



CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
ROOM 305, WATERTOWN CITY HALL  
245 WASHINGTON STREET  
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380  
(315) 785-7741

MEETING: September 1, 2026

PRESENT:

MICHELLE CAPONE, CHAIR  
Linda Fields  
Maryellen Blevins  
Peter Monaco  
Scott Garrabrant  
Lynn Godek

ALSO:

Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and Community  
Development Director  
Geoffrey T. Urda, Senior Planner  
Joseph Albinus, Planner  
Angela Gorman, Secretary

Planning Commission Chairperson, Michelle Capone, called the September 1, 2026, Planning Commission meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. Ms. Capone asked for a motion regarding the minutes of the August 11, 2026, meeting. Linda Fields made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Garrabrant seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

**SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL –  
636 HILLCREST AVENUE, PARCEL NUMBER 1-13-357.001**

The Planning Commission then considered a request submitted by Stephen J. Gracey, PLS, of LaFave, White & McGivern, L.S., P.C., on behalf of Dawn Gerstenschlager for a two-lot subdivision of 636 Hillcrest Avenue, Parcel Number 1-13-357.001.

Mr. Gracey explained that the applicant owns several parcels in the area and is proposing to divide the subject parcel, which he said was located behind two existing residences. The resulting portions would then be assembled with the adjoining parcels associated with 632 and 636 Hillcrest Avenue. Mr. Gracey explained that the proposed subdivision and subsequent assemblages would address existing property-line and building encroachment issues and ultimately result in two parcels, each containing one residence.

The Commission reviewed the summary items contained in Staff's memorandum to the Planning Commission. Staff clarified that the applicant would be required to complete the proposed parcel assemblages following subdivision approval. Mr. Gracey indicated that the resulting combined descriptions had been prepared.

**PUBLIC HEARING -SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL –  
636 HILLCREST AVENUE, PARCEL NUMBER 1-13-357.001**

At 5:20 p.m., Ms. Capone then read aloud the notice that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times* and opened the public hearing. No members of the public appeared to speak regarding the application, and Ms. Capone closed public hearing at 5:21 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING -SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL  
162 BOON STREET, PARCEL NUMBER 8-01-110.000.**

Ms. Capone then stated that there was another public hearing scheduled for 5:20 p.m. regarding the subdivision of 162 Boon Street. She read aloud the notice that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times* and opened the public hearing at 5:21 p.m. No members of the public appeared to speak regarding the application, and Ms. Capone closed the public hearing at 5:22

The Planning Commission then returned to the discussion regarding the two-lot subdivision of 636 Hillcrest Avenue, Parcel Number 1-13-357.001. The Commission then completed Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF). Staff explained that the property is located within an area identified by the Disadvantaged Communities Assessment Tool as having comparatively higher burdens or vulnerabilities. The Commission considered whether the proposed action would cause or increase a pollution burden within the disadvantaged community. After discussion, the Commission determined that the subdivision would not cause or increase a pollution burden and further determined that the proposed subdivision would not result in a significant adverse environmental impact.

Ms. Fields moved to adopt a Negative Declaration under SEQR. Ms. Blevins seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Ms. Fields moved to grant the request submitted by Stephen J. Gracey, PLS, of LaFave, White & McGivern, L.S., P.C., on behalf of Dawn Gerstenschlager for a two-lot subdivision of 636 Hillcrest Avenue, Parcel Number 1-13-357.001, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall submit one (1) reproducible Mylar print and one (1) paper copy of the final plat for signature by the clerk of the Planning Commission, and upon return of the paper copy after signature, must file it in the County Clerk's Office within 62 days of signing.
2. The applicant shall assemble the 0.05-acre western section (Lot 1) with the two existing parcels also bearing a 636 Hillcrest Avenue address, Parcel Numbers 1-13-310.000 and 1-13-309.000, into a single combined parcel by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the Jefferson County Clerk.
3. The applicant shall assemble the 0.05-acre eastern section (Lot 2) with the two existing parcels bearing a 632 Hillcrest Avenue address, Parcel Numbers 1-13-308.000 and 1-13-307.000, into a single combined parcel by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the Jefferson County Clerk

Ms. Blevins seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

**SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL –  
162 BOON STREET, PARCEL NUMBER 8-01-110.000.**

The Commission then considered a request submitted by Scott Kolb, PLS, on behalf of David and Mary Gebo for a two-lot subdivision of 162 Boon Street, Parcel Number 8-01-110.000.

Mr. Kolb appeared before the Commission and explained that the applicants both own 162 Boon Street and 716 Eddy Street. The applicants propose subdividing an approximately 9½-foot strip from the easterly side of 162 Boon Street and assembling it with 716 Eddy Street. Mr. Kolb explained that an existing concrete retaining wall has historically appeared to serve as the natural property boundary. Because the owners are preparing to sell 162 Boon Street, they would like the property between the existing boundary and retaining wall to remain with 716 Eddy Street, thus the proposed subdivision and subsequent assemblage.

Mr. Kolb advised the Commission that the Zoning Board of Appeals granted an area variance on August 19, 2026, because the proposed assemblage would increase an existing nonconformity, as 716 Eddy Street already exceeds the 100-foot maximum width allowed in the Residential District and the proposed action would increase the width to 133.8 feet.

The Commission reviewed the summary items contained in Staff's memorandum to the Planning Commission. There was considerable discussion regarding the fifth summary item, which required the applicant to provide a metes and bounds description of the proposed assemblage of Parcel B with 716 Eddy Street. Mr. Kolb questioned the need for this when previous deeds could be referenced.

Staff explained that the City does not have a separate lot-line-adjustment procedure, therefore the proposed 9½-foot strip would technically become a separate parcel until it is assembled with 716 Eddy Street. Staff requested a copy of the combined metes-and-bounds description for the City's permanent records and emphasized that the applicant must complete the assemblage as proposed.

The Commission discussed the environmental information associated with the property, including the notation regarding remediation sites, as identified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) online EAF mapper, and the Disadvantaged Communities Assessment Tool. Staff explained that a remediation-site notation generated by the DEC mapping system does not necessarily indicate that the subject property itself was a remediation site. Staff further explained that the property is located within a disadvantaged community not identified as having comparatively higher burdens; therefore, the mapping did not affect the Commission's determination.

The Commission completed Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form. Ms. Fields moved to adopt a Negative Declaration under SEQR. Ms. Blevins seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Ms. Fields moved to grant Subdivision Final Plat Approval for the request submitted by Scott Kolb, PLS, on behalf of David and Mary Gebo for a two-lot subdivision of 162 Boon Street, Parcel Number 8-01-110.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall submit one (1) reproducible Mylar print and one (1) paper copy of the final plat for signature by the clerk of the Planning Commission, and upon return

of the paper copy after signature, must file it in the County Clerk's Office within 62 days of signing.

2. The applicant must submit a Request for Real Property Tax Law 932 Split form signed by the property owners to prevent the issuance of a tax certificate on a parcel that no longer exists.
3. The applicant shall provide a suggested description of the remaining 0.146-acre western section that would retain the 162 Boon Street address.
4. The applicant shall provide a metes and bounds description of the proposed assemblage of Parcel B with 716 Eddy Street (Parcel Number 8-01-108.000).
5. The applicant shall assemble the 0.015-acre eastern section (Parcel B) with 716 Eddy Street, Parcel Number 8-01-108.000, by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the Jefferson County Clerk.

Ms. Blevins seconded the motion, and all voted in favor

### **SITE PLAN APPROVAL – ROTH INDUSTRIES, 268 BELLEW AVENUE SOUTH, PARCEL NUMBER 9-43-105.000**

The Commission considered a request submitted by Christopher Todd of Aubertine & Currier Architects, Engineers & Land Surveyors, PLLC, on behalf of Roth Industries for Site Plan Approval to construct an 11,865-square-square-square-square-square-foot building addition and associated site improvements at 268 Bellew Avenue South, Parcel Number 9-43-105.000.

Ms. Capone noted that at the July 15, 2026, meeting the Zoning Board of Appeals granted an area variance permitting a maximum coverage of 68 percent, exceeding the 60 percent maximum lot coverage permitted in the Industrial District.

Mr. Todd appeared before the Commission and explained that the project consists of two building additions totaling approximately 11,865 square feet, expanded asphalt storage areas, four additional parking spaces, improvements to the existing ADA parking spaces, and modifications to improve truck circulation. He said that the proposed circulation pattern would allow trucks to enter the site, maneuver and back into the shipping entrance before pulling forward onto Rail Drive, eliminating the need for trucks to back down Rail Drive. He added that the existing utility infrastructure, including a transformer, makes combining the two proposed driveway entrances impractical.

Because the project will disturb more than one acre, the existing infiltration basins will be expanded. Mr. Todd stated that a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and stormwater calculations had been prepared and that the expanded infiltration basins are designed to maintain post-development runoff rates below pre-development levels. The primary discharge will continue to the storm sewer in Bellew Avenue South, with an emergency overflow route through existing culverts beneath Roundhouse Drive toward the Beaver Meadows area.

The Commission also reviewed the proposed landscaping, lighting, parking and driveway configuration. Mr. Todd explained that the expanded storage areas would be enclosed by chain-link fencing and landscaped with a variety of deciduous and coniferous trees. Mr. Todd said that the revised landscaping plan incorporated seven tree species to comply with City zoning requirements.

Engineering Staff had previously requested that the applicant investigate whether the two driveway entrances could be combined. Following review of the existing transformer location building configuration and proposed truck movements Planning staff, the Planning Commission, and the applicant agreed that maintaining two driveway entrances was justified and would provide safer truck circulation.

Prompted by a question from Ms. Blevins, the Commission discussed pedestrian circulation and the absence of sidewalks within the industrial park. Mr. Lumbis explained that internal sidewalks connect the parking areas to the building, but there is no existing public sidewalk network in the industrial park, and an additional public sidewalk was not being required as part of this project.

The Commission also discussed drainage toward the Beaver Meadows area. Mr. Todd clarified that stormwater would primarily discharge to the existing storm sewer and that the route toward Beaver Meadows would function only as an overflow during an extreme storm event or in the event of a backup. He further stated that no work or disturbance was proposed near the marsh.

Ms. Capone asked whether or not this project would impact the Western Outfall Trunk Sewer (WOTS). Mr. Lumbis and Mr. Todd responded that the WOTS is the sanitary sewer system and the project would not impact it. Stormwater would be directed to the dedicated storm sewer and not the WOTS.

The Commission completed Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form and determined that the proposed action would not result in a significant adverse environmental impact. Ms. Fields moved to adopt a Negative Declaration under SEQR. Ms. Blevins seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Ms. Capone commented that it was encouraging to see an existing business expanding within the City and that the continued growth of international business reflected positively on the City of Watertown, Jefferson County and the region.

Ms. Fields moved to grant Site Plan Approval for the request submitted by Christopher Todd of Aubertine & Currier Architects, Engineers, & Land Surveyors, PLLC, on behalf of Roth Industries for Site Plan Approval to construct an 11,865-square-foot building addition, expanded asphalt storage areas and associated site improvements at 268 Bellew Avenue South, Parcel Number 9-43-105.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall revise the landscaping plan so that it conforms to the requirements of Section 310-83 of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The applicant shall submit a revised set of drawings that satisfies all summary items for approval of the Planning and Engineering Departments, prior to the issuance of any permits.

3. The applicant must obtain the following permits, minimally, prior to construction: Building Permit, and a Zoning Compliance Certificate.

Mr. Monaco seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ms. Blevins moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Fields seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at **5:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Gorman, Secretary