

**TOWN OF WATERTOWN  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, March 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, R. Antonetti (Z), K. Demirs, J. D'Uva, D. DiVito, J. McHugh.

**Members Absent:** J. Nygren, D. Pope, L. Cavallo, B. Marinaro.

**Others Present:** S. Musselman, C. Natusch, C. Allen.

**Appointment of Alternates:** J. D'Uva, J. McHugh.

**4. Election of Officers**

- Secretary: D. DiVito moved to nominate K. Demirs as Secretary. J. McHugh seconded and the motion to nominate K. Demirs carried unanimously. As there were no other nominations, K. Demirs was elected Secretary.

**5. Public Participation: None.**

**6. Approval of Minutes**

- a. Regular Meeting – February 4, 2026

J. D'Uva moved to approve the 2/4/26 minutes. J. McHugh seconded and the motion to approve carried unanimously.

## 7. New Business

- a. 8-24 Approval of the 2026 Capital Infrastructure Program (CIP) prepared by Gerald Lukowski, Director of Public Works

Public Works Director Gearld Lukowski gave a presentation of the 2026 Capital Infrastructure Program (CIP).

D. DiVito moved to issue a favorable 8-24 report on the 2026 Capital Infrastructure Program as presented by G. Lukowski. J. McHugh seconded and the motion to issue a favorable 8-24 report carried unanimously with the exception of K. Demirs who abstained.

- b. Request dated February 23, 2026, from George Touponse, Ashford Woods, LLC requesting to remove Condition of Approval #4 – requirement for fencing around the detention pond at the Ashford Woods, LLC subdivision located between Georgetown Drive and Bunker Hill Road, Watertown, CT.

S. Musselman stated that George Touponse had withdrawn the request.

R. Antonacci moved to add items 7c & 7d to the agenda. D. DiVito seconded and the motion to add carried unanimously.

- c. Petition for waiver of fees pursuant to Ordinance 36-4(e) Taft School, 110 Woodbury Road, Watertown, CT.

Attorney Stephanie Cummings was present on behalf of the applicant, Taft School, and explained the rationale for the petition for a waiver of fees pursuant to Ordinance 36-4(e). S. Cummings had previously submitted a letter with the petition request and suggested the fee be limited to no more than \$35,000. She also explained that in 2008 the fee for the dining hall application was reduced to \$7,500 from \$35,000 (a 4.5x reduction). The fee schedule for this application would result in a \$139,870 fee and a \$35,000 fee would be proportional to the 2008 reduction given by the Commission.

Commissioners discussed that this was 18 years ago and they'd have to review the petition request further before deciding on the fee. As such R. Antonacci moved to table action on the petition to the 4/1/26 meeting. J. McHugh seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

- d. 110 Woodbury Road, Taft School – Site Plan / Special Permit for the construction of two new 45,000 ft<sup>2</sup> dormitories with associated site improvements to include landscaping, walkways, and stormwater management.

S. Cummings asked if the Commission was amenable to scheduling a hearing so the application can proceed and the fee can be determined before the opening of the hearing.

D. DiVito moved to accept the application and set a public hearing for the 4/1/26 meeting. K. Demirs seconded and the motion to accept and set a hearing carried unanimously.

## 8. Staff Reports

- a. Site Reports

C. Natusch gave an update to the Commissioners on the status of the Turnberry project.

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

S. Musselman shared that he met with the Town Council at their 2/17 meeting and that they indicated support for budgeting \$100,000 for the 2027 POCD update over the next two fiscal years. Commissioners appreciated the Town Council's support; however, they indicated that they'd prefer the POCD update to be done in house in an effort to be fiscally mindful. S. Musselman will discuss this with the Town Manager.

## 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. *Public hearing opened on 9/3/25 and has been continued through the 3/4/26 meeting.*

During discussion Commissioners agreed that more consideration needed to be given to how these regulations would be reasonably enforced and it was decided to withdraw the proposed text amendment to Section 5.1.D. The regulations will be reconsidered in the future.

## 11. New Public Hearings

- 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, along with Taft CFO Jake Odden. 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. D. DiVito and R. Antonacci both asked if the new dorms would be around the same height as other campus buildings. J. Odden responded that there are 22 buildings on campus and that the proposed dormitories will be in keeping with the same architectural style, dimensions, and height as the rest of campus.

*Before opening the hearing C. Allen read the legal notice into the record published on 2/19 & 2/26 in the Republican American. R. Antonacci then opened the hearing to the public for comment.*

- Greg Chere, 87 North Street – Spoke in opposition to the text amendment as he believes it will lead to the inconsistent application of zoning regulations throughout the town and would negatively impact his property.
- Diane Chere, 87 North Street- Submitted correspondence in opposition to the text amendment.

With no further public comment S. Cummings responded that there are five other height exemptions existing in the regulations and that this would add a sixth. An existing height exemption for agricultural buildings doesn't set a height maximum.

With no further discussion or public comment D. DiVito moved to close the public hearing. K. Demirs seconded and the motion to close carried unanimously.

D. DiVito then moved to approve the text amendment to add a 6<sup>th</sup> height exemption to Section 7.1(D). K. Demirs seconded and the motion to approve carried unanimously.

**12. Old Business:** None.

**13. Communication and Bills:** The Commission accepted the Communications and Bills.

- a. Letter dated February 27, 2026, from Attorney Jim Strub, Secor and Cassidy Re: Zone Change Discussion, November 5, 2025, Portion of Echo Lake Road IR-80 to IG-80.

Attorney Charles Wilber was present to discuss the 2/27/26 letter submitted by Attorney James Strub. The letter was submitted regarding a discussion had by the Commission at their 11/5/25 meeting on the potential rezoning of certain areas of town. Secor and Cassidy represent Echo Lake Property, LLC who own C&S Masonry and Paving. In December 2025 they purchased a 4.88-acre parcel on Echo Lake Road. The property is currently zoned IR-80 and doesn't allow them to store outdoor material in bulk on site and as such they are hoping to see the parcel rezoned to IG-80. Commissioners discussed the idea and were in favor of a potential commission petitioned application to rezone the south side of Echo Lake Road from Park Road to Rt. 8 from IR-80 to IG-80,

- b. Reappointment letter of Raymond Antonacci as regular member of the Planning and Zoning Commission for a term to expire January 31, 2031.
- c. Reappointment letter of Luigi Cavallo as a regular member of the Planning and Zoning Commission for a term to expire January 31, 2031.
- d. CT Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies Quarterly Newsletter Winter, 2026 and dinner at the Aqua Turf March 26, 2026.

**14. Adjournment:** J. McHugh moved to adjourn at 8:25 pm. D. DiVito seconded and the motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

*Next meeting date: 4/1/26*

Respectfully submitted,

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