

## Section I: Executive Summary

The City of Danbury was awarded a Recreational trails Grant to catalyze the development of a regional open space greenway in 2003. This followed the commitment of the City of Danbury to preserve the southern section of the Ives Trail corridor as a zone of rural open space, which was adopted in 2002 as part of the City's Plan of Conservation and Development.

This vision could have been one that stayed in the books" , leaving to chance whether the City would enforce the vision of this plan through planning, zoning and inland wetland regulatory process for new developments proposed in this area. However, the Plan went further by proposing a broad linear "greenway" on an east - west track that would connect open space areas in Danbury and Bethel. Furthermore, since Danbury was the birthplace of the composer Charles Ives, who was inspired by music from the outdoors and rural Americana music, the east-west proposed Greenway was named "The Ives Trail". Following the adoption of the Plan of Conservation and Development that created the vision of an Ives Trail greenway, Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton appointed a Task Force composed of representatives of Danbury, Ridgefield, Bethel and Redding top engineer the greenway into reality. The City's Environmental Director was named as its first chairperson and efforts to reach out to environmental planners, regional planners, outdoor enthusiasts and hikers lead to the development of the trail.

At the close of the grant period on June 18, 2011, the design, permitting and construction of the trail corridor in Ridgefield, Danbury, and Redding is virtually complete. A minor adjustment of the greenway route at the Danbury-Redding interface could provide a significant scenic loop through the southwest corner of Bethel to make this a four town greenway. Finally, the Ives Trail Task Force continues to be active in developing the trail inspection and maintenance polices, raising funds for its future endeavors and striving to extend the trail in Redding southward to Devils Den in Easton.

This final project report documents the success of the project. Starting with a history, the report will take the reader on a virtual tour of the Ives Trail Greenway with photographs, maps and "trail notes" for 6 different segments of the Greenway, provide a targeted list of the deliverables achieved for this project, a listing of expenditures subsidized by the grant and conclude with a section entitled "Where do ewe go from here?" which speaks for itself. The city of Danbury gratefully acknowledges the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for the seed funding to design and construct the Greenway and the efforts of the Ives Trail Task Force in engineering this trail corridor to completion.

## Section II: Overview and History of the Ives Trail.

The Ives Trail was conceived in the early 2000s by Dennis Elpern, the City of Danbury's Director of Planning and Zoning in consultation with the Danbury Health Department's Environmental Director, Jack Kozuchowski. Mr. Elpern was tasked with the update of the City's Plan of Conservation and Development and proposed a project that would link vast areas of existing open space in east Ridgefield and southern Danbury, possibly linking to Bethel. Elpern further proposed to name this corridor the "Ives Trail", dedicated to Danbury's native musician Charles Ives, whose birthplace (now a museum) was situated in close proximity to the corridor of open space envisioned in the Plan concept. In a series of planning sessions with Jack Kozuchowski, Mr. Elpern developed the concept and included it in the Plan of Conservation and Development that was eventually adopted by the City through the Planning Commission in 2002.

In 2003, Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton appointed the Ives Trail Task Force and designated Kozuchowski as its first Chairman. Kozuchowski applied for a DEP grant and solicited a separate seed grant from the area's regional planning organization (HVCEO) in 2004. The HVCEO funding was awarded in 2004 and the DEP Recreational Trail Grant was funded in 2006. The funding included trail construction, a planning study to lay out the specific location of the corridor and consultation fees to assist the Task Force in engineering the execution of the Trail.

The Ives Trail Task Force designated representation from the Town of Ridgefield and the Town of Bethel and included conservationists and trail construction experts from the Danbury area. The ITTF met regularly from 2003-2006 and accomplished the following:

- ◆ Identified & mapped a Greenway corridor that connected open space tracts for the Ives Trail;
- ◆ Prepared an environmental analysis of the trail corridor;
- ◆ Identified privately owned "land gaps" within this greenway corridor that would need to be acquired;
- ◆ Initiated negotiations with other private land owners for acquisitions / easements;
- ◆ Installed a "spur trail" from Ives Trail trunk to Ives birthplace museum;
- ◆ Designed and installed 3 kiosks that portray the life of Charles Ives around Ives Birthplace Museum;
- ◆ Designed and constructed two environmental education kiosks on the Ives Trail;
- ◆ Cleared trail corridor and marked with Ives Trail markers.

In 2006, following the retirement of Kozuchowski from the City, the ITTF appointed Mike Cunningham as its next Chairman. The ITTF continued to meet regularly. In 2007, and under Cunningham's direction mapped the entire Trail corridor. The City of Danbury retained Kozuchowski as a private consultant to assist the Task Force in completing the Trail.

The Town of Bethel expressed its desire to reserve its options for its three properties in eastern Danbury and discussions with the City over acquisition or easements broke down. The ITTF decided to explore an alternate route from the central core of the Ives Trail towards Bethel and Redding, using an alternative open space road corridor - a public right of way known as the "Old Post Road" to connect Tarrywile Park with properties owned by the Land Trust of Danbury that eventually link to the Town of Redding. In 2009, the Town of Redding accepted an invitation from the Ives Trail Task Force to participate in planning its own offshoot open space corridor that would extend from the southern end of the Ives Trail corridor in Danbury.

The City of Danbury's consultant (Kozuchowski) on behalf of the City of Danbury, conducted negotiations with the Lake Waubeeka Association, the DOT and other land owners for easements for the Ives Trail corridor. Lake Waubeeka approved the easement in 2009. The State of Connecticut signed a law that required DOT to convey easements for the Ives Trail, which are pending. A survey of the Ives Trail corridor will be completed in 2010. Easements for the remaining properties needed to complete the Ives Trail are pending in 2010.

### **Section III: Organizational Structure of the Ives Trail**

The Ives Trail spans three municipalities. Its administration is, therefore, partitioned into the following segments, with regard to maintenance and inspections, corrections and improvements:

- ◆ Bennett's Pond- Danbury west border: Town of Ridgefield Conservation Commission;
- ◆ Wooster Mountain State Park, DOT easement and all private property easements in Danbury (including Land Trust of Danbury property areas): Ives Trail Task Force with support from the City of Danbury;
- ◆ Tarrywile Park sections of the Ives Trail in Danbury: Tarrywile park Authority;
- ◆ Redding trail linkage to Ives Trail: Town of Redding Conservation Commission

In addition to the maintenance aspects of the trail, there is an overall steering group, the Ives Trail Task Force (ITTF), that was appointed by the City of Danbury in 2003 to provide a steering group to engineer the creation of the trail. The Ives Trail Task Force consists of representatives of the Town of Ridgefield, City of Danbury, the Town of Bethel, the Town of Redding. As the trail is nearing completion in 2011, the ITTF is evolving into a 501 c (3) non-profit organization and will focus its efforts in fulfilling the overall trail needs, assuring that the trail sections are inspected and maintained by the appropriate jurisdictions and seeking funds for programs and projects that will enhance the Ives Trail in the future. The ITTF has developed a document entitled "The Ives Trail Handbook" that provides a "nuts and bolts" guidelines for assuring the integrity of the trail and Greenway. Finally, the ITTF maintains a website ([www.IvesTrail.org](http://www.IvesTrail.org)) that describes the Greenway and the programs and projects sponsored by the organization

### **Section IV: Environmental Analysis and Routing Study for the Ives Trail**

In 2004-2005, the City of Danbury retained the Conway School of Environmental Design to conduct a comprehensive analysis of environmental conditions in the general vicinity of the trail corridor, to define the most appropriate location of the Greenway trail within the conceptual corridor. The team of graduate students, under the supervision of Dr. of the Conway School, walked the entire length of the corridor with representatives of the Ives Trail Task Force and plotted a specific location of the trail in the field taking into account the avoidance of sensitive environmental features to avoid hiking impact and the routing of the corridor past interesting and scenic environmental features and along areas where minimum construction was necessary. Among their findings:

- ◆ Maintain the top of Pine Mountain in as natural state as possible (this led to the decision of the Ives Trail Task Force to eliminate a kiosk at this site).
- ◆ Route the trail around the vernal pond that is situated on Segment 2 of the trail on the route up to Moses Mountain;

As a result of this routing study, the location of the Ives trail became geographically in the area that is illustrated on Figure 1, below. A full copy of the Conway School's routing study is available upon request from the Ives Trail Task Force.

## **Section V: Illustration and Description of the Ives trail Corridor**

This section provides a pictorial description of the Ives Trail corridor, including topographic maps, aerial photos, ground photographs and "trail note descriptions.

### A. Overall Trail Corridor.

Figure 1 illustrates the overall corridor of the Ives Trail that extends 14 miles from Ridgefield to the Danbury-Bethel- Redding border and another miles into Redding. Although the Recreational Trails grant was awarded to the City of Danbury, the description of the Greenway does not end at the Danbury borders. This is a regional initiative seeded in the City of Danbury, so the entire multi-municipal effort is described in this report.

Note that of the 14 mile greenway, 5 miles exists in Ridgefield, including the trails up Pine Mountain and 9 miles proceeds through Danbury, including the main trunk that passes through the existing trails of Tarrywile Park going primarily east-west and the IT South connector that passes miles southwest to the Danbury / Bethel / Redding border. The trail then continues southward into the Town of Redding, starting at the nature trails of the Redding Conservation Commission.

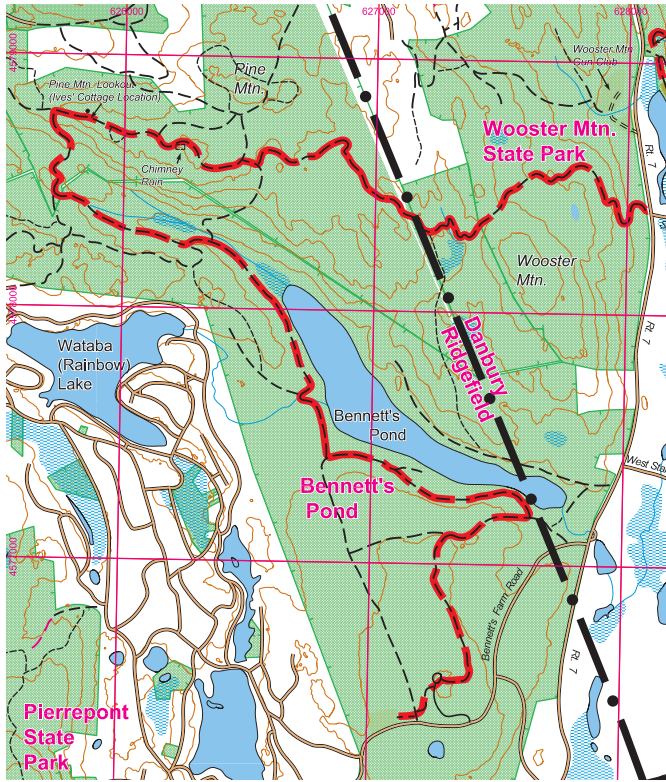
### B. Detail maps and virtual trail tour of the Ives Trail.

Figures 2-6 on the subsequent pages provide a "snapshot" description of each segment of the Ives Trail. On each of these segments, note that we are providing this description with the intent to give detailed description of each segment including relevant photographs, a listing of the public vs. private status of each property (and the easements secured or needed for each private property), and a summary of environmental noteworthy locations as determined from the environmental analysis that was conducted on the corridor.

Also, there is a "keystone photo" to the right of each map (i.e., Figures 2-6) that defines the overall flavor of the trail section. Following the textual description of the trail segment, there is a "Photo Gallery" of other images of the trail in the segment.



**FIGURE 1:** Map of Ives trail map (red dashed line) from Ridgefield-Danbury-Redding

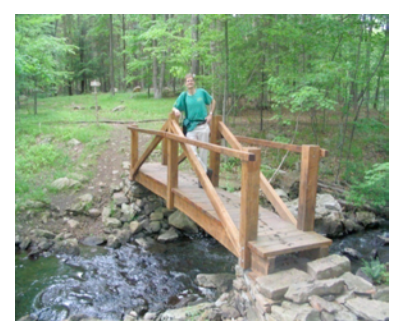
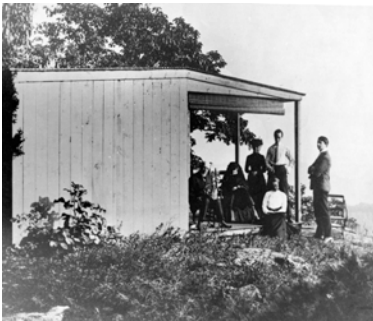


***Keystone Photo:*** Bennett's Pond

**Figure 2: Detail Map of Ridgefield-Danbury section of Ives Trail**

This section of the Ives Trail includes the entire corridor of the Ridgefield segment that starts at Bennett's Pond where the western anchor of the Greenway is marked by a gravel parking lot kiosk (see photo above) and passes Bennett's Pond, climb up Pine Mountain (see photo below) then crosses east into Danbury to Route 7. Pine Mountain is noted as an inspiration point for Charles Ives music. The historic photo of Ives on the mountain top depicts this view-shed largely as it exists today, without the lean-to.

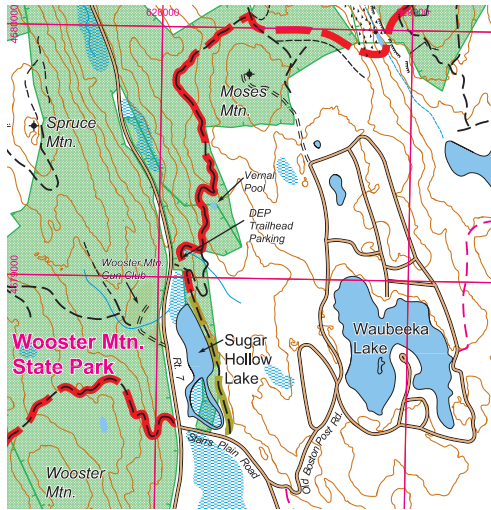
The length of this segment is miles and include moderately steep-step trails. This section is maintained by the Ridgefield Conservation Commission to the Danbury border. Outside of instituting trail maintenance in Danbury, there is nothing further that needs to be done with this portion of the Ives trail. It is fully functional.



**Photo of Pine Mountain, circa 1920 (left) first kiosk (center) & section of existing trail at Bennett's Pond**



**Steps constructed by ITTF down embankment to Rte 7 (l) view from Pine Mountain (r)**



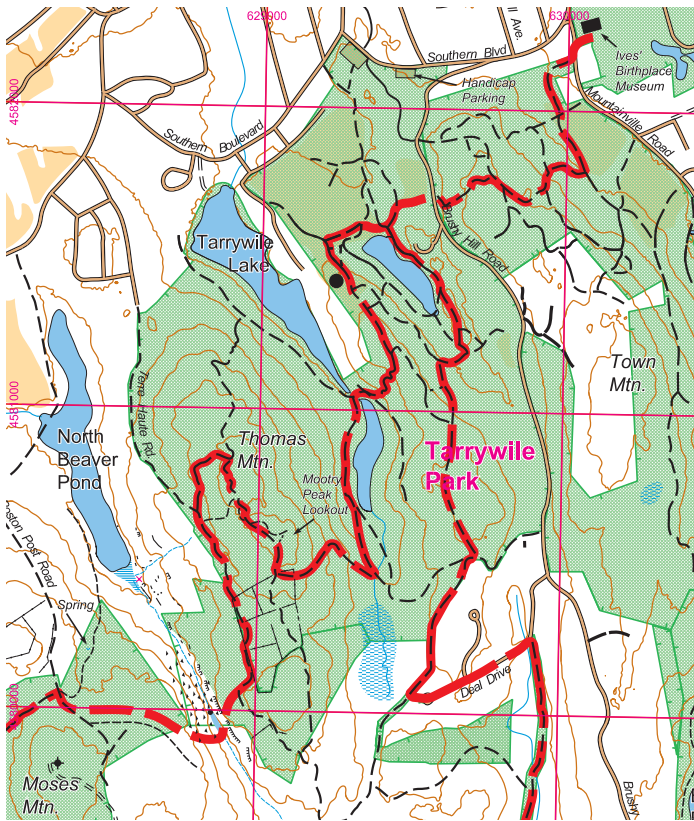
**Keystone photo:** canyon at watershed divide from the floor of the valley where IT passes.

### Figure 3: Detail Map of east Danbury segment

Wooster Mountain State Park hosts the entry of the Danbury section of the trail and the greenway passes through the State Park on both sides of Route 7. On the west side of Route 7, there is a stairway (see photo) that was constructed for this project, to allow safe access for hikers coming out of the forested section of the previous segment down a moderately steep grass embankment. The Connecticut DOT installed a traffic light with a crosswalk and a stop traffic button to cross the road, which then re-enters DOT owned property east of Sugar Hollow lake and then continues north into Wooster Mountain State Park. The Ives Trail Task Force secured a license for a trail from the DEP for this segment of state forest. The trail goes up a significant gradient past a stream with waterfalls, then joins with an old wood road, it passes by two vernal pools, and traverse up and around Moses Mountain. Just east of the State forest, the Greenway crosses into a private home association (Lake Waubeeka). One of the most serious challenges to get the project “on-line” was to secure easements from the Association, a process that took 2 years of negotiations and public meetings to achieve. Another easement is required from the Connecticut Department of transportation (DOT) for the conveyance of rights of passage over state land, for the green segment of the Ives trail that passes on the east side of Sugar Hollow Pond. Although this easement has not yet been conveyed, the value has been appraised and the offer to the City is anticipated by September, 2011.

As the trail exits this segment to the east, it passes through a canyon that is steep but walkable - the Ives Trail Task Force created a serpentine trail on more moderate south side of this canyon. As the trail enters into the





valley, it is in close proximity to a watershed divide that separates the Still River and Saugatuck watersheds.

The length of this corridor is 3 miles. Due to the steep gradient it is considered a difficult hike for experienced hikers in good physical shape. The scenery along this section is stunning.

PHOTO GALLERY



Vernal pool in vicinity of trail (l), old wood road in Wooster Mtn. State Park (c), hikers walk down canyon (r)



Ives Trail passes valley of canyon near watershed divide (left) trail marking crew scaling canyon corridor (right)



**Keystone Photo:** Meadows of Tarrywile Park.  
Ives Trail spur trail to Charles Ives birthplace  
Museum (and kiosk) pass through this meadow and

## **Figure 4: Detail Map of Tarrywile Park section of the trail**

After passing out of the canyon on the Lake Waubeeka easement, the Ives Trail enters on to City of Danbury property into Tarrywile Park where it joins with the Parks red trail. After a short distance, there is a bifurcation that offers the hiker a choice of continuing on the black trail into Tarrywile Park or branching off into the Lake Waubeeka property that begins the south Ives Trail spur that leads to Redding. The description of the southern IT loop will be described under Figure 5, and the narration here continues into Tarrywile Park. The black trail of Tarrywile Park (coinciding with the Ives Trail) heads northeast, ascends Mootry Peak of Thomas Mountain, offering sweeping view of the Still River watershed, with views that extend to New Milford on a clear day. The trail then descends the mountain and heads north past the “Back Pond” and then crosses the channel that is at the southern end of Tarrywile Lake into vast meadows of Tarrywile Park. These meadows are a special habitat of Connecticut and offer protection for birds (including bob-o-links sighted here) and wildlife. The trail crosses Brushy Hill Road, ascends Town Mountain and enters a second broad meadow (shown in keystone photo above) and passes by an environmental kiosk (see photo below) and links up with a spur trail that ends at the Ives Birthplace Museum (see photos below). A handicap accessible asphalt walkway provides a short trail that introduces the hiker to the life and music of Charles Ives (see photo below), that are describes on 4 separate kiosk signs and a separate audio kiosk that provides instructions to an audio link to the Ives trail Website, where one of Ives best known works (Symphony # 2) can b e downloaded and played on a portable device such as a blackberry, i-pod or i-phone, to provide the hiker a sample of Ives music.

Tarrywile Park is near the geographic center of the Ives Trail (which is well serviced and maintained by Tarrywile Park Authority) provides a functional anchor of the trail system, along with the Ridgefield anchor of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission trail system to the west and the network of trails and open spaces hosted by the Redding Conservation Commission to the south.

## **PHOTO GALLERY**



Ives Trail passes Parks Pond (left) ; nighttime view from Mootry Peak (right)



## Ives Trail and Greenway

**Ives Trail**

The house in front of you is the birthplace of Charles Ives, for whom this trail is dedicated. This house is a handicap accessible offshoot of the Ives Trail that detours from the meadows of Tarryville Park (cross street and follow sidewalk to get back to the trail).

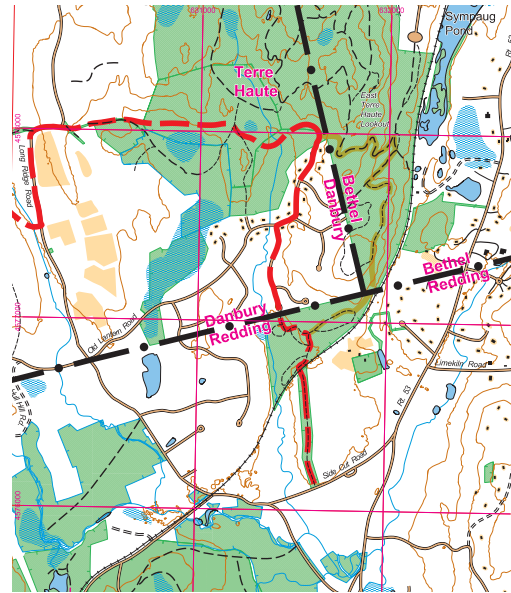
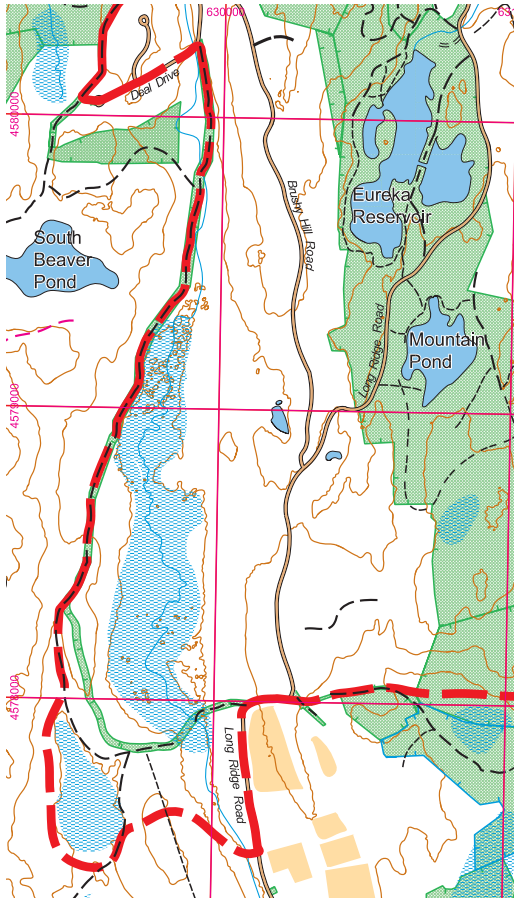
Charles Ives was born in Danbury, spent time at the top of Pine Mountain that is on the Ives Trail and had a retirement home in Redding. His music is a fusion of classical music, outdoor sounds and American folk and patriotic music. In a word, it is unique. Towards the end of his life, Ives music was recognized as something special and played by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic orchestra.

One of the notable pieces of Ives music is "Symphony # 2". If you have a device that can access MP3 files, follow the instructions below, then listen to sections of Charles Ives Symphony # 2.

TO DOWNLOAD PODCAST, SIGN ON TO THE WEBSITE <http://www.ivesco.org/ivestrail.php>  
 RIGHT CLICK IN THE ICON LABELED IVES MUSIC BELOW. GO TO SAVE THEN SAVE TO HARD DRIVE IN AUDIO FILE. NOW CLICK AND DRAG FROM AUDIO FILE TO YOUR MUSIC SOFTWARE FILE.

Charles Ives (center standing) on Pine Mountain which inspired many of his songs.

One of three biographical and history kiosks shown on left. Audio kiosk instructions on right



**Figure 5: Detail Map of South IT trail loop to Redding**

After exiting the canyon on the Segment of the Ives Trail described under Figure 3, the trail bifurcates. The original trail concept was to traverse on a full west - east pathway through to Tarrywile park and into Bethel through a town owned open space known as “Terre Haute”. However, an agreement between the City of Danbury and the Town of Bethel reached an impasse. Hence, the west-east trajectory remains intact, but ends at the Tarrywile Park meadows described under Figure 3.

However, in order to maintain the functionality of passing the trail through the 3 municipalities that hosted the various homesteads of Charles Ives, a south IT loop was developed as an alternate and is shown on the maps above. From the east exit point from the Canyon, there is a turn off that passes out of Tarrywile Park and back into Lake Waubeeka private community property, for which an easement was secured. The trail here follows along a southerly trajectory approaching South Beaver Pond, then swings east through the southernmost parcel of Tarrywile Park. The trail then follows an historic wood road which extends south for approximately 1 mile then swinging east for another half mile until it ends at a private property on Long Ridge Road. The easement that the City secured for public right of way on this property includes a 3 car parking areas for hikers to spot cars for other sections of the road. Approximately 0.2 miles north of this parking area, the trail continues through four parcels owned by the Land Trust of Danbury. the Land Trust property ends near the Danbury-

Bethel- Redding border and - at this point in time - hikers must walk approximately one half mile on rural roads to reach the Redding Border where it continue again through the swamp owned by the Town of Redding and managed by the Redding Conservation Commission.

It is significant to note that one unfinished opportunity is to avoid the use of the local roads for the passage into Redding. The map illustration of Figure 5, above (the map on the right) exhibits a yellow line that would take the trail out of Danbury into Bethel on a parcel owned by the Town and circuiting south directly into the Redding portion of the Greenway. There is an effort underway to seek the Town of Bethel's approval to use this alternate route and join the Ives Trail Greenway as a fourth municipality. This would have the advantage of keeping hikers off of the local roads and into a very scenic section of forest land that overlooks Sympaug Pond in Bethel before exiting into Redding.

## **Section VI: Summary of Deliverables**

The Ives Trail and Greenway is largely completed. With the completion of the items listed below, the trail corridor will be substantially complete, hopefully by the end of 2011.

Thanks to the funding support from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, donated funding from the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) and appropriations from the City of Danbury, the project has succeeded in the following endeavors:

- ◆An environmentally acceptable trail corridor identified the specific route of the trail from Ridgefield through Danbury by an environmental analysis;
- ◆Nine of the 11 easements from major property owners have been secured. (The last two including the Department of Transportation property easement are [pending]).
- ◆Environmental education kiosks were installed along the trail, including an audi access kiosk that provides instructions for a download of Charles Ives music;
- ◆Trail markers and signs including signs exhibiting rules and restrictions have been installed.
- ◆The steering group that facilitated the creation of the Ives Trail - the Ives Trail Task Force - is evolving into a 501 c(3) organization and will continue to oversee the functionality of the trail.

All of the deliverables for the DEP Recreational trails grant project have been achieved. As indicated in Section VIII, below, there is still unfinished business to wrap up the project. However the overall goal of this project has been achieved. In 2003, the Ives trail and Greenway was an idea, embodied in the City of Danbury's Plan of Conservation and Development. As a result of this project, the "idea" of a continuous corridor of open space extending from Ridgefield into Danbury and connecting to Bethel and/or Redding - has been engineered into reality.

## Section VII: Where do we go from here?

This report has identified the accomplishments and the deliverables for DEP Recreational Grant PSA # 2006-6255. We conclude with a list of recommendations for the Ives Trail Task Force, the City of Danbury and the Towns of Ridgefield, Redding and Bethel to sustain this accomplishment into perpetuity. By the end of 2011, the Ives Trail and Greenway will be completely in place. That will provide the foundation for the trail. However, the infrastructure foundation is the structure that will sustain what is in place on the ground. It is recommended that all parties adopt the following objectives the next three years:

1. Facilitate an agreement with the Town of Bethel to route the Ives Trail corridor leading out of Danbury into the open space at the southern end of the Terre Haute property to lead into Redding.
2. The Ives trail Task Force should seek a modest appropriation from the region through the area's regional planning organization (HVCEO) or through an apportioned appropriation from the City of Danbury, the Town of Ridgefield and the Town of Redding to support summer interns to inspect and maintain the Ives Trail in all three (four if Bethel is included) municipalities. A training manual for the summer intern trail maintenance crew should be prepared and adopted by the Ives Trail Task Force. The Task Force should commit to have one of its members per year be responsible for training the summer interns.
3. The Ives trail Task Force should sponsor one community hike day per year to promote the trail to the citizens of the Housatonic region and beyond.