



TOWN OF WELLESLEY MASSACHUSETTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

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Attend a Municipal Opt-in Energy Code Webinar on March 8

February 24, 2023 (Wellesley, MA) – Learn about the Municipal Opt-in Specialized Energy Code (“Opt-in Code”) and what it could mean for new buildings in Wellesley. The Town of Wellesley invites you to a FREE webinar about the Opt-in Code on Wednesday, March 8th from 7:00-8:30 p.m. **via Zoom**.

Sign up using the registration link [here](#).

The March 8 interactive webinar, sponsored by Wellesley’s Select Board and Climate Action Committee, will include a presentation and roundtable discussion with building and sustainability experts. Panelists include:

- Tom Catalano, AIA, Principal, Catalano Architects
- Mark Doughty, Principal, Thoughtforms
- Nick Falkoff, Owner and General Manager, Auburndale Builders
- Allen Hebert, Operations Manager, Facilities Management Department, Town of Wellesley
- Hank Keating, AIA, President, Passive House Massachusetts
- Marybeth Martello, Ph.D., Sustainability Director, Town of Wellesley
- Ellen Watts, FAIA, LEED AP

An **Opt-in Code webinar for building professionals** will take place on Monday, **March 6 at 7:00 p.m.** This event will include several of the above-mentioned panelists as well as Ian Finlayson, Director of Energy Efficiency for the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources and Lara

Pfadt, Senior Associate, Architect, and Sustainability Strategist for Finegold Alexander Architects. To register for the March 6 webinar, please contact Marybeth Martello at mmartello@wellesleyma.gov.

Why does the Opt-in Code matter for Wellesley?

Wellesley's upcoming Annual Town Meeting will consider an article co-sponsored by the Select Board and Climate Action Committee proposing adoption of the new Opt-in Code, with an effective date of January 1, 2024. If adopted, the Opt-in Code requirements would change new construction in Wellesley and help:

- Wellesley achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, a goal shared by the State of Massachusetts and federal government.
- Encourage electrification and avoid costly retrofits by requiring new buildings that are not all-electric to prewire for future electrification.
- Offset GHG emissions by requiring solar installation for some mixed-fuel projects (i.e., buildings with combustion equipment designed for fossil fuel use).

Since energy use in buildings contributes over 60% of town-wide GHG emissions, Wellesley's [Climate Action Plan](#) calls for Opt-in Code adoption, a critical step for achieving climate goals. The Opt-in Code (required by the Climate Act of 2021) builds on the Base Code and Updated Stretch Code and applies to **new construction only**. Additions and renovations are subject to the Updated Stretch Code and Updated Base Code, which automatically apply to Wellesley. The Opt-in Code offers multiple compliance pathways, and requires new construction mixed-fuel buildings to have:

- Electrical service and wiring to support future conversion to all-electric; and
- On-site solar (with some exceptions).

For more information on the Opt-in Code visit: <https://www.wellesleyma.gov/1988/Municipal-Opt-in-Specialized-Energy-Code>

About Climate Action in Wellesley

The [Town of Wellesley](#) adopted a [goal](#) to reduce the town-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net-zero by 2050, in concert with the state of Massachusetts and the nation's carbon neutrality goals. The Town's [Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP) and [Sustainable Mobility Plan](#) (SMP) provide roadmaps for reaching this goal. The [Climate Action Committee](#) supports and leads CAP implementation across municipal, residential, commercial, and institutional sectors.

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