



Access to Farmland: Affordability Comes Home to Roost

In 2007, the issue of affordability affected more people than ever before on the East End of Long Island, both in terms of the availability of reasonably-priced farmland and housing for our local residents. Rising real estate values, spurred on by a strong New York City economy, have long impacted farmland and the housing stock in our communities for decades, but has hit a heightened pace in the last few years. In the area of housing, the Trust is exploring how its conservation techniques can be adapted to stem the relocation and loss of our local residents—and their children—due to highly appreciated land values.

On the farmland front, donations and sales of conservation restrictions fueled by enhanced state and federal tax incentives as well as public and private acquisition funds (thanks to the Community Preservation Fund's two-percent real estate transfer tax that funds the five East End towns' conservation programs and private donations to nonprofit land conservation organizations such as the Peconic Land Trust), have enabled more and more farmers to conserve their land. (See box on page 2)

Article continued on page 2



Unanticipated Consequences

But one issue has revealed itself in the wake of successful protection efforts over the years: we did not anticipate the need to assure that preserved agricultural land will continue to be farmed. Indeed, there are several instances of non-farmers purchasing restricted farmland and simply leaving it open – sometimes fallow or sometimes as manicured lawns. These new landowners paid far above agricultural value making it impossible for farmers to compete. In addition, above-market purchases of restricted farmland have skewed its value for both appraisal and estate tax purposes.

“This was really an eye-opening turn of events,” said John Halsey. “As a community we never saw this as a potential consequence of conservation. It’s incumbent upon us to find solutions to this new situation and to look to other places throughout the U.S. that may have innovative programs that can work in our community.”

Earlier this year, Stephen Searl, a project manager for the Trust who joined the organization in 2006, began researching how other land trusts and municipalities, most notably those in Vermont and Massachusetts, are dealing with issues of farmland affordability and accessibility.

Learning from Others

Stephen Searl was just the right person to take on this mission. A native of Cutchogue, Stephen is related on his mother’s side to a multi-generation farming family of Southold Town: the Wickhams. Stephen’s uncle, Tom Wickham, is the owner of the Wickham’s Fruit Farm, a 350-acre farm in Cutchogue. Stephen grew up working on the farm, went to Cornell University’s School of Agriculture and Life Sciences to study sociology and horticulture, and obtained a Master of Science in Natural Resource Planning from the University of Vermont in 2006.



In June 2007 the Trust received a Conservation Capacity and Excellence Grant from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program managed by the Land Trust Alliance to develop a program that will help to promote more access to affordable and productive farmland. At the end of July, Stephen embarked on a trip to Massachusetts and Vermont, and met with the former director of Massachusetts’ Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program, Richard Hubbard, who was responsible for implementing a state-wide easement program that limited the re-sale of protected farms to qualified farmers at farmer-to-farmer prices. He also met with Equity Trust (www.equitytrust.org), the Vermont Land Trust (www.vlt.org), and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (www.vhcb.org).

The Vermont Land Trust recently began a Farmland Access Program to help farmers (those starting up and others interested in expanding) gain access to farmland. The Peconic Land Trust is studying this program for guidance and plans to incorporate various conservation tools, such as easements, leases, and equity sharing, to see if it can help keep farmland affordable and in production. It is our hope that we can enhance the diversity of qualified farmers, by providing farmland and housing for the next generation of farmers, and to ensure the diversity of farms by focusing primarily on the local food economy.



Purchase of Development Rights:

Suffolk County and most towns have Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs designed to protect farmland. Through these programs, landowners can voluntarily agree to sell all, or a portion of, the development rights on their land. The landowner retains ownership of the land, as well as the rights to farm, sell the land, or pass it onto their heirs.

“The fact-finding trip really opened my eyes to the range possibilities to protect the future of farming on the East End. Keeping farmland in production is vital not only to the business of agriculture on Long Island, but to maintaining heritage of this community that makes it attractive to people who live and visit the area,” said Searl.

Identifying Farmland & Problem Solving

Over the last few years, the Trust has acquired – predominately on the North Fork – farmland that could be used to create a pilot program for an Access to Farmland Program on the East End. One farm in particular, the Cox Lane Farm, could be suitable for startup farmers. The Trust purchased the farm simultaneous to the sale of the development rights to the Town of Southold and the United States Department of Agriculture. It is a 27.5-acre, self-contained farm with a house, barns, 25.5 acres of tillable land, and the potential for a retail outlet. The Trust is investigating the possibility of entering into a long-term lease with a beginner farmer in need of housing and barns as well as access to affordable farmland. (Currently, the Trust is leasing the Cox Lane farmland to Fred Lee of Sang Lee Farms.) The Trust is also looking at the possibility of leasing and/or selling other Trust-owned farmland to established growers such as Fred Lee as well as to startup farmers.

“The Peconic Land Trust is very positively impacted the agricultural community of the East End by providing options to farmers who want to continue farming, such as leasing,” said Fred Lee. “I don’t own all the land I farm, so having the ability to lease affordable farmland through Peconic Land Trust is a real blessing.”

While the Trust is intent on creating this program, it comes with costs. Often, the Trust purchases farmland above its true agricultural value in order to secure the land and control its destiny. In these instances, the Trust hopes to resell the parcel to a farmer at an affordable price, but this may result in a loss. In order to solve this dilemma and move beyond these financial restrictions, the Trust is currently looking at creating a fund that will provide the financial resources to *bridge the gap* in a fiscally responsible manner. If you would like to learn more about this program and help us keep protected farmland in production and accessible to farmers, please contact (name).■



Farmland Heritage Celebration

In August 2007, the Peconic Land Trust joined with the Long Island Farm Bureau and the local farming community to sponsor a two-week promotional campaign to “Buy Local.”



The Farmstand Heritage Celebration encourages all residents and visitors to the East End to visit their local farmstands and experience all the wonderful fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers, meats, poultry, dairy and food products our local farmers grow, raise, and create. This successful program—which includes a detailed map of East End farmstands (*available for download from our website—www.peconiclandtrust.org*)—will be a highlight of our 2008 Summer Season. The Trust will be revising the map and creating an advertising campaign that will kick-off early Summer. ■



Donor Profile

Gordon and Jane Danby Donate Historic Conservation Easement in Wading River

At the end of 2006, the Peconic Land Trust received a unique gift from a very unique couple – a conservation easement from Gordon and Jane Danby on a 5.7 acre woodland property in Wading River, which includes an historic home: the Woodhull-Danby House.

The Woodhull-Danby property is wooded, natural land along picturesque Sound Road in Wading River, across from a 79-acre wetland preserve owned by the Nature Conservancy. The property represents two separate, but attached, parcels: a two-acre wooded lot and a 3.7-acre parcel containing a number of buildings, including the 18th Century Woodhull-Danby house, also known as “Four Chimneys,” a Town of Riverhead historic landmark. The property represents one of the last significant privately owned homesteads in Wading River.

“This is a generous gift that the Danbys’ have given to Wading River and the East End community. The Trust, over the years, has been fortunate that there are people such as the Danbys who recognize and appreciate the conservation values of their land,” said John v.H. Halsey, president of the Peconic Land Trust. “Now, this historic property will be conserved for future generations.”

Richard Wines, Chair of the Riverhead Landmarks Preservation commission, added: “The Woodhull-Danby property is one of the last, significant properties in an area that includes many 18th and 19th century homes. The pressure to squeeze more and more ‘McMansions’ between the area’s rich collection of historic homes is great and would result in marooning the history and changing the character of the community. This makes the Danby conservation easement especially significant. It will allow those homes a little room to breath, keeping theirs and others from being engulfed by development.”

Preserving Character

According to Mrs. Danby, the decision to place a conservation easement on their property was motivated by their apprehension over continued development in their community and the resulting loss of the region’s historic character. “When it comes to the land and its historic character, as property owners we are really just custodians of the land and it is up to us to protect it. Over the years, this part of Long Island has become so crowded and this is really the only significant piece of property



left in the neighborhood. We, along with our neighbors, are constantly being solicited to sell our property but we felt that the right thing to do was to preserve it intact for the future of the community and to provide the poor wildlife left in the area with some open land.”

The Woodhull-Danby House is a unique historic home that blends two distinct architectural eras: the original home, built in 1760 is Colonial Georgian; and an addition built in 1840 is where Greek Revival woodwork is introduced and then carried throughout the house. (*The Danby’s have recently applied for registration on the State and National Registers of Historic Places for the Woodhull-Danby House.*)

Woodhull-Danby Property History

The Danby’s acquired their property between 1962 and 1965; initially purchasing the two-acre land parcel in 1962 and later purchasing the Woodhull property (3.7 acres with the buildings) in 1965. At that time, the property had only changed hands three times – the Woodhull’s lived there from 1760 to 1920; in 1920, the property was acquired by the Pew family (he was the editor/publisher of one of the NYC newspapers); and in 1942 the deLagerbergs – he was an architect and she was an artist – took up residence. The deLagerbergs did the most recent renovations on the house, changing the roofline of the 1880 extension from flat to steeped and adding an exterior staircase to the second floor and balcony. Additionally, beautiful hand-stenciled paintings adorn the kitchen cabinets, doors, and walls, painted by Mrs. deLagerberg, signed and dated 1944.

About the Danbys

Dr. and Mrs. Danby were married in 1962, when both were working at the Brookhaven National Labs (BNL). Dr. Danby, a high-energy physicist at BNL, concentrated most of his scientific exploration on the development of magnetic technology. Mr. Danby retired from BNL in 1999. In the 1990s, Dr. Danby, along with Jevan Damadian, John Linardos and Raymond V. Damadian, developed the technology that is used in today's open magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines. Most recently, Dr. Danby's work focused on development and promotion of magnetic levitation technology for transportation with his partner James Powell. Both were awarded the 2000 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Engineering by the Franklin Institute. Most recently Dr. Danby was appointed as a research professor at Polytechnic University in the Department of Civil Engineering and was appointed a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Mrs. Danby, who left BNL to raise her family in the 1960s, has a long history of involvement in community and historic preservation activities. She is an active member and one-time President of the Wading River Historical Society,

a member and past officer of the Suffolk County Historical Society, and served on the board of the East End Arts and Humanities Council. For many years Mrs. Danby performed with the Long Island Symphonic Choral Association (LISCA). In 2002, Mrs. Danby sold a successful antiques business which she opened in Wading River in 1993: Her love of antiques and beautiful objects d'art is evidenced in her home, which lovingly presents a wide array of china, crystal, and collectibles – including two wonderful collections of perfume bottles and timepieces.

The Danby's were introduced to the Trust and its mission to conserve working farmland, natural lands and the community's heritage by a friend, and PLT donor, Dr. Caryl Granttham. Dr. Granttham donated 20.5 acres of woodland, with frontage on Long Island Sound in the Town of Riverhead to the Trust in 2002. The Granttham Preserve adjoins the Reeves Preserve, 20 acres that were donated to the Trust by Avis and the late Richard Reeves in 2000—Mr. Reeves and Dr. Granttham were siblings. "Through this family's generosity, significant open space and woodland in Riverhead has been forever protected from development," said Halsey. ■

Honors & Recognition

Peconic Land Trust Recognized by Three Distinguished Organizations in 2007

Vision Long Island awarded the Peconic Land Trust with its **2007 Smart Growth Award** in the area of Preserving Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, Historical Buildings and Critical Environmental Areas. In making the award, Vision Long Island noted: "The organization works tirelessly towards conservation of land while protecting property rights of farmers and other property owners." Peconic Land Trust President and Founder, John v.H. Halsey accepted the award on behalf of the organization on June 15, 2007.

Also in June, the **Garden Club of America** recognized the Peconic Land Trust during its yearly conference, this year hosted by the Southampton Garden Club at the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club. John v.H. Halsey and Scott Chaskey, Director of the Trust's Quail Hill Farm, accepted the Zone III Civic Improvement Commendation for the organization's work in preserving over 8,600 acres from development and for being a model for conservation programs nationwide.

In 2007, the Peconic Land Trust met the **100% Land Trust Alliance Board Membership Challenge**. The Land Trust Alliance is a national community of dedicated conservation leaders working together to strengthen land trusts and advance a shared vision for local land protection. The Peconic Land Trust is one of a handful of the more than 1,600 and trust organizations in the U.S. to have met this milestone. We truly appreciate the dedication our Board of Directors has shown to land conservation. ■



Peconic Land Trust Board of Directors (2006-2007)

Back Row: John v.H. Halsey, Jane Iselin (Secretary), Barbara Wright Bush (Treasurer), Blair McCaslin (co-Chair), Pingree Louchheim, Lloyd Zuckerberg.

Front Row: John S. Norbeck, Peter J. Talty, Stephen Weir, Marilee Foster, Nancy Gilbert (co-Chair), Brian McCaffrey, Douglas Campbell

Special Events

Spring and Summer Events Bring Trust Supporters To

The Spring and Summer of 2007 offered the Peconic Land Trust many wonderful moments to connect with supporters – everything from a trendy loft party in the City to a wonderful country breakfast at the farm. We would like to thank our chairs, committees and supporters for making all our events so successful and fun.

The New York City Party: Connecting the Generations

The Trust was fortunate to have attracted Katie Lee Joel to be our special guest at the New York City Cocktail party in mid-May. Katie Lee along with her great friend Beth Ostrosky joined event co-Chairs Doug and Paige Campbell as we celebrated the Trust's accomplishments

at a beautiful West Side loft overlooking the Hudson River. The NYC Party offers the Trust an additional venue for attracting new supporters to the work of the Trust and the beauty of the East End. ■



John v.H. Halsey with Katie Lee Joel and Beth Ostrosky



Event Co-chairs Paige and Doug Campbell with Katie Lee Joel and John v.H. Halsey



Andrew Giobbi, Kathy Kennedy and Doug Campbell



Tom Kaufman, Bill Koenigsberg, Gopa Dobson and Regina Kaufman



Melissa Pugila, Jordana Roberts, Rita Kiryakos

Peconinic: A Celebration of our Supporters

Every year, the first week in June is anxiously anticipated because of one very special event: The Peconic Land Trust's annual Peconinic, a pot-luck luncheon celebrating donors and friends of the Trust. The food is as unpredictable as the weather and this year was no exception. Under a brightly colored tent, in the middle of the Trust's recently acquired Oregon Road farmland in Mattituck, over 100 hearty souls came out in the rain to celebrate the land.



Michael and Susan McGreevy

Kids flew kites, met farm animals from the Suffolk County Farm and Education Center at Cornell, and marveled at the wonders of wildlife with a raptor presentation by the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. The wonderful sounds of the Dune Grass Band filled the tent as well as the aroma of over 50 freshly cooked dishes – expertly displayed by Pingree Louchheim and her core of volunteers. Make sure to mark your calendars for June 7 as the Trust kicks off its 25th Anniversary schedule of celebrations with the 2008 Peconinic!! (Location to be announced soon!!) ■



Sadie Heston and Owen Searl

together in Celebration of the Land

Quail Hill Farm Breakfast: A Community Tradition Continues

June 23rd dawned bright and sunny for Quail Hill Farm's annual farm member breakfast. The orchard was full of smiling faces and full bellies as farm members joined with friends new and old to savor wonderful pancakes, fruit compote and assorted home-baked items, all made with ingredients picked fresh from the farm! ■



*Farm Committee members
Jane Weissman and Jerry Pluenneke*



*Trust staffers Faith Podolsky,
Julie Zaykowski and Donna Bova*



Tim Caufield



Elaine and Kent Miller with John v.H. Halsey

Special Events

Farms & Fields: A Picture Perfect Setting for Conservation

On August 5th, the Peconic Land Trust enjoyed its 5th Annual Farms and Fields Country Luncheon, by all accounts a huge success! Hosted by Lynn and Ray Wesnofske at Ocean View Farm, this year's event featured celebrity co-chairs Marci Klein and Scott Murphy along with chairs Paige and Doug Campbell, the event was sponsored by the Corcoran Group. The Wesnofske's restored dairy barn was decorated with a stunning array of antique, museum quality quilts on loan from the private collection of Thomas Woodard and Blanche Greenstein. One beautiful, early-American quilt was offered during the exciting live auction, presided over by the always entertaining host of *Inside the Actor's Studio*, James Lipton. This sold out event supports the work of the Trust throughout the year. ■



Wesnofske barn with quilts

All photos by Rob Rich



Honorary co-Chairs Marci Klein and Scott Murphy



John Halsey and Corcoran's Rick Hoffman



Committee members Ana Daniel, Tom Woodard and Blanche Greenstein



Trust Board member Peter Talty, Linda Stabler-Talty, Board Member Lloyd Zuckerberg, James Lipton and Dennis Suskind



Committee members Mary Busch, Lynn Wesnofske and Liz Stewart

Volunteers

Christine & Brooks Kraft Donate their Photographic Talents to the Trust



Brooks Kraft and Graham Hawks at Berglund Preserve

In the early summer of 2007, the Peconic Land Trust received a very special “in kind” donation from former Remsenburg resident and photographer Christine Kraft, M.S., and her husband Brooks Kraft, a native New Yorker and world-renowned *Time* magazine photojournalist with family ties to Nassau Point.

Reflecting on the inspiration of the project, Christine mentioned that “professional photographic services are very costly. Brooks and I decided that if we could identify a charitable organization that would benefit from a donation of our work, we would make serving them a priority for 2007.” When asked how they chose the Trust (while working and raising their two children in Washington D.C.), Christine said that, “Having moved away from the East End years ago, I still remembered fondly the farmland, the dunes and wetlands, and those scenic vistas. It was still “home” and I was invested in doing what I could to help support stewardship efforts. So when the Trust accepted our offer to collaborate, we were excited to get started.”

Over the course of a week in June, shooting mostly digital 35 mm and medium format film, the Krafts captured many beautiful images of the East End—from the marshes at Berglund Preserve, to the dunes of Quogue, to the farmsteads in Peconic and the preserves in Southold. Christine was back in January to shoot a winter series with the assistance of Graham Hawks, South Fork Stewardship Manager.



Christine Kraft at Tramaridge (Southampton)



Booth Preserve (Southold)



Cove Beach (Southold)



Berglund Preserve (Southampton)

“We are extremely grateful for the generosity of the Krafts. Their beautiful images have captured the natural diversity that makes the East End such a wonderful place to live and visit. We are so very pleased to be able to share these images with our supporters and the general public as part of our ongoing educational efforts,” said John v.H. Halsey, President of the Peconic Land Trust.

Brooks and Christine wish to thank Yvette DeBow-Salsedo, the Trust’s Communications and Marketing Director for her role in launching the project. Brooks and Christine wish to thank Denise Markut and Graham Hawks for their expertise and generous guidance on site during the shoot.

Volunteering with the Trust

The Peconic Land Trust is actively looking for volunteers to assist in our conservation work. Volunteer opportunities run the gamut at the Trust, from maintenance work at our preserves, to helping with mailings in the office, to providing assistance at events and programs, to offering technical, artistic and cultural services in support of our mission. Please contact Maura Doyle, Events & Volunteer Coordinator, at 631.283.3196 or email mdoyle@peconiclandtrust.org to see how you can help. ■

Grant News

Peconic Land Trust Receives Brine Family Trust Grant

In September, the Peconic Land Trust received the 2007 Summer Grant from the Brine Family Trust, the purpose of which is to fund projects that “serve to sustain the East End’s biodiversity, recover its endangered species, and maintain its natural ecosystem.”

“The Peconic Land Trust is thrilled to be the recipient of funding from the Brine Family Charitable Trust. The funds made available through this grant will make a significant difference in the Trust’s on-going repair and restoration of two of our preserves: **Shellfisher Preserve**, a mariculture facility located on Southold Bay in the Town of Southold, and **Reel Point Preserve**, located on the eastern portion of Shelter Island,” said John v.H. Halsey, President of the Peconic Land Trust.

At Shellfisher, the funds will be used to assist in the reparation of this shellfish aquaculture facility, creating a research and education facility, as well as providing small-scale aquaculture companies with affordable access to the waterfront. These funds will also help the Peconic Land Trust to make critical roadway repairs, restore native vegetation to the property, and assist



Last fall, volunteers from the Ram Island Association, organized by Edie Landeck, planted 1,800 sq. ft. of beach grass. The beach grass and new fencing at Reel Point was funded by the Brine Family Trust and the Ram Island Association.

with general construction at Shellfisher.

At the Reel Point Preserve, the funds will assist in the restoration of the dune habitat, critical for both the native plants as well as to the local population of ospreys and piping plovers. ■

Merchandise

Peconic Land Trust Note Cards

Feature Paintings by Plein Air Peconic Artists

The Peconic Land Trust is offering – for the first time — a boxed set of 12 wetland images, created by the talented landscape artists of Plein Air Peconic. Each boxed set includes 3 copies of 4 images and are blank inside for your message.

\$12.00/boxed set plus tax & shipping. To order, call the Trust’s offices in Southampton at 631.283.3195 or visit us online at www.PeconicLandTrust.org. ■



Dune Beach by Casey Chalem Anderson



Soft Light Scallop Pond by Gail Kern



Reel Point by Michele Margit



Dam Pond by Susan D'Alessio

Conservation Highlights

YEAR END PROJECTS SUMMARY

Conservation Projects: January through June 2007

Sagaponack Realty LLC

Easement: Located in the Village of Sagaponack, a 25.25-acre portion of this 43.5 acre oceanfront parcel was conserved through the gift of an easement to the Trust. The gift ensures that the balance of agricultural soils is available for production, as it has been for generations.



Photo credit: Jeff Heatley



4.36-acre-portion of Mr. Batch's 6.2 acre parcel. The land remains in agriculture by supporting several greenhouses and nursery stock.

Batch: The Trust worked with Jeffrey S. Batch and the Town of Riverhead early in 2007 to facilitate the Town's purchase of development rights on a

Sharkey/Molfetta: In February 2007, the Trust facilitated the conservation of farmland owned by James Sharkey and Monique Molfetta in Riverhead by working with the Town of Riverhead and Suffolk County in their purchase of 17.2 acres of development rights from this nearly 20-acre farm. Two development areas were left, one of which will be a future homesite. The land currently supports an equestrian use.



Arrieta: The March 2007 acquisition of the Arrieta property from Allan Arrieta adds 12.5 acres of active farmland to another Trust farmland acquisition (Shur Farm



Photo credit: Tim Corwin

Preserve in 2006) on Oregon Road in Mattituck. Working with the Town of Southold, the Trust purchased the land from Mr. Arrieta and subsequently sold the development

rights to the Town. The Trust is currently analyzing future possibilities for this combined farmland, which totals 25.5 acres.

Williams a.k.a. Manorville Horse Farm: The Manorville Horse Farm Preserve is a 15.3-acre parcel of agricultural land located in the Manorville farm belt, the Town of Brookhaven's most significant agricultural corridor. The Trust partnered with the Town in conserving the land by acquiring it from the estate of George Williams and selling the development rights to the Town at a simultaneous closing in March 2007.

A one-acre development area remains out of the conservation area for a future homesite, and the current tenants operate a long-standing equestrian business on-site.



Macari a.k.a. Cox Lane

Farm: In May 2007, the Trust purchased 27.53 acres of agricultural lands located on Cox Lane in Cutchogue from Joe Macari, Sr. at a simultaneous closing where the Town of



Southold and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service acquired the development rights on just over 25 acres. This leaves a two-acre development area with an existing two-story farmhouse and agricultural structures. ■



Southold Town Supervisor, Scott Russell, at press conference announcing the acquisition of Cox Lane Farm. L-R: Joe Macari, Sr., Tim Caufield, Stephen Searle, Dan Ross, Bill Edwards, Russell, Tom Wickham, Melissa Spiro, Chris Baiz, Joe Macari, Jr., and Ray Huntington.

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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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