

## **Keeping the Town Beautiful**

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### ***Stonington Land Trust to replace trees along North Main Street***

The Stonington Land Trust is donating \$12,500 to the town to replace trees that have been cut down along North Main Street and Wadawanuck Square.

The land trust would like the town to use any remaining money to begin creating a tree plan for the major roads in town.

"We're not just an organization that preserves land. We're also interested in the beauty of the area," said land trust board member Anne Page.

Land trust President Jim Smith added that "North Main Street is one image that generations associate with Stonington and we have to preserve that. Stonington Land Trust wants to protect and help preserve the natural beauty of all neighborhoods and we are happy to be part of a community effort to help our town."

He said the donation "fits into our mission" to preserve the town's natural resources including its farms, woodlands, water resources, marshlands, swamps, beaches, plant and animal life, as well as the unique historic and scenic character of Stonington.

In January, 36 trees were cut down along North Main Street after town officials said the dead and rotting trees were a hazard to passing cars. Not taking them down, they said, would have posed a liability problem for the town because two arborists had recommended their removal.

The tree cutting was controversial as some residents urged the town not to cut down the trees that line the scenic road or at least replace them. First Selectmen Ed Haberek has said the town will determine what type of trees to replant with money being donated and will create a maintenance schedule and master plan for the streets in town.

Several trees along Wadawanuck Square in the borough have also been targeted to be cut down.

Once there are leaves on the existing trees, the town will evaluate the existing canopy, determine what areas need to be filled in, and decide the number and species of the new trees and where they should be planted.

The town may decide not to replace some trees because there are plenty of other trees in the immediate area.

On Monday, March 22, the land trust will hold an all-day fundraiser at the Dog Watch Cafe in the borough in which 15 percent of the restaurant's proceeds will be donated to the organization.

Land trust members will staff an information table at the restaurant and there will be a jar for people to donate directly to the tree fund.