



LAND USE

Above: 14th hole at Skungamaug River Golf Course.

ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR

2009 – 2010



LAND USE OFFICE

Inland Wetlands Agency

Zoning Board of Appeals

Economic Development Commission

Planning and Zoning Commission

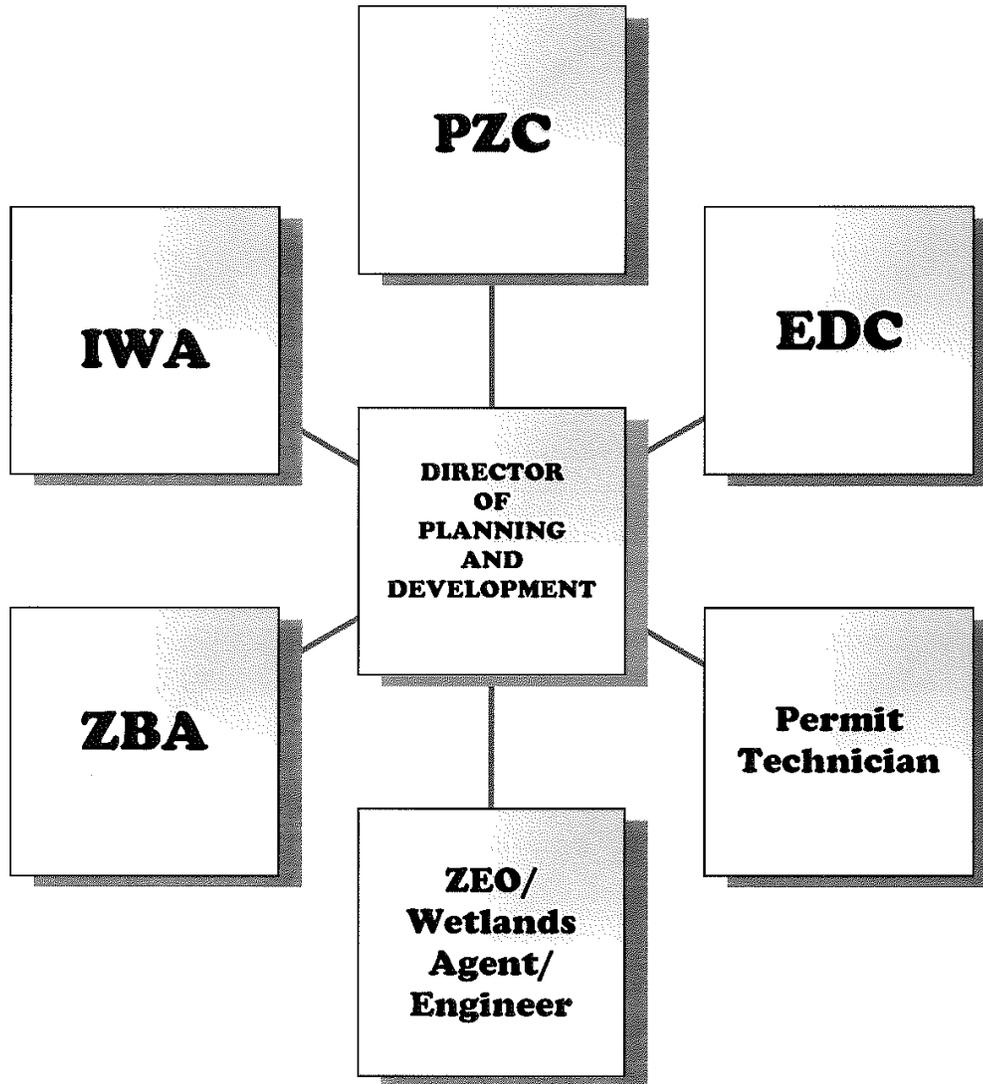
Eric M. Trott, Director of Planning and Development

Bonnie Potocki, Zoning Agent

Todd Penney, P.E., Town Engineer / Wetlands Agent

Brenda Bennett, Permit Technician

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING CHARTS



Director of Planning

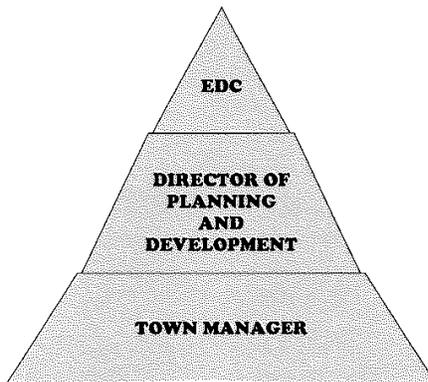
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Planning and Zoning Commission

	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10
Meetings	27*	25*	59*	49*
Applications:	40	28	21	25

The Commission meets twice a month for regular meetings. Only one meeting is regularly scheduled for the month of December.

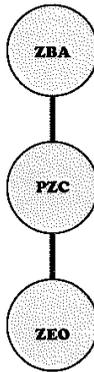
*The number of meetings changed due to the fact that the Commission held special meetings for review of the revised Zoning Regulations, Zoning Map and Plan of Conservation and Development.



Economic Development Commission

	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10
Meetings	10	11	11	11

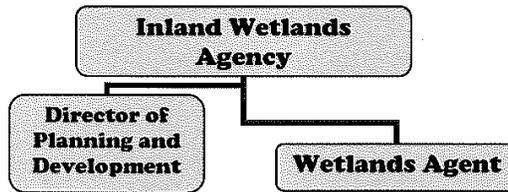
The EDC is scheduled to meet once a month excluding the month of November.



Zoning Board of Appeals

	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10
Regular Meetings	11	8	5	7
Special Meetings				1
Applications	17	9	9	17

The Board is scheduled to meet once a month.



INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10
Meetings	14	12	*13	11
Applications	69	50	51	35

The Agency is scheduled to meet once a month.

LAND USE OFFICE
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS SERVED

Planning and Zoning Commission

The purpose of the Land Use Office and Commission is to protect public health, safety and welfare through the administration of the zoning and subdivision regulations. The Office/Commission is responsible for reviewing development applications (i.e. subdivision, special permit, text/map amendment, site plan review) as well as guiding and managing land use activities. The Commission reviews and updates the zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, plan of conservation and development, and zoning map.

The Director of Planning and Development reviews all subdivision, special permit, site plan review and text/map amendment applications. In addition, technical assistance is provided to the Planning and Zoning, Economic Development, and Conservation Commissions. The Director of Planning and Development oversees the Land Use Office and staff (Zoning Agent, Wetlands Agent, Permit Technician and Recording Secretaries.) The Director regularly meets with members of the public, realtors, attorneys, etc., to discuss development procedures and options to provide guidance and advice on land use matters.

The Zoning/Wetlands Agent position was split into a full-time zoning agent and a part-time wetland position in 2001. The purpose was to provide an improved level of service and better meet the demands of the position.

The Zoning Agent is responsible for insuring that the Town's zoning regulations are complied with and directs enforcement activities when necessary. The ZEO reviews all zoning permit applications, inspects properties for certificates of compliance, and proper erosion and sedimentation controls. The ZEO answers daily zoning inquiries (phone, walk-in). The ZEO provides staff assistance to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Inland Wetlands Agency

The Inland Wetlands Agency reviews all applications/activities that could potentially impact the Town's wetland areas (i.e. subdivision, single-family, accessory use, etc.) The IWA reviews enforcement activities directed by the Wetlands Agent. The IWA reviews and updates its regulations. The IWA is responsible for administering the State's Aquifer Protection Regulations as directed by D.E.P.

The Inland Wetlands Agent is responsible for ensuring that the Town of Coventry's wetlands regulations are complied with and directs enforcement activities when necessary. The Wetlands Agent reviews all zoning permit applications that may involve regulated wetlands activities and inspects properties for proper installation of erosion and sedimentation controls. The wetlands agent answers daily wetlands inquiries and provides staff assistance to the Inland Wetlands Agency. The Zoning Agent and Director of Planning and Development assist in the basic Wetlands Agent functions when the Agent is not in the office.

Due to the resignation of the prior Wetlands Agent staff who served as a contractual consultant from the North Central Conservation District and the retirement of the Engineering Technician, a new arrangement involving the Wetlands Agent duties was created. In 2007, the Town hired a full-time Town Engineer/Wetlands Agent who serves as Staff to the Inland Wetlands Agency and administers the applications for the Agency.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals is responsible for the review of variance, special exception and motor vehicle dealer and repairer applications. The ZBA also reviews appeals taken of the decisions/actions of the ZEO.

Economic Development Commission

The Economic Development Commission is responsible for promoting the Town's business development in an effort to provide a blend of necessary services and employment while enhancing the commercial tax base of the Town. The EDC reviews all major economic development proposals and provides recommendations on an advisory capacity. The Director of Planning and Development provides staff support to the EDC.

View from Cassidy Hill Vineyard



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Members: (As of June 30, 2010 end of fiscal year)

Raymond Giglio, Roberta Wilmot, Mike Griswold, Darby Pollansky, Bill Jobbagy, Christine Pattee, Jonathan Kreisberg, Carol Polsky

Eric Trott, Director of Planning and Development

Brenda Bennett - Permit Technician

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

Due to economic downturn, fewer economic development projects have been administered by the Staff and Commission. This provided the Commission with the opportunity to carefully plan for the Town's future in the long and short terms, while still evaluating several smaller commercially related projects and issues.

The EDC carefully reviewed the situation involving the proliferation of motor vehicle dealer/repairer facilities in the Town and made a strong recommendation to suggest that the PZC delete the special permit use provision in the zoning regulations. It was the EDC's opinion that the Town has enough of this type of use and wishes for a better mix of economic development to provide goods and services to the community. The PZC ultimately deleted the special permit use. All existing/approved motor vehicle dealer/repairer uses are now considered legal nonconforming uses.

However, prior to the amendment becoming effective, two motor vehicle dealer/repairer locations on Boston Turnpike were evaluated by the Commission. One site contained an existing residence, storage use and real estate facility. The owner proposed to create a multiple use environment and adaptively re-use a portion of an existing storage structure and office. The second site is an existing commercial property that contains a residence and accessory buildings. The owner proposed to adaptively re-use the structures for the business and office.

The Commission approved a special permit for a new food service establishment on Boston Turnpike which proposed to utilize the structures and accessory amenities formally associated with the 'Notch Cantina'. The accessory area between the 7-11 and the motor vehicle repairer was proposed to serve as the location for the business.

A site plan review approval was granted to JodiLynn and Company to allow for the adaptive re-use of the former Coventry Shoppe property on Depot Road as a hair/nail salon. The proposed use is an appropriate fit for the location and allowed the business to remain in Town after relocation from her original site was necessary.

The Commission spent time evaluating the current home occupation regulations to determine if any changes were necessary to better serve the small business community. The Commission reviewed a number of different regulations from similar sized towns to get additional insight. The Commission met with a home business owner who has grown significantly over time to determine if adjustments to the regulations were required. After careful consideration, the Commission concluded that the current regulations were adequate and functioning well.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

Due to the current economic downturn, very few residential subdivisions and developments have been submitted for consideration. It appears that this trend will continue for the foreseeable future. However, the Town is fortunate to be in a situation where a number of larger subdivisions were approved in the past which provide an adequate 'bank' of available lots for development.

A number of small subdivisions were approved during the past fiscal year. These projects typically ranged from 1-3 lots in size and were of a traditional design, due to the scale and area associated with the development.

The Commission approved the Flanders Woods Condominium development off of Willow Glen Drive. This project offers a unique single family detached plan in a condo setting. A great deal of time and effort was made by the developer and designer to create a very low impact design with the project and provide a more affordable style of housing for the community.

The Commission approved an extension of time to complete the remaining phases of the Bidwell Village active adult community on Stonehouse Road. The project has unfortunately been slowed by the economic downturn and only phase 1 has been completed. The owners of the development have been seeking creative mechanisms that would enable them to proceed and complete the project. Several minor, but important adjustments have been made to the plan to accommodate the ongoing needs of the existing residents in the development.

OTHER APPLICATIONS:

The Commission approved a scenic road designation request for Riverview Drive. This road is in a lightly developed area and possesses unique natural and cultural features that the Commission felt would be appropriate to recognize as potential road alterations or development is considered.

A zoning text amendment was approved by the Commission which allows for greater flexibility in the placement of agriculturally related accessory buildings in the River Aquifer Zone. The amendment was sponsored by a citizen who owns property for the keeping of horses and needed accommodations for housing the horses.

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT:

After nearly two years of effort the Commission adopted the revision to the Plan of Conservation and Development. The Plan clearly represents the Town's visions and goals that were gained through a very inclusive public process. The Commission held numerous community visioning sessions, conducted a citizen's survey and hired a consultant to prepare a build out analysis and cost of community services study and had many one-on-one meetings with various community leaders. Overall, the community has applauded the efforts of the Commission and Staff for preparing an accurate and representative plan that will assist in guiding the Town's future.

OTHER PLANNING AND ZONING PROJECTS:

During the time of the preparation of the Town's Plan, the Commission and Staff continued to prepare drafts of two important planning and zoning mechanisms that were intended to be adopted subsequent

to the Plan's adoption. Both of these projects are supported and recommended in the Plan as necessary actions for the community.

A final draft of a revision to the open space subdivision design regulations was completed by Staff and a subcommittee consisting of members of the PZC and Conservation Commission. The intention of the revision is to focus on a more natural resource based design that relies heavily on a strong preliminary and conceptual design process at the onset of the project. These initial discussions would occur between Staff, Commission members, designer, developer and applicant to best understand the constraints of the land to be developed and provide for a reflective design to best protect the natural and cultural resources on site. Public hearings are anticipated during the fall of 2010.

Planning Staff completed work on the draft design guidelines for commercial development with Staff of the Green Valley Institute. This important effort was provided free of charge to the Town since they will serve as a template for the region. The guidelines provide a basis for designers and developers to understand the nature of what the community desires for new and infill development. The guidelines provide a broad spectrum of guidance on how to lay out a project, architectural appropriateness, landscaping details and other elements that are critical to create a project that harmonizes with the vicinity and overall community. In addition, the guidelines create confidence and certainty in the development process since the developer can be assured of the design necessary to facilitate a development in the community and inspire appropriate economic development in Town. The Commission anticipates adopting the guidelines in the fall of 2010.

A new digital zoning map was created through the efforts of the Plan preparation and will serve as the new, official zoning map as well. The required language for the map adoption has been prepared and the map amendment will be administered in the fall of 2010. The new map is a more accurate, readable and easily reproduced version that will replace the current CAD map for the Land Use Office.

PLANNING STAFF HIGHLIGHTS:

Planning Staff continues to serve as the Town's representative on the Route 6 Regional Economic Development Council and serves as secretary of the Council. The Council was formed by the Towns of Andover, Bolton, Columbia and Coventry to analyze the economic development potential for the Route 6 corridor that traverses each of the member towns. The Towns recognize the importance of working cooperatively to plan for the region's future along a significant transportation corridor. The Council received \$195,000 of grant funding assistance from the State OPM to allow for a corridor study to be performed which will continue to be implemented over the next fiscal year. The Council has hired a consultant to prepare the study which will focus on transportation, economic development, site development engineering and responsible growth strategies for the corridor. The final report is anticipated in the fall of 2010.

A transportation planning grant is also being administered by the Capitol Region Council of Governments through the work of a consultant who is applying the recommendations and goals of the Corridor Plan. This will enable the transportation planning consultant to suggest appropriate solutions that will coincide with the future development suggested in the corridor.

Land Use Staff continues to improve the GIS platform in the office. The office can use the information to provide more effective and comprehensive research and planning for the community as well as permit administration. The capacity of the office to utilize and expand the GIS system increased with the skills of the new Town Engineer, who is adept in GIS and AUTOCAD. Staff has worked closely with the Regional Planner and a specialized GIS consultant to organize and structure

the existing GIS mapping resources and files to improve the overall operation and effectiveness of this resource.

The Town entered into a contractual agreement with the Town of South Windsor to obtain Staff assistance with the continued development of the GIS platform. The Staff has been instrumental in the coordinating efforts of the newly formed GIS Usergroup that consists of a variety of Town Hall Staff who utilizes the resource. The Town is in the process of working with WINCOG, who recently has unveiled a new online GIS data source that integrates with assessor and Town mapping resources. The Community Explorer Online resource is expected to be discontinued by the end of 2010 to avoid duplication with the WINCOG resource.

Previously, Planning Staff spearheaded a campaign to create the Coventry Conservation Corps in Town. This group has been formed to allow for the stewardship and oversight of many of the Town's open space properties. The group visits and monitors the properties to ensure no inappropriate or illegal activity is occurring, as well as document the status of the sites. This volunteer service is of great importance to the Town because it allows for the task to be performed on a long-term basis by members of the public who have a vested interest in the preservation of their neighborhoods. In early 2009, the oversight committee began meeting to facilitate the efforts of the Corps. Planning Staff and the Corps Chairman orchestrated a member training forum to provide a background and guidance on the member's responsibilities. Planning Staff continues in the role of Staff support for the Corps and coordinates efforts to address issues that arise as a result of the ongoing inspections by the members. These issues include safety matters, invasive species and open space boundary demarcation.

Planning Staff was previously successful in obtaining technical assistance grant funding from the American Farmland Trust for 25 hours of staff time. A subcommittee of the Planning and Zoning Commission has completed the work with the AFT to evaluate the agriculturally related regulations and other relative policies in order to improve their function and support of the agricultural community. In addition, the subcommittee explored methods to expand the opportunities for equestrian related uses, due to the fact that the Town possesses a large number of horse owners, equine support services and areas conducive for riding. The recommendations that were drafted by the AFT Staff and the subcommittee will serve as a basis for the Commission's consideration of future zoning text amendments.

Planning Staff was previously successful in obtaining a \$50,000.00 technical assistance grant from the State Office of Policy and Management to hire a consultant to assist the Town in evaluating where it would be most prudent to consider establishing workforce style housing. The grant includes the opportunity to draft and adopt new zoning regulations that will assist in inspiring the development of such housing. Another aspect of the grant is a market study and housing needs assessment for the Town to help better understand the housing and real estate needs of a broad spectrum of the community. This information can be incorporated into the Plan of Conservation and Development in the future as well as an important resource that can be utilized to establish new planning and zoning policy. The State has clearly prioritized workforce housing as a critical amenity for our communities and this grant process is a significant mechanism and opportunity to establish more of this needed community component. The Town hired the consultant in April 2010 and work is expected to continue into the next fiscal year.

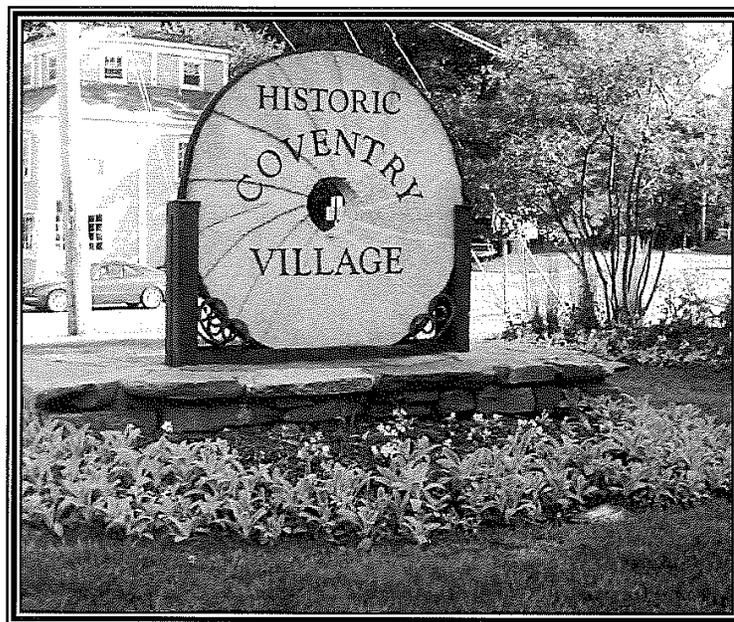
Planning Staff prepared and submitted a small grant request to the Connecticut Federation of Lakes to obtain funding to conduct an aquatic invasives and fertilizer usage educational campaign for Coventry Lake. The grant proposes to work with a newly formed group of high school students (CLEAN), who have dedicated their efforts to conduct outreach efforts to the community at large on potential threats

to Coventry Lake and offer insight into mechanisms that can serve to protect it. Another partner with the grant will include the Consortium of Coventry Lake Associations, an organization that consists of various representatives of the numerous associations around Coventry Lake. Staff anticipates a decision to be made on the grant by late summer with the hope to begin implementing the grant in the fall of 2010.

Planning Staff prepared and submitted a DEP Open Space Acquisition Grant in order to obtain a portion of a property that is available off of Pucker Street that possesses significant natural resources (Thornton Brook) and is adjacent to other open space properties owned by the Town. Prior to the submittal of the grant, Staff worked closely with the Conservation Commission to analyze and prioritize several potential sites/areas in Town that could be subject to the grant opportunity. The Pucker Street property was the highest priority, but this exercise was important to provide a basis for further open space planning efforts for the Conservation Commission. A decision is expected to be rendered on the grant in the fall of 2010.

The Town Council adopted a Blight Ordinance to address properties that have become distressed or abandoned. The focus is to gain compliance from the property owners to correct weed lots, dilapidated structures, debris storage and motor vehicle/equipment storage. The Land Use and Building, Health and Fire Offices are the hub of activity for enforcing the ordinance. Planning Staff serves as the coordinating staff for the enforcement activities by receiving, coordinating and administering efforts with the various Town Staff involved. A great deal of time has been dedicated to coordinate initial efforts and prepare for the complaints that are expected to be submitted over time.

Planning Staff worked with a volunteer citizen who assisted in revising and updating the Land Use Guidebook, which is a comprehensive resource that provides guidance and step-by-step instructions on the building/development/permitting process between the Land Use and Building, Health and Fire Offices. A working draft has been completed and is being finalized. Both comprehensive and topic specific copies of the guide will be placed on the Town website to assist the public in better understanding the Office's various processes.



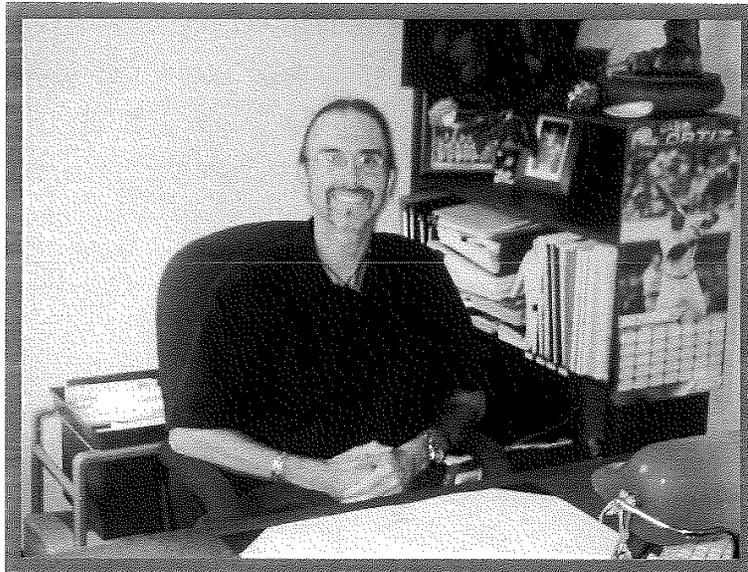
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – ACTIVITY LEVEL

A comparison between FY 08/09 and 09/10 indicates that the overall number of applications remained relatively the same from the previous fiscal year.

The number of special permits was exactly the same from the previous fiscal year. Only one special permit amendment was administered.

The number zoning text amendments increased from the previous fiscal year in an effort to accommodate flexibility and creative mechanisms to support the agricultural community.

The number of subdivisions increased by one from the previous fiscal year. The low number of subdivision applications is due to the nature of the economy and the impact to the residential market. Nearly all of the subdivisions were small in nature, ranging between 1-3 lots.



Eric M. Trott ~ Director of Planning and Development

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

ACTIVITY LEVELS

	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>08/09 AMOUNT</u>	<u>09/10 AMOUNT</u>	<u>APPLICATION DIFFERENCE</u>
SPECIAL PERMIT	APPROVED	10	10	0
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
SUBDIVISION	APPROVED	6	7	+1
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
ZONE CHANGES	APPROVED	0	1	+1
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
ZONING TEXT CHANGES	APPROVED	2	4	+2
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
SUBDIVISION TEXT CHANGES	APPROVED	0	0	0
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
SUBDIVISION AMENDMENTS	APPROVED	0	0	0
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
SPECIAL PERMIT AMENDMENTS	APPROVED	0	1	+1
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
SITE PLAN REVIEW	APPROVED	1	1	0
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0
SCENIC ROAD DESIGNATION	APPROVED	2	0	0
	DENIED	0	0	0
	PENDING	0	0	0

INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

Members: (As of June 30, 2010 end of fiscal year)

Darby Pollansky, Lori Mathieu, David Sorich, Raymond Chicoine, Thomas Woolf, Charlie Clapp, Michael Burokas

Todd Penney, PE - Inland Wetlands Agent

◆ Total number of applications considered by the Inland Wetlands Agency (IWA) for permits: **20**

❖ Outcome of applications:

➤ No jurisdiction	2
➤ Denied	0
➤ Approved	15
➤ Pending	0
➤ Withdrawn	0
➤ Agricultural	3

◆ Total number of applications considered by the Inland Wetlands Agent: **15**

❖ Outcome of application:

➤ Denied:	0
➤ Approved:	15
➤ Pending:	0
➤ Withdrawn:	0

◆ Nature of activities reviewed/regulated:

- ❖ Residential subdivisions/condominium developments.
- ❖ Drainage improvements
- ❖ Other:
 - Utility work.
 - Accessory structures
 - Lake drainage improvements.
 - Filling/grading.
 - Commercial proposal reviews.

INLAND WETLANDS AGENT

The Wetlands Agent serves as staff support to the IWA for their regular monthly meetings. The Agency continues to operate very efficiently under the Agent's guidance and has provided a very smooth transition in the level of service to the Agency and community at large.

The number of Inland Wetlands Agency permits has decreased from 18 to 13 from Fiscal Year 2009. This reduction may be influenced by the current economic climate. Conversely however, the number of Agent permits has increased from 17 to 20. These Agent applications tend to be administrated in a shorter and simpler process as compared to full Wetlands Agency permits. This has proven to be a valuable option for applicants.

For the most part, the Agency did not administer any significant activity permits with the exception of the Coventry's ARRA funded Main Street sidewalk project. The project involved the filling of an existing intermittent watercourse. The design was approved with downstream channel embankments stabilization outside of the project area to mitigate the loss of the intermittent watercourse and eliminate future downstream scour and sedimentation into a more valuable wetland complex downstream.

Most of the other approved permitted activities involved minor watercourse alterations and culvert installations and/or repairs. A subdivision involving property in Andover and Coventry offered an opportunity to implement a low impact design to minimize water discharge downstream into Coventry waters.

Todd Penney, PE – Town Engineer/Wetlands Agent



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Members: (As of June 30, 2010 end of fiscal year)

David Eddy, Erik Williams, Charles Clapp, Tom Pope, William Riordan, Jacque Collard, Jeffrey Shorts.

Bonnie Potocki, Zoning Enforcement Officer

PETITIONS:	16
Approved	13
Denied	2
Pending	0
Withdrawn	1
Appeal	1

One application that the ZBA administered involved them serving as the local authority per Connecticut General Statutes Section 14-54 to consider the location for a motor vehicle dealer and repair for the property located at 1988 South Street. This application involved significant Staff time with research, because the property has a long complex history of motor vehicle repair and sales starting in 1955. Issues involving historical nonconforming use, previous site plans and former permits issued by ZBA for this property were pertinent in the matter.

In April 2010, a variance application for an 8'x10' shed at 110 John Hand Drive was filed in response to a zoning violation, but the application was denied due to insufficient evidence to support a hardship. In June 2010, an appeal of ZBA's decision was filed with Connecticut Superior Court. It was necessary for Staff to coordinate the Town's response to the appeal with the Town Attorney.

An application was approved for a frontage variance request involving a 3-lot subdivision on Beebe Farms Road. The ZBA's approval allowed for the closure of a zoning enforcement case involving this property where a Cease & Desist Order was issued in April 2009 for the placement of an unregistered motor vehicle and storage shed.

Several applications for a variance of lot coverage in Lake Residence Zone were evaluated by the Board. During the process of administering these requests, the ZBA discovered that paved driveways can produce self created hardships for the applicants requesting a variance on lot coverage. The recognition of this theme has caused for Staff to provide special notification on the driveway apron permit to alert property owners that paving a driveway can affect lot coverage.

ZONING ENFORCEMENT

Bonnie Potocki, Zoning Enforcement Officer

<u>ZONING PERMITS ISSUED</u> (Agent Approved)	<u>230</u>
* Single Family Dwellings	29
* Condominium unit	2
* Accessory Structures	139
* In law units	0
* Residential Additions/Attached Garages	27
* Home Occupations	16
* Commercial Use/Signage	9
* Interior Renovations,	
* Outdoor Wood Furnaces, etc.	18
* Town of Coventry Projects	<u>1</u>
Total	237*

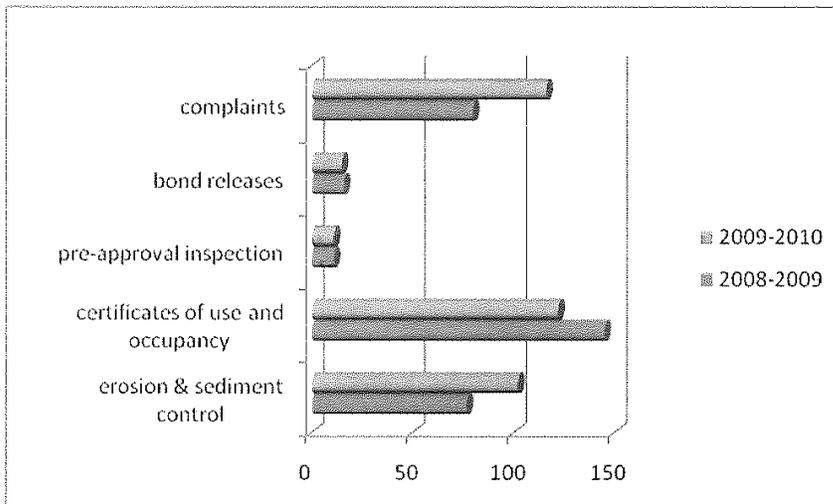
*Total differs due to more than one item proposed on a zoning permit.

<u>CERTIFICATES OF USE AND OCCUPANCY</u>	<u>147</u>
(Signed for zoning compliance by ZEO)	
* Single Family Dwellings	21
* Condominium/Adult Community	2
* Accessory Uses – Building and Structures	101
* Residential Additions/Attached Garages	17
* Commercial Signage	11
* Others	<u>11</u>
Total	158*

* Total differs due to more than one permit included on single C.O.

ZONING INSPECTIONS

* Erosion and Sediment Control	102
* Certificates of Occupancy	122
* Pre-Approval Inspection	11
* Seed & Mulch/Grading – Bond Release	15
* Complaints (See breakdown)	116
* Blight Complaints	9
* Street Number Assignment	21
* Other	<u>2</u>
Total	389**



Zoning complaint inspections increased significantly during the past fiscal year which can be attributed to required follow-up visits to track continued progress towards compliance. Erosion & sediment controls inspections are required for new house development. During the summer of 2009 and 2010, the Land Use Office received several complaints regarding uncontrolled erosion and runoff due to inadequate establishment or re-establishment of vegetative cover after new construction of single family houses. In response to these complaints, the ZEO developed an inspection procedure using 2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control for vegetative cover. This new form is now used to release seed & mulch bonds posted during the winter and early spring, before the growing season and late fall after the growing season for certificate of occupancy and use inspections for new single family houses.

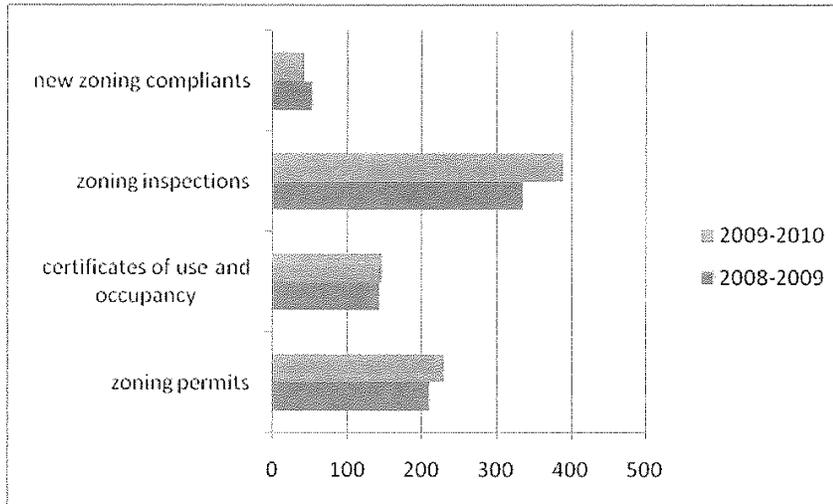
VIOLATION ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONS (Initial Inspections Only):

The following is a breakdown of the types of inspections made by the Zoning Enforcement Officer in response to written, signed complaints lodged by citizens for potential zoning violations.

Erosion and sedimentation, outdoor wood-burning furnaces, and drainage complaints associated with poor grading are investigated expediently by the ZEO due to their potential impact on the environment, and possible harm to citizens and private property.

<u>Category</u>	<u># of Complaints Investigated</u>
Erosion and Sediment Control	6
Drainage	2
Permit conditions not met	4
Non-permitted Activity or Structure	7
Conservation Easement	1
Outdoor Wood Burning Furnace	1
Home Occupation	1
Unregistered motor vehicles for sale	15
Illegal Dumping	2
Signs	2
Unlicensed motor vehicle dealer & repair	2
Total:	43**

** Listed are INITIAL inspections only. Additional inspections are commonly required to ensure compliance with the Regulations.



Compared to the previous fiscal year, a decrease in new zoning compliants was observed and can be attributed to a reduction in non-permitted activity or structures. However, complaints that were perceived as being related to zoning are now being submitted as blight complaints.

Blight Ordinance

The Blight Ordinance was adopted by the Town Council in early 2010. The Director of Planning and Development, who serves as the Blight Administrator, has assigned the following blight conditions to be investigated by the ZEO:

- Premises occupied by a structure intended for human occupancy, in which weeds, or similar vegetation (excluding flowers, fruits and vegetables, and areas maintained in their original naturally wooded state, or natural field state) is allowed to reach an remain at a heights of 36 inches or greater for a period of thirty (30) days or longer;
- Residentially zoned property with any combination of five or more pieces of mechanical equipment stored on the premises and in the public view;
- Residential or commercial zoned property that has any of the following conditions:
 - 1) Premises containing accumulated debris, not including compost piles or piles of grass and/or brush which are not visible from a public right-of-way and do not otherwise constitute a public health or safety hazard; or

The first blight compliant was received in March 2010. From March to June, 2010, the ZEO was forwarded 9 blight complaints. The ZEO has closed two of the nine blight cases. The other 7 cases continue through the enforcement process and involve other departments. The ZEO issued one Notice of Violation and the site has been brought into compliance. None of the blight complaints involve a foreclosed property.

ZEO Training

On June 2, 2010, the ZEO completed 2 years of on-job training as a ZEO and successfully completed 60 hours of zoning enforcement training and thus became a certified Zoning Enforcement Official.

Lot Buildability

The Town of Coventry conducted a property revaluation during the prior fiscal year. The results of the revaluation caused for the value of certain lots to increase. As part of the re-evaluation, the Assessor's Office is required to estimate if a lot is buildable or not. For this preliminary determination, the assessor used the required frontage and lot size of each lot based on the zoning district where the lot is located. This situation created a variety of questions from the public on what additional data can be compiled to demonstrate the nature of a property or its physical limitations that reduce its 'buildability' or capacity for development. In December 2009, a memorandum on 'lot buildability' was prepared to provide guidance and facilitate a process of information gathering that can assist in determining the development capacity of a lot.

ViewPermit

The ZEO was trained by the Building Official on how to enter approved zoning permits into the ViewPermit System, the Town's online permitting system.

Vision

The ZEO and the Land Use Permit Technician are now able to generate an abutters list from Vision for Zoning Board Appeals applicants.

Geographic Information System

A GIS committee which includes ZEO and the Director of Planning and Development and other Town Staff was formed. The contracted Town of South Windsor GIS professional meets with Town Staff on a monthly basis with the GIS Usergroup. The ZEO received training from the GIS Staff and completed the storm water culvert inventory layer for the Department of Public Works. Currently, all of the Town's information has been loaded into the various geodatabases. The GIS Staff has created 3 ArcView GIS maps for the Town Planner, ZEO and the Land Use Permit Technician to use.

ZONING ENFORCEMENT

Route 31 and 44 Motor Vehicle Sales

At the request of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Staff created an enforcement campaign on illegal used motor vehicle sales on RTES 31/44. Zoning Staff worked diligently to bring the sites into conformity. Once compliance was gained overall, the Commission suggested a shift of enforcement focus from the sale of used cars on Routes 31 and 44 to investigating blight complaints.

Illegal motor dealer and repair operation

A zoning complaint regarding an illegal motor dealer and repair operation on Grant Hill Road was submitted to the Land Use Office by a concerned citizen who was affected by an odor of paint emanating from the neighboring garage. The ZEO forwarded the complaint to State of Connecticut Department Motor Vehicle. In April 2010, DMV inspected the location, found the operations on-going and issued a misdemeanor summons for the operation of a motor vehicle repair operation on an unapproved site. In June 2010, the prosecutor from the Connecticut Criminal Court assigned to the case requested more documentation on the property from the ZEO. A Plea of Guilty was entered and the violator is awaiting a verdict from the court as June 30, 2010.

DEP Consent Order for an illegal Outdoor Wood Burning Furnace

In October 2009, the Connecticut Department of Environment Bureau of Air Management filed a complaint in the Land Use Office in response to a complaint filed in their office for the installation of an unapproved outdoor wood burning furnace. The Building Official and the ZEO inspected the property and found an outdoor wood burning furnace not in operation. The owner submitted zoning

and building permit applications and also received a Consent Order from DEP to comply with Connecticut General Statute 22a-174k. According to the CGS 22a-174k, outdoor Wood Burning Furnaces must operate only on wood that has not been chemically treated; must be located not less than 200 feet from the nearest residence not being served by the unit; and must have a chimney that is more than the height of the roof peaks of residences located within 500 feet of the OWBF, provided the chimney height is not more than 55 feet. The owner complied with the Order in June 2010 and received a certificate of occupancy use for the OWBF.



Bonnie Potocki- Zoning Enforcement Officer and Brenda Bennett – Permit Technician

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Members: (As of June 30, 2010 end of fiscal year)

Sondra Astor Stave, Bill Jobaggy, Roberta Wilmot, Timothy Liptrap, Barbara Barry, Richard Giggey, Mark Lavitt, Sam Belsito.

John Elsesser, Town Manager

Eric M. Trott, Director of Planning and Development

Coventry's Economic Development Commission (EDC) continued their efforts to attract new business appropriate for the community while supporting existing business and tourism efforts. The EDC recognizes that economic development requires a long-term commitment to create a positive atmosphere to attract appropriate development proposals.

A member of the EDC continues to revise and improve a 'New Business Primer' education resource for the business community. The primer is a 'one-stop-shop' source of information on what is required and recommended to start or expand a business.

The same member of the EDC also serves as a Committee volunteer with The Last Green Valley. This offers a link between the Town and an important regional organization that assists with grant funding and other vital resources.

The Chairman of the EDC is a free-lance writer who prepares articles on restaurant reviews for the Journal Inquirer. Due to her exposure in the restaurant business, she has made several connections with local and regional restaurant owners in order to attract more food services to the community.

A member of the EDC continues to be involved with the operation of the Visitor's Center, which serves as a business, cultural and civic information resource for the Town and the region. The Visitor's Center is being operated solely by the efforts of the volunteers.

The EDC strongly supports the efforts of the Coventry Farmer's Market. The Market was moved to the Hale Family Homestead in 2008 and has proven to be extremely successful and a significant economic development feature which supports the local agricultural community as well. Members of the EDC met with representatives of the Farmer's Market Board, The Landmarks Society and Town Staff to assist in the dialogue relative to the ongoing agreement for the use of the Hale Homestead Property.

The EDC reviewed the results a Nichols College student intern's work in preparing business plans for Song a Day Music and Le Muse Belle de Artiste. This effort is was a unique opportunity to bridge the business support efforts of the EDC, College with the needs of two small businesses. Overall, the two businesses were happy to have the experience and support that was provided. This effort is being considered to be extended to other local small businesses during future semesters.

The EDC hosted a business to business networking event at the Cassidy Hill Vineyard to offer an opportunity for local businesses to know the depth of the services that exist in the community and allow for cross marketing opportunities. One goal is to establish a mini Town chamber of commerce or business group that supports each other's cause to achieve better success. Future forums with specific goals and topics are being formulated for later in 2009 and 2010.

The Windham Region Council of Governments has administered a grant over the past two years by working with the consulting firm of AKRF to create a regional economic development plan involving the member Towns. Staff worked with the consultant to provide input during the preparation of the plan to reflect on Coventry's situation. The consultant has provided economic development profiles for the member Towns for the purpose of marketing and as an informational resource.

The EDC carefully reviewed the situation involving the proliferation of motor vehicle dealer/repairer facilities in the Town and made a strong recommendation to suggest that the PZC delete the special permit use provision in the zoning regulations. It was the EDC's opinion that the Town has enough of this type of use and wishes for a better mix of economic development to provide goods and services to the community. The PZC ultimately deleted the special permit use. All existing/approved motor vehicle dealer/repairer uses are now considered legal nonconforming uses.

An equine forum was sponsored by the EDC to learn how the Town could be more supportive of the equine industry and how this can serve as an aspect of economic development that is agriculturally related. The Town has a number of equine facilities that provide a wide variety of services and there is a unique opportunity to engage these businesses and expand on the potential of growth in this industry. The EDC is planning an equine event in the fall that will highlight these facilities in Town.

Staff and the EDC have developed a commercial property target development list that serves as a important quick reference resource that identifies key locations in Town that have economic development potential. The list describes the benefits of the site and potential compatible uses that could be considered on each. Additionally, each EDC member has been assigned a property and serves as the 'steward' of the property by acting as a contact person and advocate as interest in the property increases or a development application is considered. A forum is being planned where commercial property owners, developers, and other associated individuals will be invited to learn about the economic development activities that have occurred recently and meet the property stewards.

The Town hosted a Tolland County Chamber of Commerce 'Taste and Flavor of Coventry' event which highlighted the various food service establishments in Town. The event was held at the Cassidy Hill Vineyard and offered a great venue for members of the Chamber to learn of the restaurants that exist in Town.

The EDC continues to revise and update the Town's economic development brochure/business listing to maintain its relevance and accuracy. This marketing piece is a simple, yet effective way to identify the local businesses and provide a quick reference that can be easily offered to the public at various visible locations in Town.

The EDC continues to discuss and provide support to various businesses seeking approvals from the Planning and Zoning Commission. The EDC often serves as the 'business cheerleader' or advocate to assist in the processing of an application.

OFFICE OF CONSERVATION COMMISSION

To: John Elsesser Town Manager

From: Coventry Conservation Commission: Leroy A. Lowe Jr., Chairman; Rob Guliano, Vice Chairman; Bob Proctor, Sec./Treas.; Art Hall, Paul Manzone, Roy Shook, James Parda members.

Date: September 26, 2010

Subject: 2009/2010 Annual Report

The Coventry Conservation Commission has been busy this past year, as this report will show.

Open Space

The Coventry Conservation Commission completed the open space plan and mapping. The Open Space Plan /Mapping approved and became part of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Site Plan and Town Referrals

1. 09-16 Re-subdivision for Barbara Hilton, Brigham Tavern Road/Boston Tpke. (2 lots).
2. 09-23 Re-subdivision Joanne Solley (1 lot to 2 lots) 164 and 168 Pucker Street.
3. 09-28 Re-subdivision of the EST. of Frederick J. Malon (2 lots 48.78 Ac. Total) 765 Pucker Street.
5. 09-26S Phil Blazawski Auto Services 2724 Boston Tpke.
6. 10-01 Patriots Land Development (4 lots) 201 High Street.
7. 10-02 Andrew Ladyga "Anything Automotive" 2812 Boston Tpke. (7.99 Ac.).
8. 10-03 K.F. Realty "Hampshire Meadow" Skinner Hill Road.(39.3 Ac. 12 lots).
9. 10-07S Eric Springer 237 Woodland Road Proposed Building lot .29 Ac..
10. 10-08 Titan Construction/Trudon Construction Beebe Farms Road and South Street proposed 3-lot Subdivision (parcel a 3.31 Ac.).
11. The Conservation Commission reviewed and made comment on two applications for scenic road dedication Jones Crossing Road and Riverview Drive.

The Commission reviewed and made comments on the site plans and town referrals. This information was sent to the town staff and other agencies for their review and comment.

Workshops

None

Adopt-A-Road Program

As always the program is running smoothly with the support of the Land use Office and the Department of Public Works.

Publications at Booth and Dimock Library

Inactive at this time.

Items of general interest

1. We submit items to the town newsletter.
2. We hold elections of officers.
3. We submit a new budget for the year.
4. We participate in land use commission consortium meetings hosted by the Coventry Town Council.
5. Commission agendas, past meeting minutes, information flyers and postings are available for review on a commission-sponsored bulletin board in the Town Hall.
6. We post our agenda's and minutes on the town web site.

The Coventry Conservation Commission Worked on the following items of Special interest.

1. Members of the Conservation Commission worked with members of the Planning and Zoning Commission to construct form based design regulations for commercial construction.
2. The members of the Conservation Commission walked the "Malon Property on Pucker Street for consideration for possible open space purchase".
3. The Conservation Commission meets with the Steering Committee to review and discuss three areas of interest to the town for open space purchase; The Malon Property on Pucker Street, The Millbrook Greenway, and The Coventry Brook Greenway. A decision was made from this meeting to approach the Malon family to see if they would be interest in an open space purchase.
4. The Conservation Commission signed a letter of support for the "DEP" Open Space Acquisition Grant for Land acquisition for the "Malon property on Pucker Street".
5. The Conservation Commission reviewed the Plan of Conservation and Development for things of interest to the commission and we have started to work on some of them at this time; Trails & greenways (Coventry Brook & Skungamaug River areas), and conceptual site design for the Colvest property.
6. Reviewed for comment the revised draft (April 2009) of Natural Resource Based Site Plan.
7. The Conservation Commission work on and completed proposed Stone Wall Regulation "NEW" for subdivision and existing Stone Walls.

The Coventry Conservation Commission would like to thank the town staff for its assistance and guidance in helping us accomplish many of our projects throughout the year.

I would like to thank the members of the Conservation Commission for their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted

Leroy A. Lowe Jr.
Chairman