

## LAND USE DEPARTMENT

The Land Use Department administers the business of the following agencies: Aquifer Protection Agency, Architectural Review Board (ARB), Conservation Commission, Planning Commission (PC), Historic District Commission, Inland Wetland & Watercourses Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Zoning Commission. The Department also administers the Town's Floodplain Management program. Each year, the Department assists in the work of a special initiative—this year, it is a team-effort with Youth & Family Services and the Parks and Recreation Department to support the work of the Early Childhood Council's first annual "One Book, One Town" initiative, which resulted in a survey of ideas for bettering Old Saybrook.

Reactive to market wants, the Department conducts current planning of the Town's land. Regulation of property owner's site-specific initiatives—permitting, enforcement, and inspection—require public review and extensive public record keeping for these regulatory agencies. During the 2018 fiscal year, the Department supported the following functions:

**Permitting**—Processed and provided 283 technical reviews of the 26 different types of permits for development that the land use agencies may allow. The Department provides one-on-one consultation with property owners, business tenants and land developers during the day, including the Town's needs for design of municipal improvements, and technical advice during the evening meetings of the regulatory agencies.

**Procedural Guidance**—Provided orientation to 7 newly elected or appointed members of the land use agencies. The Department hosted 2 joint sessions of the agencies with UCONN Cooperative Extension Educator, Bruce Hyde, of UCONN's Center for Land Use Education and Research, to refresh their understanding of "Basic Legal Issues" and "Fundamentals of Reading Plans"; hosted 2 regional trainings for municipal officials by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities for "Cyber Security" and to "Make Place Matter".

**Public Engagement**—Provided staffing for 112 public meetings, information sessions or community workshops. Our clerks, Kim Barrows, Stella Beaudoin, Sharon Migliaccio, Maggie Paccione and Meryl Moskowitz can be found at the gatherings of these agencies each month to provide timely reporting and to ensure compliance with Freedom of Information laws. Thank you to Sharon Tiezzi and Ellen O'Herlihy for filling in at our public meetings this year.

**Resource Development**—Processed external funding of \$70,000 to support innovative projects that promote sustainable land use: researched and identified funding sources to match resources; developed proposals for submission; managed funded projects to meet municipal objectives; worked in coordination with the Finance Department to provide oversight of funding source requirements.

**Youth Mentoring**—Participated in 6 opportunities to inspire young people about urban planning. The Department guided hands-on activities that put new skills into action through volunteerism—the Early Childhood Council's One-Book/One-Town program (pre-K through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade); the Middle School's #LoCoolGov program; a student member of the Conservation Commission through Youth & Family Services' Youth Action Council; staff counseling at Youth & Family Services' Environmental Stewardship Camp (grades 8-12); a high school summer intern; and a college-aged Project Assistant.

Proactive to municipal needs, the Department conducts long-range planning of the Town's land. Municipal initiatives—studies, programs, physical improvements—as recommended in the Town's plans including the Plan of Conservation & Development. During the 2018 fiscal year, the Department supported the following initiatives:

**Economic Development**—Supported the Economic Development Director in research of the local, regional and state "factors that affect economic development" in a study to update the strategy of the Economic Development section of the Town Plan.

**Historic Preservation**—Completed a database of the 200+ most historic resources on properties throughout Old Saybrook beyond those listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places. Considered nominations for recognition of Achievements in Preservation as part of a committee of the Old Saybrook Historical Society; the award was given to Stephen and Sandy Huber for preservation of the historic John Whittlesey, Jr. House (built 1693 and 1750) at 40 Ferry Road. Supported the nomination of the historic Cypress Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Marine Planning for Long Island Sound**—Co-hosted, with the Old Saybrook Conservation Commission, a film series about the effect of climate change on the waters that define Old Saybrook, including a film about marine spatial planning in support of the ongoing initiative of Connecticut DEEP Resource and Use Inventory and Long Island Sound “Blue Plan” (due in 2019).

**Natural Hazard Mitigation**—Completed an Community Coastal Resilience Study and Infrastructure Evaluation via a \$125,000 grant from the Connecticut DOH under its Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program.

**Residential Development**—Hosted presentations by the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Commission, the Shoreline Basic Needs Task Force, and the Central Connecticut State University’s Sociology Department about recent studies of the need and condition of housing in Old Saybrook as part of an effort to update the Residential Development section of the Town Plan.

**Route 1 East Redevelopment**—Completed efforts with the Economic Development Director to design place branding, analyze market conditions, improve road/streetscape infrastructure and consider site reuse for the Mariner’s Way portion of the Boston Post Road (East) via a \$200,000 grant from Connecticut DECD under its Brownfield Areawide Revitalization program (with an additional \$20,000 match).

**Sustainable CT**—Registered for Certification as a “Sustainable Community” and undertook an audit of the Town’s and the Region’s current practices and community collaborations to act sustainably—to strive to be thriving, resilient, collaborative, and forward-thinking; to build community and local economy; to equitably promote the health and well-being of current and future residents; to respect the finite capacity of the natural environment.

**Stormwater Management**—Implemented interdepartmental coordination; reviewed site plan proposals and conducted site inspections for stormwater quality concerns; continued the public education program.

**Town Center Improvement**—Completed reconstruction of North Main Street to improve drainage and add sidewalks in the Town Center node of pedestrian activity, and continued design of further streetscape enhancements around the train station (Stage Road) and town center (Route 1) via a \$125,000 grant from the Governor’s OPM under its Responsible Growth Transit Oriented Development program.

The Land Use Department is open to assist the public from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Chris Costa is the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Gillian Carroll is the Environmental Planner. Joey Genga was Project Assistant this spring, and Jampel Dorjee is our intern. Sarah Lyons, Administrative Assistant, manages the day-to-day business functions of the Department.

**Christine Nelson, AICP, Director**