

**TOWN OF WATERTOWN
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 4, 2026, 6:30 p.m.
Watertown Municipal Center, 61 Echo Lake Road**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Ray Antonacci called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

R. Antonacci lead those present in a recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Members Present – R. Antonacci (Chairman), John Nygren, Lou Cavallo, Jack McHugh, J. D’Uva.

Members Absent – R. Antonetti, K. Demirs (Secretary), D. DiVito (V. Chairman), B. Marinaro, D. Pope.

Others Present – S. Musselman (Land Use Administrator), C. Natusch (Asst. Zoning Enforcement Officer), P. Bunevich (Town Engineer), C. Allen (Admin. Assistant).

Appointment of Alternates – J. McHugh was seated for K. Demirs.

4. Appointment of Spencer Musselman as Zoning Enforcement Officer

R. Antonacci introduced S. Musselman to the Commission. J. McHugh then moved to appoint S. Musselman as the Zoning Enforcement Officer. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to appoint carried unanimously.

5. Election of Officers

- Chairman: J. Nygren moved to re-elect R. Antonacci as Chairman. J. McHugh seconded and the motion carried unanimously.
- Vice Chairman: J. McHugh moved to re-elect D. DiVito as Vice Chairman. J. Nygren seconded and the motion carried unanimously.
- Secretary: J. McHugh moved to table the election of a secretary to the next meeting. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to table carried unanimously.

6. Public Participation:

- Barbara Zulkeski – Submitted a formal complaint regarding the 1/7/26 meeting and the rezoning of the BO district.

7. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting – January 7, 2026

J. McHugh moved to approve the 1/7/26 minutes. L. Cavallo seconded and the motion to approve carried unanimously.

8. Staff Report

- a. Site Reports

C. Natusch informed the Commission that the IWA requested the Commission's input on how they would like to see Lake Winnemaug developed in the future. C. Natusch also suggested that the Commission review the last CCIWA meeting video from 1/8/26. C. Natusch also reported on the site updates for Turnberry, Berkshire Plastics, and Qdoba. R. Antonacci inquired as to when the traffic safety infrastructure for Qdoba would be installed. C. Natusch will reach out to the property owner to ascertain when it will be installed.

- b. Planning for the 2027 Plan of Conservation and Development

S. Musselman provided an update to the Commission on the estimated cost of the update. Commissioners discussed the possibility of updating the POCD with town staff instead of hiring an outside consultant. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

9. Chairman's Report: None.

10. Continued Public Hearings

- a. Planning and Zoning Commission – Proposed text amendment to Section 5.1.D of the Watertown Zoning Regulations to classification and enforcement of commercial vehicles parked in residential zones.

R. Antonacci stated he would like the Commission to consider acting on the application, however, after discovering that comments from resident Day Palmer didn't make it into the packet he requested that the Commission table the closing of the hearing until the next meeting. Screening of commercial vehicles was also briefly discussed.

J. D'Uva moved to table the public hearing to the 3/4/26 meeting. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to table carried unanimously.

11. New Public Hearings

- a. Echo Asset, LLC. – Proposed subdivision of industrial land into two lots located on the northern side of Echo Lake Road midway between Park Road to the west and Route 8 to the east. Map 104 Block 90 Lot 23A.

Legal Notice published in the Republican-American on 1/22 & 1/29.

Emily Jones of Civil 1 was present for the application and gave a brief overview of the application to subdivide parcel MBL# 104-090-23A Echo Lake Road. It was noted that the CCIWA had approved the subdivision application at their 12/11/25 meeting. R. Antonacci asked if Town Engineer P. Bunevich had any comments on the application. P. Bunevich responded that he did not have any on the subdivision application, however, he had some comments regarding the site plan once they got to agenda item #13b. C. Natusch stated that the required open space is proposed to be deeded to the State as it is adjacent to the Mattatuck State Forest. R. Antonacci then opened the hearing to public comment.

With no public present with comment on the application J. D'Uva moved to close the public hearing. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to close carried unanimously.

J. McHugh moved to approve the Echo Asset, LLC. application to subdivide industrial land into two lots at MBL #104-090-23A Echo Lake Road in accordance with a resolution prepared by Assistant Zoning Enforcement Officer C. Natusch. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to approve carried unanimously.

12. New Business

- a. Text Amendment from Taft School, 110 Woodbury Road, Watertown, CT, Map 99 Block 58 Lot 7 in the R-20 zoning district seeking to add an additional provision to Section 7.1 (D) entitled Specific Exemptions – Height. Currently there are five height

exemptions. This proposal would add a sixth to allow buildings on certain large parcels of land to exceed the established height maximums. Attorney Stephanie Cummings was present on behalf of the applicant, Taft School, and gave a brief overview of the text amendment application. Modified language was submitted at the beginning of the meeting that states:

“Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing regulations, the maximum height for buildings, including accessory buildings, used by, or developed, constructed, or erected for, a private school located in the R-20 residential district on a lot that is at least 50 acres may be the greater of the height, in feet, set forth in these Regulations or 68’. All other exemptions in this Section 7.1 (D) shall continue to apply”.

S. Cummings stated that the purpose of the text amendment is to avoid having to seek variances to build new facilities at Taft in a uniform manner. If adopted, the text amendment will allow Taft to build two new dormitories whose height is proposed to be 68’ at the top of the elevator towers. Long term, S. Cummings stated, Taft will be finishing a master plan and will apply for a planned district to bring the property into compliance with the zoning regulations.

R. Antonacci asked when Taft would be applying for the site plan and encouraged them to wait until after the CCIWA had at least accepted or ideally approved the application. S. Cummings stated that was the recommendation of staff and that Taft will be submitting to the CCIWA at their 2/12 meeting.

With no further discussion J. McHugh moved to schedule a public hearing for 3/4/26. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to schedule the hearing carried unanimously.

13. Old Business

- a. Echo Asset, LLC. – Proposed subdivision of industrial land into two lots located on the northern side of Echo Lake Road midway between Park Road to the west and Route 8 to the east. Map 104 Block 90 Lot 23A.

(Application approved under item #11a.)

- b. Site Plan #2025-10 Echo Asset, LLC creation of an industrial building located on the northern side of Echo Lake Road midway between Park Road to the west and Route 8 to the east. Map 104 Block 90 Lot 23A.

Emily Jones of Civil 1 was present again for the application to construct a 22,800 ft² light industrial development at the newly created 10.66-acre parcel (*see agenda item #11a*). The project also includes appurtenant driveway, landscaping, stormwater, and parking improvements along with the installation of a septic system.

E. Jones noted that at the last meeting the Commission permitted the driveway grade to be no greater than 10%. E. Jones stated that the updated plans have the driveway grades at 9%. Town Engineer P. Bunevich issued a memo dated 10/2/25 and found the site plan to be in general conformance with regulations and standards. It was noted that the site plan had been approved by the CCIWA at their 12/11/25 meeting. Per recommendation by the Fire Marshal E. Jones stated that a fire hydrant was added at the end of the driveway approx. 300' from the building.

J. McHugh moved to approve Site Plan #2025-10 for Echo Asset, LLC. located at MBL #104-090-23A Echo Lake Road in accordance with a resolution prepared by Assistant Zoning Enforcement Officer C. Natusch. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to approve carried unanimously.

c. Discussion of HB 8002 “An Act Concerning Housing Growth”

S. Musselman provided a brief update on HB-8002 and noted that he and C. Natusch had attended a presentation on the newly passed law last week.

14. Communication and Bills

J. Nygren moved to accept the communications and bills. J. McHugh seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

15. Adjournment

J. D’Uva moved to adjourn at 7:22 pm. J. Nygren seconded and the motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

Next meeting date: 3/4/26

Respectfully submitted,

Spencer Musselman, CZEO
Land Use Administrator
Town of Watertown, CT