

# East Quabbin Land Trust working with Ware to preserve 90 acres on Church Street

By **Nancy Gonter, The Republican**

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**WARE** - The East Quabbin Land Trust is working with the town to preserve 90 acres of land on Church Street for recreation and conservation.

Cynthia W. Henshaw, executive director of the trust, said the trust purchased the 110 acres on April 29 for \$570,000 from the Frohloff family and then sold portions of the property to developers Joel J. Harder and David Fredenburg for \$225,000.

The land is right next to the former Lincoln Farm, a 123-acre parcel also purchased by the trust that now has a restriction that prevents the land from being developed, paved or mined.

The trust is a private, non-profit organization with a goal of land conservation for the benefit of all. It serves the towns of Ware, Barre, Hardwick, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Oakham, Petersham and West Brookfield.

The goal is to preserve the Frohloff farm land which includes six-tenths of a mile frontage on the Ware River and includes a half-mile stretch of what is hoped to be the Massachusetts Central Trail. It is also in the recharge area for the town's Dismal Swamp well, Henshaw said.

Henshaw and Community Development Director Paul E. Hills met with selectmen last week to let them know they hope to apply for a grant to get a conservation restriction for 90 acres of land. An appraisal of the property must be done to determine the cost of the restriction, she said.

The grant, which is expected to pay 70 percent of the cost, is available from the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The remaining cost would be paid through fund-raising, Henshaw said.

The goal is to preserve some land with recreation trails and find a farmer to use some of the land for agriculture, possibly a farm in which community members can buy shares and get locally grown products.

Henshaw said she is pleased that some land will be preserved and some will be developed, creating tax revenue for the town. The developers are expected to seek approval for several building lots and to renovate the existing farmhouse, she said.

The land is now overgrown and a cleanup day will be held on June 5 starting at 9 a.m. Volunteers are asked to come prepared to clear brush and remove invasive species that have grown on the land, Henshaw said.

The land trust is also looking for input from the public about how they would like to see the land used. Comments can be sent to [chenshaw@eqlt.org](mailto:chenshaw@eqlt.org). For information, the trust's website is [www.eqlt.org](http://www.eqlt.org).