



J.L. Yurish

Shaker View Farm and scenic New Lebanon valley, as visible from Mount Lebanon Historic Site

New Lebanon Farmland Conservation Project Fact Sheet

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Town of New Lebanon was awarded a highly competitive New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets grant in 2007 for the permanent protection of Shaker View Farm, one of the Town's most important farm properties. The conservation easement to be placed on the land will enable it to always be available for farming. The \$513,150 grant will pay for 75% of the costs associated with the purchase of the farm's development rights. Our New Lebanon community needs to raise the remaining 25% (\$171,050) before January 31, 2010.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Who will enforce the easement? Will the easement be a burden on the Town's budget?**

The Columbia Land Conservancy (a nonprofit organization) will hold and enforce the easement and will monitor the property once a year to ensure the terms are being upheld. The Conservancy does this for all of its 150+ easement properties. There will be no cost or obligation to the Town, and the monitoring and enforcing will *not* be a burden on the Town's budget.

- **Will the property be removed from the tax roll? What will happen to the Agricultural Assessment?**

No, the current and any future owners of the property will continue to pay property taxes. Assessments on protected properties are not reduced because the tax rates are determined by the current use of the land; conservation easements do not change the "current use" of the property, and thus the rates will not change. As long as the farm operation on the land continues to qualify for an agricultural assessment, the agricultural assessment remains in place.

- **Will the property remain in farming?**

While the conservation easement cannot mandate that the land stay in farming, it will prevent any development that is incompatible with farming, thereby protecting prime agricultural soils. Once protected, the property can be sold to future farmer buyers at its agricultural value, and the Conservancy will work with any new owners to develop farming arrangements that will keep the land in active production.

- **Is there a program to help farmers find protected farms like Shaker View Farm?**

The Columbia Land Conservancy coordinates a free farmer-landowner match program that helps farmers locate good agricultural land available for purchase or lease and also helps landowners find farmers to keep local agricultural lands in production. This program can help ensure that farms like Shaker View remain in production for future generations. For more information about this program, see http://www.clctrust.org/farm_prot.htm

(OVER)

- **Who benefits from this project?**

The State of New York benefits by ensuring the permanent protection of prime farmland. The Town of New Lebanon and its residents benefit by protecting farmland and highly visible open space that is in direct correlation with the goals of its Comprehensive Plan. The Columbia Land Conservancy benefits by advancing its mission of promoting agriculture and protecting open space. The landowners benefit by receiving compensation for giving up real estate development rights, and by knowing that their family lands will be protected and serve the community well into the future.

- **What happens to my donation if the project does not get completed?**

If the project does not close, all donors will be asked if they would like their gift to be applied to the Conservancy's general farmland protection program fund, but donations will be returned in full upon request.

- **Are donations tax deductible, and where should I send them?**

Donations for the project are tax deductible and should be sent to the Columbia Land Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Please be sure to note that your gift is for the Shaker View Farm Project.

Columbia Land Conservancy, Inc.
P.O. Box 299, 49 Main Street
Chatham, NY 12037
518-392-5252
Marissa@clctrust.org

** On-line donations can be made via a secure site at: http://www.clctrust.org/farm_prot_currentops.htm