

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
ANNUAL TOWN REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2004/2005

The Conservation Commission's purpose is established by the CT General Statutes as "...the development, conservation, supervision and regulation of natural resources..." According to this legislation, the Conservation Commission must keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including open marshlands, swamps and other wetlands, for the purpose of making the proper use of such areas; conduct research into the possible utilization of land areas of the municipality; and approve state grant-in-aid applications for programs to preserve or restrict the use of open space land to conservation or recreation purposes. In addition, the Conservation Commission may make recommendations on proposed land use changes to other municipal agencies (often by request of those agencies); recommend plans and programs for the development and use of all open areas; advertise, prepare and distribute booklets, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets for its purposes; inventory natural resources and formulate watershed management plans; acquire land and easements in the name of the municipality (with the approval of the townspeople); and manage municipally-owned open space property when the agency normally responsible for such duties (Parks & Recreation, by our Charter) delegates that power.

An update of the Plan of Conservation & Open Space for the Town of Old Saybrook was completed in the previous fiscal year. The plan's purposes and uses are many, including protecting the Town's natural resources, providing information to Land Use regulatory commissions as they process land use applications, and aiding the Town's Land Acquisition Committee in identifying properties of value to preserve for future generations. The Conservation Commission published and distributed to every household in Old Saybrook a booklet that contains this information, to be used both as an educational tool and as a means of enlisting the help of everyone in preserving and protecting the abundant natural resources that are a large part of the quality of life we enjoy in Old Saybrook.

The Conservation Commission and the Land Acquisition Committee recommended financial support from the Town toward the Old Saybrook Land Trust purchase of the 50-acre Fairbank property that is contiguous with the present town-owned Great Cedars Conservation Area and Town Park land. The Town will receive title to the land.

The Conservation Commission provided reviews requested by the Planning Commission for the following Subdivisions: The Preserve, College Point, Blue Point, Trinity Place, Otter Cove, Saltaire, Pasbeshauke, and North Cove Crossing.

Conservation recommended and petitioned for an Inland Wetlands Commission regulation change in order to provide that commission with the authority to consider plant or animal life and habitat among its criteria for decision-making, addressing a problem

caused by the recent Avalon Bay court decision. Inland Wetlands adopted the new regulation.

The Conservation Commission, in partnership with the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Old Saybrook Land Trust, contracted with the CT Coastal Conservation District to provide a natural resource survey and recommendations for trail locations on the east side of the Great Cedars Conservation Area. This work represents part of a renewed emphasis on the stewardship of this property in order to provide increased but sensitive use of the property by the citizens of the Town.

At the end of the fiscal year, the Commission was beginning the process of updating the Open Space Inventory and Open Space Map for the Town of Old Saybrook.

Robert W. Fish, *Chairman*

MEMBERS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Chairman	Robert Fish	(R) [06]
Vice Chairman	Jerry Brophy	(U) [06]
Representative to Inland Wetlands	Judy Preston	(U) [05]
	Charles Cobb	(R) [06]
	Walter Harris	(R) [05]
	Patrick Ingellis	(R) [05]
	Brian Zielinski	(U) [05]

LAND ACQUISITION COMMITTEE

Chairman	Robert Fish	Town Treasurer
	Jerry Brophy	Conservation Commission
	Scott Giegerich	Parks & Recreation Commission
	Howard Huelsman	Economic Development Commission
	William Peace	Board of Selectmen
	Kathleen Smith	Planning Commission
	Charles Wehrly III	WPCA