



• Connecting Our Past with Our Future •

For Immediate Release

Southport Conservancy and Sasquanaug Association merge to forge new entity dedicated to historic preservation, environmental stewardship and civic improvement

Southport, CT, July 2, 2025 Two of Southport's non-profit community groups have officially joined forces in a merger approved in a unanimous vote by the members of both associations. The carefully deliberated decision to bring together the two groups was fueled by the need to combine collective energies and resources to shore up their shared mandate to protect and preserve the community and avoid redundancy. Both the Sasquanaug and the Conservancy have collaborated for years as advocates for Southport residents, including lobbying for the Town's historic bluestone sidewalk restoration, acting as liaisons on proposed housing developments, and (most recently) as active intervenors in the ongoing UI Docket 516 battle.

This milestone merger poises the group to double down on their mission and mandate:

- Preserving the historic character and beauty of Southport Village and its environs
- Promoting civic improvement, public engagement, and historically consistent development
- Supporting community services such as zoning, safety, beautification, and coordination of government resources

7/2/25

The newly merged entity, **The Sasquanaug Conservancy for Southport**, is registered as a 501 (c) 3 charitable organization and a new Board of Trustees, Executive Committee and Advisory Council approved along with the union. The first public meeting of the SCS is scheduled for November 2025, with all members and community residents welcome to attend.

Pam Toner, co-president of the new Board of Trustees says “This merger unites the Southport residents into one impactful force protecting our heritage and way of life” with co-president Laura Becker Lawlor adding “we’re stronger and better than ever together--can’t wait to hit the 06890 ground running!”

The newly formed **Sasquanaug Conservancy for Southport** will be finalizing a new website and communications over the summer; in the interim, new and renewing members, prospective volunteers can join, donate and find information at www.sasquanaug.org, and @sasquanaug on Instagram and Facebook, as well as at www.southportconservancy.org and @southportconservancy on Instagram and Facebook. Inquiries can be directed to sasquanaug@gmail.com and southportconservancy@gmail.com.

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About the Sasquanaug Conservancy for Southport

In the early 1980’s, the Pequot School in the Village of Southport faced a serious threat of intrusive commercial development into condominiums. In order to raise funds to purchase the school property, which was built in 1914 on land that had been the home for Southport schools since 1855, citizens of Southport and Fairfield established **The Southport Conservancy** in 1982. Since its founding, the Conservancy has evolved into a substantial preservation force in the community.

The Sasquanaug Association for Southport Improvement was founded in 1887 by a group of prominent local women seeking to improve and beautify Southport. At the time, Southport was in a period of transition from a bustling shipping port to a more residential enclave. Inspired by similar grass roots groups in New England, the founders raised money through membership dues, bake sales and lawn parties to fund endeavors such as the installation and maintenance of bluestone sidewalks and kerosene street lamps through the Village.

The Sasquanaug Conservancy for Southport is the deeded steward for historic properties including The Southport School (formerly The Pequot School), The Sea Lodge, Robinson Cottage (33 Main Street), along with conservation properties and nature preserves such as The Southport Park, The Southport Village Park, The Wakeman-Lacey Preserve and irrigation of Perry Green. The Conservancy was instrumental in restoring both the historic Freight Station

(1990) and also Ye Yacht Yard's boathouse (2018). They recently completed a year-long Beautification of Five Corners in the Village as well as The Sea Lodge, and in 2025 revived the popular Southport Walking Tour (@Southport Walking Tour) guided by one time Southport resident Jason Robards as a 21st century tour on mobile devices. They have also published *Southport, The Architectural Legacy of a Connecticut Village*, by Jan Cigliano and Ralph G. Schwarz, and the quarterly *Southport Packet Volumes I and II*, all available for purchase at The Lattice House and The Fairfield Women's Exchange. Popular community events sponsored by the Sasquanaug Conservancy for Southport include The Onion Fest ,The Blessing of the Fleet, Parade, Holiday Cocoa+Cookies in the Village during Santa's Visit, and always their sweet signature--free ice cream!

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