

Massachusetts Solar Canopy Working Group

Thursday, June 5, 2025 | 1:00 – 3:00 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
- 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
- Heather Takle, President & CEO, PowerOptions
- Valessa Souter-Kline, Northeast Regional Director, SEIA
- Sonia Patano, SVP, Property Management, GID

Working Group Members Absent:

- Jessica Robertson, Director, Policy and Business Development, New England, New Leaf

Additional Attendees and Presenters:

- Michael DeChiara, Chair, Shutesbury Energy & Climate Action Committee
- Josie Ahlberg, Legislative Aide, Environmental Policy, MMA
- Grace Fletcher, DOER

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

Agenda and Minutes

1) Call to Order

Chair Cobi Frongillo called the meeting to order, reviewed the agenda, and noted that the group's goal was to finalize recommendations for inclusion in the forthcoming report. Unless unresolved issues emerge, this may be the group's final formal meeting.

2) Updates from DOER

DOER's Green Communities and Siting & Permitting Divisions are working on model solar and storage bylaws. The team is also awaiting feedback from MassDOT regarding potential projects on state property and highway overpasses.

3) Review of Drafted Recommendations

Chair Frongillo facilitated a section-by-section review of the draft recommendations, incorporating member feedback:

- *Interconnection Delays*: Members discussed municipal concerns with IX timelines. Brian Rice clarified that while utilities follow set timelines, external factors like transformer shortages still cause delays. The group agreed that recommendations should focus on adapting programs to external realities rather than prescribing utility actions.
- *Compensation for Standalone Canopies*: Members agreed to recommend exploring alternative incentives for front-of-meter (FTM) canopies that reflect their grid value, acknowledging that behind-the-meter (BTM) canopies uniquely benefit from demand reduction.
- *Competitive Grant Program & Technical Assistance*: The group supported grants for municipalities needing pre-development support, with openness to including nonprofits in limited cases. Clarified that "public entities" refers broadly to government entities, not SMART-specific definitions.
- *Peak Demand Reduction Compensation*: Members suggested incorporating consideration of non-BTM benefits into integrated resource planning rather than through specific compensation mechanisms.
- *Net Metering & Hosting Capacity for Public Facilities*: The group agreed to recommend canopy-specific expansions, mindful of avoiding overly broad public facility exemptions.
- *Cost-Sharing Framework*: Members endorsed aligning recommendations with the LTSP cost-sharing model between utilities and developers for infrastructure upgrades.
- *Model Solar Bylaw Updates*: The group supported revising the model solar bylaw to better include canopies and considering incentives for municipalities adopting it. The group noted the need to align this with the Dover Amendment's legal framework.
- *Standard Municipal Permit Elements*: Supported recommending a set of best practices for municipal permitting, including standards for height, materials, and electrical installation, based on fire department feedback.
- *Feasibility Funding for Interconnection Studies*: Agreed to recommend technical assistance funding for utility-required analyses, particularly for projects with storage.
- *Standardized Utility Reviews of Access Rights*: Members debated feasibility and suggested developing a standardized process with flexibility, avoiding overly prescriptive mandates. Brian Rice will propose revised language.

- *Statewide Canopy Requirements*: Members discussed potential mandates, feasibility assessments, and opt-in models. General consensus was to explore options without recommending a procurement mandate. Ideas included building code provisions and feasibility studies for certain new construction.
- *Workforce Considerations*: The group discussed prevailing wage and project labor agreements. Consensus was to acknowledge workforce development in the recommendations while remaining mindful of market impacts.

4) Next Steps

Chair Frongillo will revise the draft recommendations based on this discussion and circulate them for final review. Members should provide feedback promptly, with the goal of submitting the report by the end of June following DOER/EEA review. The group may reconvene if significant issues arise.

6) Adjournment

Chair Frongillo adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits Presented at the Meeting

- [Michael DeChiara SCWG Public Comment](#)