



For Release
June 13, 2021

Wilton Opens New Trail as Part of Downtown Riverwalk
Project Funded Through a Generous AARP Community Challenge Grant

WILTON, NH – The town of Wilton, N.H. has completed a new section of its downtown Riverwalk. Called the “Stony Brook Trail”, it is a solar-lit, handicapped accessible walkway along the northern bank of Stony Brook, plantings, placemaking signage, benches, and access to fishing spots.

This trail was made possible through a \$19,711 AARP Community Challenge grant as well as a permanent easement of land along the river by TDS Telecomm.

Spearheaded by the Wilton Economic Development Team in partnership with the Wilton Conservation Commission, the Wilton Riverwalk is intended to create an attractive amenity for residents and visitors alike to encourage people to come and spend more time downtown, to walk and enjoy our rivers and patronize local businesses.

The Wilton Riverwalk project began in 2017 with the opening of a walkway along the Stony Brook River near the Police Station downtown. The initial work on Phase 2 was completed in May of 2020, and comprised a full restoration of the veterans’ Monument Park, including removal of over-grown vegetation, new plantings, lighting, a new flag, benches and installation of a handicapped-accessible walkway and parking space.

The new Stony Brook trail will be open to the public on June 13, 2021 at an official ceremony and ribbon-cutting at 11:00 a.m. at the trail entrance opposite the Wilton Library. It completes Riverwalk Phase 2, and will eventually link to a proposed pedestrian bridge spanning Stony Brook to complete a full loop around the western section of downtown. For an overview of the complete Riverwalk plans, go to

https://www.wiltonnh.gov/government/boards_and_committees/economic_development_leadership_team/wilton_riverwalk.

This route along the river used to be a walking path many decades ago, but had become inaccessible. This project opened up the entire pathway along the banks of Stony Brook and created overlook areas that give beautiful views of the river and create wildlife observation areas. The design and construction was done by a Wilton business – Curtis Farm Landscape Construction. They also donated rocks and identified foundation granite from a neighboring demolished site to build natural benches and plinths for art sculptures on the site. One of the benches is being dedicated in the memory of

Spencer C. Brooks II, a long-time Wilton resident and volunteer who served as a library trustee, a member of the Budget Committee, a member and chair of the Conservation Commission, and a worker in the community garden.

The site was not an easy one to work. It required stormwater and shore land permits to make sure the river was protected during construction. Two run-off ditches that posed risks to the river ecology were repaired and those locations are now overlooks that provide great views of the river and provide fishing spots. The walkway itself is made from recycled pavers that lock together and are filled with crushed gravel creating a permeable surface that lets water flow through and be filtered before entering the river.

“We are very grateful to our partners, AARP and TDS Telecomm, for supporting our vision for a walkable downtown accessible to all, and are excited by the new recreational opportunities this trail opens up”, said Jennifer Beck, Chair of the Economic Development Team.

The AARP Community Challenge program provides small grants to fund "quick-action" projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages. Eligible projects include those which improve housing, transportation, public space, technology ("smart cities"), civic engagement and more. For more information, go to <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/info-2020/2020-challenge.html>.

“We at AARP New Hampshire are proud to have supported Wilton’s addition of a handicapped accessible walkway along the bank of Stony Brook. This project will help make Wilton more livable, more walkable and more age friendly”, said Todd Fahey, State Director, AARP New Hampshire.

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