



Town of Natick *Massachusetts*

November 18, 2020

TO: Richard Crowley, Chair
Lisa Davey, Vice-Chair
Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS)

Re: Comments from the Town of Natick in support of the principles of the Massachusetts EZ Code 2.0 (Proposal 11-03-2020) as an update to the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code, pursuant to 780 CMR Chapter 115 Appendix AA

Dear Chair Crowley and Board Members,

Thank you for soliciting feedback from municipal stakeholders regarding the Massachusetts Energy Zero Code 2.0 (Proposal 11-03-2020). We are writing today on behalf of the Town of Natick to express our support for the net zero principles embodied in the proposed EZ Code 2.0.

As one of the first communities to adopt the Stretch Energy Code, Natick looks forward to working with the BBRS on developing updates that enable the Commonwealth to make progress on our shared climate goals. At present, the Stretch Energy Code is no longer a “stretch” and it does not meet our community or the Commonwealth’s needs. As you consider proposals to improve it, we are eager to ensure updates are both feasible and ambitious in minimizing energy consumption and reducing carbon pollution.

In Natick, we believe the development of efficient buildings will also improve public health, resilience, and comfort, and we have sought to deploy such strategies in the construction of public buildings locally. As the Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) reviews proposals, we ask you to consider including robust thermal envelopes and enclosures, reductions in energy use, an emphasis on the electrification of space and water heating, an emphasis on renewables, and measures to accelerate the deployment of electric vehicles, solar, and battery storage as new requirements to the Stretch Energy Code. We support the intent of these components in the EZ Code 2.0 proposal as it relates to commercial construction, and likewise support the development of a companion residential net zero pathway.

The Town of Natick’s support for these net zero principles are guided by our community’s history of leadership on climate issues. In 2010, Natick was designated as a founding member of the Green Communities program. In 2012, we became the first MetroWest community to install solar on school and municipal buildings. In 2014, the Town achieved its Green Communities 20% energy use reduction goal. In 2016, Natick implemented the most successful SolarizeMass campaign in the state’s history, as measured in terms of contracted capacity. In 2017, Natick was recognized as a SolSmart Gold Community for its leadership on solar, and, in 2018, Natick Town Meeting overwhelmingly voted to support a non-binding resolution to adopt a 2050 net zero greenhouse gas emissions goal – the same goal Governor Baker recently announced he would seek for the Commonwealth as a whole.

As our community joins the Governor and a growing number of communities – both large and small – in the pursuit this goal, we appreciate the importance of the changes your Board is considering related to the Stretch Energy Code. Natick has sought to become a more active participant in these discussions, and, as a

Town of Natick

Massachusetts

member of the International Code Council, we recently voted on the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code. The Natick Sustainability Committee, which is appointed by the Select Board, also provided testimony supporting the EV Code at the BBRS's virtual public comment hearing on May 12, 2020.

Moving forward, we urge the BBRS to consider adopting proposals that support net zero principles, and welcome dialogue to ensure updates are both feasible and in-line with cities and towns' climate goals.

Thank you for requesting our feedback. We will continue to remain engaged on this urgent and important matter.

Sincerely,

The Natick Select Board

Jonathan H. Freedman, Chair

Karen Adelman Foster, Vice Chair

Richard P. Jennett, Jr., Clerk

Michael J. Hickey, Jr.

Susan Salamoff

Dated: 11.18.2020
