

Sebonack Neck Private Golf Course Property



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Client: Sebonack Properties LLC

Project Location: Southampton, NY

GPI led a team of professionals to provide planning, site design and engineering, architecture, environmental analysis and development of organic protocols and construction oversight services for the creation of this unique private golf course. The owner initiated preliminary planning for this innovative, organic golf course on the former Bayberryland Property on Sebonack Neck. The property is abutted by Peconic Bay, Old Spring Pond, Sebonack Road and National Golf Links of America. Several sustainable techniques were used during the design and construction of the project.

The major goals of the project were to meet or exceed the Suffolk County standards for establishment and operation of an organic golf course. GPI, together with subconsultants from academic institutions and from commercial businesses in the organic industry, developed a protocol to advance the use of organic methods and materials, and to minimize the use of synthetic chemical treatments for maintaining turf fertility, and for combating pests and diseases. An area was set aside for a wildlife preserve within and around the golf course; and the extensive wetlands on the property were protected through the establishment of appropriate buffers and management agreements with selected conservation and research entities. The property was previously used as a conference center, training facility, weekend retreat and children's camp. The proposal to redevelop this site in an environmentally sound manner conformed to the *principles of smart growth*, in accordance with policies adopted by the County Legislature. In addition, the previous maintenance procedures followed on the property included the frequent use of pesticides. This practice was terminated as part of the contemplated development. The plan complied with relevant planning documents including the Southampton comprehensive plan update, the Peconic estuary plan and the new Suffolk County standards and protocols for organic golf courses. GPI recognized that the greens would be the areas most stressed and therefore, most likely to be treated with non-organic materials. To address this condition GPI designed a liner and collection system for all the courses greens. All drainage from the greens is collected and flows by gravity or is pumped to a dedicated pond where the water can be tested and diluted or treated if needed. The water is then recycled through a separate greens irrigation system. This "closed loop" recycles water and at the same time provides protection to the area's groundwater and the adjacent bay.

The site's vegetation was second growth and was heavily invaded with exotic vines and shrubs. Clearing of areas for the golf course and its facilities allowed for the removal of many invasive plants. As part of the landscape design these areas were restored using native species of shrubs, trees and grasses. Removing the invasive plants and adding the native material also allowed the natural under story to re-establish. The goal of the project also encouraged and sustained the maturing process of the woodland in the non-cleared, upland areas of the site.