

WALTHAM



Waltham Land Trust, Inc.
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A non-profit organization dedicated to preserving our community's natural resources through open space advocacy, education, acquisition, and protection.

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**Protecting
Waltham's land
...forever.**

Preservation Alert: The Waltham Field Station May, 2018

The Waltham Land Trust (WLT) is extremely concerned about the future of the Waltham Field Station at 240 Beaver Street, currently known as the UMass Waltham Center, and seeks the public's support in protecting this legacy agricultural property in our city.

The Waltham Field Station is by far the largest of the three existing farms in the City, and is known to have the best soils available in the city, if not the entire Metrowest region. WLT is a tenant at this site, along with a dozen other non-profits, educational programs and community groups. Tenants were put on notice this winter that our tenures may be threatened, due to a lack of action on the promised state bond bill funding for the university to build a Sustainability Education Center on this site. The promulgation of a new Environmental Bond Bill, that excluded the sustainability funding, left the university scrambling for solutions for the costly and aging infrastructure on the site. A promised end-of-April decision about tenancy (60 days before leases expire) never materialized. The acquisition of Mt. Ida College in Newton raised additional questions and concerns about UMass's plans for the Field Station. WLT has learned from state house sources that closed-door discussions may be ongoing regarding turning over the site to the City of Waltham. Rumors have raced past real information about the future of the Field Station, and have impelled us to step forward to say,

Save the Waltham Field Station

One of the most important agricultural and historical properties in Waltham

The history of American farming innovation cannot be told without invoking the Waltham Field Station and its contribution to the technology of agriculture. This legacy is engaged every time a gardener buys a seed packet of Waltham Butternut Squash or Waltham Broccoli or any of the many corn hybrids developed at this agricultural research center in the 20th century. The Field Station has been a center for community-supported farming for over 96 years, and this role continues into the 21st century with improvements and reinvigorated care brought by the establishment of the GROW community gardens and the Waltham Fields Community Farm at the site on the 1990s.

Long before the researchers and community groups came to re-invent agriculture here, Waltham's greatest benefactor, Cornelia Warren, farmed these acres and intended to assure that this land should be kept in agriculture or as park land by the heirs to her fortune, the Massachusetts Agricultural College and the City of Waltham. In addition, this land is an integral part of the Western Greenway open space corridor and has been recognized as one of Waltham's most significant and endangered open space properties by the WLT.

This one unique place incorporates the history of American agriculture, the legacy of Waltham's foremost benefactor, an irreplaceable link in the Western Greenway, the best farm soils in our region, and a community of groups bringing food, agriculture, and education to the region's residents.

Please join the Waltham Land Trust in declaring that this land must stay agricultural and open to the people of the Commonwealth, as Cornelia Warren hoped, and promised by her actions, that it would.

Due to their municipal positions, board members George Darcy and Nadene Stein did not participate in the discussion of this position.