



Town of Greenwich
Department of Parks & Recreation - Facilities
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MIANUS RIVER & NATURAL PARK

Including Cary Road Nature Preserve and Mianus Pond

Location: North Cos Cob, East of Cognewaugh Road, on Greenwich/
Stamford line, ¾ mile south of Merritt Parkway

**Directions from
Central Greenwich:** Take U.S. 1, toward Stamford, after leaving Cos cob and
going over Mianus Bridge turn Left onto Cary Rd. Mianus Park is on Cary Rd.

Size: 109.7 Acres

Hr. of Operation: Daylight hours

Parking: in Greenwich off Cognewaugh Rd.
in Stamford off Merribrook Rd.

FACILITIES

- A. 1 - 3' metal garbage can
- B. 1 - 10' x 1' sign w/ rules and fire information
- C. 14 - 6' logs used for parking space markings(14spaces)
- D. 1 - cross gate (30' across, 3' high - to keep vehicles off trails)
- E. 2 - 5' wooden posts for entrance sign (sign is missing)

Deed restrictions limit property use to passive recreation. Permitted activities include walking, Jogging, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, and nature study.

No Picnicking or Camping. Fishing only with State License

Mianus River Park (220 acres)

The Park is located ½ mile east of Stanwich Road on Cognewaugh Road. There are two parking areas, one at Merribrook Lane in Stamford and the other on the north side of Cognewaugh Road above Shannon Lane in Greenwich.

The Mianus River Park, formerly the Goodbody Estate, straddles the Greenwich/Stamford border. Each municipality owns approximately an equal share: Greenwich 109.7 acres acquired in 1972 for \$ 500,000 and Stamford 110.3 acres. The Park is open to residents of both communities during daylight hours. Deed restrictions confine activities to passive recreation. There are no facilities for camping or picnicking. Individuals wishing to fish in the Mianus River must first obtain a State fishing license.

There are two trails of note on the Greenwich portion of the Mianus Park property. They are the Pond trail and the Oak trail. The pond trail, wide, well graded and easily traversed, begins at the Cognewaugh Road entrance. It skirts the lowland area, which during the wet seasons may be readily identified as swamp. The red Maple saplings stand in sharp contrast to the mature Oak and Beech in the upland slopes to the west.

The property is typical of the upland spanning the Greenwich/Stamford border. There is a wide variety of vegetation and wildlife habitat indigenous to soggy wetlands as well as to rocky hillsides. The wooded swamp area is noteworthy for the abundant growth of red Maple. On slightly higher ground at the swamps edge can be found Black Birch, Tulip Tree, Red Ash and Tupelo plus many types of Fern including: Ladyfern, sensitive Fern, Cinnamon Fern, Maidenhair, Royal Fern and Bracken, just to name a few. As the terrain begins to gently climb, red and black Oak along with Highbush Blueberry and Mountain Laurel predominate, thriving in an environment where the natural mulch of slow-decaying Oak leaves help to retain moisture.

But clearly, the most prominent features are the bedrock outcrops and ridges, testimony of the passage of the receding glacier many thousands of years ago. Along the Park's highlands as well as along this protected corridor of the Mianus River with its extensive surrounding of deciduous woods, wildlife can roam freely, disturbed by few visitors.

The bird population is rich and varied. Yellow Warblers and Red-eyed Vireos sing loudly during summer months and are joined in spring and fall migrations by many other colorful songsters. In winter, a quiet hiker may find as many as three different woodpecker species, including the magnificent Pileated Woodpecker, which is as large as a crow. In all, over 125 species of birds have been observed in the Park since 1972.

The Parks wetlands are prime breeding pools for a variety of salamanders and frogs. Although rarely observed, weasels, mink and even river otter thrive in the Park, enjoying the wonderful array of amphibians to feed upon.

Elena Chew

**Mianus River Natural Preserve
(AKA Cary Rd. Nature Preserve)**

Location: Cary Rd.
Size: 6.7 acres
Hr. of Operation: Daylight
Parking: in Designated areas along Cary Rd.

Facilities:

One Nature Trail along ridge overlooking Mianus Pond to the Southwest no entrance signs.
Access to Mianus Pond in all terrain below trail.

Cary Road Nature Preserve (6.7acres)

This preserve begins about one thousand feet north of the Post Road on the eastern shore of Mianus Pond. It is a haven for hikers, who must hike to the area as well as there is no parking either in the Park or on adjacent roads. Pedestrian access is from the northern ends of Westview Place and Cary Road. It is open year round, and closes at dusk.

Its undisturbed woods and steeply sloped shoreline are extraordinarily beautiful. The quiet hiker may encounter a variety of songbirds and small mammals feeding and roosting among the tall Oaks and Maples.

The Selectmen's committee on the future of the Cos Cob Power Plant and Mianus Pond recommended that a management plan be instituted to mitigate the serious erosion currently taking place, to institute forestry and land management, and to clean up the debris along the shoreline and in the water. The Park should then be developed for light passive use, such as picnicking, walking trails, fishing, boating and canoeing.

Further north on the eastern shore of Mianus Pond is a small wooded property (0.8acre) known as Loading Rock Road Parcel. About 50% under water, it is accessible to the public only from Mianus Pond, since Loading Rock Road is private dead-end road.

Suzanne Geiss-Robbins

Mianus Pond (53acres)

From the Post Road all the way north to the Stamford border, the Mianus River, a source of drinking water for the Town, is protected at least in part by a divided complex of Park lands, nature preserves, and conservation areas along its shores. Mianus Pond, designated as an emergency water supply, begins at the dam just north of the Post Road and extends to about 200 feet north of Palmer Hill Bridge.

The Pond was created in 1926 when the railroad dammed the river to impound fresh water for the Cos Cob Power Plant. After the closing of the plant, the Town acquired both the properties from the State in 1989.

J. Suzanne Geiss-Robbins

Mianus River Park (Former Goodbody Property)

Location: North Cos Cob, east Cognewaugh Road, on
Greenwich/Stamford line, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south of Merritt Parkway

Size: 109.7 acres

Natural History:

The Mianus River Park has a variety of habitats and features. The Mianus River flows near the property (on the Stamford side) providing fishing spots. The topography is rough with ridges of granite gneiss. The ridges and the pond are the most prominent features on the Greenwich side. Several swamps also exist. A dammed marsh/pond is located at the southern end, providing marsh grasses and wetland shrubs. Intermittent streams and perched red Maple swamps are scattered through the property. A network of trails passes through Oak and Tulip dominated uplands, areas with young Ash and Cherry trees, numerous old stands of Hemlock and Beech trees, an old field, rock outcrops and Mountain Laurel patches. The variety of vegetation provides many resting and nesting habitats for wildlife. Included are ruffed grouse, pheasant, mallards, a variety of songbirds, squirrels, deer raccoons, fox and various small mammals.

HISTORY:

The Goodbody Family purchased 200 acres in 1928. The land was farmed before this and stone walls which used to separate fields are still evident on the property. There has never been a dwelling on the property.

A dam was constructed to produce a pond in 1899-1919. It developed a leak in the 1940's and was not repaired until 1970's.

PARK DEVELOPMENT:

In 1972 the Town of Greenwich purchased 109,7 acres along the Greenwich / Stamford border from the Goodbody family. At the same time the City of Stamford bought the adjacent 110 acres of the property for the express purpose of preserving a large tract of undeveloped forest and field for conservation and passive recreational use. Residents of both towns have equal access to the entire park.

Soon after the purchase, six trails were laid out cooperatively by the representatives of Stamford and Greenwich. They were planned to provide variety to the user of the park. Initially both towns planned to share a ranger who would live in the lodge on the Stamford side of the property and maintain the park. However, fiscal constraints made the idea impractical for Greenwich.

RECREATIONAL USES:

Deed restrictions limit property use to passive recreation. Permitted activities include walking, hiking, jogging, horseback riding, fishing and nature study.

“ This is an area which one can get a great inner feeling of relaxation and enjoyment by merely walking along the trails” F. Walker Johnson

Facilities

Parking Lot - in Greenwich, off Cognewaugh Road - in Stamford, off Merribrook Lane

Mianus River Park

