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## NEWS ARTICLE

### **Major New Easement for Bethlehem Trust**

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BETHLEHEM—The Bethlehem Land Trust announced this week that its president, Mary Pratt Hawvermale, and her sister Nancy Pratt have preserved 52 acres of their family land in Bethlehem with a permanent conservation easement in favor of the trust.

The Pratt family has owned a large tract in Bethlehem since 1929, when Dr. and Mrs. Frederick W. Pratt bought Eastover Farm as a place for their family to gather while their sons attended area prep schools. For decades, the property and rambling circa 1773 farmhouse were the focus of family events.

Following the Pratts' deaths, the property was inherited by Ms. Hawvermale, Ms. Pratt, Emily Thayer and several other cousins. Eventually, Ms. Hawvermale and Ms. Pratt became the sole owners, and they made the decision a year ago to conserve the land that has been so revered by the whole family for generations.

Ms. Hawvermale has been president of the Bethlehem Land Trust since 2006, and began to formulate the easement plan with her sister in 2009. The acreage under conservation consists of forest, meadows, streams, and wetlands. It runs from Guilds Hollow Road to Crane Hollow Road and provides cover for birds, small animals and deer.

The Bethlehem Land Trust's board of directors has spent most of 2011 formulating a strategic plan and fine-tuning its land acquisition policies. The land, to be known as the Pratt Preserve, fits into the acquisition criteria in that it is scenic, provides cover for wildlife, and has agricultural uses. Among the trust's holdings, it is exceeded in size only by the 81-acre Bellamy Preserve, the trust's first acquisition.

The Bethlehem Land Trust, established in 1980, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the permanent conservation and stewardship of local farmland, fields, forests, and wetlands and to educating the public on the importance of conservation. For more information, see the Web site at [www.bethlehemctlandtrust.org](http://www.bethlehemctlandtrust.org).