

May Action Update
5.23.08

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Please visit www.ma-smartgrowth.org for more information about the Alliance and smart growth issues facing the Commonwealth.

MA Smart Growth Legislative Campaign Updates Housing and Environmental Bond bills, Surplus Land bills, Water Infrastructure Commission bill, Public Lands Protection Act

The Alliance is actively tracking a number of legislative bills, working to influence their content and passage. **You can help!** Our Recent efforts are highlighted below, as are ways you can have your voice heard on these issues.

Housing Bond bill has been passed! The House and Senate both enacted the Housing Bond Bill, which will provide for \$1.275 million in capital spending authorization to preserve and produce housing affordable to low and moderate income households. Key provisions include \$500 million for public housing modernization, \$220 million for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, \$125 million for the Housing Stabilization Fund, \$100 million for the Capital Improvement and Preservation Fund, and the extension and expansion of the Mass. Low Income Housing Tax Credit to \$10 million annually.

Environmental Bond bill (HB 4561): This bill remains before the Joint Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditure and State Assets, although it is expected to be reported out shortly to House Ways and

Means. The bill contains \$1.4 billion of authorizations for critical programs that address: land acquisition, water quality monitoring, funding for pedestrian and bike paths, restoring rivers and streams, dam removal, parks creation and maintenance, support for recreational facilities, hazardous waste cleanup; and preservation of agricultural lands.

- *Urge your legislator to help bring the Environmental Bond to a vote, or contact Senate Bonding Chairman Montigny at Mark.Montigny@state.ma.us and House Bonding Chairman Flynn at Rep.DavidFlynn@hou.state.ma.us. Also encourage them to insert language reauthorizing the Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant program for municipalities at \$350,000.*

Surplus Land Bill: Several bills that address the disposition of state property remain before the Joint Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditure and State Assets. Significant features that the Alliance would like to see in the final bill include a smart growth analysis for significant parcels and direct funds toward the Smart Growth Housing Trust Fund to fund Chapter 40R zoning districts.

- *Click here to see the Alliance's testimony. http://www.ma-smartgrowth.org/policy/policy_index.htm*
- *Contact Senate Bonding Chairman Montigny at Mark.Montigny@state.ma.us and House Bonding Chairman Flynn at Rep.DavidFlynn@hou.state.ma.us. to weigh in.*

Water Infrastructure Commission bill (SB 2292): A Water Infrastructure Commission bill has passed the Senate and remains before House Ways and Means. This bill would establish a 15-member commission similar to Transportation Finance Commission to make recommendations on closing the funding gap between the Commonwealth's infrastructure needs and available funding.

- *The Alliance is pleased to report that Senator Pamela Resor filed an amendment to the Senate Budget including the language of SB 2292 as an outside section which was successfully adopted in the final Senate budget.*

Public Lands Protection Act bill (SB 2388): This bill, passed by the Senate in November, remains before House Ways and Means. This bill stipulates that for Article 97 Lands, a change in use or disposition only be allowed when there is no feasible alternative and if replacement land of equivalent acreage and market value is provided.

- *Voice your support to House Ways and Means Chairman Robert DeLeo and urge him to report the bill favorably out of committee.*



At the Federal Level...

A campaign update from Smart Growth America

A **Complete Streets Bill**, "Safe and Complete Streets Act of 2008" has been introduced, seeking to require that, in order for states and MPOs to receive federal funding for road improvement projects, construction efforts accommodate the safety and convenience of all users of the transportation system. This bill, introduced by

Rep. Matsui (D-CA), similar to a bill introduced in March by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA). Get more information and TAKE ACTION to help get more Republican co-sponsors in the House and Senate: <http://www.completestreets.org/federal.html>

Several housing and mortgage bills have been moving through Congress.

The House approved the **Neighborhood Stabilization Act of 2008** (HR 5818). The \$15 billion proposal creates a state loan and grant program for buying, rehabilitating and selling homes, and for rehabilitating and operating rental properties. This program is similar to a \$4 billion Community Development Block Grant program included in legislation passed by the Senate in early April.

The Senate legislation, known as the **Foreclosure Prevention Act** (HR 3221), was used as a vehicle in the House for several other housing bills, which were offered as amendments. The housing package includes an overhaul of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and modernization of the FHA. After being stalled on the floor Wednesday, the House approved the package in three separate votes on Thursday afternoon. The new package includes the FHA Housing and Homeowner Retention Act (HR 5830) and the Housing Assistance Tax Act of 2008 (HR 5720). HR 5830 would expand the FHA insurance program to insure up to \$300 billion in home loans and would encourage lenders to accept losses on bad mortgages. HR 5720 is the affordable housing bill reported by the House Ways and Means Committee, which provides housing-related tax incentives. Currently, the administration is opposed to expanding the FHA insurance program at the \$300 billion level.

Effort to fix the **Highway Trust Fund** through provisions in the Federal Aviation Administration stalled in the Senate. One provision would have prevented the insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund in FY 09 by repaying \$3.3 billion that was taken from the Highway Trust Fund to pay for damage from hurricanes and terrorist attacks, by transferring the funds from the General Fund.

The Senate has revived a **renewable energy tax package**. Approved as part of a housing bill, the package represents a scaled back version of the tax package blocked by Republicans last year. The proposal extends credits for wind and solar project, geothermal, biomass and other renewables, but does not contain offsets to pay for the legislation. The prior version of the package proposed to offset the costs by repealing tax incentives for oil companies.

Call for Session Proposals for the National Smart Growth Conference



The 8th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth: Building Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities Conference will be held January 22-24, 2009 at the Albuquerque Convention Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Call for Session Proposals is open from May 19, 2008 – June 25, 2008.

If anyone is interested in collaborating with the MA Smart Growth Alliance on a proposal, please contact André at 617-263-1257 or andre@ma-smartgrowth.org. For more information: http://www.newpartners.org/session_proposals.html.



News, Reports and Resources

The New AIA Guide to Boston is now available

This rewritten, redesigned guide by Susan and Michael Southworth offers a superbly written history of Boston's built environment, filled with insider details and engaging anecdotes about more than 600 buildings. New with this release are theme tours such as Boston urban design, contemporary landmarks and the work of Charles Bulfinch. The *AIA Guide to Boston* is available at www.architects.org/store (item #700). BSA members receive a 20 percent discount.

MASS Powershifts: Climate solutions, Green Jobs, & Green Justice

Mass Power Shift (www.masspowershifts.org) is launching as a new organization dedicated to the promotion of Climate Solutions, Green Jobs, and Green Justice in Massachusetts and Beyond. If you or anyone you know would like to join our efforts, please send an e-mail to Craig Altemose at craig@masspowershift.org to find out how you can get directly involved.

"Massachusetts Power Shift will help keep our state a leader in green technology. MAPS gives people from every walk of life the chance to get involved in saving our planet." – Senator Kerry



Assistance and Awards

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Aging Initiative 2008 Awards Program

If your community is growing smart and encouraging active aging, the EPA encourages you to apply to this program. For more information please see www.epa.gov/agomg/bhc/awards. Register for their monthly list serve at www.epa.gov/aging. **Applications accepted through September 12, 2008.**



Job and Volunteer Opportunities

Director of Smart Growth/Smart Energy: The Director of Smart Growth / Smart Energy is the primary policy analyst for the Secretary on a wide array of sustainable development and climate change issues. The Director position works within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) which directs and coordinates all state policy aimed at preserving and protecting the natural resources, and the environmental integrity of the Commonwealth. Major responsibilities for the Director position include: analyze and develop policy

with EEA and other Secretariats, advance legislative objectives, manage EEA's Smart Growth/Smart Energy Team and conduct public outreach. The Director will report directly to the Assistant Secretary for Policy. Salary range: \$41,017.08 to \$90,561.63 annually.

To view the full posting, including candidate requirements and application procedure:

https://jobs.hrd.state.ma.us/recruit/public/31100001/job/job_view.do?postingId=J14579&code=search.public&companyId=9&words=smart,%20growth&mgtNonMgtType=Management

Volunteer Opportunity

Share your web design experience! The Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance is looking for a volunteer to help with periodic updates to our website. If you have a few hours a month to spare, we'd love your help in our Beacon Street (Boston) office location. If interested please contact Shelley, MSGA Program Associate, at 617-263-7470 or Shelley@ma-smartgrowth.org.



Calendar

The Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance is proud to be a supporter of



MASSImpact: Symposium II - Energy and Mobility in the Green City

June 9, 2008, 8:30am - 7:30pm

Wong Auditorium - Tang Center, MIT, 70 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, MA

Keynote speaker: Nicky Gavron, Deputy Mayor of London, 2004-2008

For more information and to register:

http://www.architects.org/massimpact/symp_02.htm. **Registration deadline is May 19th.**

10 Slides/10 Minutes: Professionals associated with the built environment - researchers, students, administrators, policy strategists - are invited to submit projects or research that explore the topic of the MASSImpact symposia.

<http://www.architects.org/massimpact/tenbyten.htm> **Deadline for submissions is April 30th.**



MetroFuture Strategy Session

Wednesday, May 28th, 8:00am - 11:30am

Omni Parker House, 60 School Street, Boston

Visit www.MetroFuture.org to learn more.

Ecological Landscaping Design and Practices

Wednesday, May 28, 7:00 PM

Volunteers Hall, Harvard Public Library, 5 Pond Road, in Harvard, MA

Free and open to the public.

For more information, please contact Mark Archambault, NRWA Smart Growth Circuit

Rider, at (978) 448-0299, or email MarkA@NashuaRiverWatershed.org.

CHAPA Spring 2008 Regional Meetings

Participation from public, private and non-profit sectors is encouraged

7 meetings planned throughout the state: Pittsfield - May 22nd, Springfield - May 22nd, Worcester, May 30th, Lowell - June 2nd, Boston - June 5th, Hyannis - June 6th, New Bedford - June 10th

For more information and to register: www.chapa.org/calendar

CHAPA Breakfast Forum: Developing Affordable Housing in Towns without Public Water Systems: The Challenges and Opportunities

Monday, June 9, 9:30am - 11:30am

Mass Housing, One Beacon Street, 29th Floor, Boston

Information on speakers and registration available at: www.chapa.org/calendar

2nd Annual Housing Institute

Thursday and Friday, June 12th and 13th

Babson College Executive Conference Center, Wellesley

\$75 including meals; \$55 for multiple attendees from the same city/town

To register or request more information, contact Carole Spear at the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) 617-330-9944 ext 286, cppear@mhp.net

Southern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association 2008 Conference September 4-5, 2008

Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence; Hosted by the Rhode Island Chapter

For questions or additional information, please contact Roberta Groch, AICP at 401-435-7539 or rgroch@cityofeastprov.com.

About the Citizen Action Network...

If you have comments, suggestions, or additional information you'd like to see included in the next update, please email andre@ma-smartgrowth.org. Feel free to forward this to friends and colleagues, and invite them to become part of this Citizen Action Network. If you were forwarded this email and would like to subscribe, please email shelley@ma-smartgrowth.org with "subscribe" in the subject line. We will not share your information with any other lists. If you would like to stop receiving this bulletin, reply to this message with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.