

LAND USE DEPARTMENT

The Land Use Department administers permitting, enforcement, inspection and public record-keeping for the Town's land use agencies, including: Architectural Review Board, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Commission, Harbor Management Commission, Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission, North Cove Historic Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Zoning Commission, and committees of the Board of Selectmen. In the past year, the Department focused upon standardizing its staffing, administration, and technical assistance to these agencies, including the addition of a part-time assistant planner to help with plan and GIS map production.

Through the Board of Selectmen, the Land Use Department continues to bring together on a quarterly basis the executive boards of the agencies that regularly deal with land use issues. The goal is to encourage cooperation, engage communication, and promote efficiency on an intra-municipal basis. During the past year, the Board has successfully encouraged each agency to promote itself as a part of Old Saybrook's overall "positive, exemplary community."

Additionally, the Department coordinates workshops to provide continuing educational opportunities for its "citizen planners" who volunteer so much of their valuable time and expertise as decision-makers in land use matters. In particular, the UConn Cooperative Extension Service selected Old Saybrook as one of five Connecticut municipalities to participate in an educational program regarding the protection of natural resources through implementation of land management policies and practices to reduce nonpoint source (NPS) pollution (stormwater runoff containing salt, oil, fertilizers, chemicals, nutrients from land use). Over the past and coming years (2001-2002), the *Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Project*, through a partnership with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Nonpoint Source Program, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 1, will help Old Saybrook to understand the basic principles of NPS pollution, the various options available to address NPS issues and other vital community issues like our responsibility to "Save the Sound".

As always, the Department was delighted in working with the members of the land use agencies that volunteer time and expertise as the Town's human resources. Old Saybrook is making great strides in shaping its future due to the sincere objectivity of these residents to observe how its residents, visitors and businesses interact with the social, physical, and economic patterns of Old Saybrook. The Land Use Department sends it thanks and encourages other residents to get involved, as well!

The Land Use Department is open from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. each weekday; the Zoning Enforcement Officer maintains office hours from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. each weekday, and the Town Planner is available by appointment Monday through Thursday.

Christine Nelson, AICP, Town Planner
Director of Land Use