

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Trail of the Month
Stonegate/Loveitt Woods Trail System

Town of Cape Elizabeth Trails

This is the second in a series of articles on the Greenbelt system of open space and trails located in Cape Elizabeth. These trails are constructed and maintained by the Cape Conservation Commission, an all volunteer seven member board that reports to the Town Council and is dedicated to the preservation and the promotion of public access to the open spaces of Cape Elizabeth. The commission meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the Town Hall and the public is always welcome.

The Town of Cape Elizabeth owns over 1000 acres of open space. Much of these lands are accessible to the public via 15 miles of Greenbelt trails. Look for these Town Greenbelt signs at all trailheads and also throughout the trail system to help you navigate your way on and through the trails.

Insert sign

The majority of trails on the Greenbelt trail system are multi-use trails intended for a wide variety of recreational purposes including; walking, mountain biking, and on certain sections horseback riding. With the exception of a few trails that allow snowmobile travel in winter, including portions of the Great Pond trail, no motorized travel is allowed on any portions of the Greenbelt trail system. Dog walkers are required to remove waste from the immediate vicinity of the trails. A complete description of the entire Greenbelt trail system, including trails description, maps and allowed uses can be found on the Town website. When you open the Town website look to the right hand side for, "Maps" under the, Most Viewed Link, click on Maps, then Greenbelt Trail Maps.

Stonegate/Loveitt Woods Trail System

The Stonegate/Loveitt Woods trail system is one of the more expansive trail systems maintained by the town, spanning over 100 acres of land and approximately 3 miles of trails. The Conservation Commission has done extensive work on this trail system, building and maintaining a number of bridges at stream crossings and installing lengthy segments of boardwalk over wet areas. Public access to the trails can be found off of Locksley Road for the Loveitt Woods portion of the trails and Shore, Dyer Pond, Stonegate, and Rock Crest Drive Road for the Stonegate section of trails.

Trails in the Stonegate/ Loveitt Woods trail systems are extensive with numerous intersections, so make sure to study a trail map prior to entering the woods if you are unfamiliar with the trail system. We hope the following narrative and attached map will help you navigate your way through the trail systems.

One of the easiest ways to access the trails is to park your car at Ft. Williams. Look for the Greenbelt trailhead sign (Point A on map) off of Shore Road just a few 100 feet south of the pond near the middle gate to the park. A short distance into the trail you will cross a stream over a crib style bridge constructed by the Conservation Commission. At the far end of the bridge (Point B) you can head left over several smaller bridges that span wet sections of the trail and exit at Dyer Pond Road. If you head right after crossing a stream you will enter the major portion of the Stonegate/Loveitt Woods trail system. Soon after your initial stream crossing there is a second crossing; this bridge spans the water with support of steel beams. If you take the left fork immediately after this second bridge (Point C), a 0.5 mile section of the trail takes you first parallel to a stream, then past some adjacent wetlands before having you climb several small hills and reconnecting to the main trail (Point D). Take some time to admire some of the old growth white pines in this area. If you are looking for a more moderate stroll skip the hills and stay straight on the main trail after point C on the map. Approximately 0.5 miles further down the trail, you will come to a major intersection marked by a small stone cairn (Point E). Taking the right hand fork from the stone cairn you can either exit the woods at Locksley Road or just prior to the road (see point F), head left into Loveitt Woods.

The Loveitt Woods property was acquired by the town in 2007 by a combination of tax acquired property and purchase. The trail continues north towards the Oakhurst neighborhood over some extensive boardwalk and bridge work before making a loop and heading back the same way you entered. For several years now, a long open public access point to this portion of the trail was closed. The Conservation Commission is still actively attempting to find new access to these trails for the Oakhurst neighborhood. If you, or anyone you know, would be willing to allow access to the trails through their property, please contact the Town Planner or the Conservation Commission.

Back on the trails, head straight on the main trail from the stone cairn (Point E) where you will cross one more bridge over a stream. The trail then continues over boardwalk and open trail for a quarter mile on land adjacent to the Stonegate subdivision. By taking the right hand fork (Point G) and then climbing a slight rise, you can exit the trail system onto a town owned easement adjacent to 24 Stonegate Road. If you continue on the main trail you will cross several more sections of boardwalk until you come upon a sturdy 6 ft wide bridge. At the far end of the bridge (Point H), the right hand fork will take you to an exit/entrance at 2 Rock Crest Road. The left hand fork will take you to a recently completed 0.5 mile section of the Greenbelt trail system which connects the Stonegate /Loveitt Woods trail system to trails maintained by the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust at Robinson Woods. At the next intersection, (Point I) you can either take the right hand fork and exit to 23 Rock Crest Road, or the left hand fork which takes you across another steel beamed bridge into the Robinson Woods trail system.

From this point you can exit the Robinson Woods trail system at the end of Dyer Pond Road (Point J), walk down the road back to the Stonegate trails (Point K), re-cross the stream to Shore Road, and finally back to your car at Ft. Williams. Hope you enjoyed your walk!

