

BRIGGS BOESCH FARM

830 South Rd, East Greenwich RI 02818

Acquisition Date: October 2001

Property Owner

East Greenwich Municipal Land Trust
 www.eastgreenwichri.com
 Tenant Farmers: Erik and Trish Eaker
 www.ledgeendsproduce.com

Project Type

Agricultural and Open Space Protection,
 Historic Preservation

Total Project Cost

\$2.1 million



COMMUNITY SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES SUPPORTED BY PROJECT

- Locate in, or adjacent to, established centers, making use of existing buildings and infrastructure and connecting to existing streets
- Preserve open spaces and farmland
- Promote compact building and neighborhood design
- Mix uses
- Provide range of housing types for range of incomes
- Create pedestrian-friendly communities that utilize transportation alternatives
- Capitalize on existing assets to protect or create distinctive, attractive places and public amenities.
- Follow environmentally sensitive building and site design practices
- Encourage citizen and stakeholder participation
- Foster creative public-private partnerships to finance project and maximize resources

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

Preserve Open Spaces and Farmland

By purchasing the farm and putting conservation easements in place, the East Greenwich Municipal Land Trust has permanently protected woods, wetlands, and fields by providing important wildlife habitat and trails that are open for public enjoyment. The property is farmed using the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model (see further discussion of CSA on page 2).

Mix of Uses

Like most agricultural operations, this property has a wide range of uses. The 86 acre property includes:

- ◊ 30.6 acres of woodlands and wetlands
- ◊ Public walking trails
- ◊ 12 acres of agricultural fields in production
- ◊ A single family home
- ◊ A barn, greenhouse and other farm related outbuildings

Existing Assets/Public Amenities

The historic site contains early 18th to mid 20th century buildings and landscape elements reflecting the town's agricultural history. The Land Trust has renovated the existing farmhouse (circa 1735-1755) for the current tenants and restored the historic barn. The project takes full advantage of the beautiful landscape by providing public walking trails and the site is used for educational and community events.

Green Building/Site Design Practices

The farmers use no chemical pesticides or

fertilizers and have been certified organic since 2006. Organic farming maintains the fertility of the soil and protects the biodiversity of the area. The farmers receive and compost waste from local businesses and landscapers. By using existing buildings on the site they have been able to avoid any new construction. All drives and parking on the property are pervious, with no paved areas.

Citizen/Stakeholder Participation

This project exemplifies community effort to preserve and maintain the site. Each year Boy Scouts volunteer their time to maintain the public trails. The Frenchtown Community Club donated a building to the Town, which now uses rental income from the building to help maintain the farm. By investing early in the season, CSA members play a critical role in keeping the site actively farmed.

Public-Private Support

State:

RIDEM Open Space Preservation Grant	\$300,000
RI Agricultural Land Preservation Commission State Historic Preservation Grant	\$180,000
	\$29,000

Municipal:

Open Space/Outdoor Recreation Bond	\$1,475,000
------------------------------------	-------------

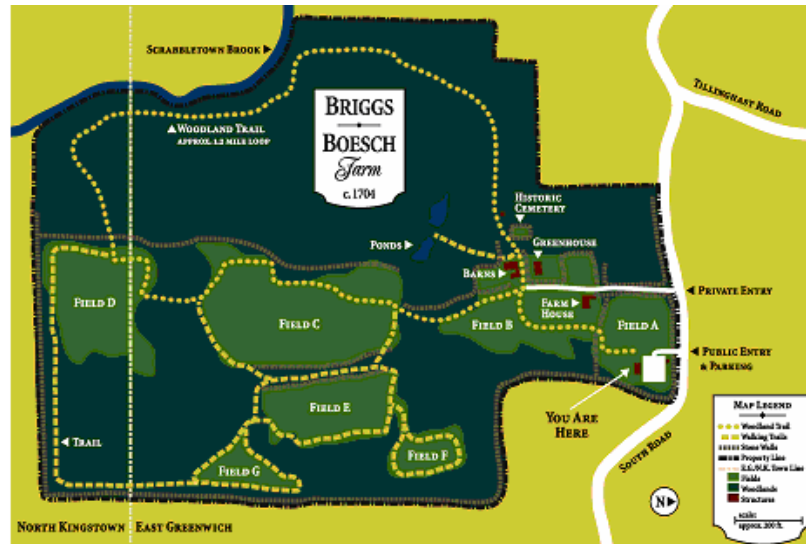
Private:

Boesch Family	\$165,000
---------------	-----------

CASE STUDY PUBLISHED 08/2008

BRIGGS BOESCH FARM

830 South Rd, East Greenwich RI 02818



KEY SMART GROWTH ELEMENTS

Preserving Natural and Cultural History

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Briggs Boesch Farm is one of Rhode Island’s longest standing farms. When Mr. and Mrs. Boesch passed away their children sought out the Land Trust in hopes of preserving the farm. Considering the farm’s historical and natural resource values, the East Greenwich Municipal Land Trust agreed to purchase the property. Recognizing town residents’ demand for local produce, the Land Trust decided to lease the property to Erik Eaker, who established Ledge Ends Produce.

Making a Small-Scale Farm Economically Viable

Ledge Ends Produce illustrates the challenges of making a small-scale farm economically viable. At the beginning of each season farmers must invest in seed and equipment. For many this means taking out a loan, a risk for the farmer who may experience crop loss due to weather conditions. The Eakers avoid loans by using the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) approach which allows consumers to share both the risks and the benefits of local agriculture. CSA members, also called shareholders, pay for shares at the beginning of the season, providing farmers with money to cover initial costs. Throughout the harvest season, CSA members receive a weekly supply of fresh vegetables, fruits, herbs, and

flowers at a lower cost than what is available at the grocery store. This system provides healthy food for members and increased support the farmers care of the land and animals. CSA members are able to see where and how their food is grown, and are encouraged to volunteer at the farm.

After the week’s harvest is divided among CSA members, excess produce is sold at both the Coastal Growers Market at Casey Farm in North Kingstown and Goddard State Park Farmers’ Market in Warwick. By selling directly to the consumers at retail price rather than selling wholesale to a middleman the farmers make a bigger profit.

Commitment to Public Green Space

The Briggs Farm Property forms the southern piece of the East Greenwich Greenway. The parcel is an important piece in an interconnected network of protected open spaces that preserve the town’s rural and scenic character, as well as its environmental quality. By creating a connected greenway the town protects habitat and creates corridors for wildlife populations. The town’s green spaces are open for public access and reserved for passive recreation. The public is welcome at the farm for a walk through the woods and fields, as well as for educational events. The town’s demonstration of broad support for the preservation effort increased the property’s eligibility for funding.

Without East Greenwich voters who approved the bond referendum, the political support of the Town Manager and Town Council, the Planning Department’s long term commitment to open space protection, and the hard work of the Land Trust, the farm’s purchase and establishment as a CSA farm would not have occurred.

PROJECT SUCCESS TO DATE

The Ledge Ends’ CSA program has quickly grown from 100 shares in 2005, to over 225 in 2008, making it one of the largest in Rhode Island. To provide East Greenwich residents at all income levels access to healthy, organic foods, the farmers established a fund to underwrite shares for low-income families. In 2008, this fund allowed 5 families to receive free weekly shares.

CASE STUDY PUBLISHED 08/2008