



AVALONIA LAND CONSERVANCY, Inc.
P.O. Box 49,
Old Mystic, CT 06372

Mistuxet Hill Preserve

Property Management Plan

Mistuxet Avenue
Mystic, New London County, Connecticut

Stonington Town Committee is responsible
for the stewardship of this property

Plan Prepared by:
Richard Newton & Beth Sullivan
Fall 2015

Approved by Stonington Town Committee: _____

Date _____

Approved by Stewardship Committee: _____

Date _____



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SUMMARY

This plan is for a property on Mistuxet Avenue in Mystic, CT. This is a non-trailed property of woodlands and wetlands. See the photos and map that follows. Visitors are welcome.

Property is owned by Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc., P.O. Box 49, Old Mystic, CT 06372. Avalonia Land Conservancy (ALC) can be reached by email at avalonialc@yahoo.com, by phone at 860-884-3500, and has a website at <http://www.avalonialandconservancy.org>.

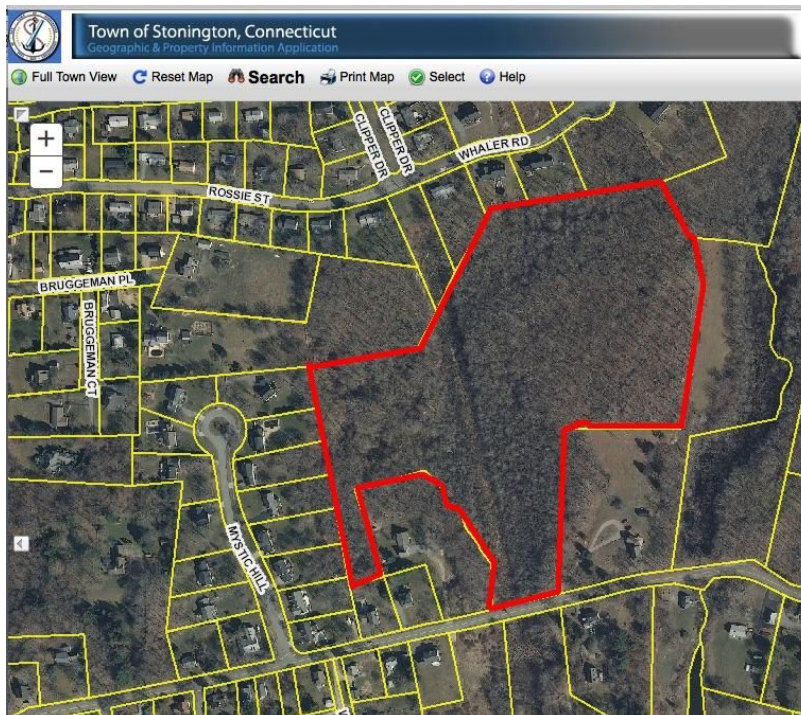
HISTORY

The Mistuxet Hill Preserve is located in the Town of Stonington southwest area of town. Residential housing and undeveloped properties surround the property. It abuts the Denison Society properties and property owned by the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center forming an extensive open space complex of over 600 acres.

SITE INFORMATION

The property

A parcel map of the property from the Town of Stonington GIS database is shown to the left.



The property is identified as Map/Book/Lot/Unit 162/2/9. Combined GIS acreage is 18.02 acres.

Acquisition history

Donation from developer Robert O'Keefe in September 2013. Was a mandatory set-aside for the Mystic Hill development.

Land use history

Historical photos show the property is fairly unchanged, except with older trees, due mainly to the large amount of wetlands. The construction of a powerline right of way has opened up a large corridor of the wetland area creating a unique line of habitat.

Nighborhood Change in Connecticut, 1934 to Present

Want to compare 1934, 1990, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2012 using a transparency tool? [Check out our Connecticut Aerial Photography Interactive Map Interface](#)



Attention ArcGIS and other GIS software users! The 1934 Aerial Photography layer is available via [MAGIC's WMS](#).

Use the search box below to locate an address in Connecticut.

mistuxet ave, mystic, ct

Toggle map layers

CT Towns

Public use resources

Avalonia accepted the property to add to the amount of protected property in the nature center complex (much of the Denison Society lands are not formally protected in perpetuity). Property

protects wetlands that drain towards Pequotsepos Brook and Pequotsepos Cove.

Public benefit of the protected property:

The property is not within a Natural Diversity Database area, but the property has not been formally reviewed since being acquired. There is a NDDB area within 200 feet. The property provides habitat for local wildlife and provides an enlarged buffer for the larger nature center complex from housing developments around it.

It may be possible to add a small side trail from the nature center trail, but much of the property is too wet to hike on.

The property is a significant natural area that qualifies as being preserved for a “conservation purpose” under 26 US Code 170(h)(4):

(4) Conservation purpose defined

(A) In general

For purposes of this subsection, the term “conservation purpose” means—

(i) the preservation of land areas for outdoor recreation by, or the education of, the general public,

(ii) the protection of a relatively natural habitat of fish, wildlife, or plants, or similar ecosystem,

(iii) the preservation of open space (including farmland and forest land) where such preservation is—

(I) for the scenic enjoyment of the general public, or

(II) pursuant to a clearly delineated Federal, State, or local governmental conservation policy,

and will yield a significant public benefit, or

(iv) the preservation of an historically important land area or a certified historic structure.

Natural resources

The parcel is open to the public, as are all Avalonia properties. There are at present no real threats other than maybe a neighbor dropping yard waste over a wall.

There are two distinct habitat types in this preserve. The east and west sides are upland, dry woods, mostly oak dominated and on the east side there are significant glacial outcrops, ledges, and erratic boulders. These areas provide denning opportunities for larger mammals including coyotes and bobcats and the large amount of hard mast, mostly acorns and some hickory nuts, supports turkeys and many smaller mammals. There appears to be a significant deer population.

There is a central lowland with wetland drainages combining to form a branch of Pequotsepos Brook. The wetlands are extensive, providing excellent habitat. Because the area is maintained by utility company as low shrubs, it is a valuable area for wildlife. It is also nearly undisturbed as it is difficult to walk through.

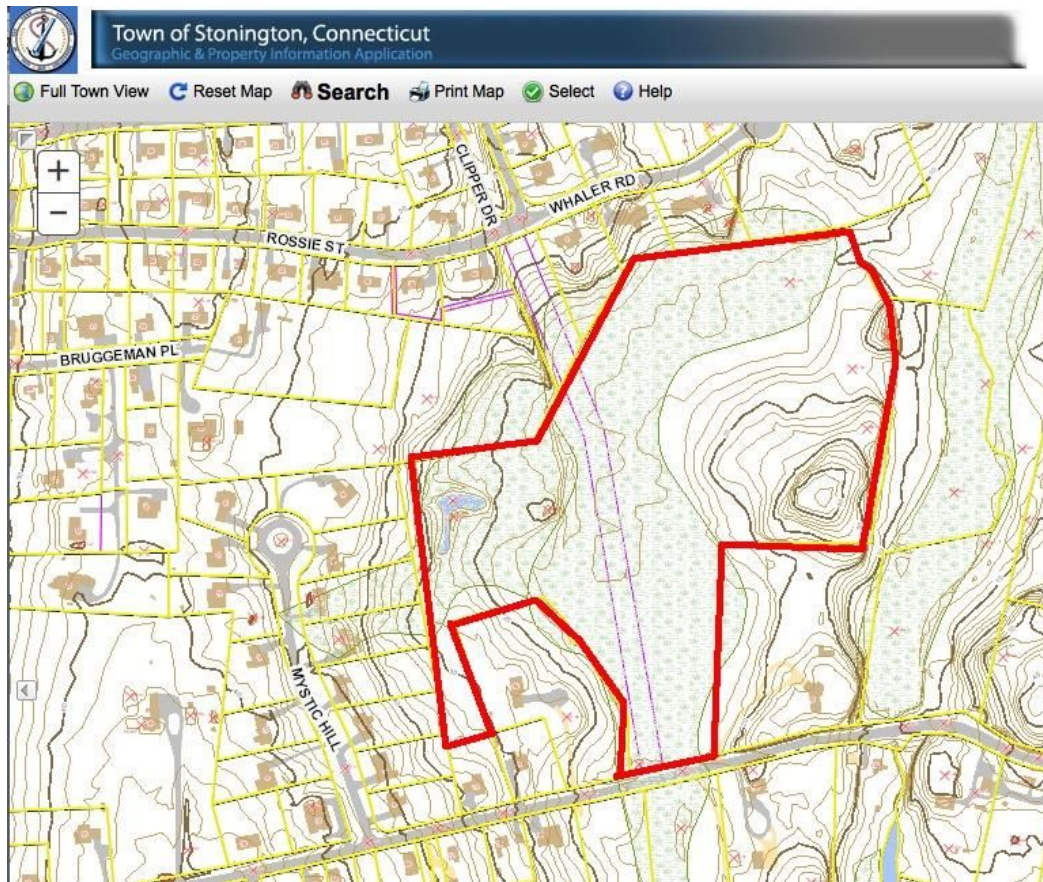
Portions of the wet lands and transition zones to uplands, are dominated by very dense thickets

of Green Brier. Excellent habitat but impossible to get through for boundary monitoring.

There are a few areas impacted by invasive species. Several patches of Phragmites are located within the wetlands. Road sides and boundaries with residential areas are impacted by Bittersweet and Barberry.

Potential threats to conservation values: Over growth of invasive plants could degrade the habitat, so monitoring for significant changes will be necessary during annual surveys. Removal or control of invasives is not likely but may be attempted as time and resources allow. The North and West sides are densely residential. Run off from yard fertilizers and roadways could impact the quality of the wetlands. The management objective is to maintain the property as it was donated to Avalonia – mainly protecting wetlands.

ELEVATIONS / WETLANDS



SPECIAL FEATURES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

None known at this time.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Stewardship policies

Avalonia Land Conservancy Fee Land Stewardship Principles were approved on December 16,

2009 and the document is available at the Conservancy's office on Hatch Street in Mystic, CT. This document sets forth the general principles governing stewardship of all Avalonia properties. The document or any approved successor is hereby incorporated as part of this management plan.

Protection

Condition of Boundaries:

- Corner monuments/pins found
- Boundary signs posted

Majority of boundary has been posted (2015) with need to get more accurate survey work on a couple of areas that are more complex. There is no street-side preserve sign at present. Some corner pins were found on initial walk after acquisition. Much of the boundary is stone walls or old fence lines. Several areas have local trail or bar-way openings onto neighbors' property. "Leaving Avalonia Property" signs were posted to prevent trespassing.

An annual walk around the boundaries of the properties is required. Best access is from Dension Society field on Mistuxet Avenue, yellow trail. Yearly surveillance should be conducted to check for infringement or encroachment by neighbors depositing yard waste. All motorized vehicles are prohibited on the properties except for maintenance. On subdivision map there is a notation of access easement from rear of Ollsen property. It has a gate but appears unused.

NOTE: A sturdy, impressive tree fort platform is noted behind home on 12 Whaler Rd. Just over property boundary. The owner had constructed it with permission of previous owner well prior to Avalonia acquisition. It does not appear to be a nuisance and at this point (2015) we agreed with owner, to let it stand.

Maintaining properties appearance

Litter control. Roadside clean up. Possibly put up road side Avalonia nature preserve sign in future.

Public use

The preserve is open to the public for passive recreational use. There are no formal trails at

present. It would not be hard to create a spur from DPNC property onto the drier and more interesting eastern areas of the property.

Motor vehicles, bicycle riding, and horseback riding are not permitted. Hunting and the use of firearms on the property including bow hunting and target practice are not permitted. Camping is not allowed. Dogs must be kept on a leash no longer than 7 feet long. Visitors are not allowed to pick vegetation or disturb wildlife excessively.

Enhancing wildlife habitat(s)

Complete natural resources assessment, especially in wetland areas, would be beneficial. Deer over-grazing is an issue in the entire green way area. With utility company maintaining the ROW shrub area, the wildlife value of the central wetlands is enhanced.

Controlling invasive species

Removal of invasive species by manual means will be accomplished as resources permit. It will be difficult to address the Phragmites in the wetlands. Power companies often have professional herbicide application if they feel it is needed.

Erosion control and flooding

No issues. Wetlands absorb runoff from northern residential areas. Flooding will not impact residences.

Productive uses

Provides habitat for local wildlife. Neighbors are thrilled the area is protected from further development and the parcel creates a welcome buffer around the residential areas and expands the greenway.

Scientific and educational activities

None planned.

Response to large natural disasters

Removal of any hazards will be undertaken as necessary.

Special management considerations

None.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Recurring and occasional requirements

Stonington Town Committee members visit the site on a limited basis. Occasional contact with neighbors will be beneficial as some have offered access for boundary surveys.

Annual obligations

A boundary walk around the outside perimeter the property is required. Contact with neighbors at various areas along boundary will allow easier access. (Anderson on 12 Whaler Drive, Pere on Bruggeman Place, and through northern entry to powerline from Rossie St.

Short term plan (1-5 years)

Annual boundary walk. Complete boundary posting along western residential area where it is more complex and unmarked. Preserve sign at roadside. Possible spur trail from DPNC property.

Long term plan (5+ years)

Monitor site. Control invasive plants.

Schedule for revising this plan

This plan shall be reviewed at least every five years and updated as necessary.

APPENDICES

- I. Zoning map for property and surrounding area is available at the Stonington Town Hall or online at <http://gis.stonington-ct.gov>.

Deeds are available in Avalonia files, Stonington Town Hall and online at <https://connecticut-townclerks-records.com/User/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fIndex.aspx>