

Ridgefield Park Celebrates Opening of New Nature Preserve

Project was 50-Years in the Making

RIDGEFIELD PARK, NJ, UNITED STATES, June 15, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- What has been fifty years in the making is now a reality for officials and residents of the Village of Ridgefield Park, as they gathered together to celebrate the recent unveiling and grand opening of their newly created nature preserve.

The nature preserve is located near Ridgefield Park High School and includes 14 acres of open green space located between Overpeck Ave and the New Jersey Turnpike. The nature preserve features a 1-mile trail that travels around the preserve which crosses over three types of environments that include wetlands, meadows, and a forested area that supports a variety of plant and animal life.



Father and son take in the sights of new Ridgefield Park Nature Preserve

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Little did we know that we would be standing here 50-years later opening this nature preserve,” said Anlian. “It has been a vision of ours for decades, an oasis of open space for everyone to enjoy.”

Ridgefield Park Mayor John Anlian

During the dedication, Ridgefield Park Mayor John Anlian recalled that he and [Ridgefield Park Environmental Commission](#) Chairman, Stephen Quinn’s love for nature came while exploring the woods as adolescents, where the Ridgefield Park Nature Preserve stands today.

“Little did we know that we would be standing here 50-years later opening this nature preserve,” said Anlian. “It has been a vision of ours for decades. To get to this point, we must thank the many families along the nature preserve who either donated or sold parcels of land to the village, which allowed us to create this oasis of open space

for everyone to enjoy.

"I also want to thank former Mayor George Fosdick, who was a champion of this initiative and helped us to move this project across the finish line. We also want to thank Bergen County Executive James Tedesco and the Bergen County Board of Commissioners who provided a \$200,000 grant to the village in 2018, which was matched by the Village of Ridgefield Park. The funding came from the [Bergen County Open Space Trust](#) and is used to preserve open spaces throughout the county. The matching grant has allowed the Village of Ridgefield Park's Environmental Commission, to design, construct and complete an ADA interpretive trail and boardwalk throughout the nature preserve. Without a doubt, it was the final piece of the puzzle," added Anlian.

The trail includes educational exhibit panels with braille, that describe the natural history of the preserve and a floating boardwalk made from recycled plastic that will allow for accessing the preserve's open wetlands. A large section of the trail and boardwalk will be handicapped accessible and allow for wheelchair access.

"Along with providing Village residents with the opportunity to simply go for a pleasant stroll in nature, we believe the nature preserve will provide many opportunities for all of us to learn more about our environment here in Ridgefield Park," said Ridgefield Park Environmental Commission Chairman Stephen Quinn. "There will be opportunities for bird watching, tree and wildflower identification walks, and hikes to study the preserve's wildlife and habitats. Our Village schools and scouting groups can also look forward to utilizing the nature preserve for conducting environmental studies and outdoor science club activities. The possibilities are unlimited. We also cannot forget to thank the many residents of Ridgefield Park for volunteering their time in helping us with the planting of native plants that will populate the nature preserve. It really is a great day for Ridgefield Park."

To view photos and a summary of the June 3 grand opening celebration of the Ridgefield Park Nature Preserve, [please click here](#).

To receive news about future programs and upcoming events at the Nature Preserve, send an email to the Ridgefield Park Environmental Commission at envcomm@ridgefieldpark.org to be added to the Nature Preserve's email list.

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