

Large portion of Ives Trail gets rerouted

OCTOBER 9, 2018 BY SANDRA DIAMOND FOX



The new route of the Ives Trail through the Weidel property meadows. – Contributed photo
Due to confusing access to a part of the Ives Trail, a large portion of it was recently rerouted.

The Ives Trail, an 18-mile continuous stretch of protected space that connects Redding, Danbury, Bethel and Ridgefield, now goes through a tract of land recently purchased by the city of Danbury.

The piece of land, known as the Wiedell property, is located on the opposite side of where the trail meets Long Ridge Road in Danbury, heading east.

It was owned by 100-year-old Monique Wiedel, who sold it to Danbury because she wanted to have her land to be made into a preserve, according to Kent Stivers, a member of the Ives Trail Board.

Reason for reroute

One reason for the reroute was the excessive walking required to regain access to the trail. “The trail courses one major road in Danbury, just beyond the Redding line,” Stivers said. “Until recently, from where the trail meets Long Ridge Road when hiking from west to east, it had you walking up designated scenic roads for about a half mile before you gained access to the trail again.”

With the reroute, the trail proceeds north a little less than 200 yards before it begins again on the other side, Stivers said.

“This is a significant difference from before,” he said.

The reroute was also necessary to prevent people from getting lost on the trail due to lack of markings, according to Stivers.

“Since that section of Long Ridge Road is a scenic road, we were discouraged from putting up trail markers along with way to direct people,” Stivers said, adding “The city of Danbury told us we can’t put up signs on the trail.”

Signs would have let people know they would have had the very long walk prior to turning off the road to resume heading east.

“There would be a turn and you wouldn’t see any more markers for a half mile or more,” Stivers said. “People might have been a little frustrated.”

Trail work

Two weeks ago, members of the Ives Trail Group carved a path through the Wiedel property, cutting away downed trees.

“Three of us prepped and mowed the trail reroute through the meadows for about three hours, using brush cutters and saws,” Stivers said. “Five of us came and laid in the trail with signage from Long Ridge Road up to the previous re-entrance off of Long Ridge.”

The Ives Trail Group plans to maintain the new portion of the route at least once or twice a year, according to Stivers.

The length of the Ives Trail with the reroute is approximately the same as it was when it was entirely on the road.

Additional logistics of the reroute, such as parking, are being worked on, according to Stivers.

“It would be nice to be a place where you can park your car and walk,” he said.

Overall, “we’re pretty happy with the reroute,” Stivers said. “It’s now more or less seamless.”

There will be a grand opening of the trail reroute in the coming weeks. For updates, visit Ives Trail & Greenway on Facebook.

Published in the Ridgefield Press

<https://www.theridgefieldpress.com/124592-large-portion-of-ives-trail-gets-rerouted/>