



GOING, GOING, GONE...

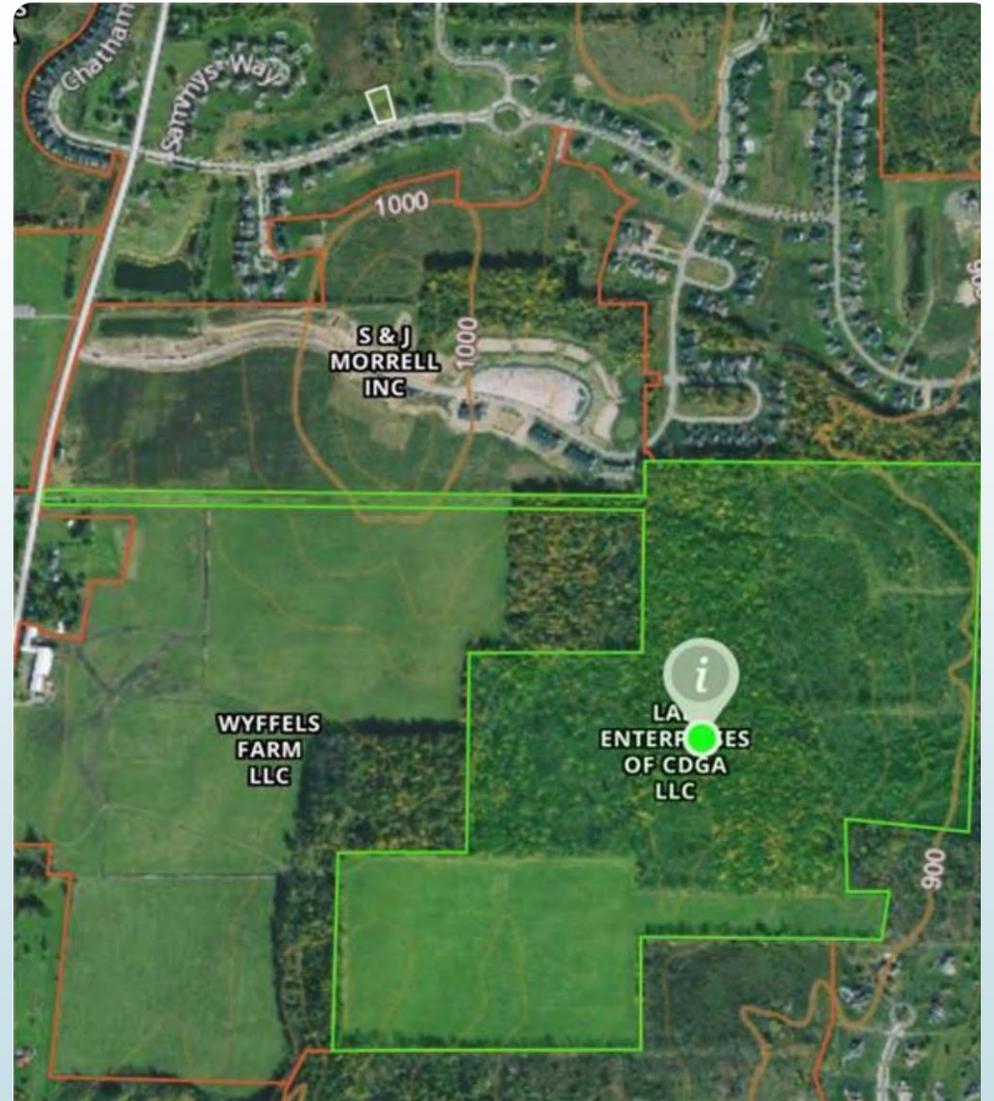
The Need to Preserve Open  
Space In Canandaigua

# PROPOSAL

- ▶ Request the Town of Canandaigua acquire the property at 4025 Middle Cheshire Road, currently for sale, as a recreational park for Town residents.



# PARCEL MAP





# PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

- ▶ Tax Parcel # 126.00-1-5.110
- ▶ Owned by LAD Enterprises of Canandaigua
- ▶ Property proposed for Everwilde Spa in 2013
- ▶ Currently listed for sale by Stacie Whitbeck of Keller Williams for \$1.4 million
- ▶ Town assessment of \$750,000



# DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

- ▶ 143.887 Acres
- ▶ 99.8% in an Agricultural District
- ▶ Comprised of 46.1% Successional Northern Hardwoods, 28.8% Successional Old Field, 22.9% Pasture Land, 1.8% Cropland, <1% Mowed Lawn
- ▶ 4.4% Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- ▶ Ridgeline traverses property from north to south, affording lake views
- ▶ Property adjoins the Wyffels Farm PDR, Lakewood Meadows Subdivision, The Landings Subdivision, and Lakeside Estates Subdivision

Source: ONCOR Property Information and Analysis, National Wetlands Inventory

# THE NEED TO PROTECT THIS PROPERTY FROM DEVELOPMENT

## ► PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE

- This unique parcel is one of the few large, undeveloped properties in the Southern Corridor. The parcel's diverse habitat is exceptionally valuable for wildlife, carbon sequestration, and Canandaigua Lake water quality, emphasizing the need for urgent action to protect it before it is too late.
- Because this property adjoins the Wyffels farm, already protected in a PDR program, a total of 279 combined acres would be protected. Due to its extensive border with the Wyffels PDR, this parcel has been ranked in the highest priority for protection. \*
- Development pressure continues to threaten open space in the Southern Corridor and this parcel in particular, due to its proximity to a sewer and water district service area. For this reason, it was ranked in the highest category for development pressure, identifying it as a priority for conservation. \*
- Retaining large, contiguous areas of open space helps to maintain habitat critical to native wildlife. \*\*
- When residents were asked what land use should be encouraged in their neighborhood, the number one answer was Open Space. When asked where they would like to see open space, the top answers were West Lake/Middle Cheshire area and Southern rural woodlands. \*\*\*

Sources: \* Canandaigua Agricultural Enhancement Plan, 2016 (Maps 10 & 11)

\*\* Town of Canandaigua Natural Resource Inventory, 2020 Update

\*\*\* Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan Survey, 2019

Narrow portion of the property adjacent to Wyffels Farm



## ► CANANDAIGUA LAKE WATER PROTECTION

- Canandaigua Lake is the drinking water source for 70,000 people \*
- The parcel is wholly within the Canandaigua Lake Watershed
- Its hilltop location and steep slopes on the eastern border could result in sediment reaching the Lake if disturbed soil from a development site causes erosion. (Ex. The Landings mudslide, 1990s and The Villas at Cheshire Glen, 2009)
- Onsite federal wetlands provide a filter for storm water runoff, absorbing pollutants and improving water quality \*\*
- With more impervious surfaces (such as roads, driveways and rooftops) the potential for runoff to the Lake increases. \*\*\* This runoff can cause flooding and deliver excessive pollutants to the Lake. \*
- Overuse of lawn chemicals can result in excessive nutrient loading to the Lake and cause an overgrowth of algae, including the toxic blue-green algae, a problem in the Lake since 2015 \*\*\*\*
- Woodlands and natural vegetation on slopes help prevent erosion. \*\*\* Forests buffer the force of rain, allowing more absorption and less runoff. They also sequester atmospheric carbon. \*\*\*\*\*

Sources: \* Canandaigua Lake Watershed Management Plan – 2014 Update

\*\* Town of Canandaigua Natural Resource Inventory – 2020 Update

\*\*\* A Vision for the Canandaigua Lake Watershed, Betsy Landre, Finger Lakes Land Trust, 2009

\*\*\*\* NYSDEC Harmful Algae Blooms Information

\*\*\*\*\* The Role of Trees and Forests in Healthy Watersheds, 2015; Chesapeake Bay Executive Council, 2006

## Wooded Portions of the Property





## ► PROTECTION OF PROPERTY VALUES

- Proximity to open space and parks is seen as a community asset and desirable to homebuyers.
- Conserving the natural or historic character of a community helps increase housing values, business activity and local investments, especially in rural or tourist areas.
- In areas where green spaces are limited, a park or other open space can raise nearby property values dramatically.

Source: Open Space Preservation: Investing in Your Community's Economic Health by John Tibbetts, 1998



## ► PROTECTING THE RURAL CHARACTER OF CANANDAIGUA

- Town of Canandaigua Surveys continue to show that residents appreciate the rural character of the town. The 2019 Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan Survey asked why residents chose to live in the Town. The top 3 responses were: Natural Beauty, Canandaigua Lake, and Rural Character
- Rural character is an attraction for new residents. Even in rural areas, where most land is already open space, a protected tract can create measurable enhancement value. \*
- The beauty and bucolic nature of the area is a continuing theme on why people choose to live here, as reflected in Town of Canandaigua survey responses
- Many fiscal impact studies show that residential development is quite expensive for communities. Local governments often pay more for supplying new subdivisions with infrastructure and maintenance than is generated in new property taxes. \*
- The past 40 years have brought a huge increase in development in the Middle Cheshire Rd. area. In 1980, the area was mostly in agriculture with single family homes lining the road. The only subdivision was Laura Lane, a group of 39 lots with homes built from 1969-2006. (See following slide)

\* Source: Open Space Preservation: Investing in Your Community's Economic Health by John Tibbetts, 1998)

# 1980 USDA Map Showing a Much More Rural Middle Cheshire Road and Southern Corridor



Source: ONCOR Historic Imagery

## ► PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCENIC VIEWS

- This goal of the Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan Update (2020) outlines conservation and maintenance of land that provides critical open space and creates a network of linkages for wildlife habitat, stormwater management, scenic views and active recreational trails. (Page 100)
  - Wildlife habitat – The property consists of diverse ecosystems for wildlife. Woods, wetlands, open fields, and pasture land support a variety of animals including Deer, Coyote, Fox, and even Fishers. A variety of birds such as Great Horned Owls, Short-eared Owls (Endangered in NYS), Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, Eastern Bluebirds, Blue Winged and Hooded Warblers, American Woodcock, Northern Harriers (Threatened in NYS), American Kestrels, Red-tailed Hawks, Screech owls, Downy Woodpeckers, Cooper’s Hawks, Goldfinches, and Turkeys have been sited in and around the area by local birders. Many more species would be expected to inhabit the area, although not yet confirmed.
  - The federal wetlands located on the parcel are important in stormwater management and recharging groundwater. Wetlands serve important functions in a watershed. They provide temporary storage for storm water, reducing flooding hazards. They improve water by acting as filters. Called “nature’s nurseries,” wetlands are biologically diverse and highly productive, providing important habitat to many birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects and mammals. (A Vision for the Canandaigua Lake Watershed - by Betsy Landre, FLLT, 2009)
  - The 2020 Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan Update calls for the protection of scenic views which benefit the Town and surrounding area. With its hilltop location, portions of the property offer a panorama of scenic views. The map on page 26 shows it is also visible from one mile from one or more scenic viewpoints. Based on the map on page 27 of the Comprehensive Plan, a good portion of the property is visible from Canandaigua Lake. A hilltop development could degrade scenic views in the Town and from the Lake.

## Deer grazing in proximity of the property





# NEED FOR A MULTI-USE PARK

- Although there has long been an interest for recreational opportunities, the pandemic has created a demand for areas to hike, off-road bicycle, and cross country ski/snowshoe that will continue far into the future. This property could satisfy all those interests.
- When the 2019 Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan Survey asked what was missing in the Town, the top 3 responses were: Lake access, more hiking/biking trails, and more parkland.
- For as many as 20 years, there has been a hope of creating a Ridgeline Trail that could connect Onanda Park with the City of Canandaigua. \* This property could be a start in creating a recreational trail corridor in the Town. Trails on the property could connect with trails in the Lakewood Development and connect with the proposed trail on the southern perimeter of the RSM property.
- The Town's updated Comprehensive Plan (2020) states that the goal in regards to Parks and Recreation is to improve and expand the Town's active and passive recreational resources to meet the needs of the community. A recommended action to achieve this is to tie open space money to acquiring public access trails. (Page 105)

Sources: \* Town of Canandaigua Comprehensive Plan, 2002 and Town of Canandaigua Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program, 2003

## Snowshoeing near the Wyffels Farm





# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

## ► FINANCING

- Interested community volunteers are willing to conduct a fundraising campaign to solicit local residents to financially assist the Town with the purchase of the property
- An interest of an adjacent landowner to purchase a portion of the property which abuts their parcel could help to offset the cost

## ► DEVELOPMENT

- There are trails that already exist on the property
- Volunteers from the Lakewood community are willing to develop additional multi-use trails on the property

## Existing Trail on the Property





# CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ Parking lot should be established at Middle Cheshire Road entrance, creating a walk-in park, similar to Upland Onanda, Sandy Bottom Park in Honeoye, Stid Hill in South Bristol, Bare Hill, Harriet Hollister Spencer, and Cumming Nature Center
- ▶ Gravel access road from Middle Cheshire Road east to the main section of the property of a minimum width for emergency vehicles. Vehicular traffic from park users not allowed on access road due to proximity to homes along the north boundary with the property
- ▶ Daylight use only
- ▶ Non-motorized, multi-use trails for walking/hiking/running, off-road bicycling, and cross country skiing/snowshoeing
- ▶ Carry in/carry out