



Zoning & Planning Committee Agenda

City of Newton In City Council

Monday, March 25, 2024

7:00 pm
Room 204

The Zoning and Planning Committee will hold this meeting as a hybrid meeting on Monday, March 25, 2024 at 7:00 PM that the public may access in-person or virtually via Zoom. To attend this meeting via Zoom use this link: <https://newtonma-gov.zoom.us/j/87286706551> or call 1-646-558-8656 and use the following Meeting ID: 872 8670 6551.

Item Scheduled for Discussion:

#154-24 Appointment of Ramzi Elfekih to the Economic Development Commission
HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing Ramzi Elfekih, 15 Taft Street, Newton as a member of the Economic Development Commission for a term of office set to expire on April 1, 2027. (60 Days: 05/18/2024)

#155-24 Appointment of Hedy Jarras to the Economic Development Commission
HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing Hedy Jarras, 439A Dedham Street, Newton as a member of the Economic Development Commission for a term of office set to expire on April 1, 2027. (60 Days: 05/18/2024)

Chair's Note: Discussion regarding the below item will also focus on the recent memo from the Planning Department regarding the VCOD Economic Feasibility Analysis. The memo can be found [here](#).

#43-24 Quarterly update on projects using the VCOD overlay district
COUNCILORS ALBRIGHT AND DANBERG requesting updates on any potential projects brought to the Planning Department under the new Village Center Overlay District. The updates should include indications of interest and actual permits filed; for which villages and under which zoning districts; number of stories and units.

Zoning & Planning Held 6-0 (Councilor Albright Not Voting) on 02/15/24

The location of this meeting is accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.

#24-24 Request for discussion and possible ordinance amendments relative to aiding small businesses impacted by development

COUNCILORS ALBRIGHT AND KELLEY request the Planning Department with the assistance of the Economic Development Commission, research and develop mechanisms including ordinance changes or other means to assist local businesses impacted by development similar to the Somerville work. The goal of this docket item will be to help small commercial/retail/independent and locally-owned businesses remain in Newton as development occurs.

Zoning & Planning Held 8-0 on 01/08/24

Zoning & Planning Held 8-0 on 01/27/24

#72-24 Requesting updates on the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust

COUNCILORS DANBERG, ALBRIGHT, HUMPHREY, LUCAS, LIPOF, FARRELL, GETZ, BIXBY, KALIS, WRIGHT, GROSSMAN, AND KELLEY requesting periodic progress reports on establishing the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust.

#44-24 Requesting re-evaluation and possible amendments to Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance

COUNCILORS DANBERG, ALBRIGHT, KALIS, WRIGHT, OLIVER, MALAKIE, LIPOF, LUCAS, AND GETZ requesting a discussion with the Planning and Development Department and the Newton Housing Partnership about the City's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance and possible amendments to the ordinance to include 4-6 units, including raising the requirements for the number of affordable units in large developments.

#45-24 Discussion and Possible Amendment to Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance to include Training

COUNCILORS DANBERG, BIXBY, MALAKIE, DOWNS, WRIGHT, AND GETZ requesting discussion and possible amendment to require that developers and property managers provide training for their employees regarding bias toward residents of the IZ units and how to mitigate this bias.

#156-24 Reappointment of Charles Tanowitz to the Economic Development Commission

HER HONOR THE MAYOR reappointing Charles Tanowitz, 51 Harding Street, Newton as a member of the Economic Development Commission for a term of office set to expire on May 14, 2027. (60 Days: 05/18/2024)

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Lisle Baker, Chair



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

RECEIVED
2024 MAR 11 PM 4:47

#154-24

Telephone
(617) 796-1100
Fax
(617) 796-1113
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
Email
rfuller@newtonma.gov

CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02459

March 11, 2024

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

To the Honorable City Councilors:

I am pleased to appoint Ramzi Elfekih of 15 Taft Street, Newton as a member of the Economic Development Commission. Ramzi Elfekih's term of office shall expire on April 1, 2027 and the appointment is subject to your confirmation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Warmly,

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Application Form

Profile

Ramzi _____ Elfekih _____
 First Name Middle Initial Last Name

_____ _____
 Email Address

15 Taft Ave _____
 Home Address Suite or Apt

Newton _____ MA _____ 02465 _____
 City State Postal Code

What Ward do you live in?

Ward 3

_____ _____
 Primary Phone Alternate Phone

Sticky.io _____ Vice President of Product and Operations _____
 Employer Job Title

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Economic Development Commission: Submitted

Ethnicity

Other

Gender

Male

Interests & Experiences

Please tell us about yourself and why you want to serve.

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

I'm an entrepreneur and tech executive. I've been a resident of Newton for 5 years and I'm interested in being involved and contributing. I see a lot of potential for Newton to grow economically. I would like to be part of the EDC to bring new ideas and work with the EDC to make good progress.

[Resume_Ramzi_Elfekih-8-23b.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

RAMZI ELFEKIH

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Product Management & Technology Executive, leading product and technology teams from strategy, roadmap, to delivery, and establishing process and culture for cross-functional trust and growth.

- Experience in FinTech, payments, and financial systems, identity/fraud, iGaming, mobile apps, eCommerce, and regulatory compliance. Recently focused on multi-product platforms and user experience (UX).
- Successful Founder/Co-founder in two startups with P&L responsibility and success scaling the companies.

Core Competencies:

- Product vision, roadmap, Agile delivery
- Technology team management
- Growth & structure
- Multi-product platforms
- User experience
- FinTech & Payments
- E-Commerce / DTC
- Mobile apps
- Regulatory compliance
- Artificial Intelligence
- iGaming
- B2B / B2B2C / B2C

WORK EXPERIENCE

STICKY.IO, San Francisco, CA

03/2023 – Present

Subscription & Payments eCommerce SaaS with \$7 Billion in transactions per year.

Vice President of Product and Operations

Recruited by the CEO for a time-limited role to help turn around the company, and transition to an Enterprise Strategy, focusing on global Direct-To-Consumer (DTC) eCommerce brands

- Re-organized and streamlined the Product, Engineering/Technology, and Operations teams for a positive EBITDA, growth stability, and enterprise support
- Established Business plan with a focus on technology and product due-diligence for fundraising and M&A, working with investment bankers.
- Introduced AI-based Predictive Analytics, and specified API-First Composable eCommerce product suite, and associated payments features

CHARLES RIVER DEVELOPMENT / STATE STREET, Boston, MA

01/2021 – 03/2023

The Investment Management System manages \$36 Trillion in assets in investments.

Managing Director, Product Platform

Led the Product Technology Platform vertical as part of a strategic pivot. Executed on modernization, Cloud migration with stakeholders from Cloud Operations, Client Relationship Managers, Sales, Support, etc. Culturally shifted the organization to emphasize the end-to-end service (versus technology), defined the scope, and translated the vision to an execution plan, establishing data-driven prioritization.

- Initiated a major step toward SaaS services with a Self-Service Portal for the top customer requests/issues.
- Introduced best practices and operational efficiency, including automated Jira boards, plans, and roadmaps, reduced the planning phase from several weeks to a few days, and successfully executed three major deliverables per year.
- Worked closely with Engineers/Architects to influence the new technologies path for faster time-to-market.
- Led the transformation of the user experience (UX/UI) to be intuitive and empowered our partners and customers to contribute to the platform.

DRAFTKINGS, Boston, MA

10/2018 – 8/2020

DraftKings is a leader in iGaming and sports entertainment.

Head of Product Platform, Senior Director

Built and led the Product Platform team covering player accounts and conversion, wallet/payment services, identity/fraud, compliance, geo-location/geo-fencing, financial ledger, tools for fraud management, and customer success.

- Led the transformation to a multi-product platform to support a suite of games on mobile (iOS / Android) and led analytics-based UX enhancements to increase player conversion and deposit rates by >25%.

- Established a culture of ownership with vision, strategy, roadmap, KPIs, and accountability.
- Mentored my team to manage stakeholders, requirements, priorities, and expectations, and to be innovative with complex challenges.
- Created new components to improve time-to-market for payment integrations by 80%.

CREOVA, Paris, France

2009 – 2018

Mobile payment and E-commerce platform, B2B2C / White label. An integrated multi-services / products platform.

Founder & CEO

- Built an award-winning product and technology platform. Drove customer-centric UX for user conversion and high level of engagement for every market launched
- Built a distribution network with financial institutions and retailers in Africa and the Middle East.
- Sold to partners following international deployments in six countries.

GOOD TECHNOLOGY / BLACKBERRY, Bay Area, CA

2002 – 2008

Vice President Engineering & Solutions

- Led the development of mobile collaboration and security software solutions and introduced a scalable, distributed architecture with microservices, APIs, and SDKs.
- Grew engineering team from about 30 to 120+ alongside migrating cloud-based product to scale, running 12+ global deployments, integrated teams, and technology during M&A activity.
- Launched an office in Europe and worked on partnership deals with global mobile companies (e.g., Vodafone, T-Mobile, Orange, Turkcell, Ooredoo) in 25 countries.

TRENDIUM (Acquired by Viavi Solution), Ft. Lauderdale, FL

1998 – 2002

Internet Providers Service Quality Management & SLA software system.

Co-Founder, Technology Vice President

- Raised funds, built the engineering team, and deployed the product with the largest Telecom operators.
- Patented technology of a high-performance DB-centric system.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Program Director, RACAL DATACOM, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Vice President of Engineering, SATTEL COMMUNICATIONS, Los Angeles, CA

Consultant, Architect, and Senior Project Manager, LOGICA, INC., Bay Area, CA

Software Engineer, CISCO (formerly Summa Four), Manchester, NH

EDUCATION

Master of Science, Computer Engineering, BOSTON UNIVERSITY, Boston, MA

Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering, BOSTON UNIVERSITY, Boston, MA

AFFILIATIONS

Volunteer Mentor to Entrepreneurs and Start-Up Incubators/Accelerators (Founder Institute, Impact)

ACTIVITIES

Sailing, Tennis



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

RECEIVED
2024 MAR 11 PM 4:47

#155-24

Telephone
(617) 796-1100
Fax
(617) 796-1113
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
Email
rfuller@newtonma.gov

CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02459

March 11, 2024

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

To the Honorable City Councilors:

I am pleased to appoint Hedy Jarras of 439A Dedham Street, Newton as a member of the Economic Development Commission. Hedy Jarras' term of office shall expire on April 1, 2027 and the appointment is subject to your confirmation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Warmly,

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Application Form

Profile

Hedy _____ Jarras _____
 First Name Middle Initial Last Name

 Email Address

439A Dedham St _____
 Home Address Suite or Apt

Newton _____ MA _____ 02459
 City State Postal Code

What Ward do you live in?

Ward 8

 Primary Phone Alternate Phone

self employed _____ owner of Sweet Tomatoes Pizza _____
 Employer Job Title

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Economic Development Commission: Submitted

Ethnicity

Caucasian/Non-Hispanic

Gender

Female

Interests & Experiences

Please tell us about yourself and why you want to serve.

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

I am interested in joining to support small businesses in Newton. I am a small business owner, I have been in business for 25+ years in Newton and think I would be a good addition to the group.

Upload a Resume



Articles

People

Learning

Jobs

Get the app



Hedy Jarras

President at Sweet Tomatoes Pizza

Newton Centre, Massachusetts, United States · [Contact Info](#)

37 followers · 36 connections



[See your mutual connections](#)

Sign in to connect

[Message](#)

 Sweet Tomatoes Pizza

 Roanoke College

Experience



President

Sweet Tomatoes Pizza

Dec 1998 - Present · 25 years 4 months

Education

Roanoke College

Bachelor's degree · English Language and Literature, General

1993 - 1997

View Hedy's full profile

See who you know in common

Get introduced

Contact Hedy directly

[Sign in to view full profile](#)

NEW

People also viewed

Olivia M.



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

RECEIVED
2024 MAR 11 PM 4:47

#156-24

Telephone
(617) 796-1100

Fax
(617) 796-1113

TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089

Email
rfuller@newtonma.gov

CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02459

March 11, 2024

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

To the Honorable City Councilors:

I am pleased to reappoint Charles Tanowitz of 51 Harding Street, Newton as a member of the Economic Development Commission. Charles Tanowitz's term of office shall expire on May 14, 2027 and the appointment is subject to your confirmation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Warmly,

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Application Form

Profile

Charles (Chuck) Tanowitz
First Name Middle Initial Last Name

[Redacted]
Email Address

51 Harding Street
Home Address Suite or Apt

West Newton MA 02465
City State Postal Code

What Ward do you live in?

[X] Ward 3

[Redacted]
Primary Phone Alternate Phone

Paytronix Systems Director of Marketing
Employer Job Title Communications

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Economic Development Commission: Submitted

Ethnicity

[X] Prefer not to Answer

Gender

[X] Male

Interests & Experiences

Please tell us about yourself and why you want to serve.

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

It has been an honor so far and I look forward to continuing to serve.

Charles_Tanowitz.pdf
Upload a Resume

CHARLES TANOWITZ

MARKETING AND PR LEADERSHIP

HB AGENCY / ERIC MOWER AND ASSOCIATES – NEWTON, MASS.

Vice President, September 2013 to Present

Merged the PR teams from two agencies to work as a seamless unit, integrating Fresh Ground's social and media relations expertise with HB Agency's broader skill sets. Trained and mentored junior employees, expanded editorial capabilities, created a measurement platform, and built the internal culture.

FRESH GROUND, INC. – CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

CEO and Chief Content Officer, September 2009 to September 2013

Built a PR firm from scratch that delivered strategic outbound and inbound marketing and communications programs for technology and consumer companies. Hired and trained a team of top-notch PR professionals to lead media relations, social programs and content creation. Executed all operations and finance functions, and negotiated an acquisition by HB Agency.

SCHWARTZ COMMUNICATIONS – WALTHAM, MASS.

Director and New Media Strategist, February 2007 – May 2009

Account Supervisor, July 2004 – February 2007

Senior Account Executive, October 2000 – July 2004

Piloted the move into social media for one of the nation's largest technology PR agencies. Trained staff of 250 on how to integrate social strategies and tactics into effective public relations campaigns. Also managed internal and external resources for as many as five teams across various topic areas including information security, supply chain software, content management, open source, telecommunications, VoIP, content management, financial services, instant messaging, mobile technology and healthcare IT.

NAK GROUP – NEW YORK, NY

PR Manager, Writer and Advertising Copywriter, August 1998 – August 2000

Planned and executed all PR programs for an integrated advertising, marketing and PR firm with a focus on manufacturing and printing companies.

BROADCAST JOURNALISM EXPERIENCE

WCVB-TV – Needham, Mass.

WHDH-TV – Boston, Mass.

WBNG-TV, Binghamton, NY

WBZ-AM, Boston, Mass.

WRKL-AM, New City, NY

Freelance Associate Producer
Morning Producer
11pm Producer
Radio Producer and Tape Editor
Reporter / Anchor

CHARLES TANOWITZ

EDUCATION

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
M.S. with an emphasis on broadcast journalism

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
B.A. in English and American Literature and American Studies

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Ligerbots – Mentor on the FIRST Robotics team that serves both Newton high schools. **Guided the team as they secured \$2000 in sponsorship from Dunkin Donuts.**
- Village14.com – Regular contributor to a hyperlocal site devoted to Newton, Mass.
- Regular speaker and presenter on social media and media to groups including the Public Relations Society of America, the Social Media Club of Boston, Boston University, Harvard Extension School, Leslie University and Southern New Hampshire University.

SELECT AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- R.L. Tennant Award – Granted the highest honor by the Newton Needham Chamber of Commerce for service to the community
- Gold Bell – Top award by the PubClub of New England for the article Betting Big that appeared on Boston.com.
- Silver Bell, Organizational Identity Communications Campaign – Granted by the PubClub of New England for positioning Greentown Labs as the “Coolest Startup Space in Boston.”
- Sizzle Award – From Exhibitor Magazine for producing a daily publication on the show floor of PRINT 2000.