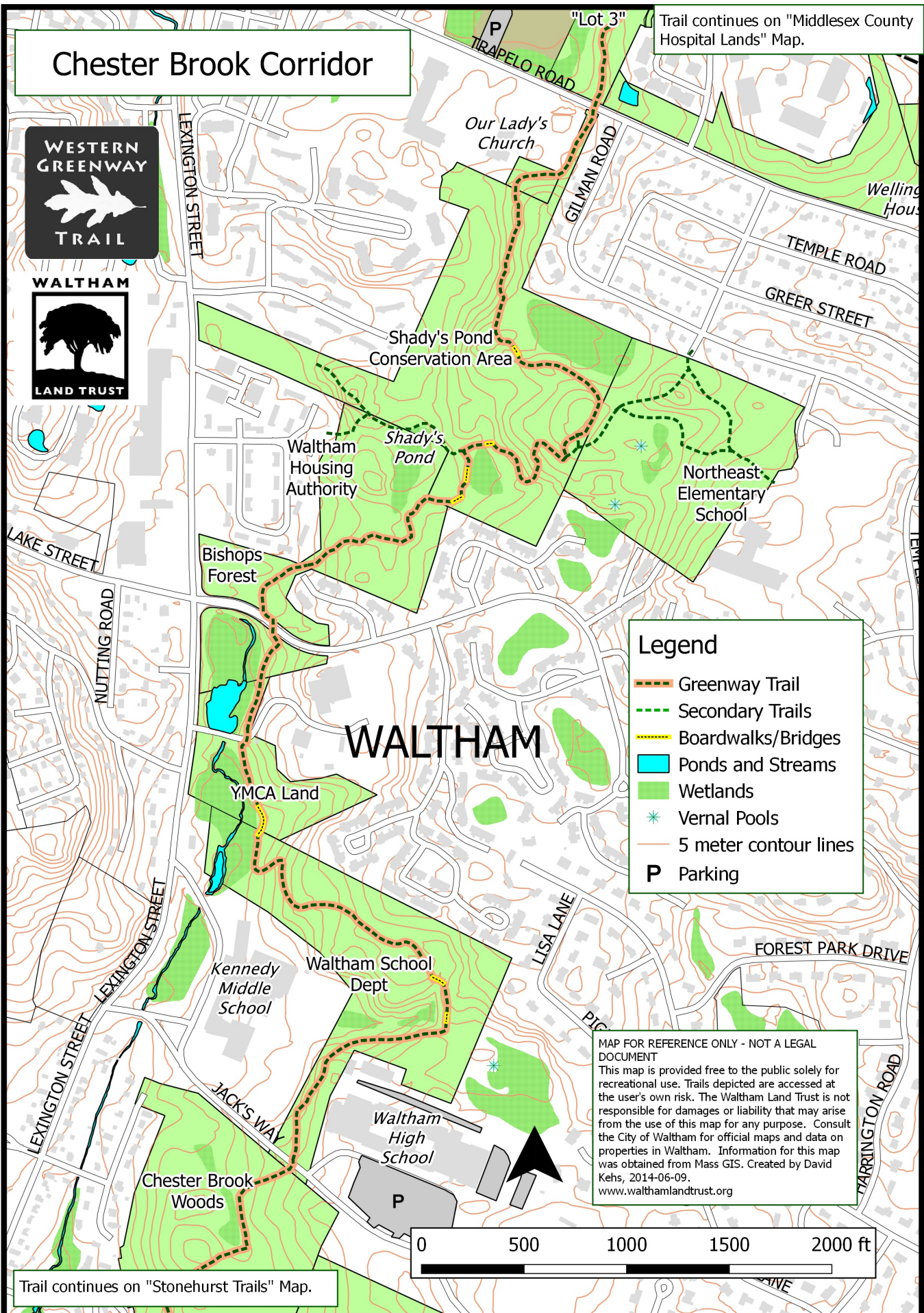


Chester Brook Corridor



Trail continues on "Middlesex County Hospital Lands" Map.





Waltham Land Trust Guide to Open Spaces

Chester Brook Corridor

Overview

The so-called Chester Brook Corridor consists of a sequence of properties under the ownership and control of various public and private entities. Taken together, these properties form a continuous, though sometimes narrow, green space connecting the former Middlesex County Hospital lands with the Storer Conservation Lands surrounding Stonehurst (the Robert Treat Paine Estate). The Chester Brook Corridor forms a vital link in the Western Greenway.

Over the past decade, the Waltham Land Trust board has worked diligently to secure permissions to build a trail through all of the properties in the corridor. Numerous volunteers have worked countless hours to build a completely new trail from one end of the corridor to the other. The trail contains no less than seven bridges or boardwalks, all constructed with volunteer labor.

The Properties

The northernmost property is the Shady's Pond Conservation Area, which has a narrow border on Trapelo Road just east of the parking lot for the Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted

Roman Catholic Church. In 2005, the Shady's Pond Conservation Area was purchased by the City of Waltham from the Archdiocese of Boston. The main Western Greenway Trail does not pass directly by Shady's Pond. But a short spur trail leads hikers to a wildlife viewing area at the pond.

Just to the east of the Shady's Pond Conservation Area is a wooded parcel connected to the Northeast Elementary School. There are some trails in that property, though at present they are somewhat primitive. A future trail building project will involve improving and maintaining the trail network in this property.

The Chester Brook Gardens development operated by the Waltham Housing Authority is well known to anyone driving along Lexington Street. Less well-known is that there is a substantial portion of undeveloped land behind Chester Brook Gardens. This land abuts Shady's Pond Conservation Area to the north.

Just south of the Waltham Housing Authority land is the Bishops Forest Condominium development. The Bishops Forest land borders Lexington Street and extends up the hill to the east. Due to the presence of wetlands surrounding Chester Brook, the land closest to Lexington Street cannot be developed and there is enough room to squeeze in a trail that does not get too close to most of the residences. In 2013, the two Bishops Forest condominium associations granted trail easements to the Waltham Land Trust, allowing the construction of a trail through their property.

The next property in line is the YMCA which also owns wetlands near Lexington Street. The YMCA has also granted permission to the Waltham Land Trust for the construction of a trail across their property, including their driveway.

The final property in the Chester Brook Corridor is wooded land that is under control of the Waltham School Department and that abuts the property used by the Kennedy Middle School and the Waltham High School. Enough of these woods have been preserved to allow construction of a trail all the way to the high school driveway (known as Jack's Way). On the opposite side of the driveway is the Chester Brook Woods parcel that was acquired by the City of Waltham as conservation land in 2001.

Access

The Western Greenway Trail through the Chester Brook Corridor may be accessed from the north from the trailhead that is just beside the Shady's Pond Conservation Area sign on Trapelo Road.

The Greenway Trail may be accessed by foot from Lexington Street by using the driveways of Bishop's Forest or the YMCA.

Parking is available at the high school parking lot, where the trail can be entered from the high school driveway.

Finally, thru-hikers can hike from the Storer Conservation Lands, through the Chester Brook Woods parcel, and continue on the Western Greenway Trail at the high school driveway (Jack's Way).

The **Waltham Land Trust** invites you to join in helping preserve, protect and maintain Waltham's open spaces.

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