



CITY OF WATERTOWN
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
WATERTOWN ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
149 MAIN STREET
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Melissa M. SantucciRozzi, Chairperson
David Ferris, Member
Christopher H. Heep, Member
Sarah Baker, Member
Alexander Dale, Member
Gregory Girard, Alternate
Samuel Odamah, Alternate

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MINUTES

The Zoning Board of Appeals held a public meeting on Wednesday, July 23, 2025, at 7:00 P.M. Held in the Council Chamber of the Administration Building, the meeting was conducted in a hybrid format so that participants could attend both in person and remotely, per applicable law.

Staff in Attendance: Gideon Schreiber, *Director of Planning and Zoning*; Antonio Mancini, *Zoning Enforcement Officer*; Sameena Pirani, *Principal Departmental Assistant*.

Board Members in Attendance: Melissa SantucciRozzi, *Chairperson*; Alexander Dale, *Member (Remote)*; David Ferris, *Member*; Sarah Baker, *Member*; Samuel Odamah, *Alternate (Remote)*; Gregory Girard, *Alternate*.

Board Member(s) Absent: Christopher Heep, *Member*

Chairperson SantucciRozzi opened the meeting and outlined the evening agenda, stating that continued cases would be heard first, beginning with 42 Frank St.

Motion made to approve minutes from June 25, 2025, by Member Ferris, seconded by Member Girard. Motion was approved by roll call vote(5-0) with Member(s) Dale, Ferris, Girard, Odamah and SantucciRozzi voting in favor.

42 Frank St.

Member Ferris read the legal notice. Chair SantucciRozzi stated the voting members for this petition.

Petitioner Esoos Bobnar gave the rationale for their petition. They were requesting approval to build an accessible addition to their home. Amber's 82-year-old father, currently in assisted living could be cared for at home. The addition would also serve future accessibility needs for their son, who used a wheelchair.

Architect Wayne Pelletier (remote) detailed the plans. He stated that the lot coverage had been reduced from an initially proposed 33% to 29.9%, eliminating the need for a variance. Accessibility

features would include wider steps and connection to the existing ramp system. The existing detached garage would be removed. Rear and front yard setback relief was needed but there would be no increase in total bedroom count. A 41-foot driveway would accommodate 2 parking spaces. A tree would need to be relocated in coordination with the Tree Warden. An alternative driveway off Loise St was considered but rejected to preserve a fenced in outdoor space created for their son by the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The family had received neighborhood support for the addition.

Member Odamah asked whether the submitted architectural drawings were final. Architect confirmed final design. Only structural (foundation/framing plans) pending.

Member Baker praised the thoughtful design, likening it to a game of “Tetris.” She asked whether the neighbor behind the property on Louise St had concerns about the new massing and windows that would face their property. The applicant confirmed positive communication and support from them.

Member Ferris requested and received clarification on several drawing inconsistencies. Based on his comments, Architect Wayne agreed to doublecheck and update A3, A5 and A2 to reflect the actual or intended configuration more clearly.

Chair SantucciRozzi noticed a discrepancy in the gross floor area calculations listed in the application. The addition was smaller than was originally proposed. She asked to ensure that the revised application form and final Decision reflect accurate lot coverage and building area.

Chair SantucciRozzi acknowledged the letters of support received from 26 Louise St and 41 Frank St.

Motion to approve the request for a special permit finding for extension within rear yard setback and variance for driveway setback from 10ft to 5.5 feet with conditions was made by Member Ferris, seconded by Member Baker. Motion was approved 5-0, Member(s) Dale, Ferris, Girard, Baker and SantucciRozzi voting in favor.

177 Westminster Av

Attorney Leitner presented updates to the plans including:

Design and elevation revisions (front entrances, front windows, rear windows), f

Clarification on façade and material (front brick façade, angle iron support for front brickwork), Consistent siding (clapboard on remainder structure)

Structural and layout changes (elimination of interior staircase to attic)

Revised elevations (A7-A10) and FAR clarification.

Chair stated that both alternates would be voting on this petition.

Key concerns raised by board members included the following

- Attic space ambiguity—if attic space was considered usable, it could push FAR above the .625 limit, exceeding the limits of the special permit. Staff suggested clarification in final documents that the attic would be unconditioned, non-habitable space, excluded from FAR.
- Inconsistent FAR calculations, especially on sheet C1 and related application materials
- Potential illegal basement unit given basement plans indicated a full bathroom, washer/dryer, sink, cooking/stove element and separate exterior entrance
- Material clarification—which parts were brick versus clapboard siding
- Drawing inconsistencies on window—Thicker window linework on Sheet A7 first floor windows. Architect confirmed that it was not a change in window type

Overall, the Board expressed concerns about drawing inconsistencies and incomplete or outdated plans.

Motion to approve the request for the special permit finding and special permit with conditions was made by Member Ferris and Member Odamah. Conditions added by the members included front door uniformity, basement use restrictions preventing unauthorized third unit creation without new application, submission of updated floor plans labeling rooms and 3D renderings, and consistency in exterior materials. Motion was approved 5-0 with Members Ferris, Dale, Girard, Odamah and Chair SantucciRozzi voting in favor.

61-63 Palfrey St

Member Ferris read the legal notice.

Architect Chris Brown accompanied by Tamara Kefeyan detailed the project and nature of relief sought. John Kefeyan attended the meeting remotely. Proposed work included enclosing front and rear porches, adding a third-floor master suite and improving rear entry and stair access.

Chair opened discussion to the Board

Member Ferris complemented the clarity of drawings, dormer design setback, matching windows and Hardie Board siding. Rear porch would be fully enclosed without side windows to maintain privacy due to tight setbacks.

Member Gerard supported the project and confirmed that the proposed solar panel array was a feasible future option, though not currently planned due to cost.

Member Dale encouraged early consideration of solar installation due to expiring tax credits, confirmed full electrification with heat pumps and clarified HVAC access for both units.

Member Odamah confirmed that there were no anticipated changes to the proposed plans.

Chair SantucciRozzi reiterated compliments on the clarity and quality of the presentation and drawings. She suggested modifying the conditions regarding siding and windows. The applicant was asked to submit an undated site plan showing a front porch adjustment. Motion for the special

permit for increased FAR was made by Member Ferris, seconded by Member Baker. Motion was approved 5-0, with members Odamah, Dale, Baker, Ferris and Chair SantucciRozzi voting in favor.

Motion to adjourn was made by Member Ferris, seconded by Member Girard. Motion was approved 5-0 with members Ferris, Baker, Dale, Girard and Chair SantucciRozzi voting in favor.