

OPEN SPACES

STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

SPRING 2022

THE STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST IS TURNING 50!



50 years ago, three visionary Stamford citizens decided to form the Stamford Land Conservation Trust (SLCT) with the mission of protecting and preserving open space within our city. Since then, our stewarded properties have grown

from 14 acres to over 450 acres — and we continue to grow.

Learn more inside about the SLCT's key milestones over the years and the individuals who helped us succeed. Enjoy!

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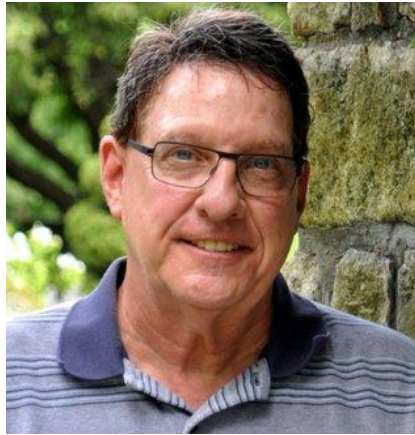
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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.” ~John Muir



Harry Day, Stamford Land
Conservation Trust President

Dear Friends of SLCT,

In the past 50 years, Stamford Land Conservation Trust has gone from an idea to stewarding over 450 acres of open space throughout the City of Stamford. That's a significant accomplishment for a small band of conservationists who have volunteered their time and energy to SLCT over the years to help ensure our community has open space to enjoy. There are myriad reasons why this is important:

- Our largest preserves offer members of the community a place to unplug and take a walk in nature.
- All the preserves offer wildlife habitats and are important to the region's biodiversity and water supply.
- Our 450 acres help offset Stamford's carbon footprint!

As gratifying as it is to look back on our last 50 years, what really excites me is our future. Most of you are hopefully aware we are working diligently to acquire 64-acres in North Stamford that will connect with two of our preserves and the City's Newman Mills Park. The result will be 245 acres of contiguous open space, much of it with walking trails!

In addition to this acquisition, there are other unique opportunities to preserve land throughout Stamford. Did you know Stamford has more acreage that could be saved as open space than most of our neighboring towns? The land we preserve today creates a legacy for future generations.

I hope SLCT can capitalize on the opportunities I see. I also hope the community continues to generously support us in our efforts. Dollars are important, but we also need volunteers to guide us through our next 50 years. There are a lot of ways to get involved: volunteer to steward a property, bring your special talents to our board of directors, include us in your estate planning, host a neighborhood event to benefit SLCT, join us on a nature walk, and many more. Please consider joining the SLCT family. You can contact us through our website at: www.stamfordland.org and by email at: info@stamfordland.org.

Happy 50th to SLCT! Check our website for posted Golden Anniversary events.

Best,
Harry

A TRADITION OF GIVING TO PROTECT STAMFORD'S OPEN SPACE



No single family has contributed more to the preservation of open space in the City of Stamford than the Altschul family. Going back generations, starting with Helen and Frank Altschul in the 1950s, the family's generosity has been instrumental in protecting the natural landscape in our city.

Committed philanthropists, Frank and Helen Altschul spent a lifetime supporting educational, cultural, and civic organizations through the Overbrook Foundation, which they founded in 1948 and named after Overbrook Farm, their home in Stamford. They made generous gifts to many renowned institutions, but they also gave to local causes and in 1960 the couple contributed funding for the Stamford Observatory which is located at the Stamford Museum and Nature Center.

In 1977, the Altschuls donated 164 acres on Riverbank Road to the Nature Conservancy, thereby establishing the Helen Altschul Preserve. In 2010 the SLCT acquired the property from the Nature Conservancy, and it

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has since become the Trust's crown jewel. This beautiful preserve supports a variety of woodland inhabitants including migratory songbirds and waterfowl, as well as year-round residents such as white-tailed deer, coyotes, red and grey fox, raccoons, frogs, turtles, salamanders, and snakes.

Several of the Altschul children, grandchildren and great grandchildren

have also made their homes in Stamford and they have continued their family's commitment to the preservation of natural habitat and open space.

Most recently members of the family have agreed to sell two parcels totaling 64 acres to the SLCT at a purchase price that is considerably less than they would receive from selling to a developer. These woodland acres are adjacent to the Helen Altschul Preserve and SLCT is actively fundraising to make the acquisition.

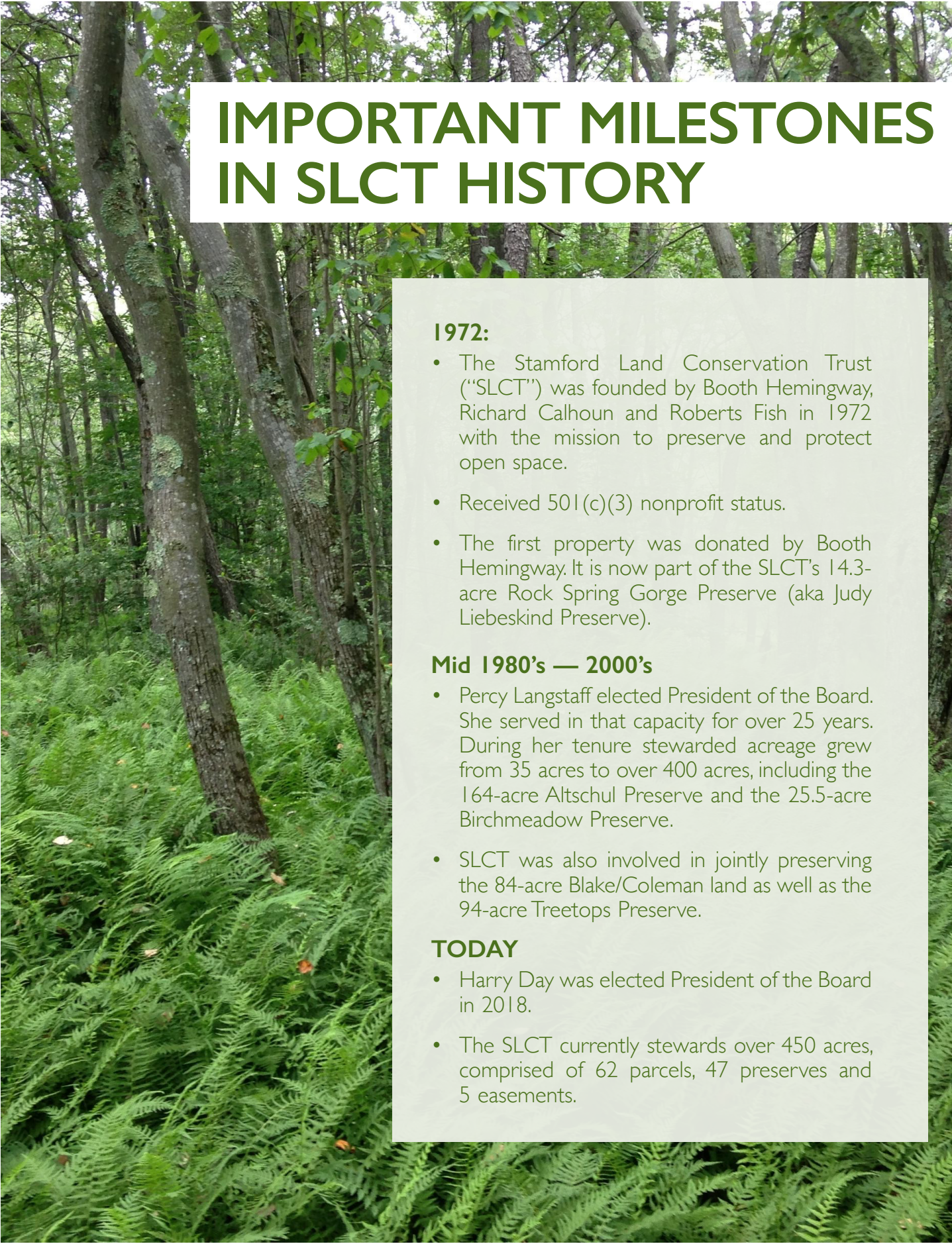
Additionally, several other family members have granted the SLCT easements to their properties in the same area, ensuring that those properties are protected in perpetuity from development.

Should the acquisition of the 64 acres go through, the Altschul family will have contributed to the preservation of over 260 acres of undeveloped land in North Stamford.

The Altschuls loved their Stamford home, surrounded by woods next to the East branch of the Mianus River, and they shared their appreciation for the natural world with their children and grandchildren.

Says Francine Lang, one of the couple's granddaughters, "Among my happiest memories of visiting my grandparents was taking walks with them in the woods on their Stamford property. I remember listening with happiness to the babbling brook, examining the lady slippers that my grandmother would point out to me. I remember climbing on the beautiful fir trees or just wandering the paths making up stories to myself. The unspoiled outdoors was what Overbrook Farm, as they called their home, meant to me and to my sisters. The possibility of their property being preserved as natural open space would mean a great deal to them – as it does to me."





IMPORTANT MILESTONES IN SLCT HISTORY

1972:

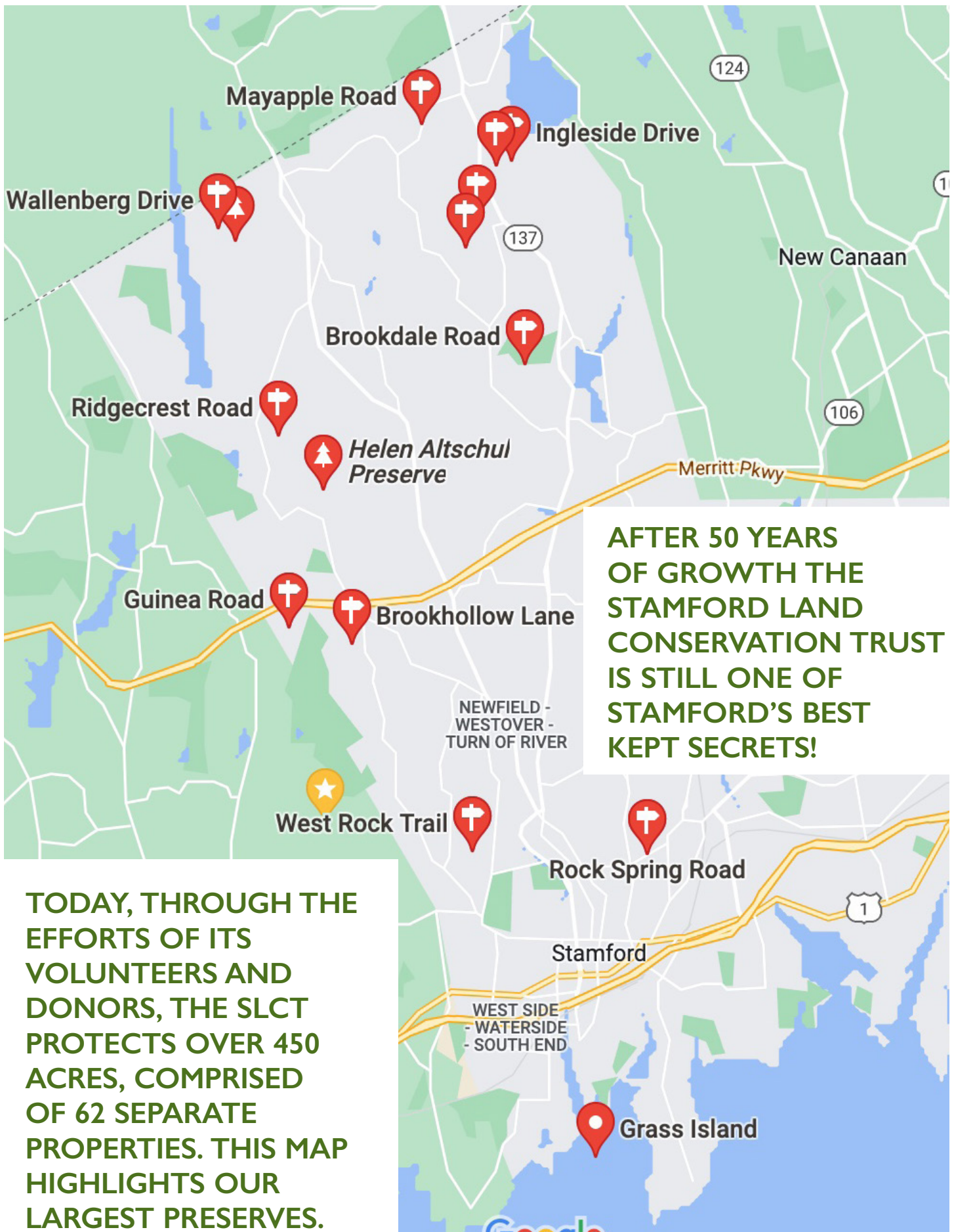
- The Stamford Land Conservation Trust ("SLCT") was founded by Booth Hemingway, Richard Calhoun and Roberts Fish in 1972 with the mission to preserve and protect open space.
- Received 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.
- The first property was donated by Booth Hemingway. It is now part of the SLCT's 14.3-acre Rock Spring Gorge Preserve (aka Judy Liebeskind Preserve).

Mid 1980's — 2000's

- Percy Langstaff elected President of the Board. She served in that capacity for over 25 years. During her tenure stewarded acreage grew from 35 acres to over 400 acres, including the 164-acre Altschul Preserve and the 25.5-acre Birchmeadow Preserve.
- SLCT was also involved in jointly preserving the 84-acre Blake/Coleman land as well as the 94-acre Treetops Preserve.

TODAY

- Harry Day was elected President of the Board in 2018.
- The SLCT currently stewards over 450 acres, comprised of 62 parcels, 47 preserves and 5 easements.



LEADERSHIP THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

Many people have contributed to the success of the SLCT over the past 50 years. We wanted to highlight a few individuals whose efforts have been especially meaningful.

JUDY LIEBESKIND (Past Board Member)

"I served for about 35 years on the Land Trust Board, during which time its holdings grew enormously. Its mission has become even more important, since protecting the environment is a major means of mitigating climate change which is the existential threat to our planet. Preservation of our open space helps to purify the water and the air, absorb carbon, and provide a habitat for wildlife.

In the years ahead, I would like to see SLCT obtain more open space for Stamford and for the rest of the world; take a proactive position in combatting climate change and promoting renewable energy; educate the public on the value of open space and other environmental concerns; partner with and support other groups to further environmental improvements such as reducing plastic use, composting of solid waste, reducing food waste and reducing heating/cooling waste in buildings."

PERCY LANGSTAFF (Chairperson Emerita)

"Walking among the trees is the best way for people to understand the importance of conservation. More people need to know about SLCT. We need to save all the land we can! We're not saving it fast enough."

DAVID MARTIN (Former Mayor, City of Stamford)

"Even as our great city grows, it is vitally important to preserve a healthy balance with open space and nature. The SLCT's pending acquisition of 64-acres represents a fantastic addition of open space and hiking trails that will grace our city forever. This opportunity would not exist without the amazing efforts of the Stamford Land Conservation Trust. I am proud that the City is playing a role to help this wonderful project succeed."

HARRY DAY (Current Board President)

"I'm extremely proud of our organization and what it does for our community. Our preserves help ensure our eco system stays balanced and they provide natural wildlife habitats. Our larger preserves with walking trails give our neighbors throughout Stamford a place to unplug and relax. In addition to the obvious, immediate benefit, deepening our connection with nature improves our health and wellbeing. It's one of the many reasons preserving open space is so important."

STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST CONTACTS

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Website: www.StamfordLand.org
Address: 22 First Street, Stamford CT

RICH CHIARAMONTE
(Past Board President)

"I was born in Stamford and spent a lot of time in my early years exploring the wooded areas off Riverbank Road. To my astonishment, fifty years later I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to help protect the same forests I wandered as a child, first as a board member and then as President of the SLCT. Every time I walk in the remarkably peaceful Altschul Preserve, or the well-maintained trail through the Birch Meadow Preserve, I marvel at my good luck.

The mission of the Stamford Land Conservation Trust, as with any land trust, is the protection and preservation of open space. But that is more than simply saving the peaceful places. The protection of open space is the protection of habitat. The protection of habitat is the effort to slow the acceleration of species extinction. That, combined with each of us doing what we can, is needed to protect the future of life on Earth."

RICHARD REDNISS
(Planner & 1st SLCT Award Recipient)

"My family has been involved with Stamford Land Conservation Trust practically since its founding. My father was president when he died in 1984. Over the years, I've been pleased to have helped SLCT to identify and create more and bigger pockets of open space. Key to its continued success is identifying land and educating landowners about the various tools available to preserve open space. There are important benefits in conservation planning and thinking outside the box has helped achieve that goal."

MUSHROOM WALKS, NATIVE WILDFLOWER PLANTING, WINTER TREE ID HIKE... AND MORE

There is always something going on at the Stamford Land Conservation Trust.



Whether you want to learn more about the flora and fauna in our preserves, volunteer to help maintain our properties, or just take a nature hike with one of our stewards, we have an activity for everyone at the Stamford Land Conservation Trust.

Check our events calendar on our website at stamfordland.org or sign up for our e-newsletter to learn more about upcoming events like these:

- Winter Tree and Fungi ID
- Property Clean ups
- Knotweed Pulls and Native Plantings
- Barberry Removal
- Mushroom Walks
- Knotweed pull at Woods End
- Chestnut Sapling Planting
- Mushroom Monday Zooms

STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

22 FIRST STREET, STAMFORD, CT 06905-0247



THE STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST IS TURNING 50!

Celebrate our milestone year by spending some time in our preserves, and experience the soothing and restorative power of the natural world right here in our community.