

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Old Stables Corner & Proposed Frederica-Sea Island Road Roundabout 11 Market Street, St. Simons Island, GA 31522

### FAST FACTS:

- **2.3 Acres:** Size of Old Stables Corner property
- **2010:** Year purchased by SSLT
- **\$2.67 million:** Amount raised by community
- **450:** Number of donors to 2010 Campaign to Preserve Old Stables Corner
- **27% (0.6 acres):** Percentage of Old Stables Corner the County wants to acquire/lease
- **26:** Number of trees that would be removed (13 live oaks)
- **15:** Number of trees that would be impacted (6 live oaks)
- **41:** Total number of trees that would be affected (19 live oaks)

**Q: Is the Land Trust opposed to a roundabout?** The Land Trust is neither for nor against a roundabout as the best way to ameliorate the serious traffic issues on the island.

**Q: Why is Glynn County proposing to take a portion of the Old Stables Corner for a roundabout at that intersection?** The County wants to purchase a right-of-way from the Land Trust to construct traffic lanes and “lease” a temporary easement “for the construction of slopes” and to store equipment during the life of the project (up to 2 years).

**Q: How much of the property are they proposing to take?** The proposed amount is roughly 27% of the total property (0.6 acres).

**Q: How many trees would be removed from Old Stables Corner?** All trees within the purchased right-of-way and the temporary easement would be removed, totaling 26 trees. This includes 13 live oak trees.

**Q: What would the impact be on the remaining trees?** According to certified arborist Roger Ditmer, “a significant impact will occur to many trees at this critical site. Trees will unfortunately be lost, with several others that remain compromised and stressed by root disturbance/damage.” There are a total of 15 trees in the “impact area” just outside of the red and green sections above. This includes 6 live oak trees.



**Q: What do the red and yellow ribbons on the trees at Old Stables Corner represent?** The trees wrapped in red ribbon are the 26 trees (13 live oaks) that would be removed. The trees wrapped in yellow ribbon are the 15 trees (6 live oaks) that would be negatively impacted by their proximity to the right-of-way and temporary easement.



**Q: Who owns Old Stables Corner?** The St. Simons Land Trust owns the property.

**Q: Is the Land Trust “obstructing” progress on this project?** No. The Land Trust has not received a proposal from the County. Until we do, we are working diligently to gather information, request data, and uphold our mission to preserve the natural and scenic character of St. Simons.

**Q: When was Old Stables Corner purchased and for how much?** The property was purchased in 2010 from the Sea Island Company for \$2.27 million. Roughly 450 individuals contributed to the Campaign to Preserve Old Stables Corner, raising \$2.67 million in less than 100 days so that the St. Simons Land Trust could purchase, enhance, manage, maintain, and preserve the property forever.

**Q: Is there a conservation easement on the Old Stables Corner property?** No, the Land Trust acquired the property through a fee simple acquisition and owns it outright. There is no conservation easement held by any other entity (i.e. DNR, TNC, etc.).

**Q: Why was the property preserved?** The environmental, historical, and sentimental value of the property is significant. Numerous live oaks and southern magnolias dominate the canopy providing a space for native wildlife to nest, find food, and seek shelter. The dense canopy also helps absorb CO2 emitted by the thousands of vehicles driving through the intersection every day. For generations, the property was the sight of the Sea Island Stables – a place where residents and visitors grew up taking riding lessons, boarding their horses, and learning important life lessons.

**Q: What about the trees on the other corners?** The health of all island trees -- especially live oaks, old-growth pines, southern magnolias, and other native species -- are an important part of the fabric of St. Simons Island and enhance quality of life. However, according to a tree study completed by Glynn County, the healthiest trees at that intersection are on the Old Stables Corner. Most importantly, it is THIS property that the community raised money to protect and has entrusted SSLT to preserve.

**Q: How long has the County been working on the proposed roundabout?** We have heard different dates, ranging from 2001 (a date given by a traffic engineer hired by Glynn County) to 2016 to the present. In two of our meetings with county officials, we were told that the plans were finalized in 2023, and it was at that time that the “pins were put in the ground.”

**Q: How long has the Land Trust been involved in the conversation?** SSLT was asked to sit down with a county representative in July of 2024. Before then, SSLT did not have a seat at the table and was not involved in any way with the planning process.

**Q: How could Glynn County “take” part of the property from a private landowner?** The standard process would be for a municipality to offer a property owner a purchase price for their land based on an evaluation from a licensed land appraiser. The appraisal would also be used to determine the “lease” of a temporary easement. If the property owner does not agree to sell their land, a municipality can use the power of eminent domain to “condemn” and “take” the property, although this is a highly disfavored path to take and is normally done as a last resort after determining that there are no other viable options.

**Q: How is the Land Trust preparing to protect Old Stable Corner?** The Land Trust has secured a certified arborist and is actively working with experts in eminent domain and land evaluation matters to help guide our steps forward in this process.

**Q: What is eminent domain?** Eminent domain is the power of a municipality (city, county, state, or federal government) to take private property for public use, with compensation to the landowner.

**Q: Has Glynn County informed the Land Trust of the appraised value of the land?**

No. The County hired an appraiser in 2024 to provide an evaluation of the land they want to purchase for a right-of-way for the project. The appraisal was completed and provided to County officials, but the appraised value has not been shared with the Land Trust, and no purchase price has been offered.

**Q: We have heard that the County has offered a “land swap” to SSLT. Is this true?** There has been no formal offer of a land swap. However, in the Land Trust’s last meeting with county officials, we were asked if we would consider a land swap. The only property mentioned was a “lot” in a densely populated residential neighborhood with no environmental, cultural, or historic values.

**Q: At the County’s Frederica Road Traffic Study Open House on Tuesday, February 25, did the Land Trust organize the display of roundabout maps and plans in the atrium at the casino?** No, the Open House was planned and executed by County officials. While the Land Trust encouraged its supporters to attend, it did not organize any part of the Open House.

**Q: If Old Stable Corner isn’t used for the proposed roundabout at this intersection, does the Land Trust have recommendations on how to solve the traffic problems?** We are not experts in traffic engineering and have not taken a position on whether a roundabout is the best solution to a major traffic problem on the island. Our focus is on ensuring the long-term conservation of a green space that the community rallied to protect. Our only recommendations to the County are to share with the community the data supporting claims that this is the safest, long-term solution to traffic problems and to thoroughly research and evaluate all possible options. Acquiring private property with taxpayers’ dollars, many of whom are the same people who gave money to protect the property, should be a last resort.

**Q: What can people do to help?**

**1. Make Your Voices Heard**

- a. Write [letters to the editor](#) in the local newspaper.
- b. Speak out at public meetings.
- c. Contact Glynn County Commissioners – Reach out to those representing St. Simons Island and ask them for information
  - i. District 2 Commissioner: [Bob Duncan](#)
  - ii. At-Large Post 1: [Bo Clark](#)
  - iii. At-Large Post 2, Commission Chair: [Walter Rafolski](#)
- d. Post and tag on [social media](#).

2. **[Sign the Petition](#)** - Join the effort led by the *Ole Sea Island Stables Facebook group* to voice community concerns.

3. **[Support the Land Trust’s Mission](#)** – Become a new member or upgrade your existing membership.

Last updated: 04/16/25