



# 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: May 15, 2025

The Committee convened on Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 5:30 pm by Zoom. Present were Lisa Feltner, chair; John Gannon, vice chair; and Vincent Piccirilli, secretary. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board interviews.

Samuel Odamah has a Masters in Architecture and a Masters in Education, and is seeking reappointment as an alternate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, where he has served since 2023. He currently works at the Harvard Graduate School of Education as an academic coach. His first two years on the ZBA has been a great experience, and he has learned a lot from his fellow Board members. For each project, he listens and learns, and pays close attention to the public comments. For the new Watertown Square zoning, he believes the ZBA will work through the new challenges, and carefully consider how each project will fit into the community.

Melissa Santucci-Rozzi served for many years in planning for the city of Braintree, and is seeking reappointment as a full member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, where she has served since 2003 and is currently the chair. The Board has been working very well together, with all the vacancies filled, and a good mix of members with diverse backgrounds. Her professional experience allows her to see projects from both sides, as well as to understanding the nuances of state and municipal laws. With the new Watertown Square zoning, she believes the smaller in-fill projects will be the most difficult to balance with the existing built environment, as many of the sites directly about smaller buildings and two-family homes.

Janet Buck is a retired architect, and is seeking reappointment as a member of the Planning Board, where she has served since 2016 and is currently the chair. She is very happy since we added an alternate member to the Board last year, and the Board has been working well together and asking good questions. She is very excited about what Watertown has been doing with changing zoning to add more housing. The Watertown Square rezoning with its requirement for Site Plan Review for by-right projects means the Planning Board will be doing many more of these than in the past, and they may need more support from staff to work through the issues.

Abigail Hammett is an architect, and is seeking reappointment as a member of the Planning Board where she has served since 2021. Having grown up in Watertown, and then moved away, and then moved back, she finds it striking how much has remained the same, despite a lot of changes, and it is very satisfying to see how thoughtfully Watertown has embraced the changes. In the new Watertown Square zoning, the Site Plan Review for by-right projects will put pressure on the Board, as this will be the only chance for public input. There will be tension of how much design input is within the Board's purview, but the Board should not be afraid to ask questions, and continue a meeting if needed.

- ➔ **Action Item:** Councilor Piccirilli made a motion, seconded by Councilor Gannon, to recommend that the City Council confirm Samuel Odamah for reappointment as an alternate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals to a term expiring February 15, 2027. Roll call vote 3-0.
- ➔ **Action Item:** Councilor Piccirilli made a motion, seconded by Councilor Gannon, to recommend that the City Council confirm Melissa Santucci-Rozzi for reappointment as a full member of the Zoning Board of Appeals to a term expiring February 15, 2030. Roll call vote 3-0.
- ➔ **Action Item:** Councilor Piccirilli made a motion, seconded by Councilor Gannon, to recommend that the City Council confirm Abigail Hammett for reappointment as a member of the Planning Board to a term expiring February 15, 2028. Roll call vote 3-0.
- ➔ **Action Item:** Councilor Piccirilli made a motion, seconded by Councilor Gannon, to recommend that the City Council confirm Janet Buck for reappointment as a member of the Planning Board to a term expiring February 15, 2028. Roll call vote 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm on a roll call vote.

Report prepared by Vincent Piccirilli