Government Affairs Meeting Notes  
February 13, 2020 8:00 am  
AIA Connecticut Office


Discussion:

- The session opened on February 5th
  - As of this meeting there was not a full list of bills from Committee Chairs. We will circle back on this once the list is available.
- AIA Connecticut – Proactive Agenda
  - Good Samaritan Language Change – Architects
    - This is needed so we can move forward with the Disaster Assistance Committee and Safety Assessment Program (SAP) training.
    - Jim and Ross met with the Judiciary Committee Chair to discuss the language. It was suggested that if the Trial Lawyers were amenable with the language change, then it would be easier to get the change made this session.
    - AIA CT was asked to provide some simple language for the dialogue. Looking to set a meeting the week of 2/17/2020. Gina will be at AIA Grassroots - Jack will take the lead.
  - Governors Climate Change Council (GC3)
    - Working groups have been set. CTGBC/AIA members (architects) have stepped up for seats on 4 committees. Gina is part of the Equity and Environmental Justice Working Group.
- AIA Connecticut – Reactive
  - Occupational Licensing
    - The Governor’s State of the State address included decreasing certain occupational licensing fees. At this time, architects/engineers are not included.
    - We will be watching for any raised bills to make sure architects professional licenses are not included.
- H.B. 5008 - An Act Concerning the Establishment of High - Performance Green Building Standards for Voluntary Adoption by Municipalities
  - When the seed of this thought was planted during last year's session the discussion was in context of adopting a code or standard that would replace the State of CT High Performance Building Standard for state funded projects. This currently impacts state work and such other projects as public schools which receive funding over a particular threshold from the state. In that context we have no concerns about the intent of this bill. However, in current form the reach of this
bill gets into some very turbulent waters. By allowing municipalities to adopt or not adopt this “stretch code”, we would end up with varying building codes as we go from town to town. Granted, the rules would either be the state-wide code or the “stretch” requirements, but that would put developers at a competitive disadvantage depending on the town they intend to build in. As the state codes are the “minimum” standard, there is nothing that prevents an owner or developer from doing better. After all, we see LEED ratings being used as marketing tools all the time, so anyone can turn the increased energy efficiency of their project into a selling feature. Mandating tighter rules at the local level is the concern.

- **Department of Administrative Services Meeting Update**
  - Gina met with Deputy Commissioner Petra and State Building Inspector Joe Cassidy on the DAS legislation requesting approval to put together a 3rd Party Inspections certification program. We are on board with the request but asked that architects are involved in the planning process. All certifications would be provided through ODEM.
  - Basis of the program: Firms would certify employees (training fees would be incurred by the firm). Clients/owners would pay for third party inspections. All certified Firms would be listed in a directory of providers and set their own rates.

- **Industry (DAS) Advisory Council Update** (quarterly meeting)
  - State is going digital on all RFP, plans and specs
  - The new RFQ selection process was effective as January 1, 2020. Gina asked David Barkin to write up a description and it would be included in the next Architype magazine
  - Delegated Design
    - The discussion was there was a need for more clarification on who is signing off
  - Debarment: Looking at a new system
  - Contract Mgmt. Review self-performance (OPM)
  - Contractor and consultant evaluations are collected but not reviewed (DOT reviews similar very well, so DAS is looking to them for lessons learned).

- **Legislative Breakfast**
  - March 25th at the Officers Club in Hartford
  - The Wall display will be up starting March 17th to the 30th

- **Action Items**
  - Follow up on House and Senate Bills
  - Monthly check-in with other Knowledge communities and Gov’t affairs
  - We will be keeping updated meeting notes on AIA CT website.

Next meeting will be a conference call prior to the Legislative Breakfast. Date TBD.