

Michigan Energy Code Compliance Collaborative

*** MINUTES ***

Location: 525 W Allegan Street, Lansing, MI 48933 – Arthur Iverson Room

Date: November 19, 2019

Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm EST

Call-In #: 1 (877) 336-1829 **Access Code:** 2022874#

Facilitator for Meeting: Jake Wilkinson, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)

Attendees In Person

John Dulmes, Michigan Chemistry Council
David Gard, Michigan Energy Efficiency Contractors Association
Sonya Pouncy, Energy Sciences
Caile Richards, Small Business Association of Michigan
Rut Wattanasak, Catalyst Partners
Jake Wilkinson, EGLE

Attendees On The Phone

Ian Blanding, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance
Ed Carley, National Association of State Energy Officials
Alex Ghanem, PSD Consulting
William (Bill) Hordyk, City of Grand Rapids
Arn McIntyre, Performance Home Corporation
Chris McTaggart, Building Efficiency Resources
Tim Mrozowski, Michigan State University
Jon Paradine, Bureau of Construction Codes
Nicole Westfall, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance

Agenda Details

Welcome and Introductions (*brief project intro for any new members*)

Summary of Last Meeting and Updates on Action Items - questions from members

- A vested member of the efficiency community in Michigan recently approached me regarding having better representation from the efficiency community on the state's code review panel for updating energy codes. Could we add this as a topic of discussion for our next meeting, to discuss the current process and professional membership of the group that collaborates to adopt updated energy codes?
 - Codes are adopted through an administrative rules process which normally takes about 9 months. This generally starts with a base energy code and then amendments are made
 - Several members of the collaborative already have a part in this and sit on committees associated with code update cycles.
 - Energy verification professionals would be very beneficial to have representing the industry on the committee
 - Brad Bartholomew and Mark Lee are on the construction committee commission and are energy professionals
 - Would be good to have collaborative members guide the representatives that are on the commission once a consensus is reached
- Question was raised regarding the opening of the commercial code given that the update process should begin in the near future. Bureau of Construction Codes representative stated that the commercial code has not been opened yet

and there is no timeline in place at this time – trying to finish and close another code that is currently open. When the code is updated it will be based on the 2018 IECC or the equivalent ASHRAE standard.

- During an update process the chair of the committee reviews all submissions and shares the best/most complete proposals with the committee for discussion.
- I'd like to hear some conversation about code officials' education and enforcement. Will either of the studies discuss how the AHJ are enforcing the energy code - both from energy performance and from commissioning perspectives? How have the trainings been received on both sides?
 - One member stated that there is a lot of confusion amongst code officials they work with (and have trained) in using the performance track for compliance and even the prescriptive track has quite a bit of misunderstanding.
 - Overall building departments are making an effort to enforce the code but there still are areas that struggle with properly enforcing the code.
 - Third party assessments are becoming more common in the enforcement of the commercial code similar to what has been done with the residential code.
 - One member stated that ASHRAE should continue to be used for the Michigan reference code because there is a greater understanding of that standard amongst contractors and others in the industry

Update from Energy Sciences on the Results of their Project: Sonya Pouncy, Energy Sciences

- Overall participation was good, but the attendee numbers could have been helped by better planning up front and longer marketing timelines. This was restricted by the fiscal year requirements of EGLE which provided the funding for the project.
- Many participants were very pleased with the training and the instructor
- Several also mentioned that a longer training (more than 4 hours) would be good due to the depth of detail in the energy code.
- Regarding the costs of codes trainings
 - Energy Sciences has found that around or under \$100 seems to be effective to get people to attend the trainings – more than that seems to turn many away.
 - The trainings that took place through this project were no cost to the attendees
 - One member stated that the State government should offer larger grants to support training on energy codes.
 - Trainings are especially needed when an updated code is about to become effective or has recently become effective.
 - There is generally about 90 days from the adoption of the code to when it becomes effective
- Members suggested that trainings that are a combination of in person and online portions would likely be effective to get more attendees.

Update and Discussion from MEEA on the Results of their Project and Finalized Materials: Nicole Westfall & Ian Blanding, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA)

- Municipal leadership is generally supportive of energy codes but there is still pushback from outside groups. There is some misunderstanding about when the energy code applies to existing building retrofits. Seemed that this was mostly in the residential sector but not solely residential.
 - It was suggested that a one pager be developed for when the code applies.
 - Times that the code applies has not been changed significantly since the state of energy codes
 - This could possibly be an issue of properly setting the boundary of the project
 - A one pager for lighting retrofits would also be a good topic to address
 - Residential vs. commercial inspectors deal with vastly different audiences
 - Confusion about when the codes applies is not unique to Michigan

- Creation of a graphical flow chart about the 3 ways that the code applies to retrofits would be a good resource to create and distribute
- Local municipal governments have been asking the Bureau of Construction Codes (BCC) for clarifications on parts of the energy code that could be interpreted in different ways. The BCC does not do that anymore due to the fact that they do not enforce code in most areas of the state; each municipality is responsible for enforcing the code in their jurisdiction. Due to this, the BCC can not provide a universal interpretation of the code for the whole state.
 - There is a user manual for the ASHRAE code that could potentially answer many of these questions

Planning for the Upcoming Year

There is likely to be no dedicated funding for this group as there was in the previous year. The office can likely sponsor a couple events/small projects through our sponsorship program but otherwise it will have to be work that can be accomplished by this group. It may be useful to do some work on developing the commercial focused checklists for the commercial subcommittee. I know we had discussed that there is a lot of complexity with the commercial code so there might be interest in breaking it down by system (lighting, HVAC, etc.) or even more granular depending on the necessary level of detail. There had been some discussion in the past about breaking it down by building type so that could be considered as well.

For the residential sector there has been some discussion today about creating one pagers for when the code applies and/or lighting retrofits.

For future meetings we will be splitting back into the residential and commercial sub-committees to future develop plans to develop these resources. Jake Wilkinson will be receiving suggestions for items that each group could work on and will use these submissions to narrow the focus as a group. Any suggestions should be sent to wilkinsonj8@michigan.gov