



Watertown City Council

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President &
District C Councilor

John M. Airasian,
Councilor At Large

Caroline Bays,
Councilor At Large

John G. Gannon,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Nicole Gardner,
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,
District B Councilor

Emily Izzo,
District D Councilor

Report of the Committee on Economic Development & Planning Meeting Date: January 23, 2023

The Committee convened on Monday January 23, 2023 at 5:30 pm in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, as a hybrid meeting with remote participation for the public by Zoom. Present were Lisa Feltner, chair; John Gannon, vice chair; and Vincent Piccirilli, secretary. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct Public Arts & Culture Committee and Historic District Commission interviews.

Dawn Evans Scaltreto (by zoom) is seeking reappointment to the Public Arts & Culture Committee. She is a long-time Watertown artist, performer, and educator. She reports the new Committee is going very well, launching new projects and bringing together several community groups to collaborate. They are applying for grants, selecting pieces for the new sculpture walk, and working on a Cultural District in Watertown Square.

Carole Katz (by zoom) is seeking reappointment to the Public Arts & Culture Committee. She is the retired Marketing Officer at Watertown Savings Bank, former board member of the Arsenal Center for the Arts, and long-time community volunteer. She reports the new Committee has been very productive getting up to speed in its first year, working on a new Cultural District, Yard Art, Edible Watertown, and collaborative projects with other community groups. She wants the Committee to help perform more outreach, and celebrate the history and diversity of Watertown.

Harvey Steiner (by zoom) is seeking reappointment to the Historic District Commission. He is an artist who lives in the District and has served on the Commission since its creation in 2003, currently serving as Chair. Some of the recent challenges for the Commission has been figuring out appropriate ways to deal with solar panel and heat pump installations that do not visually detract from the buildings. He is still working on new signage and other streetscape elements identifying the District as part of the Mt. Auburn Street project, and the Committee suggested a Commission meeting with the DCDP and the DPW to see if this can be accommodated, as the project is at 75% design stage.

Linda Sternberg (by zoom) is seeking reappointment to the Historic District Commission. She is an attorney who lives in the District and has served on the Commission since its creation in 2003. While the Commission has been very successful working with property owners to provide suggestions on preserving the look of the district, she believed the guidelines in the ordinance need to be updated to reflect the new equipment to deal with climate change issues while still maintaining the visual character of the buildings. She also noted the publication requirement has become quite a problem with the loss of the local newspaper. The Committee suggested that the Commission work with the DCDP to update the ordinance and guidelines, as was recently done with the Historic Commission.

Jae Hyoun Kim is a Watertown resident and an architect and is seeking appointment to the Historic District Commission as the AIA (American Institute of Architects) appointee, recruited by the Boston Society of Architects. In his work, he is very interested in how the architectural design interacts with its social and cultural surroundings. He believes harmony of the old and new inspires creativity, and

that his background provides him with the judgement needed to preserve the feel of the District, while acknowledging the need for maintaining properties using modern materials.

Robert Bloomberg (by zoom) is seeking reappointment to the Historic District Commission as the Historical Society appointee. Trained as a historian, he has authored many articles, including a recent article on the Shick family and their dairy farm on Grove Street, and is working on an article about Jewish farmers of New England. He believes it is important to not only preserve historic buildings, but also the historic landscape surrounding them. He thinks the Mt. Auburn Street project will spur a lot of new projects for the Commission to review.

Elizabeth Hayes (by zoom) is seeking reappointment to the Historic District Commission as the Realtor appointee, nominated by the Greater Boston Realtor Board. She is a real estate broker and a former attorney. She works for clients in cities and towns such as Cambridge and Arlington who have Historic Districts, so she is very familiar with the process property owners have to go through, and takes a practical approach. Living on Mt. Auburn Street, she loves the look of the District and how it contributes to making Watertown a desirable place to live.

James Bensinger (by zoom) is seeking reappointment to the Historic District Commission. He is a retired Physics Professor who lives in the District. He feels that once property owners start discussions with the Commission, they take more pride in the District and welcome suggestions on how to improve their projects. The increasing availability of new composite materials that look as good as original wood products has been a positive trend. The issue of solar panels, which can be installed by right, has been a challenge, and more work is needed to make them fit in and look better.

➔ **Action Item:** Councilor Piccirilli made a motion, seconded by Councilor Gannon, to recommend that the City Council confirm:
Dawn Evans Scaltreto for reappointment to the Public Arts & Culture Committee for a 3-year term to expire November 15, 2025.
Carole Katz for reappointment to the Public Arts & Culture Committee for a 3-year term to expire November 15, 2025.
Voted 3-0.

➔ **Action Item:** Councilor Piccirilli made a motion, seconded by Councilor Gannon, to recommend that the City Council confirm:
Jae Hyoun Kim for appointment as the AIA member to the Historic District Commission for a 1-year term to expire November 15, 2023.
Elizabeth Hayes for reappointment as the Realtor member to the Historic District Commission for a 1-year term to expire November 15, 2023.
Robert Bloomberg for reappointment as the Historical Society member to the Historic District Commission for a 1-year term to expire November 15, 2023.
James Bensinger for reappointment as a residential property owner member to the Historic District Commission for a 2-year term to expire November 15, 2024.
Harvey Steiner for reappointment as a residential property owner member to the Historic District Commission for a 3-year term to expire November 15, 2025.
Linda Sternberg for reappointment as a residential property owner member to the Historic District Commission for a 3-year term to expire November 15, 2025.
Voted 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.
Report prepared by Vincent Piccirilli