

## **INLAND WETLANDS and WATERCOURSES COMMISSION**

The Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission meets on the third Thursday of every month at 7:30p.m. at Saybrook Point Pavilion. The Commission is responsible for regulating any activity located within one hundred feet of inland wetlands or watercourses in Old Saybrook.

The Commission has undergone numerous changes in the 2001-2002 fiscal year. On behalf of the Commission, I would like to thank Charles Monte who resigned after twenty years of dedicated service to the Commission, and Richard Tietjen who resigned to serve as an Alternate Member of the Old Saybrook Planning Commission. The Commission sends its condolences in the passing of friend and devoted Economic Development Representative, Robert Ganswindt who is greatly missed. Welcome to our new members appointed by the Board of Selectmen: Larry L. Bright, Jr. as a Regular Member, Paul Smith as an Alternate Member and Frank A. Reichart who will be representing the Economic Development Commission. In October of 2001, the Commission moved its office into the Land Use Department of the Town Hall. The Assistant Town Planner, Christina M. Costa was sworn in as our new Inland Wetlands Enforcement Officer so that Steve Lockett could focus more intensely on his duties as Water Pollution Control Authority Coordinator. In January of 2002, Commission Clerk, Ruth Hockert, resigned and Carrie Levesque became our new Commission Clerk. Many thanks to Steve Lockett and Ruth Hockert for their dedicated work.

In addition to everyday permitting and enforcement functions, the Commission has taken on a variety of projects. The Commission held many special meetings to prepare an Ordinance to Fine Violators of the Old Saybrook Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Regulations, which was adopted at Town Meeting in March of 2002. This Ordinance allows the Commission to fine individuals who refuse to cooperate with remediation efforts and promote protection and reestablishment of inland wetlands in Old Saybrook without costly legal fees. In association with this Ordinance, the Board of Selectmen appointed Richard Hanratty, a Legislative Attorney from the Connecticut General Assembly, to act as Hearing Officer in cases where any fine is disputed. During the adoption of this Ordinance, the public requested education on inland wetlands and as a result, Commission members have written and publicized articles on wetlands issues in both the *Saybrook Events Newsletter* and the *Harbor News*. Prior to this request, our Inland Wetlands Enforcement Officer was appointed as an Inland Wetlands Committee Member for the Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions, Inc. to assist in creating a wetlands commission service bureau to help develop programs and assistance for Connecticut inland wetlands commissions, agencies and staff. This appointment has and will continue to further educate our Commission on wetlands issues that occur throughout the State. In the spring of 2002, the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission was invited by the Conservation Commission to combine efforts on two projects. The Commissions began inventorying vernal pools with the assistance of Steve Lockett, our Former Inland Wetlands Enforcement Officer; Christine Nelson, Town Planner; Barbara Dworetzky of the Middlesex Soil & Water Conservation Service; and Richard Snarski, a Connecticut Licensed Soil Scientist. The Commission also assisted in guiding Conservation Commission intern, Kosta Spilliopolous, in researching, collecting and compiling information to begin updating the Town's inland wetlands map. Carrie Levesque, Commission Clerk, and Christina M. Costa, Inland Wetlands Enforcement Officer, have and will continue to make administrative improvements to make the inland wetlands permitting process more user friendly. To achieve this goal, the Inland Wetlands Enforcement Officer's hours have been extended to accommodate the needs of the public more efficiently. Filing procedures and application forms are being updated, a permit tracking database is being created, and a handbook of procedures to file an inland wetlands application will be available in the near future.

**Frank Jones, *Chairman***