



Lebanon Conservation and Agriculture Commission

Conservation and Agriculture Commission Charge:

To advocate for conservation and agricultural issues before non-profit agencies, civic organizations, municipal boards and commissions and residents; recommend lands for preservation; provide information and guidance on protecting natural resources and agricultural viability; increase awareness and promote the value of natural resources and agriculture; and serve as conduit between local farmers, government and non-farmers.

Lebanon's Open Space Fundraising Goal is to maintain the Fund with \$100,000 annually. Tax deductible donations can be made to the "Town of Lebanon Open Space Fund".

Fall 2013
Volume III

Conservation and Agriculture Commission Activities

The Conservation and Agriculture Commission continues to work implementing Lebanon's Plan of Conservation and Development. The Commission is involved in many preservation projects and advises Town boards, commissions and residents on conservation and agricultural issues.

Major land preservation projects completed in the past year include the 162-acre Anderson Property on Randall and Sisson Roads and the 47-acre

Ten Mile River Preserve (former Kaplan Property) on Synagogue Road.

In addition, the Town successfully partnered with abutting communities to designate the Yantic River as a State Greenway – providing the potential for future grant funding opportunities for this precious natural and recreational resource.

The Commission maintains walking trails to Commons Hill and the Five-Mile Rock (maps available online and in Town Hall); sponsors

informational meetings on conservation and agricultural issues; and attends workshops and training seminars to keep members up to date on conservation options.

The Commission seeks funds for property owners interested in land preservation and is always available to townspeople as a resource on matters of protecting our rich natural resources and preserving our agriculture! Feel free to email us at ConservationComm@lebanontownhall.org.

Planning our Future while Preserving our Past

Lebanon continues to implement its 10-year Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

In addition to conservation and open space planning, the POCD recognizes the need for future development – with the two often linked.

Town regulations mandate conservation or cluster development to preserve land and limit infrastructure.

This summer the PZC adopted Village District Zoning for properties around Lebanon Green. This zoning will help preserve the rural character and scale of the Green while allowing residences around Town Hall to be converted to business use. A major element of Village District Zoning is adherence with design standards and a Design Review Board will be used to provide guidance to applicants and advice to the Commission.

In addition, the Town continues to run the Farmers Market; is working with property owners at the Route 2 interchange to promote economic development and regularly seeks out grants -- receiving over \$150,000 in planning and land preservation grants in the past year.

Copies of Lebanon's POCD and Zoning Regulations are available at Town Hall, the Library or at www.lebanontownhall.org.



Ten-Mile River Preserve (former Kaplan Property)

The Ten Mile River Preserve was purchased by the Town in 2012. The property contains 47 acres and is located on Synagogue Road at the Columbia town line.

The property runs along the Ten Mile River and includes a 10-acre cornfield the Town leases for agricul-

ture use. The land also abuts the Airline Trail as well as preserved property owned by Joshua's Trust.

Preserving this land also fulfills the long-term cemetery needs of the Town in that a portion of the property will be used for a new cemetery.

The Conservation and

Agriculture Commission plans to develop a passive recreation trail spur from the Airline Trail to the Ten-Mile River and Synagogue Road.

If you are interested in helping establish the Ten-Mile River Preserve Trail or volunteering for any other Commission project please let us know.

Anderson Property

The 162-acre Anderson property sits on both sides of Randall and Sisson Roads and is lined with large pristine stone walls and huge maple trees.

Julie Anderson, a descendent of the Randall family, and her husband Richard recently passed away while living at the family homestead.

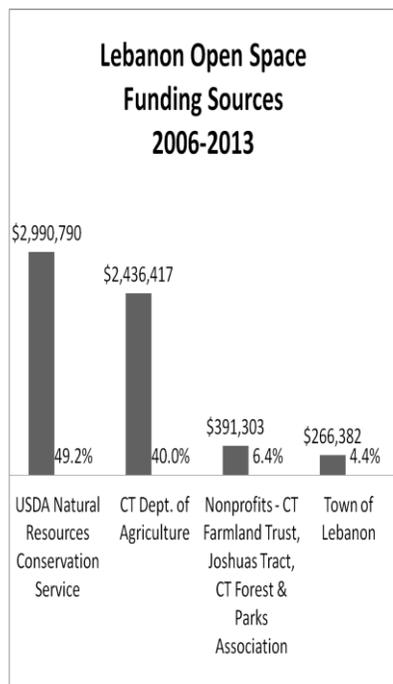
Their children Jill and Claire made the difficult decision to sell the property which the family has owned for 200 years. In memory of their parents and the land they asked the Town for assistance to place a conservation easement on the land.

With an appraised conservation easement value of \$524,000, the Town agreed to pay \$200,500 for the easement. Funding came from a \$135,500 grant issued by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; a \$15,000 generous contribution made by Joshua's Land Trust; and \$50,000 from the Town's open space account.

Before the conservation restriction was put in place the property could have supported 30 building lots, whereas now the property is prohibited from future subdivision.

Additionally, public access has been secured to the historic Five-Mile Rock along a trail maintained by the Conservation and Agriculture Commission. The Five-Mile Rock denotes the southeast boundary of the original land grant from Mohegan Chief Owaneco, son of Uncas, to Lebanon's first European settlers in 1692. In 1705 surveyors placed the letters "LVMC" in the rock representing Lebanon Five Mile Corner.

If you are interested in preserving your property or know of someone who is please contact the Town Planner at 860-642-2006.



Investing in open space helps protect community character and control property tax increases. Since 2006, Lebanon's local share of the cost to preserve 1,600+/- acres has been 4.4% or <\$200 an acre. It is estimated that 150+/- new houses could have been built on this land.

Rails to Trails Committee Update

Work is nearly complete on Lebanon's 7.5 mile section of the Air Line Trail, which runs from East Hampton center through Lebanon to the Willimantic River. The Trail is covered in stone dust and provides a wonderful place to walk, jog, bike or ride horseback. Trail grade is 2% which

allows children to practice their riding skills without fear of cars and hills.

The last remaining section to be completed lies between Cook Hill and Village Hill Roads, which DEEP should have complete by fall. Although not complete, it is open and passable.

This project has been in progress for twelve years. With the combined efforts of the Rail to Trails Committee, Lebanon Public Works Department, DEEP, contractors and many volunteers we have brought this wonderful natural area back to public use. Please go out and enjoy the beauty!

Open Space Funding Update

Since 2006, the Town of Lebanon has spent or committed \$266,382 to preserve 1,634 acres of land. This investment represents 4.4% of the total preservation cost as owners have received \$6,045,283 in exchange for preserving their property – with 95.6% of the funds coming from federal, state and non-profit partners.

Lebanon’s relatively small investment allows the Town to successfully solicit the vast majority of preservation dollars from our partners – all of whom require some matching dollars.

Most property owners interested in land preservation also need to draw on the value of their property to survive. Yet

many are willing to donate a portion of their property value in return for seeing their land permanently preserved.

Consequently, in addition to the \$6 million paid out for Lebanon land preservation projects, almost 2 million dollars in land value donations have been made by owners.

Because landowners regularly approach the Town to ask for assistance in preserving their property, the Conservation and Agriculture Commission and Town staff are here to assist them.

At the 2013 Annual Town Meeting the Town dedicated \$80,000 to Lebanon’s Open Space Account. This dedicated

account also accepts donations which are tax deductible. Our goal is to maintain \$100,000 annually in this account.

If you are interested in donating to this cause, please send a check to Town Hall made out to the “*Town of Lebanon Open Space Account*”.

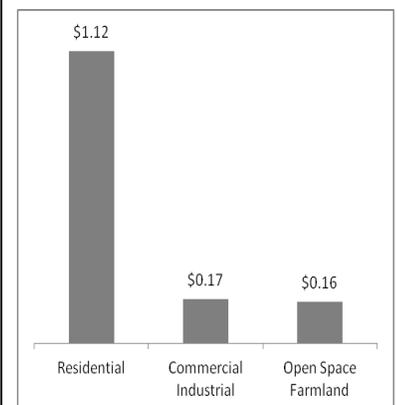
In addition, the Town is always looking for grants and resources to help implement its Plan of Conservation and Development. If you know of possible funding sources or are willing to contribute your time please contact us.

It is through our joint efforts that Lebanon will remain a unique, strong and special community.

OPEN SPACE and FARMLAND protects our pocketbooks!

Did you know that investing in OPEN SPACE and FARMLAND helps control property taxes?

According to Lebanon’s 2007 Cost of Community Services Study, OPEN SPACE and FARMLAND requires \$0.16 and \$0.17 respectively on the tax dollar for Town services rendered; whereas, residential land requires \$1.12 in town service costs (including education) for each tax dollar collected.



Dollar cost of services for every dollar paid in local taxes by land use.

Thus OPEN SPACE and FARMLAND pay more than their fair share in taxes and helps to subsidize residential development!

Lebanon - Connecticut’s Agricultural Community

A short drive through town demonstrates that Lebanon is Farm Country!

Enclosed in this newsletter is a brochure listing a portion of Lebanon’s 122 farms and the products and services they offer. The farms identified in the brochure are representative of the vegetables, fruits, meats, plants, poultry, dairy cheeses, mulch, stables, horseback riding, wood and hay offered in town.

Here are some facts about farmland in Lebanon that distinguish the Town from others in Connecticut.

- Largest amount of active farmland (10,000+/- acres).
- Biggest agricultural zoning designation (5,000+/- acres).
- Greatest amount of preserved farmland (4,700+/- acres).
- 2/3 of Lebanon’s land is classified as prime and important farmland soils.
- A Connecticut cow and goat dairy, poultry, cheese production and nursery capital.
- Town-run farmers market.
- Only Town Green remaining in agricultural operation.
- Local government committed to establishing, promoting and protecting agricultural business.

Because of these and other factors, Lebanon is known as “farm-friendly”, with many new and existing farmers investing in the community.

If you would like a “*Lebanon CT Farm Country*” bumper sticker please stop by Town Hall.

Lebanon Conservation and Agriculture Commission

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Emery Gluck
Keith LaPorte
Jon Slate
Howard Wayland
Oliver Manning, Alternate
Paul Trubey, Alternate
Toni Willard, Alternate

Philip Chester, Town Planner

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.lebanontownhall.org

Inland Wetlands Commission Turns 40

Lebanon's Inland Wetlands Commission is celebrating its 40th anniversary. Created at the June 10, 1974 Town Meeting, the mission of Lebanon's Inland Wetlands Commission remains to "protect the inland wetland and water-courses within the Town".

The Commission consists of nine volunteer board members who review land development applications. In addition, the Commission

conducts site walks of properties to see firsthand the site conditions.

Lebanon is rich in wetlands, lakes, ponds, vernal pools, rivers and streams which all contribute to the abundance of nature most residents enjoy and depend on for groundwater and recreation. When development is proposed within them or 100 feet of each they are regulated by the Inland Wetlands Commission.

Roughly 19% of Lebanon contains wetlands. A wetlands permit is required for any person proposing work in a wetland, watercourse, lake and pond or within 100 feet of each. This includes earth removal or filling and placement of buildings, patios, decks or pools.

Lebanon's Inland Wetlands Regulations, applications and map are available online. If you have specific questions please contact the Town Planner.

About the Conservation and Agriculture Commission..

Lebanon's Conservation and Agriculture Commission is a ten-member volunteer advisory board made up of town residents. Our mission is to protect Lebanon's rural character and natural resources.

Our role is to advise town boards, commissions and residents on ways to best protect Lebanon's valuable natural resources and promote open space and farmland preservation.

The Commission meets regularly on the first Monday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in Town Hall. Meetings are open to the public and we look forward to hearing your ideas.

Department of Agriculture Support

Funding for this newsletter was provided by an Agriculture Viability Grant made possible by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture through the Community Investment

Act, 05-228.

In addition to supporting Connecticut's farmers, the Department provides funds to help support Lebanon's Farmers

Market and to preserve Lebanon's farmland.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture can be reached at (860) 713-2550.

LEBANON CONSERVATION & AGRICULTURE COMMISSION

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