



Pilot Knob Ridge Preserve

Potential Lot Development Fact Sheet

Updated March 25, 2010

Organizational Overview:

Founded in 1988, the Lake George Land Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust dedicated to working with willing landowners to protect the world-renowned water quality of Lake George and to permanently preserve the natural, scenic and recreational resources of the Lake George region.

Since its inception, LGLC's land protection program has protected more than 12,530 acres of Lake George wilderness and 48,500 feet of shoreline. LGLC's efforts provide the only **permanent** protection of lands and waters in the Lake George basin. The protection of the lake's shoreline, contiguous forests, rocky summits and slopes, and wetlands is essential to maintain the purity of Lake George's water. Not only does LGLC work to protect the land through fee acquisition and conservation easement, but it also creates and maintains trails for public use, creates educational brochures and trail guides for each preserve, provides guided hikes for the public and maintains a series of nature preserves that restore ecological processes while welcoming the public for healthful recreation.

LGLC currently maintains six preserves and properties that are open to the public with more than 16 miles of trails for hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and, at the Berry Pond Preserve only, snowmobiling. Of these preserves, the Pilot Knob Ridge Preserve is arguably its most popular; since its opening in 2000, the land has hosted more than 12,000 hikers, birders, wildflower enthusiasts and all-around nature lovers, with nearly 3,000 guests in 2009 alone. LGLC is proud to provide the preserve as a free resource to the public year-round, dawn to dusk. Its nearly three miles of trails are not only heavily used by the Lake George area's millions of annual visitors and seasonal residents, but also by year-round residents who take advantage of the moderately easy climb to enjoy peaceful fall and winter views of the southern Lake George basin.

Property Overview:

Originally, the land that is now the Pilot Knob Ridge Preserve on the east shore of Lake George in Fort Ann was illegally cleared and a house constructed. The five-acre clearing became a focal point throughout the south basin and around the lake because it disrupted the unbroken wilderness of the Pilot Knob range. Further development would have greatly changed the quality and character of the entire basin. Clearly visible from nearly any point in the southern half of Lake George, the house and its outlying buildings scarred the once-pristine ridgeline and galvanized support for conservation.

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With the help of hundreds of generous donors, the Lake George Land Conservancy (LGLC) was able to purchase the 223-acre property in 2000 for approximately \$600,000, including additional fees such as closing costs. Upon taking ownership of the property, LGLC razed all structures on the ridge, other than the gazebo, permitting the viewscape to return to a more natural state. LGLC also retained the garage that had been built at the bottom of the hill on the lot's legal frontage on the private road, Lakewood Avenue. Trails and a parking area on Pilot Knob Road were created for easy public access. In 2009 we renovated the gazebo with a new roof, refurbished the decking and stained the frame, and added a bench on which hikers can rest and take in the spectacular view.

Current Project Overview:

The initial fundraising goals for the purchase of the property fell short, and LGLC has never been able to recover approximately \$250,000 that was spent from our revolving land acquisition fund. In an effort to help regain this loss, and to continue our mission of preserving the lands and water of Lake George, we have subdivided a small, single house lot from the Pilot Knob Ridge Preserve. Since LGLC purchased Pilot Knob with the extant house lot, we are not creating a new lot but instead are moving the house location from where it was, on top of the ridge, to the bottom of the hill at the location of the old garage. We anticipate that the 0.81-acre house lot will go on the market upon receiving our final permits, possibly this summer. The house lot will include a dock right and will remain part of the Lakewood Homeowner's Association.