PECONIC LAND TRUST

HOW THE PECONIC LAND TRUST WORKS WITH LANDOWNERS

From its inception, the Trust's credo has always been "know the landowner, know the land." The Trust’s staff works with the landowner to plan the future use of the land, a process that begins with a number of questions that help to clarify the landowner's goals.

- Does the owner want the property to be totally preserved?
- Can the next generation pay the estate taxes necessary to keep the property?
- In the case of a farm, should it continue to be agriculturally productive?
- If land is to be maintained in its natural state, how is it to be managed and how will the resulting costs be covered?
- Is the owner able to establish an endowment to cover future management costs?
- If not, is it acceptable to sell off a portion of the property to create an endowment?

Once the goals have been established, the Trust proceeds to the more technical aspect of the planning process, beginning with an inventory of the land's natural resources and structural improvements.

- A base map is prepared showing site conditions and natural features.
- Specific characteristics of the land such as slope, soils, vegetation, or hydrology may be further analyzed.
- If there are historic buildings on site, the Trust may recommend that an architectural historian evaluate their significance.
- Surrounding land uses and real estate trends are also studied.

With this information, the Trust divides the land into three categories:

- Land that should be preserved at all costs,
- Land that should be preserved if affordable, and
- Land that is suitable for limited development.

This detailed preparation provides the Trust staff with a thorough understanding of the land and the landowner's goals, enabling them to offer options for its future use. In each case, the Trust's professional staff does the necessary research and planning to identify and implement alternatives to outright development. Once the landowner selects an option, it is refined into a plan that sets forth the intended uses, ownership, and long-term management of the property. The implementation of the plan may take a number of years to complete, and the plan may be adjusted as the landowner's situation changes or new tax laws come into effect. Outside consultants such as surveyors, appraisers, and others may be involved in this process. Once land has been protected, the Trust can provide a variety of stewardship services to landowners, if needed, including the preparation of management plans.