

Massachusetts Solar Canopy Working Group

Friday, April 18, 2025 | 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Via Teams and in person at 100 Cambridge Street, Boston

Working Group Members Present:

- Cobi Frongillo, Deputy Director, Renewable & Alternative Energy, DOER
- Matthew Connolly, Co-Chair, Environment and Energy, Nutter
- Sonia Patano, SVP, Property Management, GID
- Kevin Brousseau, Secretary-Treasurer, Massachusetts AFL-CIO
- Amy Boyd Rabin, VP, Policy & Regulatory Affairs, ELM
- Gregory Beeman, President, Associated Builders and Contractors of Massachusetts
- Brian Rice, Director, Customer Solar Programs, Eversource Energy
- Mike Ossing, Chair, Energy and Environment Policy Committee, MMA
- Jessica Robertson, Director, Policy and Business Development, New England, New Leaf
- Jonathan Stout, PowerOptions¹

Additional Attendees and Presenters:

- Eric Friedman, DOER
- Sophia Vitello, DOER
- Grace Fletcher, DOER
- Matt Shortsleeve, Solect Energy

Cobi Frongillo, Grace Fletcher, and Sophia Vitello attended in person. All other meeting attendees participated remotely.

Agenda and Minutes

1) Call to Order

Chair Cobi Frongillo called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m., welcomed attendees, and reviewed the meeting agenda.

2) Solect Energy Presentation

Matt Shortsleeve (Solect) presented on their experience developing 33 canopy projects in Massachusetts. Key challenges included real estate access, utility easements, permitting timelines, and interconnection/SMART deadlines. Solect proposed solutions such as standardized utility reviews, template easements, technical assistance funding, and timeline flexibility aligned with project schedules.

¹ Acting as PowerOptions' designee in place of Heather Takle

Discussion covered lessons from New Jersey, financial modeling for municipalities, interconnection feasibility, and the unique challenges of canopy siting. Participants noted that canopies often require longer timelines, face more permitting hurdles, and have higher upfront costs than other solar types.

3) Leading by Example (LBE) Program Update

Eric Friedman presented on the state's progress deploying solar on public sites—34.3 MW operational to date, with a majority as canopy systems. A new grant program offers up to \$1.50/watt based on project characteristics.

Challenges include high costs, permitting, and incentive uncertainty. However, canopies provide resilience, savings, and site benefits like shading. Massachusetts remains a national leader in canopy deployment on public facilities.

4) SMART Program Overview

DOER staff gave a brief overview of statewide canopy deployment, current incentives, and potential future program improvements. No discussion followed.

5) Discussion and Next Steps

The next meeting will be held April 25 and will focus on additional presentations and solution brainstorming. Members raised questions about the group's final product and whether similar working groups had been conducted previously. DOER will share reference materials and examples. Members also requested follow-up on past studies (e.g., TPSS) for canopy-specific data.

Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest Law materials will be distributed ahead of the next meeting.

6) Adjournment

Chair Frongillo adjourned the meeting at 3:32 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits Presented at the Meeting

- [DOER Incentive & Overview Slides](#)
- [DOER Solar on State Site Slides](#)
- [Select Problem/Solution Memo](#)