



Town Council Budget Hearing

LAND USE DEPARTMENT FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

What Is The Land Use Department?

- ▶ Land use is made up of five inter related departments:
 - ▶ Building Services Department
 - ▶ Planning and Zoning Office
 - ▶ Planning and Zoning Commission
 - ▶ Conservation Commission/ Inland Wetlands Agency
 - ▶ Zoning Board of Appeals
 - ▶ Historic District Commission

What Is The Land Use Department?

- ▶ Five full time employees
- ▶ One shared employee
 - ▶ Asst Building Official shared with Thomaston
- ▶ Two interns (have recently moved on)

Department Highlights: Online Permits

- ▶ Building Services e-permit system is now online receive 60% of applications through the web portal easing the burden of in person applications;
- ▶ Building staff utilize mobile devices (Ipads) to process applications and inspections in real time in the field;
- ▶ Zoning applications and permits issued through epermit system;
- ▶ Next goal is online acceptance of zoning applications to create seamless online processing of zoning and building permits;
- ▶ After that, online processing of applications for Planning and Zoning Commission, Conservation/Inland Wetland Agency, Zoning Boards of Appeals, Historic District Commission.

Department Highlights: Zoning Revisions

- ▶ Finalizing first review of the zoning regulations, with the initial edits soon to be approved.
- ▶ Planned Development Districts
- ▶ Affordable/Alternative Housing
 - ▶ Bed and Breakfasts
 - ▶ Accessory Dwelling Units
 - ▶ Age Restricted Housing
 - ▶ Multi Family Dwellings

Department Highlights: Zoning Revisions

- ▶ Zoning standards impact town growth and development in innumerable ways
 - ▶ Uses allowed in business and industrial zones (self storage, ground level uses)
 - ▶ Use of drive throughs
 - ▶ Keeping of pets and livestock
 - ▶ Permitting process (short v long)
 - ▶ Home based businesses
 - ▶ Myriad conflicting standards that drive numerous variance requests

Budget Synopsis

- ▶ Projected Revenue Building Services: \$340,000
- ▶ Projected Revenue Land Use Department (all): \$73,500
- ▶ Total expenses Building Services/Land Use: \$539,671
- ▶ Proposal to cost share replacement of outdated plotter with Engineering (\$4,200)
- ▶ Combine office supply accounts for greater efficiency
- ▶ Other than salary adjustments and cost share above, budget requests same as last fiscal year.

Goals For The Next Fiscal Year

- ▶ **Implementation of Watertown's Vision for itself (Plan of Conservation and Development)**
- ▶ **Continue to Streamline the Land Use Regulatory Process!!**
- ▶ Fully implement the online e-permit system
 - ▶ Integrate building and planning systems for client ease of use
- ▶ Complete revision and edits of the town's zoning regulations
- ▶ Increase to the value of the Grand List