



Watertown Town Council

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Stephen P. Corbett,
Vice President

Aaron Dushku,
Councilor At Large

Susan G. Falkoff,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis,
District A Councilor

Cecilia Lenk,
District B Councilor

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
District C Councilor

Kenneth M. Woodland,
District D Councilor

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2014 @ 7:15 PM RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL: A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 7:15 pm, in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were the Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll, Town Attorney Carolyn Murray and Council Clerk, Valerie Papas.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. EXAMINATION OF MINUTES: [July 15th](#). Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Councilor Woodland and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

4. PUBLIC FORUM:

1. Roslyn Komins, Coolidge School Apartments – spoke in support of the clearing of snow from the sidewalks for the elderly, disabled and others.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

a. A proposed Resolution regarding the [Fiscal Year 2016 budget process](#). The Chair read the proposed resolution. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the resolution, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

b. The Chair indicated that he will be placing an informational presentation regarding ESCO on the next Town Council agenda.

6. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION:

a) [Informational Presentation](#) and consideration of a Design Standards Scope of Services – Steven Magoon, Director, Community Development and Planning/Assistant Town Manager. Following Mr. Magoon’s presentation the Chair opened up the meeting for comments/questions from Councilors.

Councilor Falkoff asked how a consultant will be selected. Mr. Magoon stated that he has several in mind and that an RFP process will not be undertaken.

Councilor Falkoff asked that Mr. Magoon elaborate on the design standards. Mr. Magoon stated that there will be design standards for smaller scale projects and one for larger scale projects and that the town would look to expand the guidelines in other situations but that it will not be proposed to deal with specific, defined areas of town.

Councilor Falkoff stated that she may not feel comfortable with that but will hold her comments until later.

Councilor Kounelis asked about the east end. Mr. Magoon stated that there will be no particular area of town but any area of town where such standards and guidelines are needed for commercial and mixed uses.

Councilor Kounelis asked about the outreach with respect to Phase I and Phase II. Mr. Magoon stated that it will be open ended and that the town will be performing a lot of the public outreach due to cost and time with some assistance from the consultant.

Vice President Corbett stated that he generally supports the proposal; and asked what are some of the other communities that have design and guideline standards. Mr. Magoon stated Dedham, Somerville, and Cambridge.

Councilor Lenk concurred that public outreach is very important. She further noted that there is a difference in design guidelines with respect to “build environments” and she would like that included with specifics; to strengthen the proposal.

Councilor Palomba stated that he appreciated the Council President’s letter to the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals and asked what the main difference is between a standard and a guideline. Mr. Magoon stated that guidelines are more important as it is a visual and meaningful example or explanation of what we are trying to achieve or what we expect; whereas a standard is ordinance language.

Councilor Palomba asked that incentives be included for the guidelines so that developers abide by them in a more formal way.

Councilor Piccirilli asked about the timeframe for hiring a consultant. Mr. Magoon stated by the end of the year.

Councilor Dushku asked if the consultant will work from the Town Hall or work from an outside office. Councilor Dushku also state that he values diversity of thinking. Mr. Magoon stated that the consultant will work from his/her own office. He reiterated his vision of the hiring process.

The Chair referenced a proposal by CVS and noted that perhaps that situation would fall under the guidelines rather than having a cookie cutter approach. The Chair further noted another project; a proposed indoor recreational facility; and again, perhaps that could fall under a design guideline as well.

Councilor Falkoff concurred with the proposed hiring process for the consultant as making sense. She further stated that she concurs with Councilor Lenk's comments about more information in the guidelines with respect to context. Mr. Magoon agreed.

Councilor Palomba stated that there are a number of people living in Watertown that are very qualified and that you take into consideration their feedback and expertise. Mr. Magoon stated that he will do that.

Councilor Lenk stated that this is a very good opportunity here and that she urged to move away from the cookie cutter approach; to connect spaces and improve the character of the town.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to proceed with design scope as presented, seconded by Councilor Woodland.

Councilor Palomba asked as a friendly amendment; councilors comments be incorporated, seconded by Councilor Falkoff.

The Manager indicated that the Council will not be voting on the money aspect tonight; and that he will come back with a formal document in September.

On the amendment, it was adopted by unanimous voice vote with Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

On the Main Motion as amendment, it was adopted by unanimous voice vote with Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

7. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTE on an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance:

a) **Arsenal Overlay Development District (AODD) Text Amendment**

Athena Arsenal LLC requests an amendment to the Arsenal Overlay Development District (AODD) of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance. The first reading before the Honorable Town Council was April 8, 2014. The Planning Board held a Public Hearing for May 14, 2014. As stated, the requested amendments allow the implementation of a master plan to create a vibrant campus for Athena health, Inc. as well as the residents of Watertown. The amendments would modify the retail categories to allow small-scale retail uses through special permit, increase height for new construction, and clarify the permit process for the AODD. The amendment would also incorporate amendments made by the Watertown Arsenal Development Corporation at the time the site was first redeveloped and make ministerial changes.

Gideon Schreiber, AICP, Senior Planner provided a review of the proposed amendment to the Arsenal Overlay Development District.

The Chair recognized Bridger McGaw, Athena Health who provided a power point presentation on their vision for the campus.

Following the presentation, the Chair opened up the hearing to councilors for comments/questions.

Councilor Dushku stated to Mr. McGaw; that you had me at Stormwater but he expressed concern with the parking garage for several reasons and asked why the need for the proposed 79 foot parking garage.

Mr. Bridges stated that they are removing some parking spaces for additional office space and that the additional 500 parking spots are for future growth of the company.

Councilor Dushku expressed his concern over the limited access points for the site.

Mr. Bridges elaborated on the access noting that they are still in the design phase and spoke to the potential redesigning and reopening of the Talcott entrance; which is currently a bike entrance.

Councilor Dushku asked if Athena can offer some other mitigation for the height, such as solar. He further stated that it is hard to understand why we are here tonight given the fact that Athena is still in the design phase.

Councilor Lenk also expressed concern with what is expected here tonight and stated that it is troubling to be asked to vote on something that has not been fully designed yet. She also stated that she is troubled with the proposed parking garage.

Mr. McGaw stated that the zoning text amendment is design to present a ten year plan for the campus and put out all the design ideas but that to do that they need permission to build the structure first along with a 79 foot parking structure in order to do all the other things they want to do.

Councilor Lenk suggested that they could move the proposed office space over to the west side and improve the existing garage.

Councilor Kounelis stated that she welcomes the concept and the greening of the complex but that she does not feel comfortable with so many issues.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that he also supports the concept and that the proposed amendments are fine and asked if two levels of parking can be put underground so as to address the height concern.

Mr. McGaw stated that the cost of digging into a superfund site is substantial.

Councilor Palomba stated his concern with the parking garage and asked Mr. Magoon if the amendments; once adopted, give the owner more things they can do by right.

Mr. Magoon stated that the original disposition of the site was with the WADC and once they were dismantled it went to the Planning Board and noted that the final say of the campus plan would be by right only after it is reviewed and approved by the Planning Board.

Vice President Corbett stated that he supports the proposal for many reasons including that the changes are not being promoted by a real estate developer who is interested in maximizing density for profits but a socially conscience, environmentally responsible company and indicated that the plan is attractive and welcoming.

Vice President Corbett also asked about putting some of the parking underground. Mr. McGaw stated that we are challenged by the existing soil but would look into it.

Councilor Woodland asked; in terms of the process; if we approve this tonight would they have to come back for approval of the design.

Mr. Magoon stated yes.

Councilor Woodland stated that he concurs with their vision and noted that the very people Athena is looking to attract will walk the designated areas in order to access all the amenities and further stated that he does not feel the proposed 79 foot parking garage is too daunting.

Councilor Falkoff stated that she would be prepared to vote for the plan without the parking garage as part of the proposal. She also cautioned and spoke against any digging of the soil under the garage.

The Chair stated that listening to the council and concerns of residents; it is difficult to approve a potential concept because once we approve something we lose control of it and noted that the Planning Board is not elected by the public.

The Chair opened up the hearing to the public.

1. Unidentified woman provided a visual of what the proposed parking garage would look like. She spoke against the proposed height of the parking garage.
2. Linda ?, 390 Charles River Road – spoke against the limited access to the site and difficulties in traffic flow that will result. She spoke against increasing the garage height and asked that no vote take place tonight.
3. Cathy Santorum, North Beacon Street – spoke against the proposed garage noting that it will bring down property values as it is not asthetically pleasing. She spoke to the issue of traffic problems and asked what recourse residents will have once the construction begins noting damage done to her house with the previous owner of the property. She stated that if Athena was that innovative; they would have more of their employees working from home and not need to build a higher parking garage.

4. Joe Lewendusky, 13 Templeton Parkway – stated that the vision is great but that the parking garage should be kept at 50 feet. He also spoke in keeping the control with the council and the community.
5. Elodia Thomas, Marion Road – she stated that the proposed parking garage is too tall and asked that the difference be split with two parking garages.
6. Bob Airasian, Watertown/Belmont Chamber of Commerce spoke in support of the proposal with respect to the retail component and eliminating surface parking and in support of the garage.
7. David Martin, 229 North Beacon Street – spoke against the proposed amendments as unreasonable and too fast paced. He asked that the Council not vote until a consultant is hired and new guidelines are in place.
8. Chip Finnie, New Rep Theatre – spoke in support of the parking garage and the project in general as a more attractive and inviting site for everyone. He spoke in support of more green space and the removal of surface parking.
9. Ernesta Kraczkiewicz, Riverside Street – read a [statement](#) in support of the proposal for storm water management and the green roof.
10. Meghan O’Halloran, Director of Belmont/Watertown Chamber of Commerce – spoke in support of the proposal noting Athena’s commitment to Watertown and the opportunity for small businesses. She spoke in support of removing surface parking and in support of the parking garage.
11. Rena Baskin, 15 Franklin Street – spoke in support of the green roof on a 50 foot parking garage.
12. Elaine Bean, Warren Street – spoke against the proposed parking garage and in support of either two 50 foot parking garages or a wider, lower parking garage.
13. Sharon Kline, Arsenal Center for the Arts – spoke in support of the proposal.

There being no further comments from the public, the public hearing was closed.

The Chair suggested that the Council vote to continue the public hearing.

Councilor Palomba moved to continue the hearing to a future date, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

The Chair called for a two minute recess.

8. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

a) [First Reading](#) and referral to the Planning Board – a Zoning text amendment proposed by the Watertown Housing Partnership to amend Affordable Housing requirements of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance. The Chair provided a first reading. The Manager provided a brief overview. The matter was so referred to the Planning Board.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a) Committee on Personnel and Town Organization [reports](#) with [evaluation composites](#) and a first reading on a COLA for the Council Clerk and Town Auditor – Susan G. Falkoff, Chair. Councilor Falkoff read the two committee reports. The Chair read a composite report for both the Auditor and Clerk and provided a first reading of their COLAs. Councilor Woodland moved to accept the reports, seconded by Vice President Corbett and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

The Chair noted that the COLA's will be advertised in the local newspaper for a public hearing and vote on September 10, 2014 at the next Town Council meeting.

b) Joint Committees on Rules and Ordinances, Economic Development and Planning and Public Safety [report](#) on additional liquor licenses – Kenneth M. Woodland, Stephen P. Corbett, and Susan G. Falkoff, Chairs. Vice President Corbett read the committee report and noted that the next meeting of the committees will meet on September 2nd at 7pm. Councilor Woodland moved to accept the reports, seconded by Councilor Falkoff and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

c) Committee of Public Works [report](#) on naming of streets/squares, town-wide water meters, an Energy Manager, and a Clean Energy Grant – Cecilia Lenk, Chair. Councilor Lenk read the report. Councilor Palomba moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli.

Councilor Dushku asked if there were other options regarding the grant monies. Mr. Magoon stated that the other option was to evaluate town parking lots and buildings and a limited number of commercial parking lots.

Councilor Dushku asked, given the concerns with the Clean Energy Manager position, has there been a decision. Mr. Magoon stated that there is a draft job description which will be finalized and sent out shortly.

Councilor Lenk noted that these were not things the committee could just pass on, as there were concerns; as noted in the report.

The report was adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

Councilor Kounelis moved to continue Council business past 10:30 pm, seconded by Councilor Piccirilli and adopted by with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba,

Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

10. NEW BUSINESS:

Councilor Dushku asked if we have considered solutions to the problems plaguing the Watertown Cable Access Corporation with respect to their website.

11. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER: the Manager reviewed the following:

- a) East End [Dog Park](#) - so referred to the public works subcommittee.
- b) [Burying of Utilities](#) – so referred to a joint subcommittee of Economic Development and Planning and Budget and Fiscal Oversight.
- c) Phase Two of Victory Field Design Proposal – community meetings on September 11th and 17th at the Watertown Free Public Library at 7pm; WSB room.

12. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION:

Councilor Kounelis asked for an update on the survey for Sampson Street.

Councilor Kounelis asked for a copy of the water retention plans for the AT&T property as Melendy Avenue, Laurel Street, Oak Street residents have experienced flooding which they feel is due to the AT&T property.

Councilor Falkoff stated that the old recycling center is an eyesore and asked what the plans are for the site.

Councilor Falkoff asked if there has been any progress with respect to codifying the Traffic Ordinances as previously requested.

Councilor Falkoff asked that the Town's website "calendar" be organized better.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS – none noted.

14. PUBLIC FORUM – none noted.

The Chair called for a moment of silence in memory of Dorothy Mee, mother of Gerald S. Mee, Jr., Superintendent of Public Works.

15. ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before the Town Council, Councilor Woodland moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 pm, seconded by Councilor Lenk and adopted by unanimous voice vote with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, Vice President Stephen P. Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

[Addendum](#)

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted on September 10, 2014 by unanimous voice vote.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President