

## HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Connecticut General Assembly empowers a historic district commission to review for “appropriateness” the erection, alteration, demolition or removal of the exterior architectural features of any principal or accessory building, structure, or other work within a historic district. The Old Saybrook Historic District Commission conducts its review of such proposals for properties within the North Cove Historic District. The Commission consists of five regular members and three alternates appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

During the fiscal year 2007-2008, the Commission considered and approved various applications for Certificate of Appropriateness, including a pool house, a guide rail, driveway materials, roofing materials, additions to houses, a porch enclosure, a guest house, and new and expanded garages.

The Historic District Regulations acknowledge that there are certain activities that are exempt from the requirement for a Certificate of Appropriateness, including the color of paint, improvements that are not visible from a public place or the waters, and repairs necessary for health or safety. This year, the Commission streamlined the process for making that determination by creating a “request for exemption” from the certificate process. An inspection by the Building Inspector or the Zoning Enforcement Officer presents an administrative confirmation of the exemption with the provision that anything not immediately clear is merely referred to the Commission for the usual certificate process. A form to provide basic information in making such a request can be found on the Town’s website.

As usual, we welcome residents of the District to attend meetings. The Commission purposefully holds a public hearing on each application for Certificate of Appropriateness in anticipation of receiving information about the historical nature of these beautiful houses and the neighborhood. The commission meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall. You can keep abreast of what is on an agenda for any meeting through a variety of means including legal notice in the Hartford Courant of new applications, posting at the Town Clerk’s office and the Town website, or request for delivery via regular mail by submitting a year’s-worth of self addressed, stamped envelopes to the Town Clerk. We recently added automatic delivery of agendas via electronic mail through the Town website “subscription” service.

It is our desire to rekindle an interest in the historic nature of the North Cove neighborhood, especially among its residents. Any resident who is interested in filling a vacancy on the Commission is encouraged to contact the Office of the First Selectman.

**Robert A. Wendler**, *Chairman*