



## Land Trust acquires 82-acre site on Taugwonk Road from Pfizer

By **LESLIE ROVETTI** / Sun Staff Writer | Posted: Thursday, October 4, 2012 10:30 am

STONINGTON — The Stonington Land Trust has purchased land on Taugwonk Road that will help it preserve another piece of the Anguilla Brook greenbelt corridor. Protecting the corridor is one of the land trust's primary objectives, said land trust Vice President Stanton Simm.

The land trust had been looking at the 82-acre property, owned by Pfizer since 1974, since it went on the market two years ago, said land trust President James S. Smith. But with a \$1.6 million asking price — the appraised value — the property was out of reach.

After waiting, and negotiating, the land trust was finally able to buy the property last week for \$350,000, with money provided by a single anonymous donor. "That's a pretty good discount," Smith said.

Simm said about 27 acres of the property and will be kept as hayfields. A front portion of the property is a nursery for

Dutch elm-resistant elm trees, grown by a research foundation. Behind the hayfields, about 55 acres of woodlands haven't been touched in about 50 years, he said. The land has been reverting to forest and will be maintained as a nature preserve, Simm said.

The property is important to preserve as open space because it contributes to the Anguilla Brook watershed on its eastern side and to the Stony Brook watershed to the west, Smith noted.

The land will be named after Thomas Miner, one of the four founders of Stonington. It will not be a public park, but the land trust will offer private tours. It will likely be used as the land trust's primary place to hold events, Simm said.

The property, flanked by two houses, is on a side of Taugwonk Road that is zoned as light industrial. Most of the properties on the road are residential, and were built before zoning regulations were put in place in 1961. An attempt by

the Conservation Commission in 2009 to change the entire road to a residential zone was unsuccessful.

This is the fourth property secured by the land trust, which was formed in 2007, and the second property it has purchased. During its five years of existence, the land trust has preserved 311 acres along the Anguilla Brook corridor.

"We're getting a pretty good buildup of open space," said Smith. The Pfizer parcel is probably one of the largest untouched properties in the area, said Simm. Buying large parcels is the best way to reach Stonington's eventual goal of preserving 30 percent of the town as open space, he added. "It really fulfills the objective of the land trust,"

Only 30 acres of the 82-acre property are zoned for light industry. However, it comprises 13 percent of the total light-industrial property in Stonington, and the town will no longer collect taxes on the land. Pfizer's property tax was \$17,875.





Dear Friends-

Thanks to you, our members, the year that ended on June 30<sup>th</sup> was very successful for the Stonington Land Trust. In just five years, we have built an organization that protects many hundreds of acres in our town and we are negotiating to acquire substantial additional acreage.

In June 2010, Pfizer Inc. put its' 82.5 acre property on Taugwonk Road on the market for \$1.6 million. In 2011, the SLT agreed with Pfizer to acquire this property for \$350,000. We were fortunate to find an anonymous donor who enabled us to close on this property in September 2012. The property is to be known as the Thomas Miner Nature and Wildlife Preserve. We offered members the opportunity to have a walk on this property led by Bob DeWire on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

Once again, we held our annual meeting in June at the Stonington Vineyards, thanks to the hospitality of Nick and Happy Smith. Our speaker was Kevin McBride, professor of Archeology at UConn. Kevin spoke about the archeological importance of the Davis Farm on Osbrook Point Road. We have since held extensive discussions with owners Whit and Larry Davis. As a result of these discussions, our attorneys are now preparing a contract which will enable the SLT to preserve this property forever. We are also in discussion with Cherenzia Development Co. about preserving 26 acres on Mary Hall Road, including 6 acres of active farm land.

During the year we updated our website and adopted a new logo. We encourage you to check us out at [stoningtonlandtrust.org](http://stoningtonlandtrust.org). On May 6<sup>th</sup> we had another walk on the Fusina property led by Maggie Jones and were able to check on the trees planted in 2011 by the Stonington Garden Club.

Our membership rolls have continued strong and our financial condition is solid. We are very grateful to the members of the Stonington community who have been so supportive of our efforts and we look forward to the future with optimism.

*Sincerely,*  
Jim Smith







# STONINGTON LAND TRUST

preservation for generations



## WELCOME



## STONINGTON LAND TRUST

seeks to protect the town's natural resources including its farms, woodlands, water resources, marshlands, swamps, beaches, plant and animal life. We also strive to preserve the unique historic and scenic character of Stonington represented by our beautiful stone walls and other historic structures.

We're happy that you've found us and look forward to connecting further. Find out about the many ways you can become involved in SLT on our Membership & Volunteering pages. We invite you to submit any questions that you may have about SLT on our Contact page.

Join us in the rewarding endeavor of preserving the natural beauty and resources of Stonington.

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## BECOME A MEMBER

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## STONINGTON LAND TRUST

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[info@stoningtonlandtrust.org](mailto:info@stoningtonlandtrust.org)

It's our 5th  
Anniversary.  
We have a  
New Look  
& Logo!



In five years we have preserved more than 310 acres in the Anguilla Brook and Pawcatuck River Watersheds. For more detailed information on our properties, please visit our web site at [stoningtonlandtrust.org](http://stoningtonlandtrust.org)

♦ **Anguilla Brook Preserve & Grande Tract Properties**, a 33.1 acre parcel on North Anguilla Road given to us by the town and abutting 18.54 acres, purchased from the Carl Grande Estate, which combined gives us about 51 acres of preserved habitat between North Anguilla Road and I-95.

♦ **Fusina Conservation Easement**, a 148 acre easement running from Pequot Trail to Route 1 on the Fusina property.

♦ **Grandview Farm**, a 27.93 acre open space parcel given to us by the developers of Grandview Farm.

♦ **Thomas Miner Nature and Wildlife Preserve**, a 82.5 acre parcel of fields and woodland located on Taugwonk Road which was purchased from Pfizer. This property is open for SLT guided walks.







*On a Sunday afternoon in May, Maggie Jones led members of SLT and the Stonington Garden Club on a nature walk through the Fusina Conservation Easement. We had a tour of the trees that the Garden Club had planted there one year earlier.*



*To celebrate the acquisition of our new property, on October 14th Bob DeWire, a renowned naturalist, ornithologist and owner of NatureScapes, led us on a walk through the Thomas Miner Nature and Wildlife Preserve. We were thrilled to have so many of our members present that day!*

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** *On Sunday January 6 at 1:00 PM we have a winter walk planned with Bob DeWire in quest of animal and bird tracks and to experience the Thomas Miner Preserve in winter.*



**NEED A CHRISTMAS GIFT?**  
Our SLT hats are available for purchase. By mail send \$10 to:  
Stonington Land Trust  
P.O Box 812  
Stonington CT 06378  
Or online at:  
[stoningtonlandtrust.org](http://stoningtonlandtrust.org)  
Go to "Contact Us" and fill out the form with the subject HAT.

