

I am a member of the Boxborough Sustainability Committee providing this comment to your committee as a resident of Boxborough. Boxborough is a small town with a population of approximately 5200. We have recently attracted national and local builders for large development projects. These builders are quite probably building on spec and not concerned about the longterm carbon emissions and high operational costs of their buildings. Boxborough needs a strong Specialized Municipal Opt-in Code to help us respond to the soaring climate emergency.

As the climate emergency worsens, it has been extremely frustrating to see new fossil fuel inefficient buildings constructed in our town. Toll Brothers has recently constructed fifty luxury senior homes in our Town Center using propane heating/cooling. Constrained by MA building codes, our citizens had no recourse but to accept this. Appealing to Toll Brothers got us no results. These already outdated homes are on the market now, and the future homeowners will have to bear the cost of electrification.

I urge you to provide us with a Net Zero building code. Time is of the essence for us. We currently have a national developer close to submitting plans for a four building light manufacturing park. When we suggested Net Zero buildings, they ignored us. Previously, when we approached them about putting solar panels on another building, they ignored us. The monetary gain for them is staggering. The carbon emissions for us is staggering.

Our Town has a number of empty buildings that have not been leased for years. We do not want more stranded assets with enormous inefficient fossil fuel buildings built in 2023 only to be outmoded within 10 years. It is quite possible that having to wait for the new building codes, we will miss the opportunity to have an impact on these projects. We need strong codes NOW. We need to be able to vote in the code and have it take effect immediately without a waiting period.

Thank you for all you are doing to give MA residents the tools to require better building.

Sincerely,
Barbara Salzman
barbsalz@gmail.com