

WATERTOWN ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday January 28, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
Watertown Municipal Center, 61 Echo Lake Road
In Person Meeting

1. Call to Order - Appointment of Alternates

Chairman Enrico Sarandrea called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: E. Sarandrea, N. Dalton, V. Giannetto, J. Franson, J. Proe.

Members Absent: P. Roger, G. Swingle

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

Appointment of Alternates: J. Franson, J. Proe.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. **October 22, 2025:** No action was taken.

b. **November 19, 2025:** No action was taken.

4. Old Business: None.

5. Public Hearing

- a. Application ZBA #2025-004 for a variance to reduce the front yard parking area setback to 17 ½ ft instead of 35 ft, Slade Street MBL 114 173A 1A, Watertown, CT in a R-12.5 Residential Zoning District. *Section 6.2.F.2 of the Watertown Zoning Regulations requires that in a Residential zone no parking area shall be located within the required front-yard, which for the R-12.5 zone is 35 ft.*

Before opening the hearing Chairman E. Sarandrea read the public hearing notice, published on 1/15/26 & 1/22/26 in the Republican American, into the record. The public hearing procedure and rules were also read.

Applicant Erik Markiewicz was present and gave an overview of the proposed variance request to reduce the front yard setback to 17.5' from the required 35' in the R-12.5 district. If granted the variance will allow the proposed triplex and parking area to be moved 17.5' forward towards the front property line. This will reduce the amount of fill required for the project and will remove the need for a rear retaining wall which will push the area of disturbance further away from the wetlands. Additionally, the variance will allow the grade of the driveway to be reduced from 10% → 7%, negating the need for additional review by the Town Engineer. E. Markiewicz noted that he had completed similar projects at Davis Street and Cherry Street if the Commission wanted to get an understanding of what the units would look like.

Chairman E. Sarandrea then opened the hearing to the public for comment.

- *Kandice Wainwright, 157 Slade Street*, spokè in opposition to the variance request as she has concerns with traffic and believes that the request is not a hardship and

instead a site design decision. K. Wainwright also stated that zoning regulations are a code to be enforced for the good of the public.

- *Mary Renato, 149 Slade Street*, shared similar concerns as her neighbor, K. Wainwright, and noted that she did not receive a letter notifying her of the hearing. M. Renato was also concerned that the stormwater retention basin would be affected.

E. Markiewicz then responded to the Commission that M. Renato did not receive a letter as she is not an adjacent property owner. Although visual vegetative and topographic buffers exist, he offered to meet with the neighbors to discuss potential landscape screening. N. Dalton asked if the stormwater basin would be affected. E. Markiewicz responded that it would remain, although he is proposing to improve the condition by cleaning the pond out and adding more riprap.

J. Franson moved to close the hearing for ZBA Application #2025-004. N. Dalton seconded and the motion to close carried unanimously.

6. New Business

- a. Application ZBA #2025-004 for a variance to reduce the front yard parking area setback to 17 ½ ft instead of 35 ft, Slade Street MBL 114 173A 1A, Watertown, CT in a R-12.5 Residential Zoning District. *Section 6.2.F.2 of the Watertown Zoning Regulations requires that in a Residential zone no parking area shall be located within the required front-yard, which for the R-12.5 zone is 35 ft.*

J. Franson moved to approve ZBA Application #2025-004 due to the topographic hardship of the site. N. Dalton seconded and the motion to approve the variance request carried unanimously.

7. Communications and Bills:

- Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies, Winter 2026 Quarterly Newsletter.

Before adjournment the Commission requested that staff provide them with bylaws for review at the next meeting. Discussion was also had on the submission of meeting packets to Commissioners and the procedure with positing minutes. S. Musselman stated he would have the bylaws sent to the Commissioners and agreed to work with the Commission to find a solution to their concerns.

8. Adjournment

J. Franson moved to adjourn at 8:00 pm. J. Proe seconded and the motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Spencer Musselman
Land Use Administrator
Watertown, CT