

# PRESS RELEASE

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Town Planner's Office

## Town of Ellington

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### TOWN PARTICIPATES IN FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM TO PRESERVE CHARTER FARM!

**Ellington, CT** – March 28, 2014 – First Selectman Maurice Blanchette and Commissioner of Agriculture, Steven K. Reviczky announce that the Town of Ellington and the State of Connecticut recently completed the joint acquisition of development rights to a local farm. The acquisition of approximately 77 acres on Somers Road, generally known as the Charter Farm and owned by Peter and Verna Charter, was completed on February 10, 2014. Ellington's participation in this program is made possible by a farmland bond authorization approved by Ellington voters in 2007. The preservation of Charter Farm represents Ellington's third joint acquisition by the Town and State of Connecticut since the authorization.

Peter Charter, owner of the Charter Farm, said "My wife and I are very appreciative of the purchasing of the development rights by the Town of Ellington and State of Connecticut. It has enabled us to continue our dream of farming in Ellington and Somers for the remainder of our lifetime." Ellington First Selectman Blanchette said "The Town of Ellington made a strong commitment some years ago to authorize up to \$2,000,000 for farmland preservation, and has since followed-up with the State of Connecticut in purchasing development rights for several farms in Ellington. The Charter Farm can now be added to this list. The residents of Ellington are pleased to continue their active participation in this program." Commissioner Reviczky added "Keeping our working lands available for farming is critical to the future of agriculture in Connecticut. The Charter Farm is our tenth protected property in Ellington, and I commend the town for its ongoing support of this program and the agricultural community."

Charter Farm is located in an agricultural part of town that straddles the town line of Ellington and Somers and is situated west of Somers Road (Route 83) stretching to Egypt Road in Somers. Between the two towns, approximately 77 acres were preserved. Almost three-quarters of Charter Farm contain soils classified as prime or important farmland soils, the type of soils most suitable for growing crops and the most critical to preserve.

The contribution from the Town was \$160,005.32, and a permanent conservation easement is now in place restricting the use of the farm for agriculture only. Protected farms help the Town and State retain its rural character and scenic vistas, protect natural resources, promote local food security, and sustain employment in the agricultural sector.

To learn more about farmland preservation, please contact the Ellington Town Planner, Lisa Houlihan.