

Governor Ames Estate, Easton – Community Preservation Act Project Proposal Application Form

A. Project Description/Eligibility for CPA Funding:

1. Street Address; Assessor's Map & Lot Numbers; Current Ownership:

- a. 35 Oliver Street – 12U-16 – Robert R. Woodburn Jr. Trust
- b. 23 Sullivan Avenue – 16U-131 – Elizabeth M. Ames
- c. 27 Sullivan Avenue – 16U-130 – Elizabeth M. Ames
- d. 105 Elm Street – 12U-17 – Elizabeth M. Ames
- e. 59 Pond Street – 17U-2 – Elizabeth M. Ames

Four parcels are owned by Mrs. Elizabeth Ames, now living at Fox Hill in Westwood; the fifth parcel is owned by a trust benefiting David Ames, Jr. and his siblings. All 5 parcels are zoned for single-family residential use, and have no current use or deed restrictions.

This project anticipates the southern third of the 105 Elm Street parcel fronting on Pond Street being retained by the Ames family. The northern two thirds of that parcel, and all of the other four parcels, would be acquired by The Trustees of Reservations to be managed as a reservation, open to the public, thus safeguarding the historic landscape and the historic 19th Century stone stable. The Town of Easton would hold a perpetual Conservation Restriction on the TTOR-owned land.

2. This project serves two “community preservation” purposes:

- a. Public Open Space Protection – this 48-acre historic landscape will be open to the public as a community park;
- b. Historic Resources Protection – this project will protect a landscape of significant historic interest and the 19th Century stone stable building, which will be used for functions, events, and meetings and as a visitor's and interpretation center; it will be made available at reasonable cost to local groups and to the Town of Easton. This property will be a base for ongoing partnership with the Easton Historical Society and other groups to increase public understanding of the unique industrial and architectural history of Easton, with a particular focus on the origins and development of the Shovel Shops and the evolution of Easton as a model industrial community.

B. Project Eligibility Considerations:

1. This project fulfills several goals of Easton's April 2008 Open Space & Recreation Plan:

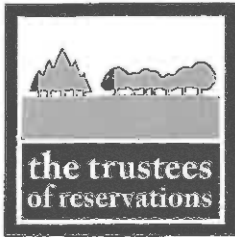
- a. Goal 1, Objective D – Acquire for permanent protection significant areas of natural, historical, and visual interest.
- b. Goal 1, Objective F – Use acquisition, conservation restrictions, receipt of gifts, easements, and other measures to continue to develop a greenbelt system along brooks, streams, and wetlands, which connects current and future open space and recreation areas.

2. Leveraging CPA Funds:

- a. CPA funds are a key component of a financing structure that includes an application for a matching state LAND grant and significant private fundraising.
- b. Total Project Cost: \$4,000,000 (acquisition, preparation & start up of the reservation, and endowment for maintenance & operations)
- c. Sources of Funding (preliminary, subject to appraisal and fundraising):
 - Easton CPA: \$ 500,000
 - State grant (LAND or other program) \$ 500,000
 - Bargain Sale: \$ 500,000
 - Private Fundraising: \$2,500,000

We anticipate funds would be received and project would close in October 2011

3. CPA Funds: \$500,000, available to be spent in October 2011
4. Relevant Town Committee Recommendations: In process – we will begin conversations with the Conservation Commission and the Historical Commission (as well as the Community Preservation Committee) in February 2011.
5. Public Access: Yes
6. Zoning & Potential Uses: These parcels are zoned single-family residential; 2007 appraisal found conventional 18-lot subdivision to be “highest & best use”.
7. Special Issues or Timing Issues: The Ames family is in the later stages of planning for the estate of Mrs. Elizabeth Ames, which will include disposition of the 35 Oliver Street property.
8. These parcels are not “already owned” by a conservation, historic preservation, or affordable housing group.
9. This is not a community housing project.



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January 13, 2011

Mr. James Lee, Chair
Community Preservation Committee
c/o Planning & Community Development Office
Town of Easton
136 Elm Street
Easton, MA 02356

Re: Governor Ames Estate, 35 Oliver Street – CPA Funds Application

Dear Mr. Lee,

The Trustees of Reservations enclose an application for \$500,000 from Easton's Community Preservation Act funds to help permanently protect the highly scenic and historic Governor Ames estate on Oliver and Elm Streets in Easton for public use and enjoyment.

David Ames, Jr., son of Elizabeth Ames who resides at Fox Hill in Westwood has been working with our organization on behalf of his mother and siblings to protect approximately 48 acres of this historic landscape, immediately east of Oliver Street, south of Elm Street, and north and west of Shovelshop Pond. (Note that this property is entirely separate from the neighboring "Langwater" estate to the east, owned by another branch of the Ames family).

Our vision for the Governor Ames estate is to establish and care for a high-quality, attractive, community-centered park engaging families and youth from Easton and other nearby communities, similar in patterns of use to our Bird Park property in Walpole. Closely associated with the extraordinary collection of architectural and historic landmarks in this part of Easton, the Governor Ames property would highlight the arboretum-like character of the estate grounds and their close connection to the history of the model industrial village established by the Ames family and so important to the development of Easton and the history of Massachusetts and the nation.

We intend to renovate the handsome 19th Century stone stable for use in meetings, events, and functions, and as a visitor center, with interpretation of the history and significance of the property. As has been our practice in other communities, we would engage in a participatory planning process with the local community to agree on a shared vision for this important property and to ensure strong connections with other local institutions, such as the Historical Society, the Children's Museum, Stonehill College, and the Town of Easton.

We estimate a total cost of approximately \$4 million for this project – approximately \$2 million for the bargain-sale purchase of most of the estate, and an additional \$2 million to fund the public access improvements and our ongoing stewardship obligations. We plan to request \$500,000 from the Town's Community Preservation Committee and \$500,000 from the State, with the remaining \$3 million to be obtained through our private fundraising.

We have contracted for an appraisal (expected by early February) and we would like to meet with the Historical Commission, the Conservation Commission, and of course with the Community Preservation Committee in the next few weeks. I'll plan to contact your office in the next few weeks to schedule that meeting.

I've enclosed a completed Community Preservation Act project proposal.

Thank you and your group for considering our request, and please feel free to contact either myself or our project lead, Community Conservation Specialist Wayne Beitler, with any questions. Wayne's direct phone number is 781.784.0567 x 7015, and his e-mail is wbeitler@ttor.org.

Sincerely,



Wesley T. Ward

Vice President for Land and Community Conservation

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Preliminary Vision

Governor Ames Estate, Easton

January 13, 2011

Summary

The Trustees of Reservations have been in discussions with the Ames family for more than a year about the possible acquisition of the Governor Ames Estate—roughly 48 acres in Easton (shown on the map below on page 7).

The Governor Ames Estate is highly attractive with several interesting and significant architectural and landscape features, including a brook, fields, woodlands and a designed landscape with sweeping lawns and meadows, two ponds, large specimen landscape trees, and gardens. The property has direct ties to the rich history of the industrial village established by the Ames family. The property includes an elegant 19th Century stone stable/barn built at the same time as the former Governor Oliver Ames' mansion (razed in the early 1950s). The estate is well situated in a tightly developed village setting and is easily accessible by foot to many residents. It is also adjacent to the recently approved Shovel Shops development (119 affordable housing units), the Easton Historical Society (located in the Old Colony Railroad Station designed by H. H. Richardson), the Easton Children's Museum, and several other landmarks for which North Easton is well known.

TTOR staff believe that with proper planning, the property has the potential to be an important, popular park for the people of Easton and nearby communities, playing a similar role in Easton to the role Bird Park plays in Walpole. Moreover, we believe that the association of the property with the model industrial village established by the Ames family will interest visitors from a much broader radius. The overall project is expected to cost a minimum of \$4 million – \$2 million for the acquisition of the estate (thought to be a bargain sale – the appraisal is due in early February), \$1.4 million for endowment to fund maintenance and staff costs, and \$600,000 for various start-up and renovation costs.

[Note that we use the term “Governor Ames Estate” as shorthand to denote the assemblage of parcels owned by the David, Sr. and Elizabeth Ames family, with David Ames, Jr., as the designated representative. The parcels themselves are owned variously by a family trust and by Elizabeth Ames. The Governor Ames Estate is adjacent to, but not part of, the abutting Langwater Estate to the east.]

Preliminary Vision for the Governor Ames Estate Property

Our conservation and stewardship vision for the Governor Ames Estate is to establish a high quality, popular community-centered park closely associated with the extraordinary collection of architectural and historic landmarks in the northern part of Easton. We see the primary use as passive recreation and enjoyment by neighbors and the Easton community of the arboretum-like character of the property. Occasional public and private events, including weddings and other private functions, will bring activity and revenue to the property and enable The Trustees to carry out a variety of creative programs including the promotion of the surrounding model industrial village in partnership with local groups. A property map will be prepared and offered to visitors, including interpretive information, and an interpretive program will be developed in collaboration with the Easton Historical Society.

Within a year following acquisition, a cultural landscape and historic resources report will document the Stable, Studio, and landscape features including specimen trees, gardens, pools, lawns, and meadows, and will make recommendations for their preservation, restoration, renovation, and adaptive reuse as appropriate. Any historic structures or landscape features that cannot be preserved or renovated will be permanently documented. Consistent with The Trustees sustainability ethic, any surplus structures would be deconstructed and recycled to the extent practical.

In addition, a natural history report will summarize the geology and hydrology of the property and its flora and fauna as a basis for protecting and enhancing natural habitats on the property.

We are committed to renovation of the Stable as a visitor and interpretive center and a place for events and functions. A property management plan incorporating the recommendations of the cultural landscape and historic resources report and the natural history report would be prepared within the first two or three years of ownership and implemented as budgets and philanthropic support allow. During this period, potential uses of the main house will be evaluated as well as the costs of maintaining it. At this stage, our budgets for the property do not provide sufficient endowment to maintain the house unless it can become financially self-sustaining. We invite suggestions for appropriate, self-sustaining uses of the house.

We also see the property as a valuable base for The Trustees' outreach to the diverse Brockton community and to the Old Colony YMCA, the Brockton Boys and Girls Club, and other organizations in Easton, Brockton, and nearby communities.

Year Zero—remainder of FY11

Acquisition

- Continue to negotiate purchase
- Secure \$3 million in private funding through TTOR's Land Legacy Fund

- Secure \$500,000 from Easton CPC
- Secure \$500,000 from state grants

Year One—FY12

Acquisition

- Due diligence and closing

Start-up

- Hire community planning consultant
- Launch 6-month planning process
- Hire landscape architect to work with planner and design visitor circulation and new park features
- Deconstruct house (unless an affordable alternative emerges), tennis court, and pool
- Improvements to stable and duplex house
- Hire park manager
- Initiate park improvements, e.g.
 - Parking, walkways & benches
 - Features for children
 - Safety measures
 - Solar array
 - Interpretive elements, possibly including
 - Diorama of adjoining estates and shovel shop factory
 - Physical outline of governor's mansion (as at Coolidge Reservation)

Year Two—FY13

Start-up

- Complete park improvements, e.g.
 - Parking, walkways & benches
 - Features for children
 - Safety measures
 - Solar array
 - Interpretive elements, possibly including
 - Diorama of adjoining estates and shovel shop factory
 - Physical outline of governor's mansion (as at Coolidge Reservation)
- Property Grand Opening

Operations

- Hire seasonal worker and cultural resource apprentice
- Develop signature events for Fall and Winter

- In partnership with Easton Historical Society, develop programming around Ames family, industrial village, and cultural landscape
- Explore partnerships with Old Colony YMCA

Year Three—FY14

Operations

- Develop two additional signature events (total of four)
- Explore partnership with Children's Museum
- Explore other programmatic links to Brockton

Financials

This proposal requires fully \$4 million; \$2 million for the (likely bargain sale) acquisition of the major part of the Governor Ames Estate, \$1.4 million to endow the estate's ongoing operations, and \$600,000 in start up costs. We shall seek \$500,000 from Easton's CPC towards the creation of a community park on the estate. We will also seek \$500,000 in funding from the State LAND grant program and other programs. We propose to grant the Town and State a permanent conservation restriction on the property in exchange for their investment. The remaining \$3 million will need to be raised by The Trustees, largely from major donors, for this project to be viable.

Advancement

Working with advancement staff, we have determined that local fundraising will not play a major role in this project at this time. We are seeking to obtain private funding for this project through a small number of foundations and individual donors who are close to The Trustees. However, in the future, we will seek local philanthropy to help support the expansion of our property-based programs.

Estimated Visitation for FY 2014

Unstructured Park Visits — 15,000 visits

We expect relatively high volumes of visitation for casual walkers of all ages. We will seek to design a park that is friendly to people of all abilities and ages. While it may take a decade or longer for long-term visitation patterns to emerge, we expect that the community planning process will provide a good jump-start to reaching or exceeding our visitation estimates.

Structured Park Visits — 8,500 visits

The creation of a full-time park manager position for this property will enable us to provide for the property and to focus significant time on both volunteer recruitment and programming. Programming likely will be a combination of facilitating the use of the property by partners (like the YMCA and Children's Museum) and content-driven

programs relating to Ames/Easton history, landscape and architecture, and the sustainable care of the property.

Cultural Resource Programming	1,000 visits
Other Programming	1,000 visits
Partnership (Y & Children's Museum) group visits	5,000 visits
Signature Events: 250 each x 4	1,000 visits
Volunteers	500 visits
Total Estimated Annual Visitation	23,500 visits

Engagement Potential

Demographics of Easton and Surrounding Communities

Town	Population	Members in 2008	Hispanic/Latino	Non- white	Average Household Income
Easton	22,299	40	2%	8%	\$ 69,000
Brockton	94,000	43	10%	50%	\$ 40,000
Raynham	12,000	8	1%	3%	\$ 60,000
Foxborough	16,000	41	1%	3%	\$ 64,000
Taunton	56,000	20	4%	8%	\$ 55,000
Bridgewater	25,000	28	3%	13%	\$ 65,000
Avon	4,000	6	1%	7%	\$ 50,000
Sharon	17,000	151	1%	10%	\$ 89,000
Norton	18,000	18	1%	8%	\$ 64,000
Mansfield	22,000	27	1%	6%	\$ 67,000
Stoughton	27,000	36	2%	12%	\$ 58,000
West Bridgewater	7,000	7	1%	4%	\$ 56,000
Totals	320,299	425			\$ 61,417

Cultural — The Governor Ames Estate is one piece of the highly significant and multi-faceted story of the Ames family and the model industrial village that supported and was supported by the Shovel Shops. The estate will provide us an opportunity to interpret both the history of the family and a landscape located in the middle of the Easton National Historic Landmark District, established in 1987. The district includes five H. H. Richardson structures (two abutting the Ames Estate) and the adjacent, F. L. Olmsted-designed Langwater Estate.

Our interpretive program can be bolstered through partnerships with the Easton Historical Society (in the adjacent Old Colony Railroad Station).

Easton Historical Society – we have met with the Curator and a longtime Board member of the Easton Historical Society, owners of the landmark Old Colony Railroad Station designed by H. H. Richardson and given by the Ames family. They are very

interested in seeing the Governor Ames property protected; it is one of the remaining “gaps” in the protection of the Richardson/Olmsted legacy in Easton. They would welcome the opportunity to include the property in their frequent architectural and historic tours. In addition, there clearly are opportunities to cross-market and promote the concentrated landmarks of the model industrial village.

Greening – Our budget would support sustainable stewardship practices at the Governor Ames Estate. We plan to install a solar array to provide adequate power to provide for our onsite electrical needs. Structures that are not needed will be deconstructed rather than demolished. Structures that are kept will be improved to be more energy efficient. We are proposing the purchase of a low-emission propane mower and an electric utility vehicle. As with our existing historic properties, we will strive to balance maintenance of lawn areas appropriate to an estate with allowing some of the field areas to revert to managed meadows in order to reduce overall mowing and to enhance habitats.

Prepared By:

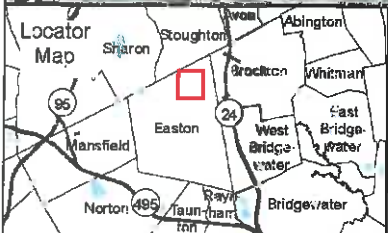
Wesley T. Ward, Vice President for Land and Community Conservation
Wayne Beitler, Community Conservation Specialist
Stephen Sloan, Greater Boston Regional Director

For further information, contact:

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Governor Ames Estate in Red



Ames Property - Easton, MA

 Governor Ames Estate	 Mass. DEP Wetland
 The Island	 Stream
 Conservation Land	

