



Little Compton Landscapes

Newsletter of The Sakonnet Preservation Association

Summer 2004

Strength in Numbers Promoting Conservation through Regional Cooperation

Heather Steers, President, Sakonnet Preservation Association

The Sakonnet Preservation Association (SPA) has been hard at work on a variety of projects and initiatives to promote land conservation, both in Little Compton and throughout the state. We believe that our local efforts are enhanced through our cooperation with other Rhode Island conservation organizations and agencies.

Locally, SPA's Land Protection Committee is working with several Little Compton individuals and families who are considering donations of land and conservation easements involving properties throughout the town. We hope to announce several important conservation acquisitions during 2004.

The SPA has also begun planning cooperative ventures with the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust and the Nature Conservancy. The first effort focuses on raising public awareness of conservation. The three land trusts are planning a town wide celebration of land preservation to honor land donors and to make available to the public a route that highlights many of the preserved sites in Little Compton. The "Little Compton Land Rally" will take place this summer on Saturday, July 24. All town residents are invited to attend.

In addition, over the past three months the SPA board has worked on revising the draft strategic plan that Sylvia Bates, a consultant, had compiled after two day-long planning sessions last winter. We have made considerable progress in this planning effort, and we expect that the final draft will be ready for board approval by November.

Save
the Date!

THURSDAY
July 8
6 pm

Join
the SPA
at its
ANNUAL MEETING
at the
STONE HOUSE

Guest
Speaker
**Whitney
Hatch**
The Trust for
Public Land

Public
Invited
Hors d'oeuvres
Sandwiches
Cash Bar

On March 20, several board members attended the Rhode Island Land and Water Conservation Summit at North Kingstown High School. The Summit was co-sponsored by the Rhode Island Land Trust Council (RILTC), the Rhode Island Association of Conservation Commissions, and Rhode Island Rivers Council. Gus Seelig, Executive Director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, was the keynote speaker. His presentation addressed how the Vermont program sponsored the renovation and building of affordable housing units in conjunction with land conservation objectives. Participants at the Summit then attended three workshops of their choice.

The RILTC also held its Annual Meeting at the Summit. Anne Marie Ignasher, Council president, reported on the events of the past year, the highlight of which was the hiring of an Executive Director, Rupert Friday, with funding from the Rhode Island Foundation, the Land Trust Alliance, and the Doris Duke Foundation. Later this year, it was announced that the State's 46 land trusts will be asked to support the RILTC in order to leverage additional grant funding and other contributions.

Since the fall of 2004, RILTC has been leading a coalition of organizations to advocate for a new Rhode Island open space bond in November 2004. RILTC provides a voice for the land trust community on this important state policy issue. Land trust members have been asked to contact their representatives to request their support for the bond and for a coalition-recommended increase of \$10 million, from \$5 million to \$15 million, for the Local Open Space Grants Program. In addition, municipal leaders and local organizations have been asked to endorse the Open Space Bond. On April 22, the Little Compton Town Council endorsed a resolution in support of the bond and the \$10 million increase and also recommended that all Little Compton and statewide voters support the bond in the November referendum vote.

Finally, the SPA would like to invite members and residents to our Annual Meeting and speaker on July, 8 at the Stone House.



**Sakonnet
Preservation Association**

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July 8 SPA Annual Meeting Will Feature Talk by Regional Conservation Leader

A region-wide perspective on land conservation issues will be offered by the guest speaker at the Sakonnet Preservation Association's Annual Meeting on Thursday, July 8, 2004, at the Stone House Club, 122 Sakonnet Point Road, from 6-8:30 pm. Whitney Hatch, Vice President and Regional Director of The Trust for Public Land (TPL), will give a talk titled "Land Conservation in New England: Critical Ingredients."

Whitney will talk about TPL's activities in New England, including its growing Rhode Island program. TPL has protected more than 329,000 acres in New England, including projects ranging from the 171,000-acre Connecticut River Headwaters initiative to a quarter-acre city park in Montpelier, Vermont. In Rhode Island, TPL has been involved in promoting development of and public access to the waterfront in Warren as well as the creation of the Woonasquatucket River Greenway in Providence. His talk will use TPL's experiences throughout the region to illustrate the challenges and requirements for building local consensus in support of land conservation programs.

Whitney oversees all of the land conservation work and program development undertaken by TPL in the six-state region. The Trust for Public Land is a national land conservation organization that defines its mission as "conserving land for people." Since 1972, TPL has completed more than 2,600 projects, conserving over 1.6 million acres, and helped generate over \$18 billion in state and local conservation funding.

In addition to Mr. Hatch's talk, the SPA Annual Meeting will include a reception with hors d'oeuvres and sandwiches, a description of recent SPA activities, and the election of SPA officers and directors. All SPA members, as well as the entire community, are welcome to attend. Please consider bringing a friend or neighbor. There is no charge for the event, but donations will be welcome at the door. Call 635-8800 for additional information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 8, SPA Annual Meeting, 6 pm, featuring Whitney Hatch from the Trust for Public Land, at the Stone House, Little Compton.

JULY 24, Little Compton Land Rally, Town wide celebration of land preservation, 130 South Shore Road, Reception 5-7pm. Visit preserved sites by map. See back page.

OCT. 28-31, Land Trust Alliance, National Rally, Workshops, lectures, field trips. Providence, RI. For more information call the SPA office at: 401. 635. 8800.

VOTERS APPROVE INCREASES IN AGRICULTURAL CONSERVANCY TRUST TAX, EXEMPTION

The Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust (LCACT) estimates that its funds available for land conservation will increase by about 50% annually as a result of the actions of Little Compton voters at the May 22 annual financial town meeting.

By voice vote, town citizens approved a resolution proposed by the Trust to increase from 2% to 4% the property transfer tax for sales exceeding \$225,000. The 2% tax rate will remain in effect for property sales between \$150,000 and \$225,000.

Voters raised the exemption to \$150,000 for each transaction from the current level of \$75,000. At the May 22 financial town meeting, LCACT Vice Chairman Joseph R. Marion III noted that, as a result of the approved changes, the effective transfer tax will now be lower for sales under \$300,000 than had previously been the case.

In mailings and public meetings prior to the financial town meeting, the Trust emphasized the need for increased revenues to meet the challenge of rising property values. At the 2003 level of property sales, the Trust estimated, the \$580,000 received that year would increase approximately \$292,000 under the newly approved 4 % tax rate and \$150,000 exemption.

The LCACT was established in 1986 by vote of the the annual financial town meeting in accordance with enabling legislation approved by the Rhode Island General Assembly. The legislation permits voters at financial town meeting to set the rate of the transfer tax between 0% and 5%. The law was subsequently amended to permit voters to adopt an exemption between \$75,000 and \$150,000. Previously the law had limited the exemption to \$75,000.



Sakonnet Preservation Association

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME
A NEW MEMBER.

*Enclosed is my tax deductible
membership contribution.*

_____ Individual Member	\$20
_____ Family Member	\$25
_____ Sustaining Member	\$35
_____ Special Gift	\$ _____

I am already a current member. _____
I would like to be a new member. _____

Please make checks payable to:

Sakonnet Preservation Association

P. O. Box 945, Little Compton, RI 02837

Phone/Fax: 401. 635. 8800

Name _____

Permanent Address _____

Town _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Summer phone _____

E-mail _____

Summer Address _____

I would like to volunteer for the SPA. ☐



LITTLE COMPTON LAND RALLY



**Sakonnet
Preservation
Association**



*The Nature
Conservancy*
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

**RALLY
All Day**

JULY 24TH

**PARTY
5-7pm**

On Sat. July 24, enjoy a self-guided bike, car or walking tour of your choice of 20 preserved sites within a 26 mile loop around Little Compton.

Join the three land trusts for a town wide celebration of land protection under the tent at 130 South Shore Road from 5-7pm.

Complimentary music, hero sandwiches, ice cream, drinks. All are welcome.

Maps and Rally information will be mailed to all town residents in July.

Postal Customer

Our Mission
The Sakonnet
Preservation
Association,
a non-profit
land trust,
is dedicated to
preserving the
rural character
and natural
resources of
Little Compton
for the lasting
benefit of the
community.
For information:
401. 635. 8800



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