

LAND USE DEPARTMENT

The Land Use Department conducts planning of the Town's land in corresponding strategies – the first being *current planning* via regulation of property owner's site-specific initiatives ("reactive" to market forces) and the second being *long-range planning* via implementation of the municipal improvements, programs and standards recommended in the Town's Plan of Conservation & Development ("proactive" to municipal needs).

The Department administers the business of the Town's land use agencies, including the Architectural Review Board, Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Zoning Commission. The Department is open to the public daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Carol Suits, Administrative Assistant, supports the day-to-day functions of the Department. Chris Costa, Enforcement Officer, maintains regular office hours daily from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Christine Nelson, Town Planner, is available by appointment Monday through Thursday. And, most often we can be found at the regularly-scheduled public meetings of these land use agencies throughout the evenings of each month.

Through the Board of Selectmen, we continue to bring together on a quarterly basis the agencies that regularly deal with land use issues in order to encourage cooperation, engage communication, and promote efficiency on an intra-municipal basis. This year, the land use agencies gathered to address 1) the *Town Center Gateway* area of the Boston Post Road, as well as *Route 1 East Industrial/Commercial Corridor* ("out towards Ferry Point"), 2) Architectural Review Board's *Design Excellence Awards 1999-2001* for new or renovated commercial development 3) the Board of Selectmen's consideration of *North Cove and its Current and Future Use*, 4) the collective efforts of the many land use agencies to *Protect Old Saybrook's Natural Resources*.

The Department has begun in earnest to support the Town's initiative to make more resources available through its website. This year, we began to regularly post both the agendas and minutes of the land use agencies, which is then available for viewing on-line or for subscribed delivery via electronic mail. Patrons of the Department and the land use agencies – applicants, attorneys, civil engineers land surveyors, adjacent property owners, the press and appointed/elected decision-makers themselves – save time and expense in keeping "in the know" as to municipal goings-on. I salute our administrative clerks who have so willingly learned the new technology and continue to provide seamless continuity to the increasingly-complicated tasks necessary for timely and convenient record-keeping, archiving and freedom of information. Thank you Janet Vinciguerra (ARB), Melanie Dautrich (CC), Andrea DeDominicis (IWWC), Katie Beecher (HDC/PC), Kathy Noyes (PC), Kim Barrows (ZBA), and Maura Farbotka (ZC).

Christine Nelson, AICP, Director of Land Use