

**PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT**  
**QUARTERLY REPORT: JULY 1, 2004 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2004**

The Planning and Zoning Commission met six times this quarter.

*Permits by type this quarter:*

Flood Damage Prevention: 10 granted; 1 granted in part/denied in part; 1 withdrawn

Coastal Site Plan Review: 7 granted; 1 granted in part/denied in part; 2 withdrawn

Land Filling/Excavation: 7 approved; 1 granted in part/denied in part; 1 withdrawn

Special Permit: 1 granted; 1 granted in part/withdrawn in part; 2 amendments approved

Subdivision: 1 approved (dividing one existing lot into three lots)

Mandatory Referral: 2 reports issued

Zoning Amendments: 1 change of zone approved (deletion of an overlay district)

Total Number of Projects\*: 20 applications and 4 amendments

\*Total number of projects does not equal number of permits, because some applications include multiple permits.

On September 28, 2004, the Commission approved a proposal to increase application fees. That will take effect on October 17<sup>th</sup>. This quarter the Commission also updated its application form, and has put it on the Town web site for easy access by applicants. Over the next few months, the Commission will hear requests for the following: to expand the operating hours and the parking lot at the YMCA; to expand an existing chiropractor's office in downtown; and to establish outdoor dining behind Pasta Pizza and Brew on Center Street. On October 6<sup>th</sup>, Department personnel will be meeting with the representatives from the consulting firm Blum Shapiro to discuss user requirements for new land use permitting software.

The Planning and Zoning Commission's work on the Town Plan of Conservation & Development continues. In September, they met to discuss the first draft of the Housing Chapter. Two representatives from the Darien Housing Authority were present to discuss housing issues with Commission members. Members will be reviewing a second draft of that Chapter on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Staff is also working on the Community Facilities Chapter, and expects to have a first draft of that chapter ready for discussion in November.

The Zoning Board of Appeals met five times this period to process 23 applications. Of those, eleven were granted; eight denied; three granted in part/denied in part; and one withdrawn.

The Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) met six times this quarter to process 33 applications and two application amendments. Of the 33 applications, 27 were granted; four denied; one granted in part/withdrawn in part; and one withdrawn. The Commission granted the two amendment requests. The EPC approved two separate applications for the Friends of Goodwives River to dredge Katy's Pond and Upton Pond. An extra meeting has already been scheduled in October to accommodate the existing application workload. The EPC will process more applications this year than any year in its history.

The EPC created an informational brochure last quarter. Copies were made and distributed through the Darien Environmental Group and posted on the Darien web site. Staff is working on proposed amendments to the Inlands Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations, with the expectation of Commission discussion in November, and a public hearing in December or early in 2005.

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) met three times this quarter—once each month. They approved a total of nine applications. This includes approval of new signage for: Allen O’Neill Drive, a new Fairfield County Bank, Fitness Together at 242 West Avenue; and Miceli Insurance Agency on Heights Road.

This period, a total of 161 Zoning Permits were issued—the same number as last quarter. Three of the permits were for new single-family residences—two “teardowns” and one house on a vacant lot. Seven permits were issued for new swimming pools.

This quarter, the most significant project in the history of the Darien GIS was completed. This was the creation of all new color maps for the Assessor—75 maps in total, with 75 more made for Spec-Print. This was a task that took over a year, as all maps needed to be created, proofed, edited, finalized, and printed. The task of printing the final original mylars that can be reproduced was also completed this quarter. These maps will be updated as new information is received by the Assessor’s office.

Also this quarter new zoning maps were printed, reflecting an August 1, 2004 amendment by the Planning & Zoning Commission. New maps were put up in the Assessor’s office, in the Planning and Zoning Department office, on the Town web site, and made available for purchase by the general public. We are in the process of updating the Town’s Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Map. A public hearing will be held on this Map on November 3, 2004.

The first meeting of the newly-established GIS Steering Committee was held on September 29<sup>th</sup>. This Committee was recommended in the May 2004 Blum Shapiro Strategic Technology Plan. The Committee will have a number of responsibilities, including: educating Town Departments on the benefits of GIS; monitoring the short and long-term GIS directions for the Town; and reviewing and updating policies and procedures.