

## **EAST SIDE TRAIL**

Worcester, Mass. www.gwlt.org

The East Side Trail was initially conceived in the mid 1980's and envisioned as a continuous greenbelt linking East Park (Cristoforo Colombo Park) with Lake Quinsigamond. Construction of the trail commenced in the spring of 1997 with the original route being completed in a span of just over three weeks. Due to the construction of the Worcester Technical High School at Green Hill Park, a major portion of the trail was relocated away from the school site in the fall of 2003.

The current trail route begins at the twin stone lions flanking the entrance to East Park on Shrewsbury Street. Following a walkway through the park, it then climbs steeply to the top of Bell Hill. From the summit, just off the trail, limited views may still be had. Descending — partly by a guardrail — the trail reaches and skirts the westerly shores of Bell Pond. It then runs a short distance along and crosses Route 9, ascending a ledge slope entering into Green Hill Park.

The lands comprising Green Hill Park were first settled in 1755 by Thomas Green. The property passed from father to son until it was deeded to the City in 1905 with the understanding it would remain as a park in perpetuity. Passing an overlook of Bell Pond, the trail reenters the woods following cart paths and a foot trail to the site of an old stone quarry, one of several on Millstone Hill. Much of early Worcester's foundation stone and curbing was quarried from here.

Moving into the core of Green Hill Park the trail travels along a section of Lucy Lane, passing a spur trail on the left to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, before turning back onto a network of serpentine foot trails. Past the Barnyard Zoo and a small quarry, the trail turns east and crosses Skyline Drive. At a cart road junction just north of the old water tank base, the East Side Trail rejoins its original route. The many stone walls in this section were built by a former resident of Worcester State Hospital. Working six days a week, never on Sunday and always alone, the several miles of remaining walls are testament to his more than thirty years of efforts.

Traversing an open field the trail runs alongside, then crosses a stone wall, entering the northerly portions of Green Hill Park. The trail descends through a high canopied forest to a junction with the Trinity Spur & Brook Loop, at a small brook crossing. Heading east over private property, the trail crosses a paved drive before arriving at a ledge overhang, site of the old coal mine shaft. Known as Nackor's mine it produced much coal at first but the coal was of poor quality and the mine was finally abandoned. Nearby Indians used the black lead as part of their war paint.

Passage over other private lands northeast of the shaft — permitted by a trail easement granted in June 2011 — allows for an unbroken trail route of nearly 3.5 miles from Shrewsbury Street to Lake Quinsigamond and completes the trail after 14 years of efforts. In 2018 the Brook Loop was expanded. It's bisected into equal halves by the Trinity Spur; a main access trail between the East Side Trail and Trinity Avenue. The southerly half of the Brook Loop runs on the Fisher Link, the northerly half on the Brook Trail. Other spur trails not previously shown have been added.

## EAST SIDE TRAIL ELEVATION PROFILE





