



Area 19 & 20

JOHN SOLURI PRESERVE / WILLOW COURT



Parking for Two Cars and Trail Entrance, Right

Size: 46 acres

ACCESS/PARKING: Linden Road Extension; Norran's Ridge Drive. Condominium residents have access from Fox Hill. Parking can be found at Linden Road, 1-2 cars; along Norran's Ridge Drive; trail side of gravel road off Norran's Ridge near the intersection of the loop road, 2 cars. [GPS Addresses: 60 Linden Road, 50 Norrans Ridge Drive]

DIFFICULTY: Easy. 30 minutes or more, depending upon trail combinations selected.

FEATURES: Several trails are available in this open space:

- Marked as the red trail, the dirt road is bordered by stone walls and ends at Fox Hill. Boots may be needed where the bridge crosses a stream feeding the Norwalk River.
- The yellow trail is the major loop trail. It utilizes part of the red trail and takes advantage of both town-owned and adjacent state open space lands. The gravel trail on part of the lower yellow loop goes past Aquarion well fields at the edge of the swamp. Stone piles, stone walls, and occasional 5x3 foot holes, where trees were removed, indicate the transition from farmland to nursery.

As part of the old Outpost Nursery, the land has many unusual specimen trees scattered throughout the subdivision. The meadow boasts birches, maples, oaks, white pine, and sweet gum, to name a few. Varieties of ferns, club-mosses, and spring wildflowers abound, including brilliant marsh marigolds at stream edge, also occasional large boulders for climbing or sitting. Habitats include meadow, woodland, swamp, and stream. A spectacular grove of beeches visible at the intersection of Farmingville and Lee Roads gave the subdivision its name.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: Red trail from Linden Road to Fox Hill. Remove skis to cross bridge over small stream.

HISTORY: The 1987 Beechwood subdivision yielded 17 acres of open space. These link 23 acres from the Willow Court subdivision, 6 acres from other subdivisions, and 63 acres acquired by the state for flood control, in conjunction with the dam at Fox Hill. The open space was renamed the John Soluri Preserve in July of 1990 in honor of the late landscape architect who worked to preserve the natural features of the site and who served on the Conservation Commission from 1984-87.



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