

A drive to preserve 'old Cape Cod'

Two Barnstable groups work together to protect Bayview Farm from development

By **EMILY C. DOOLEY**
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WEST BARNSTABLE – Exclusive: 9.65 acres of undeveloped land and salt marsh surrounded by acres of conservation space; views of Sandy Neck. Asking \$250,000.

This isn't the cheapest land offering to hit Cape Cod in decades, but rather the remaining balance to protect open space at Bayview Farm in West Barnstable. Together, the Nature Conservancy and the Barnstable Land Trust are working to keep the space free of development.

Bayview Farms connects 300 acres of town and private conservation lands with Sandy Neck and the Barnstable Great Marsh.

Purchasing the 9.65 acres will cost \$805,000 – \$500,000 of which has already been promised by conservation and state funds. Private fundraising has also added to the till, leaving \$250,000 yet to be raised by a June 15 deadline, Barnstable Land

See for yourself

■ Check out a 360-degree view of the farm at Capecodonline.com.

Trust executive director Jaci Barton said.

The parcel contains 2 acres of undeveloped land and 7.65 acres of salt marsh and inter-tidal wetland. The buildable portion has been subdivided.

The push is on to bring in money to complete the open space acquisition as soon as possible.

"Where else is there in the town of Barnstable, besides the golf course and the airport, where there are 7 acres of open land?" Barton said. "To people in West Barnstable, this is a pretty important place."

That much was evident yesterday, when an estimated 75 to 100 people stopped by the Route 6A site, braving the wind and rain to take a tour of the property and learn more about

Bayview Farm.

"What we're trying to do is prevent too much development around the fringe of the salt marsh," said Robb Johnson, a land protection specialist with the Nature Conservancy.

The more lawns, pavement and structures that are added to the area means an increase in run-off that hits the salt marsh and disrupts the salinity of the area, which could hurt the wildlife habitat, he said.

The goal of the two groups is to protect the area – reminiscent of "old Cape Cod" – from development.

They have until June to hit their deadline or risk losing grants and a tract of land that many consider a main contributor to the cultural charm of West Barnstable.

"Right after the Puritans arrived, this was settled," said Mark Wirtanen, a former land trust member. "It's gone through a lot of names."

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Bayview Farm, Phase 2

■ Acreage: **9.65 acres**; 2 acres undeveloped upland, 7.65 acres salt marsh and wetland

■ Total cost: **\$805,000**

■ Amount left to raise by June 15: **\$250,000**

■ For more information: Go online to www.SaveBayViewFarm.org or call 508-771-2585



STEVE HEASLIP/Cape Cod Times

Two conservation groups in Barnstable are working to keep Bayview Farm free from development. The total cost of the land is \$805,000, and the groups have raised all but \$250,000.

Land: Efforts under way to protect Bayview Farm

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Historians have been able to trace the land back to at least 1640, when the Rev. John Hull claimed the area known as Bridge Creek.

The property was sold and divided over the centuries.

The first time "Bay View Farm" was recorded in a deed was 1918. It was a working farm for about a decade.

In 1931, all of the buildings on the property were destroyed by fire. The land was sold again several times or passed on through family members.

In 2003, the property was sold

to Bayview Farm Realty Trust, which received approval to subdivide the parcel two years later.

Last year, the Barnstable Land Trust and Nature Conservancy purchased 14 acres of salt marsh and a 2-acre parcel of field along Route 6A just in front of the homestead.

This latest phase includes land behind the house and wetlands along Bridge Creek in between Parker Road and Meetinghouse Way near the train tracks.

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Historians have been able to trace the land back to at least 1640, when the Rev. John Hill claimed the area known as Bridge Creek. It was sold and divided over the centuries.



STEVE HEASLIP/Cape Cod Times

Bayview Farm along Route 6A in West Barnstable contains 9.65 acres of undeveloped land. The Nature Conservancy and the Barnstable Land Trust would like to see the land stay open, instead of being turned into another subdivision. "To people in West Barnstable, this is a pretty important place," says Jaci Barton of the Barnstable Land Trust.