



Town of Reading
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Select Board
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December 5, 2023

Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
Green Communities Division
100 Cambridge Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
ATTN: Joanne Bissetta, Director

RE: 225 CMR 25.00 – Draft Regulation for Public Comment

Dear Ms. Bissetta,

We write to the Green Communities Division (the “Division”) today as members of the Town of Reading (“Town”) Select Board in support of 225 CMR 25.00 (Draft Regulation for Public Comment) (the “Draft Regulation”). As discussed below, the Draft Regulation will allow communities like Reading that receive electricity service from a municipal light plant (“MLP”) to achieve the sustainability and financial benefits of the Green Communities program. Reading’s adoption of the Stretch Energy Code is in compliance with Draft Regulation requirements. We urge swift adoption of the Draft Regulation.

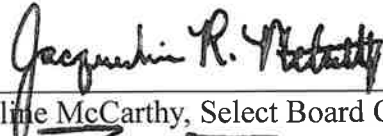
The Draft Regulation allows communities served by MLPs to access Green Communities’ grants, technical assistance, and local support. Specifically, the Draft Regulation allows municipalities “that receive electric distribution service from a municipal light plant with a service territory that covers more than one municipality and where there are no investor owned electric distribution company customers” to join Green Communities upon a showing that the municipality has adopted the renewable energy charge in M.G.L. c. 25, § 20(b) or M.G.L. c. 25, § 20(c).¹


In November 2020, Reading Town Meeting approved a Stretch Energy Code pursuant to 780 CMR Appendix 115.AA. Adoption of the Stretch Energy Code included the renewable energy charge required by the Draft Regulation, and indicated Reading’s support for building code updates encouraging energy efficiency. Town Meeting’s approval was motivated by its interest in ensuring that Reading would qualify for Green Communities funding and assistance. Now more than three years later, the Draft Regulation finally ensures that Reading (which is served by Reading Municipal Light Department, the Commonwealth’s largest MLP) and similar communities can enjoy the sustainability and financial benefits of Green Communities in the face of significant cost increases and additional Federal and state mandates.

¹ Draft Regulation at 25.05(c).


We respectfully urge you to finalize the Draft Regulation and expand access to Green Communities for municipalities served by MLPs. Thank you for considering our views on this matter.

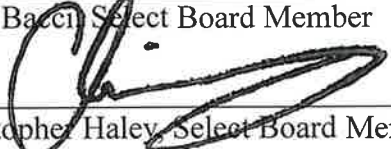
Best Regards,


Jacqueline McCarthy, Select Board Chair


Mark Dockser, Select Board Vice Chair


Karen Herriek, Select Board Secretary


Carlo Baccin, Select Board Member


Christopher Haley, Select Board Member

CC:

Senator Jason Lewis

Representative Bradley Jones

Representative Richard Haggerty



December 18, 2023

Joanne Bissetta
Director, Green Communities
100 Cambridge St., 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114

RE: 225 CMR 25.00 – Draft Regulations

Dear Mrs. Bissetta,

On behalf of Energy New England (ENE) and all of our municipal light plant (MLP) clients, I'd like to thank you and your team at the Department of Environmental Resources (DOER) for your thoughtful draft regulations regarding 225 CMR 25.00. As you are aware, the legislature passed *"An Act Relative to Municipal Light Plant Participation in Green Communities"* on September 30, 2022. It will allow MLP's that serve multiple municipalities to apply and join DOER's Green Communities Program individually and not have to depend on each of that MLP's member municipalities joining at the same time.

We have reviewed the draft regulations for 225 CMR 25.00 and fully support them as they have captured the entirety of the spirit of the law that we helped to draft so that more of our MLP municipalities could join as soon as they were prepared to apply.

ENE also wants to applaud the work of Chairman Barrett, Leader Tarr, Senator Lewis, Senator Eldridge, Chairman Roy, Leader Jones, Vice Chair Haggerty, Representative Sena and Representative Lipper-Garabedian – and all the members of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications Utilities and Energy for listening to the problem, working together on three versions of fixing the problem and then passing the Bill into law in informal session. We are hopeful that this will bring new immediate members to the Green Communities community.

If you have any questions or if we can be helpful in promoting your programs, please do not hesitate to contact me at jtzymorangas@ene.org or Vincent Ragucci at vragucci@ene.org.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

John G. Tzymorangas

John G. Tzymorangas
President & CEO
Energy New England, LLC