

WELLESLEY TRAILS

Favorite Trail Walks

Fuller Brook Park

The Brook Path is the most popular trail in town for walking, jogging and bicycling. It is an ADA accessible stone dust path in Fuller Brook Park that runs along the Fuller and Caroline Brooks. Established in 1899, the park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Fuller Brook Park is linear park covering 35 acres along 2.2 miles of central Wellesley. The path runs along Fuller and Caroline Brooks which flow southwest to the Charles River. The park was established in 1899 for the purpose of improving drainage and providing park land. It was constructed with the consultation of John Charles Olmstead and, later, Warren H Manning. Stone bridges were constructed at road crossings during the Great Depression. Channels were straightened in the 1950s. In 2009 the Fuller Brook Master Plan initiated a project to preserve, restore and rehabilitate Fuller Brook Park. This \$6 million project addressed storm water drainage, stream bank stability, landscaping, path alignment and invasive growth. The project concluded in 2017. The park joined the National Register of Historic Places in 2013.

Brook Path Northern Section to Maugus Avenue

2.0 miles, 1 hour & 15 minutes

Location and Parking

Park at the [State Street parking lot](#) at State Street trail crossing.

Directions

From the center of town, head northeast on Washington Street (Route 16) for 0.5 miles, and turn right onto State Street. Follow State Street for 0.1 mi and the parking lot is on your left.

Walk Description

Start your walk on the stone dust path along the edge of the parking lot and walk right toward the Wellesley High School stadium. On your left is Skating Pond and Memorial Grove, a memorial in honor of every Wellesley resident who served in the Great War. Three hundred and twenty-five trees, one for each person, were planted there on May 3, 1919. Following the path past the stadium, you leave the Fuller Brook, and enter the playing fields at Hunnewell Field. After you pass the basketball courts to your right, look right for the Caroline Brook that joins the Fuller Brook in culverts under the parking lot.

Cross Rice Street and continue on the sidewalk along Caroline Brook bordering the Wellesley High School parking lot. At Paine Street the path enters a wetland along Caroline Brook, crosses wetlands on boardwalks and then crosses over the brook on an extended footbridge. At the Forest Street crossing, on your left is an interpretive sign

that explains the brook relocation and restoration and shows a before and after diagram depicting changes in the stream alignment.

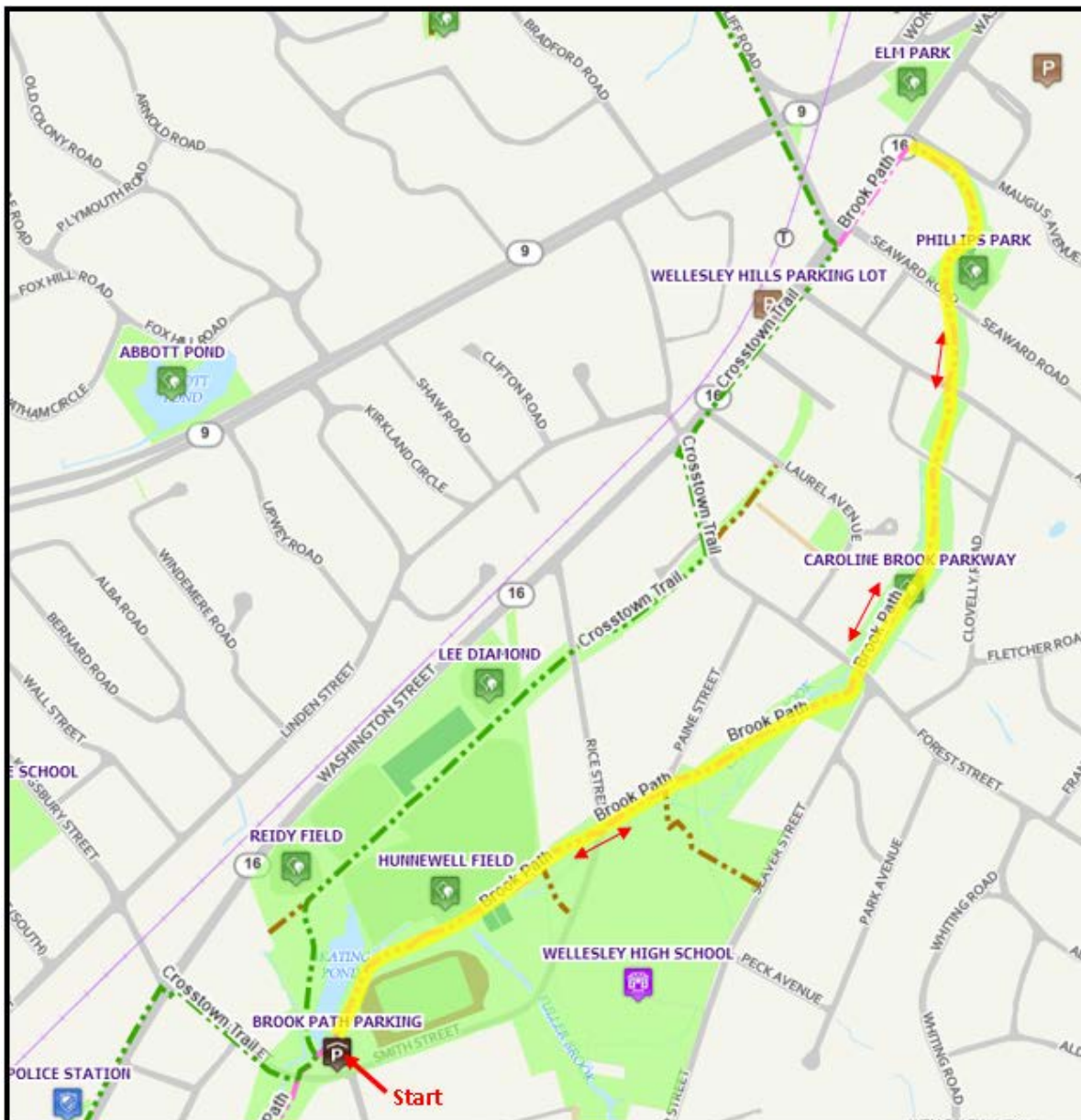
After crossing Forest Street, walk along a tree lined section that crosses Caroline Road, which is one of the few dirt roads in town. At Abbott Road there is an interpretive sign showing how bioretention areas (rain gardens) along the path are used to trap and filter the water before it flows into Caroline Brook. They are planted with native plants that thrive in wet conditions and are very hardy and self-sufficient. Note that the Caroline Brook has now disappeared and storm water drains are the main source of its water.

Cross Seaward Road, and on the right is Philips Park with playing fields and a playground. The path continues to Maugus Avenue, and ends on Washington Street in Wellesley Hills.

Across Washington Street is Clock Tower Park. The Elm Park Hotel was located there when the Worcester Turnpike was a major toll road from Boston and was a stopping point for travelers and summer visitors. It was torn down in 1908 and in 1928 the clock tower erected. The clock and bell came from the old Shaw School built in 1814.

Turn around and retrace your walk along the Brook Path back to the State Street parking lot.

Northern Section Trail Map



Brook Path Southern Section to Dover Road

2.4 miles, 1 hour and 30 minutes

Location and Parking

Park at the [State Street parking lot](#) at State Street trail crossing.

Directions

From the center of town, head northeast on Washington Street (Route 16) for 0.5 miles, and turn right onto State Street. Follow State Street for 0.1 mi and the parking lot is on your left.

Walk Description

Start your walk on the stone dust path along the edge of the parking lot and walk left and cross State Street. The section between State Street and Wellesley Avenue is a picturesque section of the park. There are flowers and shady trees. Turtles and frogs can be found along the edges of the brook. The path meanders on a widened crushed stone path and ramps up a curved paved section near Wellesley Ave.

After crossing Wellesley Avenue, look to the left of the footbridge and notice the low-lying area with grasses. This is a wet meadow using bioretention areas (rain gardens) that helps manage storm water and other run-off. Tolerant native plant species take up nutrients, and the soil acts as a filter and a home for microorganisms that break down pollutants. Birds, small mammals and insects including butterflies are attracted to this habitat. The meadow also moderates drainage that would otherwise flood the path. Before the improvements this area of the path was often wet and muddy after a storm.

The Cameron Street Bridge is the first of many bridges constructed that bring roads across the Fuller Brook, connecting two sides of Wellesley. The bridge was designed by A. Stewart Cassidy and built in 1931. It provided an example for the other park bridges that followed. Notice that biodegradable coir logs are used to stabilize banks until natural root systems grow in. These natural materials help improve the brook drainage and flow.

Crossing Cameron Street to west and walking halfway to Grove Street, see the fish ladder to the right. Adult fish from coastal waters swim up coastal streams and rivers to spawn annually. The Alewife herring come upstream via the Charles River to spawn in the Skating Pond where this walk began. Timing of spawning varies year to year depending on water temperatures, but the Alewife run typically happens in April or May.

Cottage Street is a congenial neighborhood of houses once occupied by workers in the town's nineteenth century manufacture of shoes. The neighborhood enjoys protected status as a historic district.

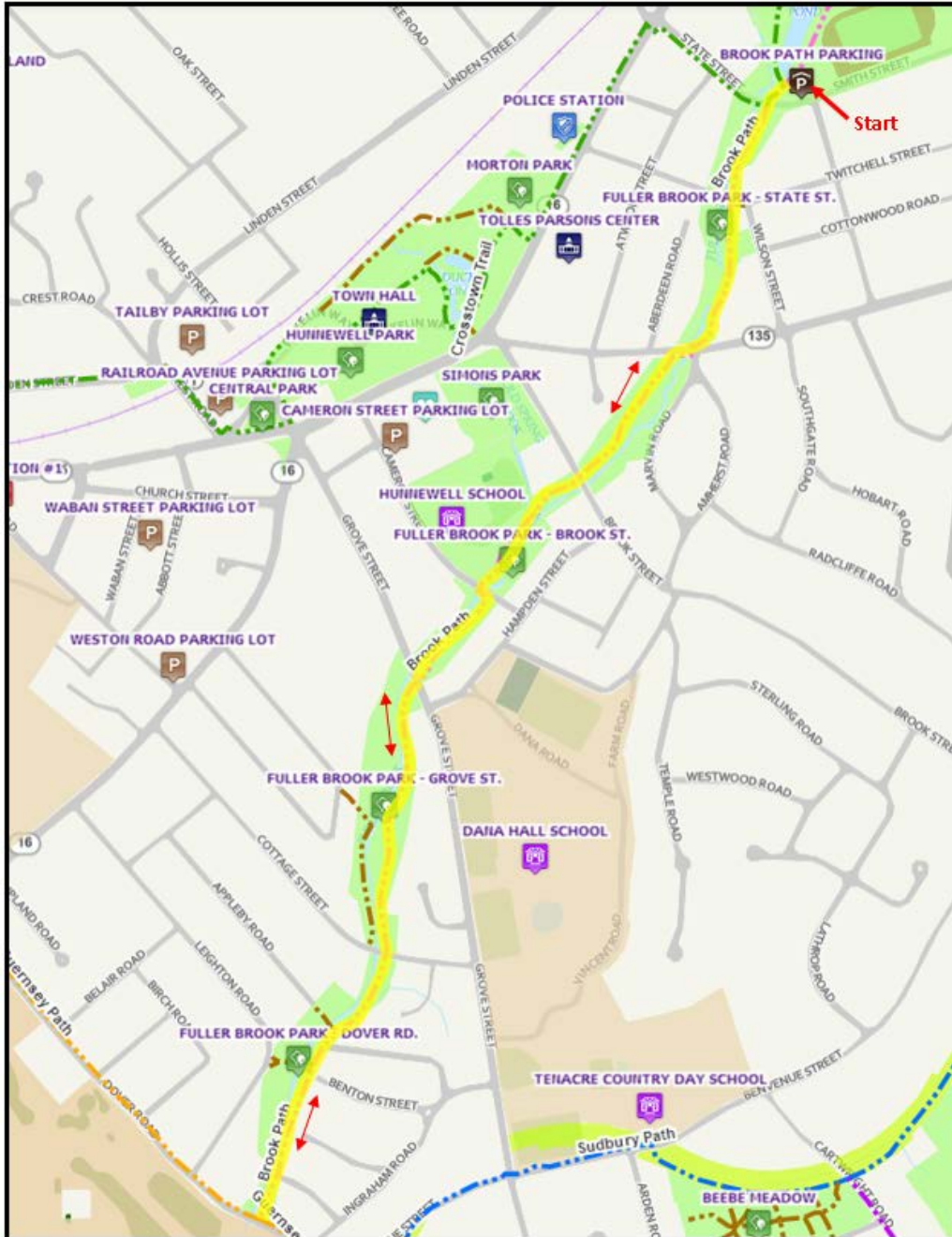
This last section is a generally natural woodland with areas of open grass, providing a respite from busier and more developed section of the path.

Just before Dover Road, look for a split rock on the path. Many years ago Katharine Fowler-Billings, a Wellesley College professor who wrote *The Geological Story of Wellesley*, was so upset about the plans to remove this glacial erratic, she perched herself on top of the rock to prevent it from being removed. As a compromise, the rock was split and separated for passage.

The path ends at Dover Road, and across the road is the Wellesley College Nehoiden Golf Course. Constructed in 1829, it was one of the first golf courses in New England and is the oldest 9-hole course in the country.

Turn around and retrace your walk along the Brook Path back to the State Street parking lot.

Southern Section Trail Map



We hope you enjoyed our little walk today. We believe hikes help keep us healthy and happy.

Take a Hike!

Wellesley Trails Committee

wellesleytrails.org

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