



LAND USE

*Above: The Market Barn at Nathan Hale Homestead after one of the heavy snowfalls during the winter of 2012-2013.
Photo by Laura Stone.*

TOWN OF COVENTRY ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year:
2012 – 2013



Thornton Brook Preserve

LAND USE OFFICE

Inland Wetlands Agency

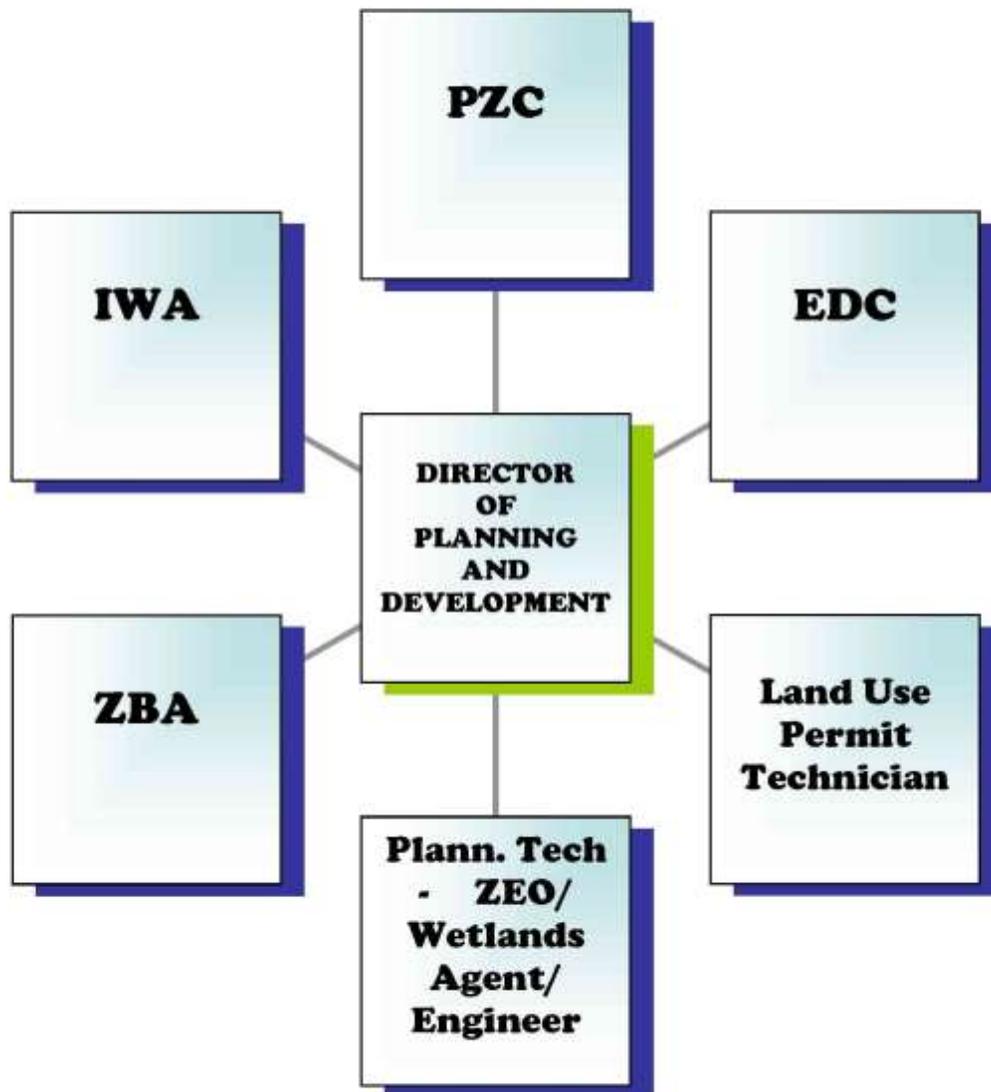
Zoning Board of Appeals

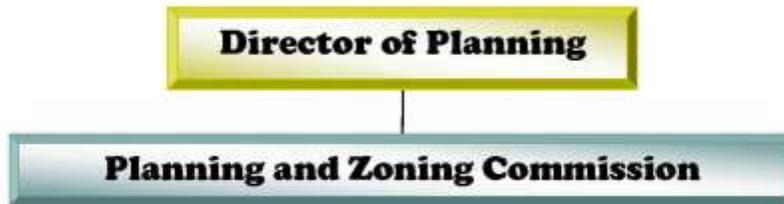
Economic Development Commission

Planning and Zoning Commission

Eric M. Trott, Director of Planning and Development
Michael Antonellis, Planning Technician/Zoning Enforcement Officer
Todd Penney, P.E, Town Engineer/Wetlands Agent
Heidi A. Leech, Land Use Permit Technician

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING CHARTS





Planning and Zoning Commission

Fiscal Year	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Meetings	25*	59*	49*	22*	20	17
Applications	28	21	25	27	13	10

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 over the past two fiscal years 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

Fiscal Year	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Meetings	11	11	11	11	9	10

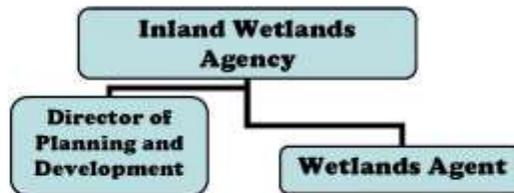
The EDC is scheduled to meet once a month excluding the month of November.



Zoning Board of Appeals

Fiscal Year	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Regular Meetings	8	5	7	10	6	4
Special Meetings	0	0	0	1	0	0
Applications	9	9	17	15	7	2

The Board is scheduled to meet once a month.



Inland Wetlands Agency

Fiscal Year	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Meetings	12	*13	11	13	12	12
Applications	50	51	35	39	28	28

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, Conservation Commission, Coventry Lake Advisory and Monitoring Committee. The Director of Planning and Development oversees the Land Use Office and staff (Planning Technician/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 Planning Technician/Zoning Agent is responsible for insuring that the Town's zoning regulations are complied with and directs enforcement activities when necessary. The PT/ZEO reviews all zoning permit applications, inspects properties for certificates of compliance, and proper erosion and sedimentation controls. The PT/ZEO answers daily zoning inquiries (phone, walk-in). The PT/ZEO provides staff assistance to the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning and Zoning Commission and Conservation Commission.

Inland Wetlands Agency

The Inland Wetlands Agency (IWA) provides regulatory oversight for all activities (land disturbances as defined by the Regulations) involving wetlands, water bodies, and watercourses; including defined upland review areas from the wetlands, water bodies, and watercourses. 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 Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (D.E.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 Planning Technician/Zoning Agent and Director of Planning and Development assist in the basic Wetlands Agent functions when the Agent is not in the office.

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.

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission is an advisory commission that focuses on environmental, conservation and open space matters. The Commission is responsible for making recommendations on open space purchases, planning and updates to the Open Space Plan and Natural Resource Inventory. The Commission is also involved in other efforts, such as stone wall awareness and maintenance, Adopt a Road program and provides recommendations to the Planning and Zoning Commission on land use applications.

Coventry Lake Advisory & Monitoring Committee

The Coventry Lake Advisory & Monitoring Committee is a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission that focuses on issues relative to Coventry Lake and its associated watershed. The Committee serves as an advocate for the Lake, compiles data and performs analysis on information that pertains to lake water quality, aquatic invasives and other threats to it. The Committee organizes activities for the Coventry Lake Awareness Month each July and works with Staff to organize the yearly State of Coventry Lake Forum. Efforts are underway in the development of a Lake Management Plan as well.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Members: (As of June 30, 2013 end of fiscal year)

Raymond Giglio	Stephen Savell	Darby Pollansky
William Jobbagy	Christine Pattee	Roberta Wilmot
Eric M. Trott, Director of Planning and Development		
Heidi Leech, Permit Technician		

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

Despite the downturn of the economy over the past few years, the Commission has still authorized a number of significant economic development projects over the past fiscal year. These projects involve a new use as well as substantial improvements to existing businesses.

Planning, Zoning and Wetlands Staff carefully worked with the owner of the Lakeview Restaurant and his designers to accommodate a new outdoor patio project on the shores of Coventry Lake. Although the project posed some design and construction challenges, the end result will provide for a sensitive and functional arrangement for the location and business. The project is expected to commence in the fall of 2013.

The former Daisy's Creamery was purchased by a new owner who proposed a significant addition to the restaurant that allows for year round indoor seating. Planning Staff worked closely with the new owner to create an architectural design that complies with the Coventry Village Design Guidelines and provides a functional arrangement for the existing facility. The new Reid's Grill and Creamery was approved by the Commission and opened in the spring of 2013.

The owner of Coventry Automotive proposed an addition to the facility to provide more adequate work and storage space for the business. Planning Staff facilitated the design and review process to create an architectural design that complies with the Commercial Development Design Guidelines and provides an appropriate layout that is in context with the existing building. The Planning and Zoning Commission approved the proposal, but the owner has yet to pursue the construction.

Planning Staff worked with the new owner of the former DPW Garage facility on Bradbury Lane to examine appropriate layouts for a new Millbrook Trail link on the subject property. The garage was sold to Earth Dynamics, who is adaptively re-using the site for an office, equipment storage and repair. They proposed to perform the trail improvements as part of their re-use of the site. The Planning and Zoning Commission held a concept plan meeting with the new owner and was supportive of the adaptive re-use and proposed site improvements. The new owner is currently using the site.

Planning Staff and the Commission worked with a tattoo artist to create new regulations to permit tattoo studios in Coventry Village. The applicant's proposal involved an adaptive re-use of an historical structure. At the time of the proposed zoning text amendment for the new use, the Commission spent time to examine the zoning definition of 'personal' and 'professional' use and suggested new language that would expand the allowable uses. A text amendment will be prepared for the Commission to adopt the new language.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

Due to the current economic downturn, fewer residential subdivisions and developments have been submitted for consideration when compared to previous years. It appears that this trend will continue for the foreseeable future. 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. However, the Commission approved and conceptually considered three new open space design subdivision proposals of a sizable nature.

The Commission approved an open space design subdivision on Riley Mountain Road. The proposal involves the creation of 13 new lots on a 40 acre parcel that is directly adjacent to Maynard Farms. The design provides over 20 acres of permanently protected conservation easement area. Planning and Engineering Staff worked with the designer to address the road and drainage improvement needs for the project. These solutions needed to be creative, due to the substandard nature of the road with the existence of a significant archaeological site along the frontage of the property. The Commission approved the proposal in the fall of 2012.

The Commission held a second preliminary review with the owner of Maynard Farms on Riley Mountain Road to review a proposal to develop a portion of the 100 acres into 14 lots. The proposal would include a new emergency vehicle access between Riley Mountain Road and Woodmont Drive to address access needs for the substandard nature of the road system in that location. The developer will likely be seeking approvals from land use commissions in the fall of 2013.

The Commission approved an open space design subdivision on Dunn Road. The proposal involves the creation of 10 new lots on a 34 acre parcel. The design provides 20 acres of permanently protected conservation easement area. A portion of the easement area will be protected agricultural area that can be actively utilized for a number of purposes, such as hayfield, livestock grazing and other cultivation. The Commission approved the proposal in the winter of 2013.

OTHER PROJECTS:

In the fall of 2011, the Commission formed a working group of members as well as representatives from the Town Council, Inland Wetlands Agency, Parks and Recreation Department, Conservation Commission, Conservation Corps and Coventry SOS. The mission of the group is to carefully examine and study the various components of 'open space – protected lands' in Town. The group continues to meet on a monthly basis in an effort to understand the experience the community has had over the past decade and previously with open space matters. Statutes, regulations, developments, studies, reports and other resources have been evaluated by the group. Ultimately, the group will be drafting a report of findings and recommendations that will serve as a basis for a land use consortium meeting, likely during the late summer of 2013. Planning Staff serves as the staff support for the working group.

PLANNING STAFF HIGHLIGHTS:

In May of 2012, the Zoning Enforcement Officer resigned from the position to accept another employment opportunity. This created a vacancy in the Land Use Office between May and September. In addition, the Land Use Permit Technician resigned from the position to pursue another position within the Town Hall which created a vacancy after the close of the fiscal year. The duties associated

with these positions were assumed by the Director of Planning and Development, in addition to those the Director is required to perform. The office was served temporarily by a part-time assistant who was extremely helpful in assisting the office during a very busy time of the year.

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 prepare a corridor study, which was completed and adopted by the member Towns in early 2011. This report received awards from the American Planning Association and American Society of Landscape Architects due to its creative planning solutions.

A transportation planning grant was also administered by the Capitol Region Council of Governments through the work of a consultant who applied the recommendations and goals of the Corridor Plan. This enabled the transportation planning consultant to suggest appropriate solutions that coincides with the future development suggested in the corridor. The project was completed and presented to the member towns in 2012.

The RECD continues to prepare zoning regulations and design guidelines that will serve all four towns of the Corridor. The goal is to have harmonious and consistent regulations and design criteria that will achieve the goals and recommendations of the Corridor Studies.

Land Use Staff continues to improve the GIS platform in the office. A GIS User group consisting of a number of Town Hall Staff has been meeting once a month with the Town's IT consultant to discuss ways of improving and expanding the GIS system. The Land Use 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 as well as the new Planning Tech/ZEO who is very adept in GIS applications. 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 Council adopted a Blight Ordinance in 2010 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 continues to be dedicated to coordinate efforts of the enforcement program. The program has proven to be successful overall in addressing many blighted properties throughout Town. The Town Council also adopted a revision to the Ordinance that provides broader allowances for the Town to enter private property and assist in clean-up efforts when required.

The Planning and Zoning Staff and Parks and Recreation Department continue to work with the Conservation Commission to prepare new trail maps of various Town parks that can be available as either a hardcopy or for download on the Town's website. Staff performs site walks to obtain GPS

data points for the mapping and site inventories and evaluations are collected that serve as a basis for the map narrative. The Town's IT consultant has been instrumental in assisting with this project due to the GIS needs. Maps are available on the Parks and Recreation Department website for the following Town properties: Millbrook Park, Riverview Trail Park, Patriot's Park Woods and Creaser Park. New maps are currently being prepared for Thornton Brook Preserve and Laidlaw Park.

Planning Staff facilitated volunteer efforts to perform trail improvements on two walking trails that were in need of attention. An Eagle Scout performed a project to construct natural benches, clear more amenable trail sections and improved accessibility overall at Patriots Park Woods. The Girl Scouts are performing trail blazing activities in Laidlaw Park to improve access on existing trails to encourage expanded use. The Town is very appreciative for the volunteer efforts of the Scouts.

Three years ago, Planning Staff submitted and was awarded a \$190,000.00 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. Staff continues to work closely with the surveying consultant, DEEP, the owner's attorney and the Town Attorney to finalize the conveyance. The ultimate closing for the conveyance of the property is anticipated in the late summer of 2013.

Planning Staff continues to work the State of CT Department of Agriculture on a project that involves the purchase of development rights on a significant 55 acre agricultural property that possesses frontage on the Willimantic River. The Town intends to utilize existing open space purchase funds and leverage them with funds from the CT Farmland Trust, Joshua's Trust and the CT DoAg. The closing on this project is expected in the fall of 2013.

Planning Staff spent a great deal of time with other Town Staff to execute the Solarize Coventry program during the spring and summer of 2013. Coventry was chosen by the Clean Energy Financing Investment Authority to participate in the SolarizeCT program which allows citizens to participate in a group purchasing program to install photovoltaic solar systems for their homes at discounted prices. The Town selected a preferred installer that served the residents. The program was very successful and the Town was able to achieve the lowest prices for the residents by encouraging town-wide inclusion in the program. Ultimately, the number of residential solar systems tripled in town due to the benefits of the SolarizeCT program.

Planning Staff worked closely with the Coventry Lake Advisory & Monitoring Committee to plan for the 2013 State of Coventry Lake public forum that is held annually in September. Guest speakers were chosen for the forum based upon an agreed upon topic. In addition, Planning Staff worked with an intern in the Parks and Recreation Office to create a Survey Monkey – citizen's survey on lake recreational issues. The Committee members drafted the survey that covered a variety of relative issues. The Committee will analyze the results and incorporate findings into a Lake Management Plan that is being drafted.

Planning Staff and the Planning Tech continue to work with the Conservation Commission on the preparation of town-wide bike route mapping. The goal is to create a variety of different routes that meet different cycling capacities and connect points of interest, such as parks, recreation areas or

business areas. The Commission ultimately is interested in developing a bike plan for the community as well and is reviewing sample documents and resources to examine the options for such a resource.

In coordination with the Town's complete renovation and improvement of its website, the Permit Technician Staff worked on various Land Use Office website improvements to improve the amount and nature of available information and resources that are available to the public. These improvements include expanded resources available, improved Coventry Lake page and enhanced clarity for better navigation as well as more informational material to assist the web visitor.

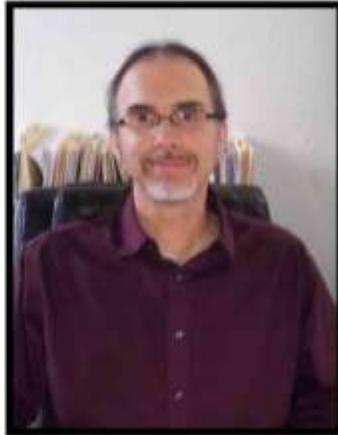


PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – ACTIVITY LEVEL

A comparison between FY 11/12 and 12/13 indicates that the overall number of applications remained relatively the same from the previous fiscal year.

The number of special permits and subdivisions was virtually the same from the previous fiscal year.

The number of zoning text amendments decreased slightly from the previous fiscal year. There were no subdivision text amendments, a decrease from the previous fiscal year.



Eric M. Trott
Director of Planning and Development



Michael Antonellis
Planning Technician/Zoning Enforcement Officer



Heidi A. Leech
Land Use Permit Technician

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
ACTIVITY LEVELS**

	ACTION	11/12	12/13	APPLICATION DIFFERENCE
Special Permit	Approved	8	7	-1
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	
Subdivision	Approved	2	2	0
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	1	0	
Zone Changes	Approved	0	0	0
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	
Zoning Text Changes	Approved	2	1	-1
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	
Subdivision Text Changes	Approved	1	0	-1
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	
Subdivision Amendments	Approved	2	0	-2
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	
Special Permit Amendments	Approved	0	0	0
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	
Site Plan Review	Approved	0	0	0
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	
Scenic Road Designation	Approved	0	0	0
	Denied	0	0	
	Pending	0	0	

INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

Members: (As of June 30, 2013 end of fiscal year)

Darby Pollansky	Lori Mathieu	David Sorich
Raymond Chicoine	Thomas Woolf	Charles Clapp
Michael Burokas		
Todd Penney, PE – Town Engineer/Inland Wetlands Agent		

Total number of applications considered by the Inland Wetlands Agency (IWA): **18**

- ❖ Outcome of applications:
 - Non Jurisdiction Ruling: 0
 - Permit Denials: 0
 - Permit Approvals: 12
 - Permit Extensions: 3
 - Permit Withdrawals: 0
 - Permit Modifications: 3

Total number of applications considered by the Inland Wetlands Agent: **18**

- ❖ Outcome of application:
 - Permit Denial: 0
 - Permit Denials: 0
 - Permit Approvals: 18
 - Permit Extensions: 0
 - Permit Withdrawals: 0
 - Permit Modifications: 0

Nature of activities reviewed/regulated:

- ❖ Residential subdivisions/condominium developments
- ❖ Single Family House Developments
- ❖ Main Street Sidewalk Construction Project
- ❖ Drainage improvements
- ❖ Commercial Expansion
- ❖ Other:
 - Utility work.
 - Accessory structures
 - Filling/grading

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 applications remained the same at **18** in FY12/13; from FY11/12. The number of Agent permits increased to **18** in FY12/13; from 17 in FY11/12. The Agent Permit applications are administrated in a shorter time frame and with a simpler process as compared to full Wetlands Agency permits. This has proven to be a valuable option for applicants.

Highlights of the Agency applications involved the subdivision of two properties and the proposed Main Street sidewalk extension as part of the Safe Routes to School Grant. The two subdivisions, one on Riley Mountain Road and the second on Dunn Road, involved the development of residential houses on the existing frontage of their respective streets. Low Impact Development (LID) schemes were employed to minimize stormwater impacts off the sites and affecting the downstream receiving wetlands. This infrastructure on the residential properties will be the responsibility of the property owners with provisions being placed on the land records for their continued maintenance.

The Safe Routes to School Main Street Sidewalk project will extend the constructed sidewalk from its terminus at Paden Road and continues it the Ripley Hill Road Intersection. There is a significant wetland complex to the west of Root Road and the detention pond at the Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School that the sidewalk traversed next to which will require the appropriate erosion and sediment control measures to be implemented during construction.



Todd Penney, PE – Town Engineer/Wetlands Agent

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Members: (As of June 30, 2013 end of fiscal year)

Erik Williams	William Riordan	Raymond Chicoine
Charles Clapp	John Henry	Stephen Curtiss
Karen Post	Joram Echeles	
Michael Antonellis, Planning Technician/Zoning Enforcement Officer		

PETITIONS: 2

Approved 2
Denied 0
Pending 0
Withdrawn 0
Appeal 0

There have been two applications to the ZBA this year. These applications involved relief of the dimensional standards on lake lots. The applications were approved by the ZBA based on a zoning hardship.

The low number of applications to the Zoning Board of Appeals likely represents the efficiency and comprehensiveness of the Zoning Regulations providing less need for variances. This may also reflect the efficacy of staff working with applicants to find creative solutions that satisfy a variety of needs.

In the last year, the variances requested reflect more significant proposed work, such as rebuilding entire homes. This seems to be the true intention of applying for zoning variances, which is to allow for a primary use for which the lot has been zoned which wouldn't otherwise be approved through staff review based on a hardship. Applications for variances on smaller projects such as decks and sheds seem to be deterred by the high cost of a ZBA hearing (legal notice publication fees) and the availability of feasible options.

ZONING ENFORCEMENT

Michael Antonellis, Planning Technician/Zoning Enforcement Officer

ZONING PERMITS ISSUED (Agent Approved) **208**

Single Family Dwellings	26
Condominium Units	0
Accessory Structures	145
In-law Units	2
Clubhouse	0
Residential Additions/Attached Garages	16
Home Occupations	15
Commercial Use/Signage	17
Interior Renovations	16
Agricultural Buildings	2
Other	1
Total:	238*

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

CERTIFICATES OF USE AND OCCUPANCY **41**

(Signed for zoning compliance by ZEO)

Single Family Dwellings	17
Condominium/Adult Community	3
In-law Units	0
Accessory Uses – Building and Structures	21
Residential Additions/Attached Garages	3
Commercial Signage	0
Agricultural Structures	0
Outdoor Wood-burning Furnace	0
Home Occupation	0
Total:	40*

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

ZONING INSPECTIONS

Erosion and Sediment Control	13
Limits of Clearing	0
Certificates of Occupancy	40
Pre-Approval Inspection	10
Seed & Mulch/Grading – Bond Release	9
Zoning Complaints (see breakdown)	35
Blight Complaints	101
Street Number Assignment	1
Other	10
Total:	219

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 and blight violations.

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

	# of Complaints Investigated
Erosion and Sediment Control	2
Drainage	0
Permit Conditions Not Met	0
Non-Permitted Activity or Structure	5
Unregistered Motor Vehicles for Sale	0
Signs	5
Unlicensed Motor Vehicle Dealer & Repair	1
Residential Motor Vehicle Sales	2
Blight Complaints	76
Total:	95*

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

Zoning complaint inspections have decreased. This trend may be attributed to the fact that more complaints are now submitted as blight complaints as seen by the rise in blight as noted in previous annual report. Blight is responsible for 80% of all enforcement. This may be due to the obvious, aesthetic nature of blighted properties which are very visible to neighbors.

What these numbers do not reflect are conversations with residents about possible complaints. Before a resident submits a complaint zoning staff tries to emphasize neighborly discourse as to avoid contentious situations with neighbors before town staff becomes involved. Often time's issues can be resolved if parties are willing to cooperate.

OTHER PROJECTS:

Stormwater Management Guidance for Homeowners

Zoning staff created a matrix to maintain information on the location and associated information the installation of infiltration stormwater structures in town. This resource provides details on the type of structure, owner, evidence of land records filing as well as comments for status inspections. The matrix is continuously updated and made compatible with GIS.

Zoning/Blight Enforcement

Due to the specific nature of the blight ordinance and the complaints that are submitted by the public, most of the enforcement activities are focused on blight oriented issues. The information above gives an indication on the level of enforcement activity and the type of issues that are addressed. The zoning staff serves as a member of the blight 'team' along with the Building Official, Sanitarian, Community Service Officer and Director of Planning and Development who address their particular jurisdiction of the blight ordinance. Sign enforcement is a continued effort to work with the businesses in a cooperative fashion to encourage their compliance instead of simply issuing enforcement orders. The Planning and Zoning Commission has instructed Staff that flexibility and reasonableness can be applied to temporary signs for businesses, so as not to stifle advertising of special events in an effort to support the business community, yet avoid sign proliferation.

Geographic Information System

Zoning Staff serves on the GIS user group that includes other town staff and the IT staff from the town of South Windsor, who are contracted to perform such services. Since the Zoning Staff is one the GIS users in the Town Hall, it is important to be involved with ongoing dialogue on such matters, as well as training and instruction opportunities. Also, with the help of the Town Engineer, the Zoning Officer has been learning introductory CAD, which is beneficial to both departments. This allows for the trade-off of data-entry and management allowing databases to grow faster.

There has also been a recent effort to push the department towards a more digital direction. This includes scanning maps to the R and L-Drives on the server so that they are more easily accessible eventually eliminating clutter from office space. Also, electronic-street files are increasingly utilized by the ZEO as information comes in regarding applications or violations. Each street file is updated to best reflect individual properties under "Zoning" file. The goal of this new push for digital is to soon have an electronic database which serves queried information as well as GIS.

Open Space Map Update

A collaborative effort between the Conservation Commission, Planning Staff, Engineering Staff and Zoning Staff to update the previous Open Space Map incorporated into the 2010 POCD. Through identifying "protected" Open Space and removing "unprotected" Open Space the map, the document is able to provide more accurate depiction of the current status of Open Space in Coventry. This document and map is far superior to the information noted in the 2010 POCD. The 2010 POCD was able to provide a baseline for this information. By researching subdivision approvals, recently dedicated Open Space, as well as institutional knowledge from staff the new map is able to provide a more comprehensive inventory of Open Space in Coventry. The map continues to be updated and is constantly improving as staff works to refine details.

Smaller Projects

Zoning continues to take on smaller projects when needed. For example, Parks and Recreation is involved in a Geo-Caching project for which simple maps are needed to assist their efforts. Simple Aerial maps can easily be created through ArcGIS by the Zoning Officer. This provides a service to other departments and is not considered to be overly-burdensome and quite manageable with enough notice. Examples of other smaller projects are the White's and Williams' parcels which are currently being considered for Open Space dedication. Simple maps were created for these parcels which included an aerial photo, boundary information, as well as topographic and flood information. These are examples of maps that are created for staff purposes. Several smaller projects come and go and it's helpful to have competent staff with expertise in GIS programs to provide this benefit to all Town Hall Departments and its collaborative partners.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Members: (As of June 30, 2013 end of fiscal year)

Sondra Astor Stave	Bill Jobbagy	Roberta Wilmot
Timothy Liptrap	Barbara Barry	Richard Giggey
Mark Lavitt	Sam Belsito	Carol Polsky
Eric M. Trott, Director of Planning and Development		
John Elsesser, Town Manager		

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. This resource is distributed to new home occupation businesses to assist them in their 'start ups'. The member also is involved with the Northeast CT Economic Alliance a regional business financing source that supports small business development.

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, education and other vital resources.

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 Commission and Staff have recently discussed new opportunities to encourage visibility and expand the volunteer support of the Visitor's Center. One idea that is likely to be implemented involves working with the artist community to provide showcase space at the Visitor's Center in exchange for staffing it and greeting visitors.

The EDC continues to strongly support 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 and small business community as well. The Commission continues to consider ways in which the visitor's of the Market can be connected to the other businesses in Town in order to further support the local economy.

Planning Staff and the EDC have developed a commercial property target development list that serves as an 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.

Staff and Commission members continued to provide support with efforts to retain Teleflex in the Town as the company was examining relocation options. The State of CT Department of Economic and Community Development was included in the explore options to provide monetary and resource support. Ultimately, Teleflex retained their presence in Coventry, in part due to their strong ties to the University of Connecticut.

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.

Planning Staff worked with the Commission to create a brochure of available services that both the collective Commission and its individual members can provide. This resource is helpful to advocate the Commission's efforts to support the business community by offering assistance on a variety of relevant topics, including financial matters, business networking, employee interaction and internet marketing.

Planning Staff continues to work with Water Pollution Control Staff, DEEP and State of CT Office of Policy and Management to promote the expansion of the Bolton sewers into Coventry to address wastewater and economic development needs on RTE 44 near the town line. Planning Staff testified during legislative hearings and submitted written documentation that supported efforts to revise the State's Plan to better harmonize with the local and regional plans. In addition, Staff remains vigilant in its efforts to satisfy the concerns of DEEP Staff relative to sewer service area expansions in this area.

Members of the Commission and Staff participated in the Ad-Hoc Water Study Committee that was formed by the Town Council. The mission of the Committee was to review and make recommendations in response to an offer by the CT Water Company to extend water service from RTE 275 to the Town Hall and Schools complex. This expansion has significant implications with economic development in the Coventry Village as well as to the north on RTE 31 by expanding fire suppression capacity for businesses and mixed-use buildings. The final report of the Committee is expected in the fall of 2013.

In an effort to maintain open communication with businesses in the community, the EDC has made efforts to meet one on one with several businesses at the Commission level. The goal is to better understand the needs of the businesses and determine how the Commission can assist. The meetings have been helpful for both parties by sharing information and insight into small business support.

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; Bob Proctor, Sec./Treas.; Art Hall, Paul Manzone, Roy Shook, Corey Vann, members

Date: September 28, 2013

Subject: 2012/2013 Annual Report

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

Bike Plan and Routes

The commission is working on establishing a Bike Plan and routes for the town. The commission met with the town planning office, and parks and rec. to establish a framework in starting the bike plan and routes. The commission met with town residents to help in the establishment of bike routes. To date the commission has five (5) routes with more to come. The commission also created a questionnaire for a bike route survey (town newsletter).

Site Plan and Town Referrals

1. 12-08 Charlie Brown –Ziegler Woods Riley Mountain Road.
2. 12-09S Coventry Motorcar expansion, 2152 Boston Turnpike.
3. 12-10S Jon-Paul & Paulette Smith, 102 Rabbit Trail. Construct new home to replace home destroyed by fire.
5. 13-01S Cravings-Formerly Daisy's, 1384 Main Street. Addition to existing food service use.
6. 13-03 Menzel subdivision, Dunn Road.
7. 13-06S Thomas & Candice Hyatt. 74 Arlington Road. Construction of new home.

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

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.

Items of general interest

1. We submit items to the town newsletter.
2. We hold elections of officers.
3. We submit a new budget each year.
4. We participate in land use commission consortium meetings hosted by the Coventry Town Council.
5. We submit commission agendas and meeting minutes. Information flyers and postings are available for review on a commission-sponsored bulletin board in the town hall.

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

1. The conservation commission sponsored a Stonewall Cleanup Day, members of the conservation commission cleaned up the stone wall at the Nathan Hall Homestead (adjacent to the farmers market and parking area). This has become an annual event held on the last weekend in March.
2. The conservation commission walked the Williams property for open space evaluation.
3. The conservation commission evaluated approx. 70 Ag parcels. Of those 70, 44 were presented to the Town Planner. The commission prioritized the Ag parcels using the focus map.
4. Discussion on adopting the completed trails brochures. After review no changes needed.
5. The conservation commission proposed an Earth Day cleanup. This would be a yearly event.
6. Letter from John Elsesser; Bow Hunting on town land for review and comment.
7. The conservation commission walked Patriot Park Woods Trail for evaluation to see if repairs were needed.
8. The conservation commission walked Laidlaw park trail to evaluate the status of the trail and make recommendations on repairs and extension of the trail.

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