments, statewide climate bank, land trusts, etc. Also discussed scorecards and other ways to leverage utility rate design.
- Equitable access, program design and delivery as well as topics on how to best [address](#) split incentives for tenants/landlords, union apprenticeships, etc.

Transportation Work Group report out

Sarah Simon (E2) reported that this work group was looking at areas that require policy changes, and they are interested in contributing to policies to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Electric Sector Work Group report out

Caitlin Peale Sloan (CLF) reported that the work group has been in dialogue with the EEA staff over the last 5-6 months. They would like to schedule time to dive deeper into some specific topics related to the electric sector with the EEA.

Land Use and Nature-Based Solutions Work Group report out

Steve Long (TNC) reported that the group adjusted to a less ambitious goal, and they pivoted to focus on funding options. They provided EEA detailed recommendations on “blue carbon” including statutory, regulatory, better science, and the implementation of blue carbon projects. They saw the request for quotes for the Technical Potential of Solar Study was recently released by the DOER and plan to collaborate and augment the study. The work group also urged EEA to release the Resilient Lands Initiative report. They are curious to know what is happening with the carbon sequestration market discussion and would like to know what role the work group might play in that effort. They also asked for an update on EEA’s newly established Reforestation and Urban Greening. Based on input from NGO partners and municipalities, there is a strong desire and need for EEA to provide guidance, and clarity on existing programs and funding that support nature-based solutions and natural and working lands. They also requested a robust process for the Department of Conservation and Recreation 10-year Forest Revisioning to ensure the implementation of the hierarchy -- protect, manage, and restore – of natural and working lands owned by DCR.

NWL public meetings and feedback

Undersecretary Chang provided a brief update on the 3 recent public meetings that the EEA hosted (all virtual) on Natural and Working Lands (NWL) as part of the stakeholder process required by the 2021 Climate Law. The first meeting focused on statutory requirements around NWL carbon flux tracking, baseline and goals, and strategies. The second meeting focused on forest carbon goals and policies from the Resilient Lands Initiative that are being proposed for inclusion in the 2025/2030 CECP. The third meeting focused on additional forest carbon policies for avoiding forest conversion while supporting the local economy.

The public comments EEA received at these meetings have been diverse in their perspectives:

- Some were passionate that state-owned forests should be off limits to commercial harvesting in perpetuity, that more Massachusetts forests (especially older growth forests) should be set aside for passive management, and that the state should not incentivize the use of forest products to generate electricity.
- Other people expressed concerns that limiting commercial harvest on Massachusetts forests will further drive the sourcing of our wood consumption to other places that may practice less sustainable forestry.

- There were also concerns raised about limiting the siting of solar on forest land, the need for state assistance to preserve forests they own for recreation or working forests, as well as the need for more education and outreach on climate smart forestry.

IAC recommendations on cross-cutting policy priorities

Undersecretary Chang thanked the IAC for their hard work developing the cross-cutting policy priorities in the [October 2020 recommendation document](#) and for recently bringing that to the EEA's attention again. EEA is looking closely at what cross-cutting policies should be included in the 2025/2030 CECP. Some of these cross-sector policy priorities are being implemented as part of the 2021 Climate Law and some others are being incorporated into the 2025/2030 CECP policies. EEA welcomes the IAC to bring up policy discussions during work group meetings or during the full IAC meetings.

Public Comments

A member of the public asked for clarification on how the 2022-2024 Energy Efficiency Plan impacted customers of municipal light plants. Maggie McCarey responded that while the current electric incentives are for customers of the investor-owned utilities, customers who have gas service are also eligible under the new plan for incentives to transition from gas to electric heat pumps.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:33pm.

Documents or exhibits used at the meeting (posted online afterwards)

1. Meeting Agenda¹
2. Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2021²
3. Meeting Slides³

Attendance 2/28/2022

IAC Member/Delegates in attendance:

Organization	Name
A Better City (ABC)	Kate Dineen
Boston University	Cutler Cleveland
City of Boston	Alison Brizius
Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)	Caitlin Peale Sloan

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/event/february-28-2022-meeting-of-the-gwsa-implementation-advisory-committee-iac-2022-02-28t120000-0500-2022-02-28t133000-0500>

² <https://www.mass.gov/event/december-10-2021-meeting-of-the-gwsa-implementation-advisory-committee-iac-2021-12-10t130000-0500-2021-12-10t150000-0500>

³ <https://www.mass.gov/event/february-28-2022-meeting-of-the-gwsa-implementation-advisory-committee-iac-2022-02-28t120000-0500-2022-02-28t133000-0500>

Commonwealth Green Low Income Housing Coalition	<i>absent</i>
Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2)	Sarah Simon
Environmental League of Massachusetts (ELM)	Nancy Goodman
Eversource	<i>absent</i>
Fraunhofer Center for Sustainable Energy Systems (CSE)	<i>absent</i>
Mass Audubon	Michelle Manion
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	<i>absent</i>
Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC)	<i>Jason Viaderoabsent</i>
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)	Cammy Peterson
National Grid	Mackay Miller
Northeast Clean Energy Council (NECEC)	Jeremy McDiarmid
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	Steve Long
Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS)	Paulina Muratore

Others in attendance:

Affiliation (if applicable)	Name
ABC	Isabella Gambill
ABC	Yve Torrie
Arcadia Center	Kyle Murray
CLF	Staci Rubin
Department of Energy Resources (DOER)	Maggie McCarey
DOER	Marian Swain
DOER	Shevie Brown
DOER	Eric Friedman
DOER	Ian Finlayson
DOER	Maggie McCarey
DOER	Marian Swain
DOER	Catie Snyder
DOER	Chelsea Kehne
Department of Public Utilities (DPU)	Chris Chan
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)	Judy Chang
EEA	Rishi Reddi
EEA	Daniel Gatti
EEA	Dunbar Carpenter
EEA	Hong-Hanh Chu
EEA	Kurt Gaertner
EEA	Nicole Cooper

Affiliation (if applicable)	Name
Energy Solutions	Erin Kempster
Eversource	Tracy A. Gionfriddo
Green Energy Consumers	Anna Vanderspek
Legislative Aide to Rep. Meschino	Jon Hamilton
Office of Senator Barrett	Lexi Concannon
MA State Senate	Audrey Horst
Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC)	Ariel Horowitz
MassCEC	Peter McPhee
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)	Christine Kirby
MassDEP	Will Space
MassDEP	Sharon Weber
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	Steve Woelfel
Mass Forest Alliance	Chris Egan
MASCO	Janice Henderson

National Grid	Julia Gold
The Northbridge Group	Bruce Phillips
Pope Energy	Doug Pope
Sierra Club	David Zeek

Roger Luckmann
Danilo
Brianna Rockwell
Betsy Isenstein
Lucia Dolan
Cathy Kristofferson
Kylie Abouzeid
Sarah Creighton
Deb Pasternak