



Preserving Sound Avenue: A Conservation Story

Along Sound Avenue in Riverhead, a quiet conservation story has emerged through the cooperation of many landowners, the Town of Riverhead, Suffolk County, and the Peconic Land Trust, resulting in the protection of over 250 adjoining acres of beach, bluff, farmland, meadow, and woodland. The varied terrain, the vistas of water, trees, fields, and wildlife . . . represent a microcosm of the natural wonders of Long Island's East End, now conserved for future generations.

The heroes of this story are both historic and new to the area: Reeve, Granttham, Stoutenburgh, Anderegg, Tasker, and others. And their motivations, though varied, included a love of the land, the future, and the continuation of farming.

The latest piece of this conservation tapestry is a property now known as the Anderegg Preserve—a 19-acre Sound-front parcel of meadow and woodland purchased by the Peconic Land Trust with funds provided by the estate of J.

Phillip and Etienne Anderegg. Arthur Tasker, executor for the Anderegg Estate, made the donation in order to keep the land “forever wild,” a specific wish of Mr. Anderegg for the proceeds of his estate.

Today, the Anderegg Preserve is part of an expansive 250-acre assemblage that runs from Sound Avenue to the Sound, and is owned in part by the Trust, Rick and Debbie Reeve, and an anonymous conservation buyer. This conservation story has a fascinating history.

The Beginning...

In the late 1960s, Caryl Reeve Granttham met with Paul and Barbara Stoutenburgh and a small group of conservation-minded friends on the sound-front bluff. There they had the first conversation about how wonderful it would be to conserve all they could see around them. Paul, who 20 years later joined the Board of Directors of the Trust,

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Adapting to Changing Times and Challenges



Since the Trust was founded in 1983, some of the challenges facing agriculture remain the same (e.g. estate tax policy, labor, impact of adjacent development, etc.), but new ones have certainly emerged, especially on the South Fork. And what happens on the South Fork, eventually manifests itself on the North Fork and elsewhere on Long Island.

In recent years, sales of protected farmland to non-farmers on the South Fork (at prices as high as \$200,000/acre) have driven up values to an unprecedented average of \$100,000 per acre, making it impossible for farmers to purchase. In addition, these non-farmer sales have dramatically increased the value of protected land within the taxable estates of land rich, cash poor farmers. Ironically, a farmer who owns 100 acres of protected farmland may have an additional \$10 million added to his/her taxable estate and may, of necessity, have to sell it to a non-farmer at inflated values in order to generate the funds necessary to pay state and federal inheritance taxes. This is an insidious problem that has far-reaching implications for the future of farming on Long Island unless solutions are found.

As with all complex issues, there is never one "silver bullet" that solves all challenges. However, the Trust is in the process of adapting and refining a new tool for our toolbox known as a "preemptive right," first put into practice in Massachusetts 10 years ago. By placing a preemptive right with additional restrictions on already "protected" farmland, its value can be lowered since subsequent sales of the farmland will be limited to family members of the owner or other farmers, at a price consistent with comparable sales exclusively to farmers. When the Trust holds a preemptive right, we will review all future sales to ensure that the restrictions are fulfilled. If need be, the Trust can also serve as the purchaser of last resort if a future owner is unable to find a farmer to purchase the farmland.

The Hopping acquisition, home of the Pike Farmstand for over 20 years, is a great example. Hundreds of people from the broader community have made contributions to ensure that they have access to fresh, local produce grown by the Pikes. At the same time, we want to ensure that this land will always be available to farmers. To this end, when we make the final payment for the Hopping property in March, 2011, we intend to resell the protected farmland subject to a preemptive right at a price that the farmers can afford.

It is this type of creativity that your support of the Trust enables us to pursue. Indeed, our Annual Fund ensures that we have the human capital necessary to accomplish all types of conservation projects, whether it is the New Suffolk Waterfront, Charnews Farm in Southold, or the Amagansett Farmers Market. In addition, it underwrites our work to steward the 3,800 acres of easements and preserves held by the Trust, to plan and coordinate our Connections education-al programs, and to pursue critical public policy initiatives.

We could not do this work without the many supporters and partners who share our mission. Conserving what we know and love for our communities now and in the future is truly the work of the Peconic Land Trust. We do this because of our connection to the land and people of the East End and beyond. We do this so that working farms and natural lands will continue to define Long Island in the future. We do this so that there is something to pass on to the next generation. To this end, with your continued help, the Trust will continue to pursue its conservation mission from a pragmatic, problem-solving perspective for many generations to come. Thank you for all that you can do to help us reach our 2010 Annual Fund goal of \$1.5 million by December 31st, 2010. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John V. H. Haley".

Please Consider a Gift to the 2010 Annual Fund

Your gift to the Peconic Land Trust's Annual Fund helps to ensure that Long Island's future includes productive working farms and thriving natural lands for generations to come, by allowing us to think and work creatively on conservation solutions in an ever evolving environment.

Success in conservation requires patience and consistency. It also requires the skills, experience, and innovation that only a professional staff and wise counsel can provide. The resources raised through the Annual Fund make certain that the Trust has both the human and financial resources necessary to pursue our work.

Thank you for your continued support.

To make a donation today, visit us online at www.peconiclandtrust.org or call 631.283.3195.

Or, please use the enclosed response envelope in your newsletter.



Legislative Update

The Future of the Estate Tax Remains Unclear

Federal estate tax policy has been one of the principal reasons for the loss of farmland on Long Island for the past 40 years. It is not only the tax itself, but also the anticipation of the tax that has resulted in the sale and loss of lands of conservation value. At a time when many have come to understand the importance of a regional food supply (i.e. food security, transportation costs, etc.), we continue to lose many farms because tax policy makes it nearly impossible for farmers to keep their land. This problem has been exacerbated by the fact that protected land values have risen due to purchases by non-farmers at very high prices. Consequently, even land that has been protected through the sale of development rights to a municipality or through a gift of a conservation easement to the Trust may now present an estate tax burden to farmers and other landowners.

Unfortunately, Congress did not act on federal estate tax reform in 2009, so there is currently no federal estate tax in 2010. If Congress fails to act on estate tax policy this year, federal estate taxes will return with a vengeance in 2011. For example, the unified credit (the amount of value exempt from federal estate taxes for individuals) will revert to \$1 million (it was \$3.5 million in 2009) and a 55% tax rate. This will be devastating for many and add additional challenges to our efforts to conserve working farms and natural lands. If Congress enacts indexed unified credits this year of \$3.5 million, or even better \$5 million, this will help... but it will not solve the problems on Long Island and other parts of the country where property values and development pressures are high (including parts of California, Colorado, Montana, etc.). Hence Peconic Land Trust's interest in several bills, particularly H.R. 1328 introduced by Congressman Timothy Bishop that would defer the federal estate tax on land of conservation value with provisions for a recapture tax triggered by the development of the land; and H.R. 3050 introduced by Congressmen Earl Blumenauer and Eric Cantor (and companion bill S. 3640 introduced by Senator Mark Udall) that would expand an existing exclusion of protected farmland from federal estate taxes from \$500,000

to \$5 million. Other bills, which are variations on these themes, have also been introduced by representatives in other parts of the country. These include H.R. 5475 introduced by Congressman Mike Thompson (and Senate companion bill S. 3664 introduced by Senators Dianne Feinstein and Mike Crapo) that allow owners of working agricultural land to defer estate taxes until the land is sold outside of the family or is taken out of production.

The Trust was invited to appear before the House Land Conservation Caucus in the fall of 2009 for a briefing, Using Smart Tax Policy to Preserve Land, and presented to over 60 House members and their staff. The Trust and its partners continue to lobby for estate tax reform that would transform federal estate tax policy from a cause of land conversions to a land-based incentive program.

If you would like more information about estate tax and other public policy issues, please visit the Trust's website www.PeconicLandTrust.org or contact Julie Zaykowski at 631.283.3195 x 32.

America's Great Outdoors

We also invite you to join the national dialogue on land conservation by visiting America's Great Outdoors Initiative IdeaJam at <http://ideas.usda.gov/ago/ideas.nsf/>. (Use the tag "land trusts" to narrow your search.) Share your ideas about ways we can reconnect with the great outdoors. Help shape the future of land conservation!

Historical Note: Efforts to protect a critical mass of farmland necessary to sustain agriculture on Long Island began in the 1970s when the nation's first purchase of development rights program was devised by Suffolk County farmers, the Long Island Farm Bureau, and Suffolk County Executive John V.N. Klein. To this day, Suffolk County is New York's leading county in terms of the gross value of agricultural products sold. Indeed, the Long Island economy benefits greatly from agriculture, agritourism, and related businesses. ■



Senator Charles Schumer meeting with members of the Long Island agriculture community, including Trust President John v.H. Halsey, May 21, 2010.

ultimately brought the Trust and members of the Reeve family together, with the hope of conserving the land. “Having known and talked often with (Caryl’s brother and sister-in-law) Richard and Avis on their farm since the early ‘50s, we spoke many times about the possibility of preserving their unique land. As time went on, Caryl and I sat and worked things out to preserve her property,” said Paul.

The Reeve property—135-acres, including farmland, homestead, woodland, meadow and soundfront bluff—had been left divided among the two children of Myrtle and Norman Reeve, Caryl and Richard. The parents divided the property based on interests: splitting the upper sound front in half for each; and then leaving Richard, who continued the family’s agricultural operation, the farmland, and Caryl, who was off to the big city to follow her dreams, the house on Sound Avenue.

Fast forward nearly 25 years, in the early ‘90s, Caryl came to the Trust to inquire about conservation options for her portion of the property, and decided to provide for the donation of her 20-acre soundfront property in her will as a testamentary gift to the Trust. According to Trust Vice President Tim Caufield, this was the first concrete step taken toward the conservation of these lands.

A few years later, Richard and Avis, along with their son Rick, also began exploring conservation options with the Trust. At that time, Richard and Avis were concerned about their ability to pass the farm on to their son and how best to preserve assets for both of their children; they were getting (like many others)

daily calls from developers looking to acquire the land, particularly the soundfront property. Working with the Trust, the Reeves decided on a four-lot subdivision of the property:

- The homestead lot, five acres with a buildable lot, is where Richard and Avis lived. This is the original Reeve family homestead, where Avis still resides.
- A seven-acre upper meadow, upon which the family had previously placed a conservation easement on six of the seven acres.
- A 70-acre farm parcel, the development rights of which were sold by Richard and Avis to the Town of Riverhead and Suffolk County, preserving the acres in perpetuity.
- A 20-acre soundfront parcel, which was preserved through a conservation easement with the Trust, and eventually gifted entirely to the Trust by the Reeves.

In addition to the four lot subdivision, the Reeve family land also includes a 14-acre farm on Sound Avenue, which is owned by Rick and Debbie Reeve and is where they live. Rick and Debbie have sold the development rights on eight of those acres to the Town of Riverhead, which is active farmland behind their house.

In describing his family’s conservation story, Rick Reeve said: “If my parents, along with their attorney working with the Peconic Land Trust, hadn’t come up with a plan to conserve the farmland, I would not be farming today. Initially, when the idea was brought to me, I was in favor, but skeptical about how it might work. It couldn’t have worked out any better than it did. I will be able to continue farming, and this land will always be connected with

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my family's name. We were not interested in having roads or developments named for us. But this farmland will always live on in our family's name."

When the Reeves completed their plan, Caryl accelerated her gifting of the soundfront property to the Trust, rather than wait for conveyance through her will. Subsequently, the Reeves sold the protected meadow and 70-acre farmland to a vineyard owner; who in turn, working with the Trust, sold the property to a conservation buyer.

In the meantime, the adjacent 114 acres had gone through a series of owners, most recently the Macari family. While the Macaris were willing to consider a conservation outcome through the County's Farmland Preservation Program, the time came when they needed to sell and an agreement on a conservation plan seemed out of reach. The land was sold to a real estate investment group, which ultimately agreed to sell the land to a conservation buyer brought to them by the Trust.

The aforementioned conservation buyer of the former Reeve Farm, who prefers to remain anonymous, purchased all 114 acres and sold the development rights on the eligible farmland—approximately 75 acres—to the County. That farmland is currently leased to a number of local farmers, including the Golden Earthworm and Rick Reeve. This left 40 acres of land unprotected.

In early 2009, a conservation opportunity for a portion of the remaining 40 acres presented itself from the Anderegg Estate. Arthur Tasker, a Greenport native, and an attorney representing the estate of the Andereggs, was in a nationwide search for "forever wild" land to invest in on behalf of the estate. Tasker felt the 19-acre upper soundfront portion of the property, which is adjacent to the soundfront property the Granttham/Reeve family donated to the Trust, met the estate's goals.

In describing the motivations behind the donation, Mr. Tasker said: "The majority of Philip Anderegg's estate was directed toward the purchase of land to be kept forever wild, or to an organization whose mission and goals were to do that," said Mr. Tasker. While the Andereggs spent most of their adult lives in Forest Hills, NY, they were world travelers. Their love and respect for the natural environment was born of their experiences.

The Anderegg Preserve, along with a seven-acre meadow transferred to the Trust (by a conservation donor) and the 40 acre soundfront property donated by the Granttham/

Reeves now created a contiguous 65-acre nature preserve owned by the Trust along Long Island Sound—nearly 2,100 feet of beachfront that will never be developed.

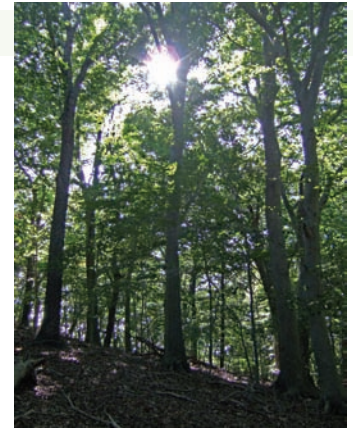
Tying it all together

In 2008, the Trust purchased the last remaining piece of Caryl Granttham's estate, her house on Sound Avenue, as a potential gateway to this conservation cluster. Future plans are to make the house a nature and education center, documenting the wonderful conservation of this area and providing future generations with its link to the past.

In a donor profile from 2000, Caryl Granttham described part of her motivation for seeing this property conserved: "There's a quality in all of us that wants peace and quiet. If you don't have nature—if you overbuild and over-stress the land—you lose a fundamental part of yourself."

On reflection, John Halsey added: "The path to conservation often takes many turns, and sometimes includes many people. The legacy wishes of Caryl Granttham, Richard and Avis Reeve, and the Andereggs; combined with Arthur Tasker's local knowledge have produced the perpetual protection of beautiful farmland, meadows, woodland, bluff and dunes along Long Island Sound. The Trust is grateful to all involved in this endeavor." ■

"There's a quality in all of us that wants peace and quiet. If you don't have nature—if you overbuild and over-stress the land—you lose a fundamental part of yourself." — Caryl Granttham



Community Outreach: Connections

A Focus on Farms, Food, Wildlife and Habitat

The Trust's effort to close the gap between people and the land around them saw another very successful year! Our "Connections" programs expanded to nearly year round. In 2009 and 2010, we "met the farmer" at places like **Bianchi-Davis Greenhouses**, **Catapano Dairy**, **Lavender by the Bay Farm**, **Mecox Bay Dairy**, **Paumanok Vineyards**, **Quail Hill Farm**, **Seven Ponds Orchard**, **Shellfisher Preserve**, **Sylvester Manor**, and **Wölffer Estate Vineyards**. We hiked and observed birds throughout conserved lands including the **former Keyspan property**, **Dam Pond Maritime Reserve**, **Scallop Pond Preserve**, **Laurel Lake Preserve**, **Sabin/Tanger Preserve**, and **Downs Farm Preserve at Fort Corchaug**, and enjoyed a variety of hands-on workshops for everyone from children to seniors. Topics included **seeding and**



transplanting vegetables, planting and enjoying **edible flowers**, growing and using **culinary and medicinal herbs**, **seining for marine life** and making **jams, jellies and preserves**. Community building events were enjoyed at **Charnews Farm** in Southold, **Quail Hill Farm** in Amagansett, **Bridge Gardens** in Bridgehampton and the **New Suffolk Waterfront** in Cutchogue.

These activities attracted hundreds of local residents and weekend visitors who made new friends and acquaintances, experienced nature and our local agricultural heritage, and learned about the importance of conservation and the work of the Trust. With programs at many varied locations on both the North and South Forks, we guarantee that the Trust was in your neighborhood. Plan to join us and see what all the fun is about!■

Community Outreach: Volunteers

Digging Deep to Support Land Conservation

Over a chilly weekend in March 2009 and 2010, residents of both forks attended volunteer orientations in Jamesport and Bridgehampton, to learn more about the various ways they could work side by side with members of the Trust's staff and Board to further conservation. About 50 people, both new and familiar faces, listened with interest as Trust President John Halsey and other members of the staff and seasoned volunteers explained community involvement through volunteerism—describing how their energy and assistance could result in meaningful contributions to the protection and stewardship of working farms and natural lands, as well as the education of the public at large.

While many volunteers have been actively pitching in since the Trust was founded in 1983, the volunteer orientations represent a more sys-

tematic approach to putting interest into action. Indeed, by providing volunteers with opportunities to be on preserves, farms, and other conserved properties, stronger bonds are formed between the land we all love and our desire to protect and steward it. In speaking of the Trust's goal to expand the opportunities for volunteerism, chair Nancy Gilbert observed that, "it is not enough to simply ask people to support our work. We must engage them, teach them, and inspire them. We must share our belief that the land and how we treat it shapes our understanding of who we are."

Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of respondents to our volunteer questionnaire are inspired by stewardship-related activities and tasks. The Trust has many preserves on the East End, and it makes perfect sense that folks want to actively care for protected land in their com-



munities. The stewardship staff is always looking for intrepid souls willing to dig in, get dirty and help out on Trust properties.

Active volunteer groups have begun to emerge at Bridge Gardens, Charnews Farm, and other Trust properties. In particular, the Charnews volunteer corps is especially strong. Dubbed the “Honey Dews” by North Fork Stewardship Manager Denise Markut, the volunteers have met faithfully every Friday since April 2009, digging new garden beds, painting fences, planting trees, and readying the farm for its transformation into a community gathering place, incubator farm, and learning center. Charnews is an inspiring example of what is possible when planning, partnership and dedicated citizens intersect.

On the South Fork, Macy’s department store sent 25 volunteers from its Long Island and New York branches to Bridge Gardens to spend Earth Day in both 2009 and 2010, cleaning the beds, raking leaves and readying the garden for spring.

Also on the South Fork, of course, is Quail Hill Farm, the Trust’s CSA (Community-supported Agriculture) that has greatly benefited from the dedication of its highly committed volunteers since its founding. On any given day, volunteers at Quail Hill can be seen helping in the fields and the office; they manage farm events and create cookbooks that celebrate the bounty of Quail Hill (and, if you really need to speak to Scott Chaskey, chances are it is a



volunteer who will know how to reach him). The close-knit community at Quail Hill Farm, which has been described by some as spiritual, is possible only through the dedication and unity of purpose embodied by its volunteers.

While the call to stewardship is obviously strong—we are a land trust, after all—others see ways of applying their life experiences to tidier, less physical but equally important endeavors on behalf of the Trust through outreach: educators, lawyers, grant writers, financiers and many others whose lives, rich in experience, bring a wellspring of creativity and innovation to our Board committees. The Trust has 10 Board committees—covering everything from finance, philanthropy and public policy to conservation projects, stewardship and personnel, as well as our educational, recreational and special event programs. We are also fortunate to have volunteers willing to lend a hand with the dreaded office work (always needed!).

When you help with a program or event, in the office or outdoors, you will be inspired as you inspire others. And perhaps grow and enjoy along the way. As Nancy Gilbert believes, there is a tremendous possibility for self-discovery and fulfillment in our journey through caring for the land we know and love.

Our next Volunteer orientation will take place in early March 2011. We hope you will join us. ■



Conservation Accomplishments

Farms, Historic Properties and Soundfront Preserves are Recent Conservation Successes

Folks Farmland Preserves:

Jack & Gusty Folks protected two 1.6-acre parcels of farmland in Bridgehampton, one in 2009 and another in early 2010. In both instances, the development rights were sold to Southampton Town and the protected farmland was sold to the Trust at a bargain sale price. All told, the Folks have permanently conserved a total of three building lots of over 4.5 acres that adjoin a 20-acre parcel of protected farmland. The farmland is in active production through a lease to an East End farm family, and the conservation of these parcels enables agricultural production to continue on the land.



White Easement: In December 2009, Jeffrey White donated an overlay conservation easement that includes a preemptive right, on a scenic 21-acre farm parcel in Sagaponack. Although the farm is protected through a sale of development rights to the Town of Southampton, Mr. White wanted to further restrict the property to ensure the protection of the scenic viewsheds. The preemptive right ensures that any resale of the property would be at agricultural value to keep the land affordable for farmers in the future. The easement further limits the agricultural uses, protecting it from any future action that may be deemed detrimental for farming, water quality or soil conservation purposes.



Anderegg Preserve: In September 2009, the donation of funds from the Estate of J. Philip Anderegg and Etienne Trouve Anderegg made possible the bargain sale

purchase of 19 acres of woodland and bluffs on Long Island Sound in Riverhead that, combined with adjacent previously conserved lands, creates a 65-acre assemblage along the Long Island Sound. In addition to a generous bargain sale of the 19-acre parcel, the sellers also agreed to a land swap that resulted in the preservation of an additional 6.7-acre building lot that provided the Trust with a meadow buffer between the preserve and adjacent working farmland. (See cover story).



Danby Historic Preservation Easement Amendment: Also in December 2009, the Danby family of Wading River executed an amendment to their existing easement, after being formally listed on the National Register of

Historic Places. The property, known as “Four Chimneys,” was originally constructed in the 18th century with later additions through the early 20th century. The easement amendment permanently protects the façade of the home, known as the Benjamin King Woodhull Home, along with the façade of its adjoining outhouse from material changes, and will run permanently with the deed.

McQuade Preserve: Ann McQuade and her son Benjamin McQuade donated their 64.5-acre property in Riverhead to the Trust in November 2009. In 2006, Trust staff facilitated a sale of development rights to Suffolk County. Now with the gift of the protected land to the Trust, the McQuades have completed the permanent conservation of their magnificent woodland, replete with an impressive old growth beech forest, meandering trail, high bluffs and nearly 1,150 feet of beachfront on Long Island Sound. The Trust is very pleased to join the McQuade family in celebrating the conservation of this significant woodland.



Sylvester Manor Easement: The Trust was very pleased to be the recipient of a 22-acre conservation easement donated by Eben Fiske Ostby on his historic 243-acre Sylvester Manor, located on Shelter Island, in December 2009. Mr. Ostby’s property has substantial scenic, wetland habitat, agricultural, cultural and historic value, and the easement extinguishes development rights on a 22-acre portion of the estate along Gardiner Creek, thereby contributing to permanent protection of land important to the Town’s aquifer as well as wetlands. The donation of the conservation easement is the first step in a complex planning process for the Manor undertaken by Mr. Ostby and his nephew, as they plan for the future use of lands (including agricultural operations) that have been in continuous ownership of the family since 1652.■



Stewardship

Grant Funding Plays a Major Role in Stewardship Development

An important, but often unsung, aspect of the Trust's work is Stewardship: the perpetual monitoring, maintenance and sustenance of protected lands. The Trust's stewardship team provides vigilant attention to 1,286 acres of preserves (representing 83 properties). From high profile, public properties including Quail Hill Farm, Bridge Gardens, Charnews Farm and Shellfisher, to the 98 conservation easements received from donors (representing more than 2,500 acres), to the more than 430 acres of farmland either owned or managed by the Trust, stewardship work varies greatly. This can mean working with heavy equipment that is used to mow, seed or harvest on the land, renovating deteriorating agricultural structures, or carefully monitoring the natural evolution of plants and animals at a site. Funding for this work is critical. Easement donors provide stewardship gifts to the Trust to support some of this work. Funding through our annual fundraising campaign and grant awards make up the rest. In recent years, the Trust has been fortunate to receive several grants to assist us.

Early in 2009, the Trust was very pleased to receive a National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant which was instrumental in helping the Trust's stewardship staff erect a barrier to the large herd of hungry deer that nightly invades Quail Hill Farm. This fencing allowed the many varieties of vegetables planted on the Town Lane Preserve portion of the farm to flourish. Our CSA members were pleased with the increased quantity and variety of produce, and extra food not consumed by our members was then sold at the Sag Harbor Farmer's Market with proceeds directly supporting the work of the Trust.

On the North Fork, generous grant funds received from the US Department of Agriculture – Rural Development, and the Keyspan (now National Grid) Foundation in 2006 and 2007, along with a grant from the Brine Family Charitable Trust, provided us with the means to embark on a renovation to the structures at our Shellfisher

Preserve. This renovation involved replacing the old 144 foot long structure, repairing the bulkhead and deepening 150 feet of creek that runs under this structure. After receiving the necessary permits from the Southold Town Trustees this year, the final phase of the restorations to eliminate roadway erosion at the site were completed. Looking to the future, additional grant funds are being pursued that will support our desire to renovate a smaller building on the site for use as an education center to showcase the historic mariculture operation in place at Shellfisher Preserve.



In October 2009, the Trust was awarded two grants through the New York State Conservation Partnership Program (NYSCPP). The first is a "Conservation Catalyst" grant for a two-year project that will enable us to develop and implement a sustainable agriculture education program with North Fork community volunteers at the Trust's Charnews Farm. This project is inspired by the Trust's successful Quail Hill Farm community supported agriculture (CSA) and apprenticeship program in Amagansett. The grant will allow us to grow a wonderful community resource for Southold town residents at Charnews Farm, a property that the Trust plans to use to promote regional agriculture, local food production and community involvement.

The second is a "Capacity and Excellence" grant that enabled the Trust to hire a part-time staff member, Peter Priolo, who assisted us in updating baseline documentation and management plans for the Trust's many conservation easements and preserves, in accordance with Land Trust Standards and Practices.

"I am so thankful we have the confidence of these granting agencies," remarked Pam Greene, Vice President of Stewardship, "as we look to the future stewardship needs of the lands entrusted to us," ■

Project Update

Hopping/Pike, Charnews and New Suffolk

The following are brief updates on three active projects of the Peconic Land Trust. More information on these and other ongoing projects of the Trust, as well as registration for email updates, can be found on our website, www.PeconicLandTrust.org – there are also archives for all of the Trust’s Newsletters and eNewsletters.

Hopping Property/Pike Farm Stand

In April 2008, the Trust signed a contract of sale with the Hopping family for this 7.6-acre parcel. The initial purchase price was \$8.23 million. At that time, the contract was due to close by April 22, 2009, but along came a worldwide recession. In April 2009, the Trust received an extension from the Hopping family until the end of 2009, giving us more time to raise the necessary private funds as well as finalize the sale of development rights to Suffolk County and the Town of Southampton, a key component of the acquisition. The purchase of development rights was contingent on a final vote of the Suffolk County legislature, the availability of funds, and the Town’s participation with the County (a 30 percent/70 percent split respectively).

For 20 years, Jim and Jennifer Pike have rented these 7.6 acres from the Hopping family on Sagg Main in Sagaponack. It has been the home of their popular farm stand during most of that time, providing tens of thousands of customers annually with fresh produce. With over 60 acres in production, the Pikes own just five acres. Consequently, they do not control their destiny, a problem increasingly common among farmers that lease more land than they own. The Trust ultimately intends to sell the restricted farmland to the Pikes at an affordable price subject to a "preemptive right" held by the Trust. This will assure that future farmers will have an opportunity to purchase the property at agricultural value should it be put on the market again years from now.



In September 2009, the Trust was expecting the final vote of the County Legislature. However, the vote was unexpectedly postponed given concerns over the economy and dwindling public funds. The delay prompted the Trust and the Hopping family to renegotiate a lower purchase price given the recession.

The amended purchase price was \$6 million and the closing took place on March 2, 2010, at which time the Trust took title to the property. The Trust brought \$1 million to the closing, a combination of private donations and a matching grant through the Pew Charitable Trust’s Northeast Land Trust Consortium. The County and Town provided \$4.3 million through a simultaneous purchase of the development rights at closing. Since the Trust was unable to raise the full amount of the purchase price, the Hopping family agreed to a second installment payment from the Trust of \$600,000 by March 15, 2011. In the meantime, the Pikes are leasing the farmland from the Trust. Once the final installment payment is made, the Trust will sell the restricted farmland to the Pikes as described above. For more updates, please visit our website and sign-up for our eNews in order to follow this exciting project.

Charnews Farm

2009 was the first full year for the Peconic Land Trust at Charnews Farm, where the mission of promoting regional agriculture, local food production, and community involvement is fully underway. As noted in the article on stewardship (*see page 9*), the Trust received a grant through the NYS Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance: the \$30,000 grant will be used to create a sustainable agriculture education and outreach program at Charnews Farm—inspired by the work the Trust has done at our Quail Hill Farm.

Last year, with the help of anonymous donors, the Trust initiated a fundraising effort to recoup the acquisition cost of the farm so that it can be retained as an educational resource for the Trust. This effort was led by two dedicated, long-time Trust supporters – John Henry and Drienne Benner. As the co-chairs of our Friends of Charnews Farm Committee, John and Drienne have coordinated the fundraising and friendraising efforts dedicated to making the farm a community asset, through farming, family friendly programming, and community gardening.

The farm was put back into agricultural production, the first time in over 20 years, through a lease with Fred Lee of Sang Lee Farms in 2009. In 2010, Fred Lee renewed his



lease, and was joined by two new farmers: Dan Machin, who is farming one acre and producing 100 varieties of produce, and Chris Browder of Browders Birds, who is focused on raising organic chickens.

The farm also spawned an impressive volunteer crew under the guidance of North Fork Stewardship Manager Denise Markut. Every Friday, volunteers—known affectionately as the Honey Dews—have gathered at the farm to work on the house, gardens, and barns; creating a hospitable destination for the community, including the establishment in 2009 of a “Learning Garden,” which provides an on-going agriculture micro-environment for education programs at the farm; and then in 2010, adding community garden plots, 20 4’ x 20’ raised bed gardens, that have been rented out by individuals, families and friends to grow their own vegetables, fruits and flowers.

The farm has also been the destination for both new and traditional community programs bringing hundreds of visitors to the farm over the spring, summer and fall, including a Global Youth Services Day with the Town of Southold in both 2009 and 2010, the 3rd and 4th Annual Foodie Tours hosted by the North Fork Reform Synagogue, and a movie night series in cooperation with the Floyd Memorial Library. Family films were shown “on” the barn in August. In 2010, the first of what we hope will be an annual Family Day at the Farm saw scores of children and their parents visit the farm for a day of fun with animals, arts and crafts, games and good food.

To get more involved with Charnews Farm, contact Denise Markut at 631.734.5630 or email dmarkut@peconiclandtrust.org.

New Suffolk Waterfront

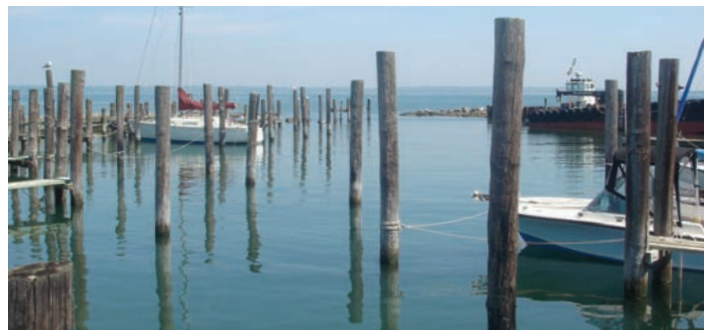
On December 19, 2007, the Peconic Land Trust acquired a 3.4-acre historic waterfront property located on Peconic Bay in New Suffolk, home to the first United States submarine base and where the submarine, the U.S.S. Holland, was commissioned by the U.S. Navy. For over 20 years, the Trust had been monitoring the status of the property as development proposals came and went, always in touch with New Suffolk residents concerned about its future. Using funds from its

revolving fund and other assets, the Trust purchased the property at less than fair market value through a “bargain sale” providing the sellers with the opportunity for a charitable gift equivalent to the discount amount.

The Trust is currently working closely with the New Suffolk Waterfront Fund (a local charitable organization and prospective new owner) on the future use, ownership, and management of the site. The Fund is an outgrowth of the New Suffolk Civic Association, and was established for the purpose of purchasing, improving and maintaining the property for the benefit of the community. The Fund has entered into a purchase agreement with the Trust as it works to raise the capital necessary to acquire the property. Once accomplished, the Trust will have replenished its funds so that another threatened property can be acquired and protected. The Fund hopes to close with the Trust by December 2010.

The Trust and the Fund have held numerous community meetings to gather input on the future use of the site. Over the last two years, the Fund has hosted many events to generate community interest and involvement in the project as well as fundraising, including a very successful, annual “A Day in New Suffolk” 5k Waterfront Run/Walk in 2009 and 2010. Other activities have included a community BBQ over Memorial Day weekend, and a host of clean-up and beautification days.

To learn more, visit the Trust’s website or the New Suffolk Waterfront Fund website, www.NewSuffolkWaterfront.org. ■



PECONIC LAND TRUST



296 Hampton Road
PO Box 1776
Southampton, NY 11969
(631) 283-3195
www.peconiclandtrust.org

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The Peconic Land Trust conserves Long Island's working farms, natural lands, and heritage for our communities now and in the future.

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Yvette DeBow-Salsedo, Editor
Kathleen Kennedy, Associate Editor
Contributors: Maura Doyle & Julie Zaykowski
Searles Graphics, Design & Printing