



Land Acquisition to Complete the Henson's Cove Conservation Area

PURCHASE of 4 BRADDOCK'S WAY

BACKGROUND:

- OCT has an opportunity to purchase a large property on Henson's Cove, a salt pond of Little Pleasant Bay that opens onto "The River."
- The acquisition will complete OCT's long-term effort to create the 23-acre Henson's Cove Conservation Area (HCCA – formerly the White's Lane Conservation Area). OCT has worked with three families since the 1970s to acquire ten surrounding lots, and acquisition of this last parcel will finish a gorgeous necklace of preserved land.
- Acquisition of this parcel is a top priority of the Town (as shown in the Town's CROS plan).
- OCT intends to acquire this parcel in partnership with the Town's Open Space Committee (see Financial Information below).
- The property was about to be developed with a large main house and a guest house when OCT got it under contract.

LAND FACTS:

- The property totals 3.74 acres and is nearly all forested upland. It abuts two freshwater wetlands, Henson's Cove, and the adjacent saltmarsh.
- The land has 157 feet of frontage on Henson's Cove and over 500 feet of frontage on the adjacent saltmarsh.

CONSERVATION VALUE:

Acquisition of the property will:

- Protect two freshwater wetlands, a salt marsh, and Upper Pleasant Bay water quality.
- Preserve a 23-acre block of diverse, high-quality wildlife habitat.
- Allow OCT to expand habitat for rare diamondback terrapins, box turtles and a host of other grassland-dependent species.
- Prevent clearcutting, development, and associated septic load, traffic, and other activity in an environmentally sensitive area, and reduce pressure on the Pleasant Bay system.

After acquisition, OCT plans to restore sandplain grassland habitat along the waterfront (to provide additional terrapin and turtle nesting areas), create a long public walking trail over the property, and remove a large, dilapidated boathouse.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- The land has an appraised value of \$975,000 and an assessed value of \$1,065,000, but OCT negotiated a sale price of \$800,000. Intensive habitat restoration and other project costs bring our fundraising target to \$900,000.
- OCT has pledged \$100,000 of its own funds towards the project and will raise private funds for much of the project cost. OCT intends to partner with the Town's Open Space Committee to obtain a major state grant and funding through the Community Preservation Act.