



STONINGTON LAND TRUST

SUMMER 2009

THIRD ANNUAL STONINGTON LAND TRUST MEETING - June 15, 2009

Still Time to Preserve

Westerly Sun, The (RI) - Tuesday, June 16, 2009

LESLIE ROVETTI, Sun Staff Writer

STONINGTON - The best thing the Connecticut legislature did this session, according to state Sen. Andrew Maynard, D-18th District, was defend the Community Investment Fund from being invaded to help the budget.

The money from the fund comes from a fee - "some would say a tax," Maynard said - people pay whenever they file a land record in their town hall. The fee is \$30, with \$3 going to the town for processing and the other \$27 going to Hartford. The money is used to pay for preservation of open space, farms and historic places, and affordable housing. "It's done incredibly well," he said. "It takes good causes out of the political rough and tumble."

Maynard was speaking at the third annual meeting of the Stonington Land Trust, held Monday evening on a sunny porch overlooking the water at the Wadawanuck Club in Stonington Borough. He spoke to more than 50 people, representing the nearly 200 individual and family memberships in the land trust, on what the state can do to help towns preserve open space.

Maynard said some in Hartford were looking "in every nook and cranny" for money to use to balance the budget. This fund, which he said has been used in more than 130 towns since its inception in 2005, was defended and eventually spared. "If you go down that road, you're never coming back," he said.

Maynard also pointed out the benefits of preserving open space, and noted that southeastern Connecticut is a much less congested place to live than southwestern Connecticut.

"We've still got time up here to preserve the landscape and quality of life," he said.

David Sutherland, director of government relations for The Nature Conservancy's Connecticut chapter, also spoke to the land trust. Sutherland told the crowd that land preservation has seemed like a gamble in the past, but he believed it has always paid off in the end.

Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme, he said, was acquired in 1931 at the height of the Great Depression. He said legislators balked at what was then a high price for undeveloped land. Hammonasset State Park in Madison was also purchased during a tight budget year, he said. "I can't imagine a weekend in Connecticut without Hammonasset, Rocky Neck, and some of our other parks," he said. "Previous generations have done their part."

Sutherland also said the debate on whether or not properties owned by land trusts should be taxed continues to play out. "Town assessors have become more aggressive, shall we say," he explained. "They've gotten increasingly aggressive with nonprofits in general."

Stonington's First Selectman Edward Haberek Jr. said the tax status of land trust properties in Stonington has yet to be determined. The Stonington Land Trust owns one 32 acre parcel and has an easement on another 148 acres. Both of those properties were acquired this year, and Haberek said they are still in the process of being appraised. Once the appraisals are complete, voters at a future town meeting will decide if the property should be tax-exempt.

Sutherland also stressed the importance of local conservation groups to preserving open space.

"Groups like yours are really, really critical," he said. "It's so crucial to have networks of people around the state who know their land really well."



(l. to r.) Jim Smith, State Senator Andrew Maynard, First Selectman Ed Haberek, Laurie Smith



148 ACRES DONATED TO LAND TRUST

Westerly Sun, The (RI) - Saturday, April 18, 2009

By LESLIE ROVETTI / Sun Staff Writer

STONINGTON — Not long after celebrating the acquisition of its first parcel, the Stonington Land Trust has cause to celebrate anew. The conservation group has just been given a conservation easement to a second, larger property — a secluded 148 acres off Pequot Trail.

“[We’ve been given] a permanent easement,” said land trust president Jim Smith. “It was an incredibly generous gift.”

The easement was donated by Alessandro Fusina and his wife Nora, who purchased the property nearly two years ago. They are keeping 11 of the 159 acres for their own unrestricted use, and are dedicating the remaining acreage as perpetual open space. Included in the 11-acre tract is the Fusinas’ home, built in 1695.



Alessandro Fusina

Daniel Hyland / The Sun

The land begins high up on Pequot Trail and gently slopes down to wetlands just behind the town’s police station and the Stonington Shopping Plaza. Even this week, with the green veneer of spring not yet fully realized, the vista that spreads toward Route 1 was an idyllic one. The land has vineyards, a cornfield, and two ponds, in addition to pastures and stands of evergreen and hardwood trees.

“I think I was lucky enough to see that in 300 years, [the land’s former owners] did almost nothing,” Fusina said.



Daniel Hyland / The Sun

The Fusinas still own the donated land, but they must now limit their activities on the land. They cannot build on it, or use dirt bikes on the trails or motor boats in the pond. They can continue to grow corn and the Chardonnay grapes they sell to Stonington Vineyards, but they must do it with as small a negative impact on the land as possible.

Fusina said he has had experience with organic farming back in his native Italy, but it’s more difficult to accomplish here.

“The fashion is organic, but it gets so humid here you can’t do it,” he said, adding that he was pleased to add to the town’s stock of committed undeveloped space because he believes Stonington has had enough growth.

“There is too much development here,” Fusina said. “It’s not an unpleasant part of the world, but it’s still very built up.”

The land will not be open to the public, as it is still private property. However, Smith said the land trust is working to get walking trails on their first property, the 32-acre Anguilla Brook Preserve, ready for the public. The land trust is planning to host a May 22 bird walk on the preserve, located off North Anguilla Road, led by Maggie Jones of the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center.

Standing on top of the hill overlooking the easement property this week, Fusina listened to a visitor remark how beautiful the property is.

“And it should stay that way,” he said.

STONINGTON LAND TRUST ACQUIRES FIRST PARCEL

Excerpted from the Stonington Times, January 22, 2009



The Town of Stonington’s First Selectman Edward Haberek Jr., Laurie Smith, Stanton Simm, Anne Page and Jim Smith.

Photo by Cheryl Albaine

Stonington Land Trust takes over 32 acres

BY JOE WOJTAS
STAFF WRITER

The town didn’t want it anymore and now the Stonington Land Trust has its first piece of property.

Three weeks ago the town officially transferred ownership of a 32-acre piece of land off North Anguilla Road to the two-year-old organization.

The town had paid \$110,000 for the land back in 1988 with hopes of possibly developing trails and other passive recreation. But half the land is made up of wetlands and last September, residents voted to give

it to the land trust.

“This puts us on the map and gets us going,” said land trust president Jim Smith as he and other members of his organization met with First Selectmen Ed Haberek on the property two weeks ago.

Smith added that it took the very successful Westerly Land Trust seven years to get its first piece of land while the Stonington group has done it in just two.

The entrance to the site is a narrow right of way along the west side of North Anguilla Road. That access is about 1,400 feet north of the entrance to the

Pawcatuck Little League complex.

The heavily wooded property is bordered by Anguilla Brook to the east and Interstate 95 to the west. The brook is the town’s only untapped aquifer.

As for the future of the property, Conservation Commission Chairman Stanton Simm, who heads the trust’s acquisition committee, said a bridge could be built over the brook and Boy Scouts could create trails.

Ann Page, who heads the trust’s publicity committee, said the transfer is a win for everyone. She said the trust gets the land, the town no longer has to be responsible for maintaining the property and it remains open to the public.

“It’s the public side doing what it does best and the private side doing what it does best,” Simm said.

Page pointed out that the town has recently gone through a burst of development that has now slowed with the recession.

“I think people are starting to realize you have to preserve the natural habitat if you want the town to remain a place where people want to stay,” she said.

She added that the preservation of open space also makes the land next to it more valuable.

The trust’s holdings will soon expand as Haberek said the town is getting ready to donate two pieces of land it owns on Schiller Avenue in Pawcatuck to the group.

Dear Friends,

As the Stonington Land Trust ends its second full year of operations, we are very pleased with our support from members and citizens of the Town of Stonington. Our membership has continued to grow - almost 75% in the last year - we now have over 200 memberships. Our balance sheet is very strong - we have approximately \$80,000 (a 50% increase over last year) in cash and interest bearing accounts and we have no liabilities. We are preserving over 180 acres of open space, including 32 acres off North Anguilla Road which we own in fee, and we hold a conservation easement on 148 acres running from Pequod Trail almost to the police station on Route 1.

As we look to the future, we are very optimistic. We are learning to work with other organizations interested in preserving open space, such as the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, the Nature Conservancy, and the Avalonia Land Trust. We believe we can accomplish more with like minded organizations than we can on our own.

We are very grateful to the Town of Stonington and to First Selectman Ed Haberek for their continuing support of our operations. I wish to thank all of our members for their continuing support. For the future, I hope each member would ask just one friend to join Stonington Land Trust, so that we can continue to grow at a rapid pace. Finally, I wish to thank each of the hard-working directors, without whose efforts none of the above could have been accomplished.

Sincerely,


James S. Smith
President

PRESERVING STONINGTON!

Why Donate Land or Conservation Easements to the Stonington Land Trust?

You can help protect beautiful Stonington from development and create a lasting legacy by participating in the Stonington Land Trust (SLT).

Through land donation, placing conservation restrictions on your property, or making a financial gift to SLT, you can help ensure that more open space will be protected in perpetuity. Land donations, conservation restrictions, and financial gifts offer significant income and estate tax benefits.

Recent changes in Federal tax laws have increased both the maximum annual deduction for conservation restrictions as well as the number of years over which that deduction may be taken. SLT will work with property owners to help achieve their personal, income tax, and estate planning objectives.

Each year, the amount of open space and wildlife habitat dwindles. Please consider a donation of land or a financial gift to SLT for land acquisition, reclamation, and protection. It is a way that you can make a difference here in Stonington.

Summer is time to renew your membership for 2009!

Please cut out the form below and don't forget to include your email address. We intend to use emails more in the future so we can keep you updated about Stonington Land Trust news and events.



STONINGTON LAND TRUST

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Individual Membership	\$ 25	[]
Family Membership	\$ 35	[]
Patron Membership	\$ 100	[]
Business Membership	\$ 100	[]
Sustaining Membership	\$ 250	[]
Benefactor Membership	\$1,000	[]

Donation to Land Acquisition Fund \$ _____

NAME(S) _____

MAILING ADDRESS:

STREET _____

TOWN _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE
(H) _____ (W) _____

(Cell) _____ Best time to reach _____

EMAIL _____

Make checks payable to *Stonington Land Trust*.

Contact us!

Stonington Land Trust

P.O. Box 812

Stonington, CT 06378

phone: (860) 535-2528

fax: (860) 245-5127

www.stoningtonlandtrust.org

All contributions, including memberships, to the Stonington Land Trust are fully tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

Thank you for your interest.



06379822110010 * * |||mm|||mm|||mm|||mm|||mm|||mm|||



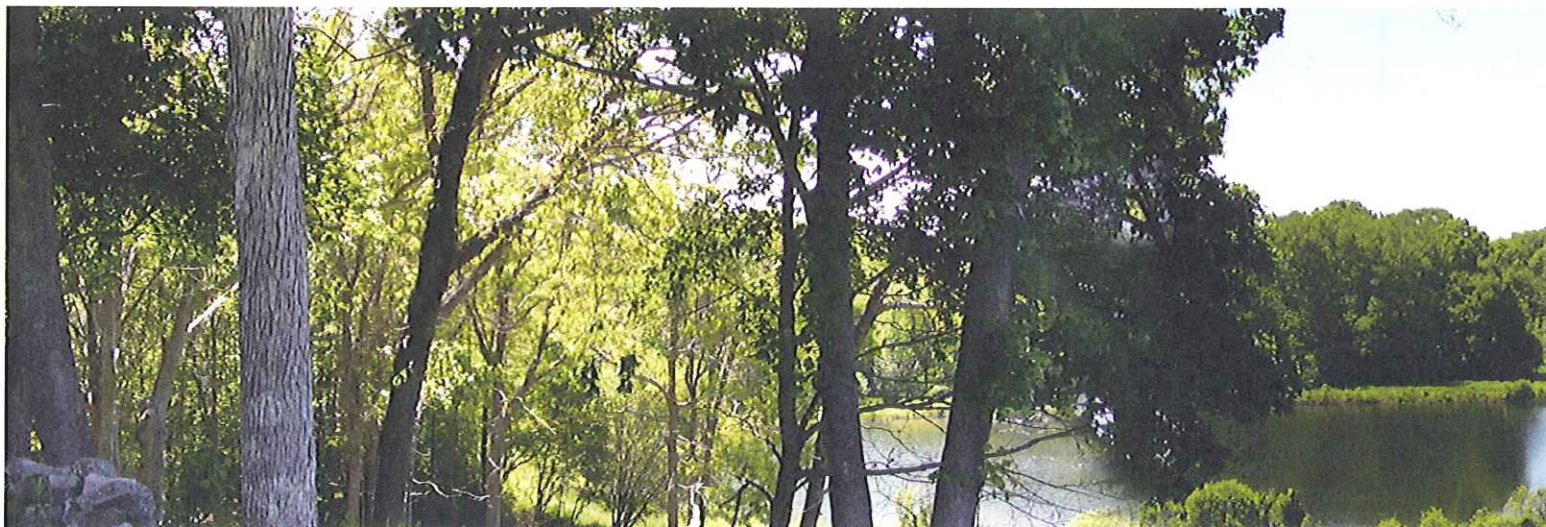
Harry F. Martin

Anne Page

A. Wright Palmer

Stanton Simm

Joshua G. Welch





STONINGTON LAND TRUST

November 2009

OFFICERS

James S. Smith, President

Paul Holland Jr, Vice President-Secretary

John T. Guyol, Vice President-Treasurer

Laura B. Smith, Vice President

DIRECTORS

Stuart G. Cole

Alice L. Groton

Jennifer Herbst

Dora Hill

Harry F. Martin

Anne Page

A. Wright Palmer

Stanton Simm

Joshua G. Welch

Dear Land Trust Member:

The year 2009 has been very good for the Stonington Land Trust. At the very beginning of the year we received 2 properties – 32 acres in fee on North Anguilla Road and 148 acres of conservation easement running from Pequot Trail to the police station on route 1. Our stewardship committee under the direction of Stuart Cole has made a comprehensive survey of the 148 acre parcel so that the Land Trust has a firm base line of what the the property looked like when it came to us for protection. We are planning trails on the North Anguilla property which will make it usable for nature walks in the future.

Our land acquisition committee under the direction of Stanton Simm has at least half a dozen properties under consideration. These range from parcels which may be given to us to others where we may be required to raise funds to help in the acquisition. We feel confident that one or more of these opportunities will come to fruition in the year ahead.

Our membership growth has continued strong under the direction of Jennifer Herbst. A listing of our membership is included in this newsletter. We are deeply grateful to our members who have already renewed in 2009. If you have not yet renewed this year, please use the enclosed envelope to return your gift now.

Our financial condition continues to be secure. A summary balance sheet as of June 30 is included in this newsletter.

We welcome Alice L. Groton of Collins Road as a new director this year. We thank her and all of our hardworking directors for helping us to achieve so much this year.

Jim Smith, President

WE ARE PROUD OF OUR MEMBERS!!

FOUNDERS

(those who helped establish the Land Trust in 2007)

Dexter & Nancy Anderson
Helen Brewster
Stuart G. Cole
John T. & Gracelyn Guyol
Kevin Detwiler & Jennifer Herbst
Dora Hill
Paul G. & Cathleen Holland
Amanda Lindberg
Harry F. & Susan P. Martin
Anne Ford Matthews
Bob Mercer & Anne Page
A. Wright & Anna Maria Palmer
Jeffrey F. & Pamela B. Ruzicka
Stanton & Susann Simm
James S. & Laura B. Smith
Cornelius H. & Happy Smith
Peter Kepple & Karin Whittemore

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

(\$250 or more)

John & Grania Ackley
Michael & Ann Adair
Doug & Barbara Barrett
Lucy A. Burr
Richard & Betsy Flynn
Alfred H. & Barbara S. Gildersleeve
John T. & Gracelyn Guyol
Charles J. & Irene Hamm
Edward G. & Susan C. Hart
Charles & Janet Hatton
Michael Leahy & Deborah Kotchen
Saren Langmann
Stephen S. & Wendy Lehman Lash
Bruce H. & Catherine Littman
Henry D. Lord
Mary-Martha Marshall
Steven & Judith Martin
Bob Mercer & Anne Page
Thomas F. & Marguerite Moore
Frederick S. Nicholas Jr.
Francis & Joyce Pandolfi
O. Pomeroy Robinson
Cornelius H. & Happy Smith
Pete & Nicole Stajduhar
Andrew W. Wilson
James R. & Karin Wittliff
Stonington Conservation Commission

BENEFACTORS

(\$1000 or more)

Dexter & Nancy Anderson
Alan & Ann E. Blanchard
Pamela Brewster
Michael & Dudley DelBalso
Paul G. & Cathleen Holland
Harry F. & Susan P. Martin
A. Wright & Anna Maria Palmer
Gillian A. M. Patrick
Jeffrey F. & Pamela B. Ruzicka
James S. & Laura B. Smith
Richard & Charlotte Smith
Joshua G. & Alejandra Welch
Peter Kepple & Karin Whittemore
Stonington Garden Club

PATRON MEMBERS

(\$100 or more)

Willis & Esther Arndt
Sheila Bodine
George C. & Ann C. Brown
Lavinia R. Buck
Donald J. & Jane Charbonnier
Robert W. Crecca
Michael H. & Daphne B. Davis
William L. & Lou C. Fanning
Jerry & Joyce Fingerut
Alessandro & Nora Fusina
Wyatt & Katharine Garfield
Richard & Katharine Gildersleeve
John & Alice Groton
Terry & Sonia Hall
Dora Hill
Colman & Ethel Ives
Rodney & Lucia Johnstone
Bill & Tina Lyman
Craig & Lisa MacDonnell
David & JoAnn B. Main
Anne Ford Matthews
Amy Nicholas
Betty Richards
Margery V. Rugen
Jeff Skinner
Bulkeley & H. W. Smith
Martha Snyder
Charles & Alisa Storrow
Tom & Lisa Switz
Terra Firma Farm

GIFTS UNDER \$100

Stuart Allen
 Benjamin Baldwin
 Christina F. Barrie
 Robert & Brigitte Baum
 Priscilla Baxter
 Bruce & Betsy Biddle
 Howard & Marcia Brensilver
 Brenda H. Bright
 William & Diane Brown
 Betsy Burbank
 James C. & Laura Burbank
 Betty Anne Caldara
 Neil & Marcia Canavan
 Severn & Patricia Carlson
 Eleanor Casey
 Frances A. Cawley
 Paul & Sharyne Cerullo
 Mike & Dori Charnetski
 Barbara S. Colby
 Elsa Cole
 Kathleen D. Cole
 Stuart G. Cole
 John & Doris Cory
 Gerald O. & Daphne H. Dahlke
 Nancy D'Estant
 Roger H. & Cornelia Dickinson
 Niall & Marjatta K. Doherty
 William & Sally Edmonstone
 David & Jean Evans
 Richard Farmer
 Bill & Sharron Ferguson
 Theodore F. & Marjorie Goodchild
 Walter Grant
 Margaret C. Greene
 Edward Haberek
 Betsy Copp Halsey
 James A. Hands
 Hilary A. Heminway
 Carol R. Heron
 Kevin Detwiler & Jennifer Herbst
 Mildred G. Hodgson
 Theoda Lee Hohing
 Dorothy G. Honohan
 Joan V. Isbell
 Rebecca M. Jackson
 Paul & Sarah Janssens
 Dan & Sue Jeffrey
 Bob & Susan Johnson
 Philip Johnstone
 Margaret Jones
 Dan & Pam Kelley
 Robert & Ruth Kelly
 Eino F. & Helga Kerttula
 G. F. Lane
 Judith A. Larzelere
 Larry & Sandy Levine
 Amanda Lindberg
 William A. Lipp

George W. & Barbara A. Lipphardt
 David & Helen Lyon
 Merrily Lyon
 Sheila Lyons
 Malcolm E. Macleod
 Frank & Catherine Marco
 M. J. McDonough
 Walter L. & Betty A. McGill
 Eleanor J. McLarney
 Spencer & "Skeeter" Montgomery
 Nancy O. Moreland
 George B. & Jean F. Morgan
 John D. Morris & Marcia Santoni
 R. B. Jones & Mary Preston Morton
 Anne H. Nalwalk
 Chester & Linda Niedbala
 James Goodman & Jennifer O'Brien
 Ted Liston & Cyndy Oksanen
 Frances M. O'Neil
 Bill Kavanagh & Cynthia Palmer
 Elena Pascarella
 Larry & Linda Peduzzi
 Anthony & Kathryn Perrone
 Kim T. Phillips
 Arton B. & Holly Powell
 John & Teresa Prue
 Michael D. Read
 Nancy T. Rees
 John & Wendy Richards
 Frank & Mary-Jean Ridout
 James D. & Ann S. Robins
 Mark & Eleanor Robinson
 Peter Roper
 Michael & Marie H. Roy
 Bernard Ryskiewich
 Jonathon White & Ruth Saunders
 Edwin J. & Margaret Seder
 Manfred & Carol Seeman
 Patricia Selden
 Stuart R. Shamberg
 Tom Haggerty & Gail Shea
 Robert L. & June Sicilian
 Stanton & Susann Simm
 Debbie Smith
 Joan H. Soons
 Nora Spens
 David & Nancy Tapley
 Ken & Grace F. Tate
 Sally L. Taylor
 William I. Treadway
 Margaret Vested
 Ruth H. Walsh
 Louis & Valerie Woisard
 Jim & Connie Worcester
 Richard Z. & Helen Zimmermann

STONINGTON LAND TRUST, INC.
Balance Sheet

	June 30, 09	June 30, 08
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking account	\$13,010	\$ 8,170
Money market account	<u>\$64,925</u>	<u>\$41,091</u>
Total current assets	\$77,935	\$49,261
Fixed Assets		
Land held in fee	32	0
Easements held	148	0
Office equipment	<u>698</u>	<u>931</u>
Total fixed assets	878	931
TOTAL ASSETS & MEMBERS EQUITY	<u><u>\$78,813</u></u>	<u><u>\$50,192</u></u>

Note: Land held in fee and easements are valued at a nominal price of \$1. per acre.

PRESERVING STONINGTON!

Why Donate Land or Conservation Easements to the Stonington Land Trust?

You can help protect beautiful Stonington from development and create a lasting legacy by participating in the Stonington Land Trust (SLT).

Through land donation, placing conservation restrictions on your property, or making a financial gift to SLT, you can help ensure that more open space will be protected in perpetuity. Land donations, conservation restrictions, and financial gifts offer significant income and estate tax benefits.

Recent changes in Federal tax laws have increased both the maximum annual deduction for conservation restrictions as well as the number of years over which that deduction may be taken. SLT will work with property owners to help achieve their personal, income tax, and estate planning objectives.

Each year, the amount of open space and wildlife habitat dwindles. Please consider a donation of land or a financial gift to SLT for land acquisition, reclamation, and protection. It is a way that you can make a difference here in Stonington.