



# 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 Woodland,  
District D Councilor

## SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015 @ 6:30 PM RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING MINUTES

1. **ROLL CALL:** A Special Town Council meeting was called to order at 6:30 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 Woodland, Vice President Corbett, and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll and Town Attorney.
2. **PUBLIC HEARING** and vote on a proposed [AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE and MAP](#) - BP Watertown Retail LLC submitted a petition request for a Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Map Amendment to create a new Zoning District, Regional Mixed Use District (RMUD), and further to amend the Watertown Zoning Ordinance (WZO). The amendments are intended to be in keeping with and implement the recently adopted 2015 Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map, which identifies an area for Regional Mixed Use. This request was reviewed by DCDP Staff and by the Planning Board and now includes amendments of, but may not be limited to:
  - Modified Definitions (open space),
  - Use Tables (mixed-use, cemeteries, assisted living, new/used vehicles for sale, light industry, heavy industry, and accessory uses) and Use Notes,
  - Dimensional Table (change of setbacks, coverage, impervious surface, minimum opens space, height)
  - Dimensional Notes (overall length and faced lengths),
  - New RMUD Section (intent, purpose, district delineation, dimensional criteria, authority, and procedure) - Creates a new Master Plan process and identifies the Planning Board as the permit granting authority
  - Site Plan Review (LEED and Energy Assessments requirements) and Parking, and updates to other sections as appropriate.

Further, the request will consider amending the Watertown Zoning Map by establishing the Regional Mixed Use District. The expanded area being considered

for the RMUD includes a substantial portion of the existing I-1 Zoning District and a portion of the I-3 Zoning District (along Coolidge Avenue) as identified on the Future Land Use Map of the adopted 2015 Comprehensive Plan and the proposed RMUD Zoning Map Amendment.

The Chair read the agenda item and recognized Boylston Properties; Bill McQuillan; Michael Wang and Eric Brown who provided an [in-depth presentation](#).

Mr. Steve Magoon, Assistant Town Manager and Planning Director provided a brief introduction and read a Planning Board report that summarizes the amendment.

David Gamble, Gamble Associates addressed the dynamics of zoning ordinances and the Master Plan processes.

The Chair opened up the hearing to the public and recognized:

Barraster Fiji, Urban Planner – noted that the brown area on the map - along the Charles River is the best place for the development of residential area (which is proposed to be mix-use).

Jonathan Bockian, Irving Street – submitted 8 proposed amendments to the RMUD.

Rena Baskin – stated that this is a huge step that is being fast tracked – take time to assess it so it is fully understood.

Chuck Dickenson, Church Lane – thanked Planning Department and the Town Council as well as Jonathan Bockian. He concurred with slowing down the process.

Russ Arrico, Fayette Street – he stated that - section 5.8 (d) – paragraph says it all. Rezone the mall so investors can make millions is a path of economic discrimination.

David Martin, Beacon Street – stated that he is extremely concerned with the open-endedness of the proposal.

Gary Shaw, Russell Avenue – explained what is possible in the zoning - showing a 3D document and a hypothetical example to give a sense of massing, height, and other issues. He stated that he does not have a position on this.

Diane Crowley, Parker Street – asked what provisions for public transportation and traffic in general as well as public housing.

Gayle Boyd, Arlington Street – expressed concerns about what will go into the property and noted that we are in danger of fast becoming an urban environment.

Joseph Gerson, 4 Washburn Street – provided political commentary.

Joseph Levendusky, Templeton Parkway – stated that we have a lot of concerned citizens, and that is a good thing.

Mark Peterson, School Street – spoke in support of reducing single occupancy vehicles. Spoke in support of Transportation Demand Management.

Barbara Ruskin, Spring Street – stated that we should continue this discussion with a variety of agencies for however long it takes.

Debra Peterson, School Street – stated that more time should be given to consider these amendments.

Judith Perue, Lexington Street – stated that the best way to combat resistance is for more information and participation.

Elodia Thomas, Marion Road – stated that she feels overwhelmed by these developments and noted that we want to feel profit and pride in our projects and asked that the town slow down.

Tom Gorman, Arsenal Court – stated that he is excited about all the new development happening. He spoke in support of the zoning.

Rena Baskin, Franklin Street – stated that action without vision is a nightmare.

Matthew Raymond, representing the Home Depot – spoke in opposition to the residential uses.

Diane Crowley, Parker Street – urged the Council to take time to make a thoughtful decision.

Jonathan Bockian, Irving Street – offered general observations of the master plan idea. Put some teeth into this with clear limits and guidelines for the Planning Board.

Maria Saiz, Hovey Street – stated that she is excited about the process of a master plan and encouraged by the coming changes; but worried as well about dealing with the changes that are here.

Bill McQuillan – Spoke to some issues raised.

Kathy Santoian, N. Beacon Street – thanked Jonathan Bockian for his contributions this evening,

Joseph Gerson, Washburn Street – stated that what we just heard from Mr. McQuillin should frighten us all.

Joseph Levendusky, Templeton Parkway – asked Mr. McQuillin to not denigrate or bully residents.

Chris Toomey, representing Home Depot – stated that the bullying and personal attacks by Mr. McQuillan do not belong in the process.

Ilana Mainelli, Duff Street – stated that she is offended by the remarks of Mr. McQuillan.

Joanna Refanno, Coolidge Avenue – stated that we don't know the objective; we need to know the scope and it seems that we are not clear and asked for a delay until we clearly understand.

Lisa Feltner, Parker Street – concurred with comments made by Jonathan Bockian and others and asked that this issue be deliberated fully.

Elizabeth Yusem – shared key points from an article by Bob Gary regarding North Carolina – highlighting quality projects and strong city planners.

Michelle Cokonougher – stated that Mr. McQuillan was very insulting and inappropriate.

Russ Arrico, Fayette Street – spoke against the comments of Mr. McQuillan.

There being no further comments, the hearing was closed.

Councilor Woodland presented background on the zoning of Pleasant Street.

Councilor Falkoff provided many ideas which included: being agreeable with encroaching (instead of a 100 foot buffer) if it was matched by double the amount of open space; she noted that she agrees with many of Jon Bockian's amendments; spoke in favor of TDM (Transportation Demand Management) town-wide and suggested it be referred to committee; she spoke in favor of step backs; community spaces; multiple points of access and noted that height might be preferable to massing;

Councilor Dushku stated that this is the Council's time to sit down; roll up our sleeves in committee and do the work to make this a better ordinance – not with suggestions; but with something to give it real teeth.

Councilor Kounelis stated that we are moving too quickly and commended Mr. Bockian and Mr. Shaw for all their hard work on documents. She noted that more dialogue is needed.

Councilor Palomba indicated that this redevelopment was going to happen and the responsibilities were going to fall with the Planning Board and subcommittee on Economic Development and Planning. He asked if this was the proposal the Town would have come up with; and is this the process we would have used.

Mr. Magoon answered no; but that as planning staff we don't have the experience as developers do and noted that it is hard to say what our process would have been.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that one of the reoccurring questions is – what is the vision here – do we still believe in the vision and goals laid out in the comprehensive plan. He indicated that he believes the answer is, yes. The vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan is regional mix use development which includes the addition of a lot of housing. The real question is; are we protecting enough of the public realm with access points. He stated that he is looking forward to moving this to the next step.

Councilor Lenk concurred with Councilor Piccirilli. She noted that malls are not the future. This is an exciting opportunity for Watertown and noted that this is not a bad proposal.

The Chair thanked all the people who came out tonight. He stated that the vision is not what is there now. He noted that there is an opportunity to transform what is now the mall to a more mix use vision. He suggested submitting all the amendments to the Planning Department and continue the meeting.

Councilor Falkoff moved to continue the meeting, seconded by Councilor Lenk.

Councilor Woodland suggested striving to get these amendments in as soon as possible.

Councilor Palomba suggested the subcommittee of EDP to convene a public meeting for further discussion of the ordinance for the RMUD with the Planning Department as soon as possible but not rush discussions.

The motion was unanimously voted to continue the meeting with Councilors Aaron Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr, Kenneth Woodland, Vice President Corbett and Council President Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

There being no further business to come before the Town Council, Councilor Woodland moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 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 Woodland, Vice President 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 Order was adopted by a vote of 9 for, 0 against, and 0 present on August 9, 2016.

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Mark S. Sideris, Council President  
s/MWP