

The Warren Conservator

Summer/Fall-2005

Volume 1, Issue 1



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

From the President's Desk	2
Trust to Sell Trees at Warren Fall Festival	2
Historic Houses of Warren	3
How can you Help Conserve Land	3
Dorothy Maier Honored	3
Become a Member Today	4



Warren Land Trust Works on Mapping Key Conservation Areas Across Warren

The Warren Land Trust is working in cooperation with the Housatonic Valley Association and the Trust for Public Land to create a Litchfield Hills Greenprint. The Litchfield Hills Greenprint is a multi-year project to help community leaders and residents in the Litchfield Hills with mapping, networking and land conservation. Development is occurring at twice the rate of the region's population growth. Connecticut's Working Lands Alliance determined that 5,000 acres of farmland and forest shift from rural to suburban and commercial land uses each

year. By most estimates, we have a small window of opportunity to protect the very landscapes that define our sense of place here in the Litchfield Hills -maybe twenty years at best.

So what do we do? We need to know what farms, forests, river corridors and ridgelines are most vulnerable. We need to understand how we can best put our conservation dollars and know how to work on behalf of these lands. We need a conservation action plan -a Greenprint! To date HVA and TPL have created a series of open space

and resource maps for the towns in Litchfield county to analyze important natural landscapes, already conserved lands and large areas of yet undeveloped properties. The Warren Land Trust is currently mapping our town. We plan on having the results of this work available at our booth at the Warren Fall Festival to share with town residents. Our work will ultimately tie into that of other Litchfield County towns to create a regional land use plan which we hope will leverage significant new funding and land use tools for open space land protection across the region.

OUR MISSION:

The Warren Land Trust is dedicated to conserving all types of land within the town of Warren. Our goal is to preserve open space, to protect natural and endangered resources such as lakes, streams, ponds wetlands and wildlife habitats, and to encourage the use of conservation restrictions and to educate the public on the benefits of land conservation.

Governor Approves Funding for \$6.5 Million in Open Space Grants

On July 11th, Governor Jodi Rell signed legislation that will make an estimated \$6.5 million available to Connecticut towns for open space funding. The new law, Public Act 05-228, also provides funds for farmland preservation, historic preservation and affordable housing and is designed to generate a total

of \$26 million each year. The legislation will be funded by an additional \$30 in recording fees collected for every document recorded on the local land records. Each town will retain \$4 from each \$30 collected, and the remaining \$26 will be forwarded to the State Treasurer to fund the new programs.

Twenty-five percent of the funds collected will be distributed to the Department of Environmental Protection for municipal open space grants; and another 25% each will go to Department of Agriculture, Commission on Culture and Tourism and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority.

From the President's Desk



"The gathering storm of development is on the horizon and we as a community should be creating a vision of what we want our town to look like"

This is the Land Trust's first newsletter. We hope you find it informative and thought provoking. We would like to begin a dialogue with our members and the Warren community at large, raising issues we see as possible threats to our rural community lifestyle as well as possible alternatives for debate. Please feel free to respond!

.....

Rural communities are an essential part of the Northwest corner's quality of life. Many people who live in rural areas expect to continue the rural lifestyle enjoyed by previous generations. Still others want to live in rural areas to enjoy their beauty while retaining the conveniences of an urban life. Reconciling these expectations with the need to manage the impacts of growth is a difficult job that must be confronted by many towns across Litchfield County.

The town of Cornwall has this summer instituted a series of forums dealing with the future of land use in Cornwall. The first selectman of Cornwall, Gordon Ridgeway, recently said, "one of several land use conundrums the town will grapple with in the coming years is the expected influx of subdivision-style development as it spreads from the south and east. Though the prospect of an up tick in development

of this sort is distant now, it could emerge as a major concern not too far in the future, and it is better to be prepared for the onslaught than to scramble to deal with it once it arrives."

This is smart planning and an example which Warren may choose to emulate. The gathering storm of development is on the horizon and we as a community should be creating a vision of what we want our town to look like over the next 5, 10 and yes even 20 years. It's not too soon for a broad cross-section of the community to come together to talk about their vision for maintaining Warren's rural character. However, development of our rural vision will require specific decisions to be made within that framework. Citizen involvement will be essential to the process because residents are best able to help answer questions like:

- What does rural mean for our community?
- How do the people in Warren want to live?
- What kinds of activities and land uses does the community want?
- What are things the community doesn't want?
- What does Warren want to change about its rural areas?
- What does it want to keep

for future generations?

- Are there historic buildings, structures, sites, districts, landscapes, objects, and views that Warren wants to preserve?
- How much new development can Warren allow without hurting its rural quality of life or significantly affecting its tax base?
- What kinds of development are appropriate? Should our zoning minimums be raised?
- What is the role and importance of farms and forests?

In many respects, development of a community vision for our town, is the most important step in the land use planning process. This vision will guide how Warren defines and protects rural character, as well as how it provides for future development.

I believe it is not too soon for Warren to begin the process of creating its vision for what constitutes a rural community and to begin to put in place plans to ensure we accomplish that vision. The Warren Land Trust stands ready to support and participate in this community wide debate. I encourage my fellow Warren citizens to raise this issue with our town's elected officials to ensure this very important topic receives a well deserved public forum.



The Land Trust will be displaying its new conservation map at the Festival and also plans to sell trees to help raise funds



The Land Trust Plans to Sell Trees at the Warren Fall Festival

The Warren Land Trust will once again be manning its booth at the Warren Fall Festival. The booth will feature Land Trust members explaining how the land trust functions and how local landowners can benefit from either donations of land or

easements allocated to the Trust. Maps and literature will be available and, as an additional feature, individual Dwarf Alberta Spruce trees will be offered for sale. A Dwarf Alberta Spruce is the perfect complement to a Northwest Corner garden.

They rarely grow taller than eight feet, are the perfect conical Christmas tree shape and are spurned by deer. What better gift for yourself or a friend than a baby Dwarf Alberta Spruce?

Historic Houses of Warren

The town of Warren is blessed not only with scenic riches, but a wealth of historic homes. Warren was originally part of Kent, laid out in 1738, but there was a dwelling at "Great Swamp" near the present town center as early as 1707. There are a surprising number of colonial and federal period homes surviving, to say nothing of the many Greek Revival, Gothic, Italianate, Shingle Style and Colonial Revival homes from the nineteenth century.

The fascinating "Historical and Architectural Resource Study of Warren," published by the state Historical Commission, documents 70 significant structures using

the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places—integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and historical association. On Brick School Road, for example, there is a cape style house built by Benjamin Brunson in 1782; a saltbox built by Ebenezer Marsh about 1740, two more cape style homes dating to the 1760s, and a grand Greek Revival farmhouse of about 1840. The road is notable as well for a one-room brick schoolhouse built in 1784, the oldest surviving district school in Connecticut.

Other noteworthy dwellings of the early settlers, all dating to the 1740s, are the Thomas

Beeman house on Lake Road, the Strong house on Above All Road, the Knapp farm on Cornwall Road, and the Thomas Judd house on City Road.

Formal Federal style houses dating to the late 1700s can be found on most old roads in Warren. The parsonage built in 1772 in the town center for the Rev. Silvanus Osborne is a fine example and shows the early use of a center hall with two end chimneys.

Look to the sides of the road as you drive around Warren, you can enjoy an architectural tour as well as marvelous views.

WARREN LT BOARD

President: Thomas Paul
Vice-Pres: Ann Martindale
Secretary: May Hill
Treasurer: David Scofield
Director Jack Baker
Director Carolyn Brau
Director William DeSeta
Director Dorothy Maier
Director David Miles
Director Paul Prindle
Director Virginia Smith
Director Jed Struckus
Director Wayne Wilson
Honorary Board Member
Jack Travers

Have you thought about how you can help conserve land in Warren? How the WLT Works

Land under the protection of the WLT is conserved and protected from future development forever. We accomplish this in several ways:

Land Ownership

We welcome gifts of all types of land, especially parcels with water resources such as streams, ponds, and wetlands. We have a strong commitment to protecting farm land,

fields, forest land, steeply sloped areas and ledge areas. All contribute to the natural beauty of Warren. We occasionally purchase land for conservation using funding from grants or neighbor donors.

Conservation Restriction

By using a conservation restriction you retain ownership of your land and agree

to restrict the type of development that may take place on your land. This agreement is recorded on the Warren Land Records and permit the WLT to enforce these restrictions against all owners of your land forever. Land donations and conservation restrictions provide a donor with beneficial tax treatments.

"Land donations and conservation restrictions provide a donor with beneficial tax treatments"

Dorothy Maier Honored for Her 15 Years of Dedicated Service as President of Warren Land Trust

At its January Board of Directors meeting, the Board honored Dorothy S. Maier, who founded and served as President of the Warren Land Trust since its inception in 1989. In recognition of her achievements, the Sackett Hill Preserve was renamed the

Dorothy S. Maier Preserve. Dorothy has been a leader in recognizing the importance of open space in our community and taking concrete steps to acquire and set aside land for posterity and to maintain the important rural character of Warren. "It was

a great pleasure and honor," said Thomas Paul the newly elected President, "to make this gesture of recognition to Dorothy for her vision, insight and 15 years of hard work and dedication to move the Warren Land Trust to where it is today."



Dorothy Maier

The WLT currently holds 213 acres under permanent protection

**If You Aren't a member of the Warren Land Trust,
We Invite You to Join NOW!!!**



The Warren Land Trust

Becoming a Member of the Warren Land Trust is easy. Simply cut off this page and send it to our mailing address below, along with your check. We will send you a receipt along with our thanks for your generous, 100% tax-deductible contribution. **Include your name and address and choose the type of membership you would like:**

☐ **Family Membership \$25**

☐ **Land Protector \$100**

☐ **Land Caretaker \$300**

☐ **Land Conservator \$500**

☐ **Land Steward \$1,000**

☐ **Land Grantor \$2,500**

Please make checks payable to: The Warren Land Trust, Inc.

MAIL THIS FORM AND CHECK TO:

The Warren Land Trust, Inc. 151 Melius Road, Warren, CT 06754