

Gardiner's Creek Preserve SHELTER ISLAND, NEW YORK

STEWARDSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN

Introduction

On 6/29/09 the Town and Suffolk County jointly purchased 4 acres of open space at the headwaters of Gardiner's Creek from the Dorsey family. The portion of the property close to the water is marshy and full of wetlands vegetation. The upland portion of the property has been kept open meadow by seasonal mowing. This meadow offers a vista to Gardiner's Creek for travelers of Route 114.

Intentions

The property includes frontage on Gardiner's Creek, part of the Peconic Estuary system. It lies adjacent to preserved Sylvester Manor property and part of an overall plan to preserve lands fronting on this sensitive waterway feeding Dering Harbor. It is also an excellent area to collect stormwater and to allow aquifer recharge.

Gardiner's Creek is very shallow and not particularly suitable for motorized boating. Kayak and canoe exploration is popular there. The shallows have traditionally been excellent for shellfishing, but precautionary measures due to proximity of the Shelter Island Heights Sewage Plant to Dering Harbor has resulted in the DEC closing the headwaters to shellfishing. The goal is to protect the headwaters to minimize pollution and reopen the area to shellfishing.

The meadow portion of the property provides scenic vista to Gardiner's Creek, so it should be kept meadow by seasonal mowing. The Town may remove invasives. EPA approved chemicals can be used to assist in such removal. The Town may also remove any diseased trees and dead wood so as to maintain an appropriate and safe environment.

Name

The property will be called "Gardiner's Creek Preserve" and will be so-called on all Town maps and descriptive material. The entrance to the property shall be from the eastern-most portion of the cul-de-sac on Quail Hedge Lane. There will be no entrance sign, per se, but a Community Preservation Fund Advisory Board sign shall mark a location near the entrance.

Improvements

There are no improvements on this property and none are planned.

Management

The Town or its designee will mow the meadow area once per season (preferably between October and March) no lower than 3 inches in height. If paid for by Community Preservation Funds, the cost is estimated to be less than \$500. The Dorsey family may do additional mowing of the path from the stone pillars on Route 114 to the northern border of the property on an as needed basis at its own expense. The balance of the property shall be left undisturbed.

The property has never been fertilized or watered, and therefore both are deemed unnecessary and are not contemplated. All activities on the site shall be conducted to maximize protection of the aquifer.

Public Access and Signage

Public access for small groups for hiking and nature watching is permitted during daylight hours. Assemblage of large groups is prohibited.

The Town will erect the standard town/county Community Preservation fund signage at the southern end of the property by the stone pillars on Route 114 and one sign off Quail Hedge Lane.

The existing chain between the two stone pillars shall be locked and maintained and the key held by the Highway Department.

Measures to Protect Ecology

The Town will manage the property to protect the ecology of this property. Specifically:

- (i) Birds: no particular action will be taken except to keep the meadow open to encourage diversity.
- (ii) Animals: Nuisance hunting if necessary will be conducted in conformance with Town rules and regulations.
- (iii) Wetlands: The area fronting Gardiner's Creek shall be left undisturbed.