

## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

The Architectural Review Board is the steward of small-town character for Old Saybrook's commercial and multi-family development. The Town Charter charges the Board to "evaluate applications for site, building or sign development, redevelopment or construction from an architectural and aesthetic perspective with the goal of preserving the quality of our heritage and environment". Over the years, the Board has "raised the bar" by discussing issues that are often not considered by an owner, and therefore, out of the scope of his or her designers, such that they often "fall through the cracks". By taking a pro-active policy in realistically considering each developer's offerings and potential, we have found most all to be receptive to and appreciative of our requests and suggestions for adaptive fine-tuning. Our goal is to pass on to the Zoning Commission a positive recommendation reflecting mutually agreed upon modifications for permitting.

The Board reviews each development for building scale, style, and compatibility with its neighborhood; façade renovations are an important concern of the Board because the Zoning Commission often permits renovations as-of-right. The Board evaluates appropriateness of landscape design with respect to location and type. When reviewing signs, the Board makes recommendations with regard to compatibility with adjacent signs; of particular concern is review of the lighting of signs to avoid excessive illumination, glare in the public right of way, and protection of the environment. These *town-wide design standards* guide the Board in their decision making and are available at the Town Hall to all applicants for land use permits, as well as on the Town website.

During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, the Board reviewed one special exception use modification, one affordable housing development consisting of 15 units, and 28 signs. The Board participated in a Visual Preference Survey regarding how the Zoning Regulations' *town-wide design standards* might better depict effective structures, information and graphics for signs.

Chris Costa, Zoning Enforcement Officer, is available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon in the Land Use Department of the Town Hall to assist with applications and to answer questions concerning land use in Old Saybrook.

The Architectural Review Board meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Hall, second floor conference room. Kathy Noyes of the Land Use Department supports us as our Recording Clerk.

**Theodore "Guy" Pendleton, *Chairman***