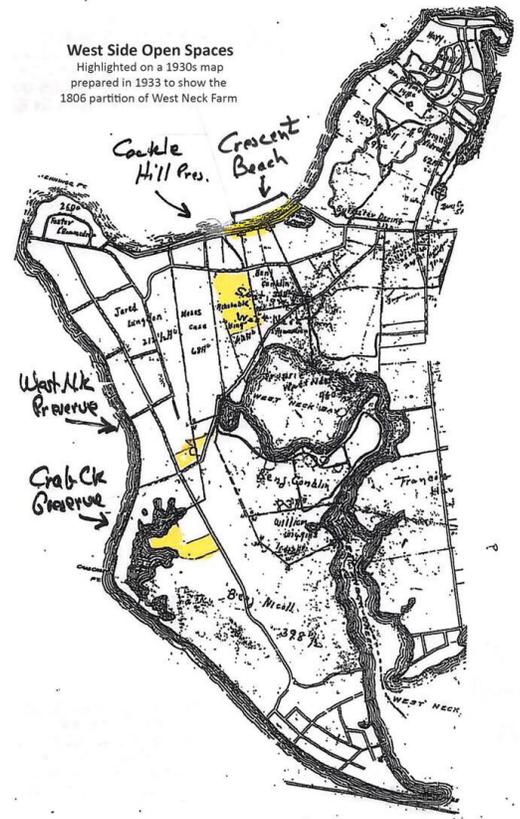


# WEST NECK PRESERVE



## Property Description

The Town acquired the 7.7-acre property with CPF funds in 2020 to maintain the property as passive parkland for freshwater recharge to the fragile West Neck Watershed. It consists principally of an open field with some tall deciduous trees and a small evergreen "farm" in the center. The property is bounded on the east and south by West Neck Road, on the west by Nostrand Parkway and on the north by woodlands. The property was in the Sturgis-O'Connor family for four generations before they sold it to the Town.

## Access

Visitors may walk onto the property from West Neck Road or Nostrand Parkway. Visitors with vehicles are encouraged to use the West Neck Road entrance and park in the designated area.

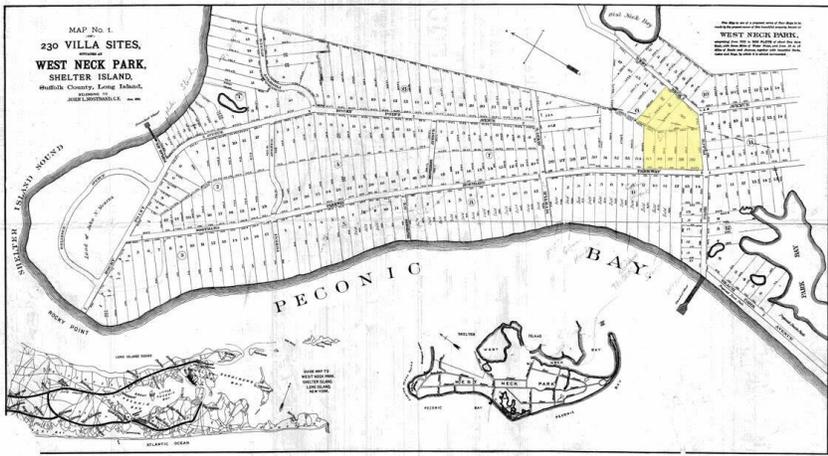
## Prior Owners/History

The property was part of West Neck Farm, an agricultural partnership established in the mid-1730s that owned the west side of the Island from the Heights to Shell Beach. West Neck Farm had about 23 partners, a number from Southold, in 1739. Upon its partition in 1806, it had eleven partners, mostly Island people; interests had been transferred by sale and inheritance. It was managed as a stock farm; wood was sold, flax and wheat raised and pasture hired out for livestock both winter and summer. Upon the 1806 partition of the Farm, the 398.5-acre parcel allocated to Samuel B. Nicoll (owner of Sachem's Neck (Mashomack)) contained the property, and that parcel passed to his son Richard F. Nicoll, then to Richard's daughter Charity Antoinette Nicoll Gavitt by 1863 and then to others (see Two Maps section).



John L. Nostrand acquired that parcel in 1885 and established in 1888 his 230-villa West Neck Park subdivision running from Rocky Point Avenue to Crab Creek. The property consists of eight lots in that subdivision (Lots 35-42; 4 Nostrand Parkway), on the northwest corner of Park Place (now West Neck Road) and Nostrand Parkway. In 1894 Joseph A. Hall acquired Lot 39. Mr. Nostrand died in 1900 and the other seven lots passed with other property to his son Peter E. Nostrand.

In 1910 Stephen P. Sturges acquired Lot 39 from Joseph Hall and Lots 35-38 and 40-42 from Peter Nostrand. The eight lots continued in four generations of the Sturgis-O'Connor family until the 2020 when they sold them to the Town.



Stephen Sturges also acquired Lots 10 and 11 (5 Nostrand Parkway) across the road and on the bay in 1903. He expanded the existing mansion. It was called “Cherry Tree Farm.” Early on, they established a lane along the northwest side of the property with an allée of trees leading directly from West Neck Road (near the turn-off to Worthy Road) to their mansion on the bay. One can just reflect on the image presented as they drove through the passageway of trees to the entrance of the mansion.



A cottage was built on the property to serve staff and a caretaker; and the property was used to support other needs of the family, probably vegetables, flowers and poultry. A 1929 aerial photograph shows open fields on the property and nearby. These areas were probably actively farmed in potatoes, lima beans, etc., up to the hurricanes of 1954 and 1955 that decimated the lima bean fields and effectively ended wide scale farming on the Island. Since then, the area was mostly unused. The caretaker lived in the cottage until 2016 despite only a wood-burning stove for heat. It was he who planted what was to be an evergreen farm.



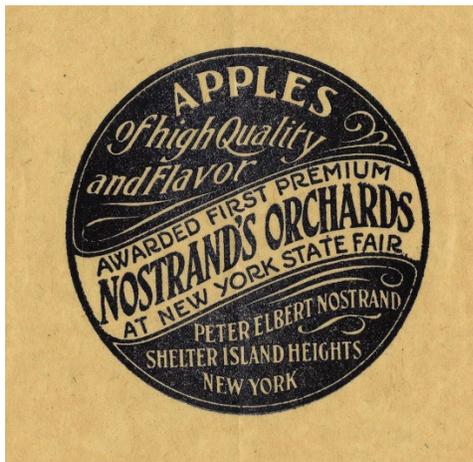
## Stories

Cherry Tree Farm was the summer base for four generations of the Sturges-O'Connor family from 1903 to 2020. During that period, they were active in Island affairs, including particularly sailing both as young people and adults.

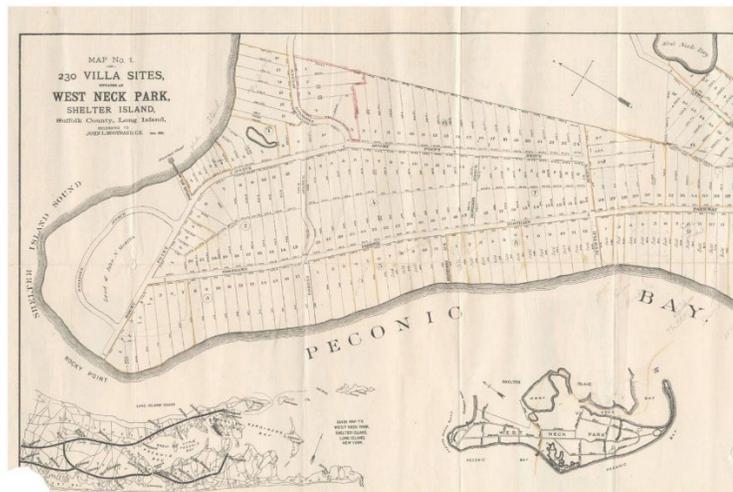
Sandra O'Connor and Ed Hydeman were the last family members to live on the Farm.



On the 1888 Nostrand subdivision map, West Neck Road ended at the turnoff into Westmoreland at Worthy Road, and a road labeled “Park Place” continued across Nostrand Parkway to the bay. The 1909 and 1915 Belcher-Hyde maps and later continued this use. In 1974 interest developed in changing the name to “Bootlegger’s Alley” in celebration of the historical use of the area during prohibition. In 1975, after petitions and a hearing, the Town Board changed the name of “Park Place,” the road from Nostrand Parkway to the bay, to “Bootlegger’s Alley.” However, that left the portion of Park Place between Nostrand Parkway and Worthy Road awkwardly unchanged. At some point the highway people simply changed the street sign at the intersection with Nostrand Parkway from “Park Place” to “West Neck Road,” the map makers followed - and “Park Place” was no more.



Nostrand Orchard logo (SIHS 1973\_87)

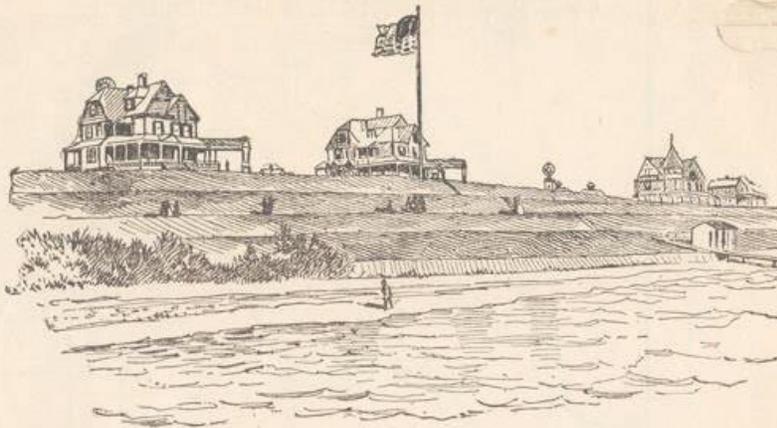


West Neck Park brochure (SIHS 2015\_8)—see below

**YACHTING, FISHING, BATHING,**  
ON THE PECONIC BAY, AT  
**WEST NECK PARK,**  
**SHELTER ISLAND.**

THREE OF THE COTTAGES AT WEST NECK PARK.

A FAMOUS RESORT FOR OVER 250 YEARS.



**The Paradise of Summer Re-  
sorts! - Magnificent  
and Attractive.**

---

One of the Coolest, Healthiest, Most Picturesque and  
Delightful Summer Resorts in the  
United States.

**IT HAS NO EQUAL!**

**WEST NECK PARK** embraces all the southwestern portion of Shelter Island which lies near the extreme eastern end of Long Island.

It is a high plateau or neck of land formerly known as West Neck, about four miles long, lying between Peconic and West Neck Bays.

It is almost surrounded by water, having a water frontage of seven miles, with about twelve miles of broad avenues and drives.

It is a **NATURAL PARK**, owing to the charming diversity of scenery produced by long stretches of magnificent trees, rolling grass lands, fresh water lakes, beaches, bays and indentations in the coast line.

**THE ADVANTAGES** of West Neck Park can be partially summed up as follows:

**HEALTH.**—Situating beyond the contaminations of air and water due to great cities, upon the shores of clear salt water over a sand and pebbly bottom, near no large meadows, free from malaria, the air being pure, dry and balmy, this place offers a safe retreat for all who wish to retain or regain their health.

**COOLNESS.**—Fronting as this property does upon the Peconic Bay upon the southwest, it has the full benefit of the ocean breeze, which first crossing the southern portion of Long Island over the Shinnecock Hills, then following the Great and Little Peconic Bays for 15 miles or more, is again cooled, so that when it reaches West Neck Park, which is the first land it passes over, it is dry and clear, like mountain air. A great advantage over places nearer the ocean where fogs are so prevalent.

**THE PREVAILING WIND** is this southwesterly breeze, which makes this property the coolest location that can be found on Shelter Island or its vicinity.

**SCENERY.**—The undulating nature of the land, the prevalence of groves of wood, the unexpected views of water always presenting themselves on the drives, and the points of land jutting into the water from the opposite shores, all heavily wooded, with the contrasts of color between the water, the beaches, the woods and the sky, make the scenery ever changing, new and delightful.

**DRIVES.**—Over seven miles of avenues and roads have been made and graded at West Neck Park. These cannot be surpassed for beauty and variety of scenery, along high bluffs, through shady groves, beautiful parks and along sandy and pebbly beaches, from which one has an extended view of the surrounding waters for miles.

These drives and others to be made, added to the already existing roads on Shelter Island, give all the variety that can be desired.

**SHELL BEACH.**—A narrow strip of land or beach extending from West Neck Park three-quarters of a mile into the Bay is noted throughout this neighborhood for its beautiful views and the handsome shells which here abound.

**THE LAND** is undulating, the soil rich and well timbered and the drainage perfect.

**THE DRINKING WATER** is pure, abundant, cold and clear as crystal.

**BATHING** is one of the great attractions, and can be indulged in for a month later than at the ocean shore. The beach is sand and pebbles and the water clean and clear; so clear that the bottom can be distinctly seen while bathing.

**YACHTING.**—The bays surrounding Shelter Island offer for the yachtsman safe land-locked waters and harbors which are his delight, are seldom found and cannot be surpassed.

**FISHING** is unsurpassed; all species of salt water fish are plentiful. Ladies and children fond of fishing can enjoy the sport with safety anywhere along the shore from 200 to 500 feet from the beach, or can fish from the wharves. Shell fish of all kinds are found here in abundance.

**RESTRICTIONS.**—For mutual benefit the villa sites at West Neck Park are sold under the following restrictions, viz: Not more than two houses to be built on any one plot, nor more than one stable, and that a private one. Houses to be located not less than 25 feet from the line of the street. Stables to be built not nearer than 100 feet of the street or within 50 feet of any house; also restricted against nuisances, manufacturing and public trading. Special locations are set aside for stores, etc., near the wharves on Poplar Avenue and Park Place.

**COTTAGES.**—There are now built and in course of construction more than a dozen cottages at West Neck Park, and more are contemplated on the plots already sold.

**HOTEL SITE.**—Twenty acres have been reserved for a hotel site, upon which it is contemplated to build a large, commodious hotel. This plot has an elevation of 75 feet above high water, and a hotel thereon could be seen from 15 to 20 miles in any direction. Every room in the hotel will have a water view.

**PLOTS.**—West Neck Park is most desirably laid out in 800 villa plots of about one acre, equivalent to 20 city lots each, nearly one-half of which have a water frontage.

The rear plots are generally at a higher elevation, overlooking the front plots, and all have an extended view of the surrounding bays, the ocean and Long Island Sound.

The rear plots have water privileges at the foot of the streets, at the proposed Beach Park, and on such plots directly on the water as may be reserved for their use and benefit.

The plots are 100 feet wide and from 250 to 750 feet in depth.

**TITLES** are guaranteed by the Title Guarantees and Trust Company of New York.

**NOW** is the time to get the best plots at the lowest prices. **PRICES** vary, according to the size of the plots and locations, from \$300.00 to \$3,000.00.

**A VIEW** of West Neck Park and a drive over it will convince any one that for the beauty and diversity of its scenery, its varied opportunities for enjoyment, its cool, healthy and salubrious climate, it has every requisite for a perfectly appointed summer resort and watering place, and cannot be surpassed, if equaled, by any in this country.

**COMMUNICATION.**—West Neck Park is 2 hours distant from New York City via Long Island Railroad to Greenport, from which there is a steam ferry to Shelter Island.

There are now 2 steamboat wharves at West Neck Park, at which the regular daily steamers from New York, New London, Hartford and New Haven make landings when required.

On this same land lie 25 acres, 50 acres and 120 acres which has been set apart for gentlemen's country seats, and for such it cannot be equaled.

THEY ARE FOR SALE AT A REASONABLE PRICE.

FOR MAPS, PRICES AND OTHER PARTICULARS INQUIRE OF OR ADDRESS

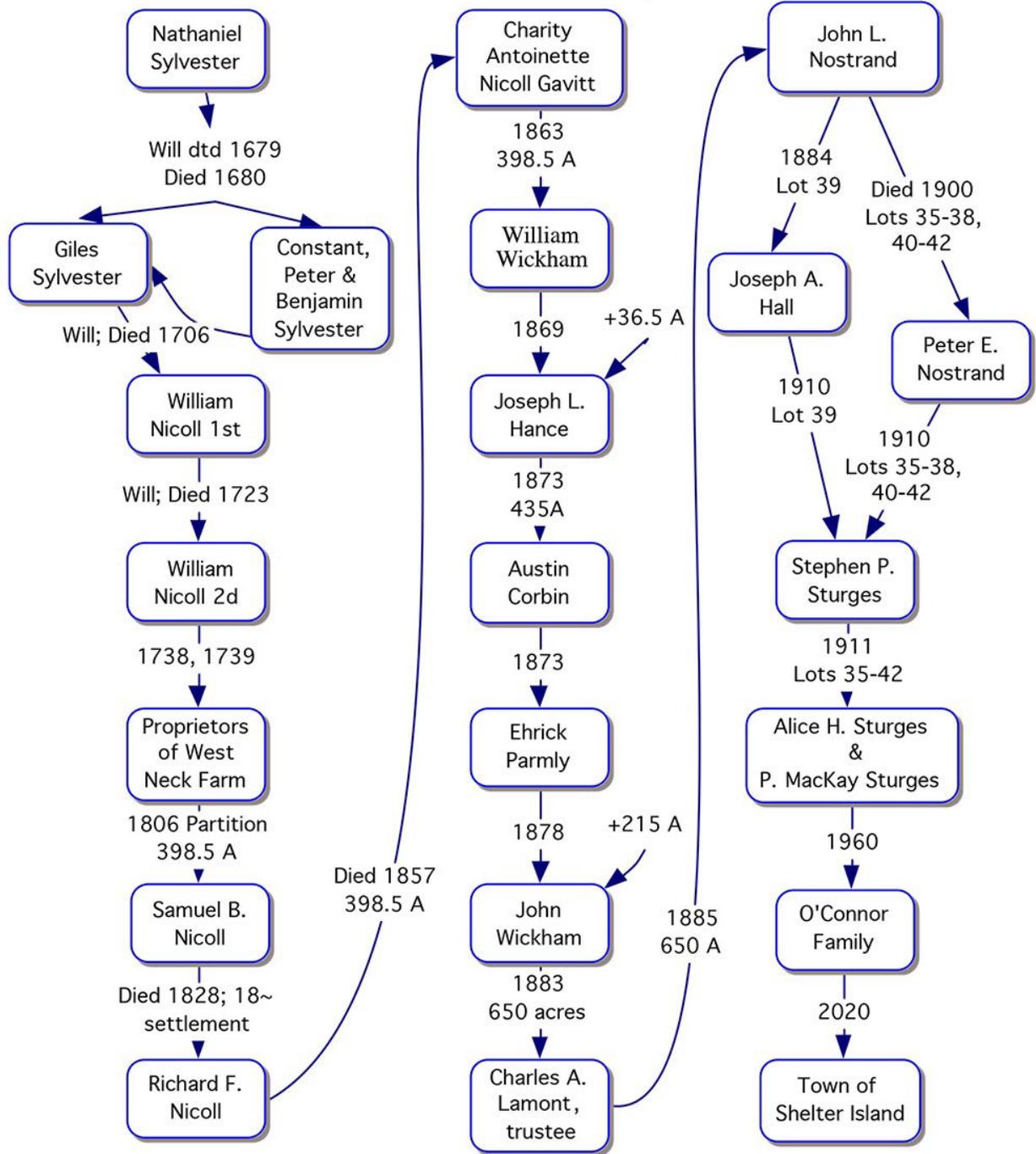
**JOHN L. NOSTRAND, Owner, or ROBERT C. BRECKENRIDGE, Agent,**

WEST NECK PARK,

No. 115 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

SHELTER ISLAND, N. Y.

**West Neck Preserve**  
 4 Nostrand Parkway  
 Chain of Ownership



"A" = acres  
 "~" = uncertain

Sources: William Meringer  
 (SIHS House File 8/26/1980);  
 J. E. Shillingburg research.