



BOESCH FARM MANAGEMENT PLAN

Also known as Richard Briggs Farm
EAST GREENWICH, RHODE ISLAND

Prepared for
R.I. OEM
Open Space Bond Fund Program
and
Agricultural Land Preservation Commission

AUTUMN, 2001



I. Introduction/Overview

The Boesch Fann property is an approximately 76-acre parcel in the picturesque southwest corner of East Greenwich and it contains additional acreage spreading across the Town boundary into North Kingstown. The relevant parcel purchased by the East Greenwich Land Trust and covered by this management plan consists of Assessor's Plat 19A, Lot 46 in East Greenwich Rhode Island. Please refer to the attached maps that show the property boundaries and relevant physical features as required. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the site survey prepared by Scituate Surveys Inc, dated September 28, 2001, and Figure 2 is the required topographic map, taken from the U.S. Geological Survey Slocum Quadrangle.

The site survey as shown on Figure 1 identifies four sub areas on the property:

- "Parcel A" is the area to be protected under an agreement with the RI Department of Environmental Management to protect the open space.
- "Parcel B" is the area to be protected under an agreement with the Agricultural Land Preservation Commission to protect the agricultural land.
- "Parcel C" is the farmstead owned by the Municipal Land Trust. This parcel may be the center of the community supported agriculture program and other programs such as environmental education. The farmhouse will be the caretaker residence.
- "Parcel D", the North Kingstown lot, will be conveyed to the Land Conservancy of North Kingstown.

The Boesch property will serve to form the southern anchor of the East Greenwich Greenway and is identified as a "Greenspace Resource Area on Figure 155 -5(2) of the State Greenway Plan (11/94). The property is zoned for Farm use and is an important remnant of the Town's agricultural heritage. It is a significant historic resource for East Greenwich in large part because of the integrity of the farm complex as a whole, including the original farmhouse, dating to the 1700's. The elements of the farm setting- cleared fields still in grazing use until very recently and defined by dry laid fieldstone walls; the gravel lane leading from road to house to outbuildings; the complex of barns, sheds, ice house and hay mow - evoke our earlier agricultural way of life.

A. Public Access

The intention is to have the property, particularly Parcel A, open for public access and reserved for passive recreation (i.e. nature walks) and educational purposes. Access by the general public for the purposes of observing the various natural

features is allowed and encouraged. The property will be available for the public from dawn to dusk, unless the Land Trust has granted special permission for overnight events or other activities after dusk.

Current access to the property is via South Road in East Greenwich, along a long gravel lane driveway running south between two stonewalls and rhododendra on Parcel C. The property boundaries and entrance will be marked, including hours of use, types of uses permitted and an acknowledgement of the use of Open Space Bond assistance at the site as required. Please see Figure 1, which shows the location of frontage providing alternative access to the farmland and open space areas. There is a bar gate access to the farmstead. There is a less formal opening in the stonewall fronting the open space.

B. Activities

The following activities shall not be permitted on the premises:

- Cycling (including mountain biking and motorcycling).
- Horseback riding, except by written permission of the Land Trust.
- Fishing, Hunting or Trapping.
- Littering.
- Sound Amplified Devices.
- Timber harvesting, except as a management practice.
- Soil excavating or paving, except as necessary for property management.
- Fabricating or placing structures of any kind, except as approved by the Land Trust in support of agricultural uses and open space preservation.
- Removing any organic or mineral matter except as required for property maintenance.
- Collecting plants or plant products, except for approved farming activities.
- Pets shall only be permitted on leashes.
- Unregulated, unpermitted fire.

The restrictive covenant identified as "Exhibit C" attached hereto shall apply to "Parcel B."

C. Vehicles:

There shall be no motorized vehicles permitted on the property outside of designated parking areas, except those in approved farm use or as necessary for property management. Figure 1 shows the location of a bar gate between pole 48 and 49 on South Road that can be improved to serve as a parking area for access to the open space in Parcel A.

D. Trails:

Existing trails are shown on the site survey. There is great potential for trail extensions at this property. Please refer to the "Five Year Plan" for information on this activity. Trail maintenance shall be the responsibility of the East Greenwich Land Trust with assistance from appropriate volunteers, including Scout troops and other organizations as needed. If necessary, the Trust may also call upon the Town's Parks and Recreation Department where maintenance activities of a specialized nature might be required.

E. Litter and trash removal:

Litter pick-up and trash removal shall be the responsibility of the East Greenwich Land Trust, which may utilize appropriate volunteer groups for this activity. The Trust has a "carry in-carry out" policy for litter control.

F. Permitted Uses:

See also the prohibited activities listed above. The public will be able to partake in passive recreational activities such as walking/hiking and cross-country skiing, on Parcel A. There will be no active recreational areas such as ball fields, nor will there be picnic tables or fireplaces provided.

The farmland in Parcel B may be leased to local/area farmers, as is current practice. A "Casey Farm" approach (community supported agriculture) is also being explored. A separate area may be set aside to raise "street trees" for the Town.

G. Surveillance:

Routine Police surveillance shall be provided by the East Greenwich Police Department. General surveillance of the site shall be provided on a regular basis by the Caretaker. General surveillance includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

- Reporting evidence of violations of site regulations;
- Reporting damage or potential for damage to the property or its natural features;
- Identification and reporting of site-maintenance needs;
- Identification of practices that would improve the management function.

H. Party responsible for scheduling activities:

Organized activities at the site shall be scheduled by and/or through the Land Trust.

II. Property Maintenance

The property shall be maintained in its current state. Maintenance activities shall generally be conducted on an as-needed basis by persons designated and supervised by the East Greenwich Land Trust. Specific maintenance activities may include the following: litter removal, footpath maintenance, and cutting, trimming, or mowing as needed, along with selective tree removal and harvesting to promote forest growth.

A stated goal of purchasing this property was to preserve the farmland and keep it in production. The agricultural fields on this property ("Parcel B") are currently utilized by a local farm family to grow silage for their dairy herd. The existing pastures are mowed and maintained to keep open fields from converting to forest. These practices will continue and there is potential for additional crop planting here as well. The existing forested land ("Parcel A") is unsuitable for agriculture due to topography and soil conditions and will remain forest. Some selective cutting of wood will take place for property maintenance and this wood could be sold as fuel to help cover any costs associated with maintenance. There has also been some consideration by the Town of establishing a tree farm here ("Parcel B") to raise trees as part of an on-going effort to maintain street trees and trees on other public lands in Town.

Regarding a schedule of management activities, maintenance activities will take place as appropriate based on the condition of the land and will be ongoing for the life of the property. Please refer to Figure 3 for a timeline of all management activities planned. Regarding cost of maintenance activities and sources of funding, it is not expected that there will be significant costs associated with most of the management activities planned. The development of community- supported agriculture (i.e. Casey Farm type farm) is likely to have costs that have not yet been identified. As noted, personnel from the Trust and their designated volunteers will be responsible for the bulk of the activities anticipated. Other activities, such as the mowing of hay, are at no cost, as the farmer who performs this function reaps the benefit of gaining silage for his dairy herd. As also mentioned, any selective woodcutting could likely be supported by the cost of selling said wood for fuel.

If necessary, the Trust may also call upon the Town's Parks and Recreation Department where maintenance activities of a specialized nature might be required.

III. Rare Species Protection

At the current time, we are not aware of any rare species on the open space property. Please see the attached 1998 letter from Applied Biosystems for specific species identification. As noted in Section II B. above, collection or removal of plant species is not a permitted use. Further, by restricting property access to specified trails, it is expected that any disturbance of nesting birds or other wildlife will be minimized.

IV. Environmental Education

The property will be available for educational purposes particularly as pertains to conservation, agriculture, local and state history, wildlife management, forest management, and wetland ecology. It is expected to be utilized by the Land Trust to promote and support its mission, students, groups and organizations around the state, as well as by the general public. The Land Trust will produce an informational leaflet providing information on the property's various natural features and include a map of trails and significant features.

V. DEM Requirements

The site access point, boundaries and footpaths shall be clearly marked. Hours of use as well as permitted and prohibited uses shall also be listed. The method, design, and materials for all signs and markings shall be compatible with the natural character of the site and shall be approved by the Trust. All such signage shall also be reviewed and approved by the RI DEM and shall acknowledge the use of Open Space bond assistance at the site.

Figure 1

