

Òpalanie Trail

Eagle Scout Project 2014 by Nikolai Krebs



The Òpalanie trail is a half mile path following an old railroad. The trail is located in the Metuchen Dismal Swamp, and the wetlands surround the elevated railroad track.

Sponsors

La Rosa Pizzeria

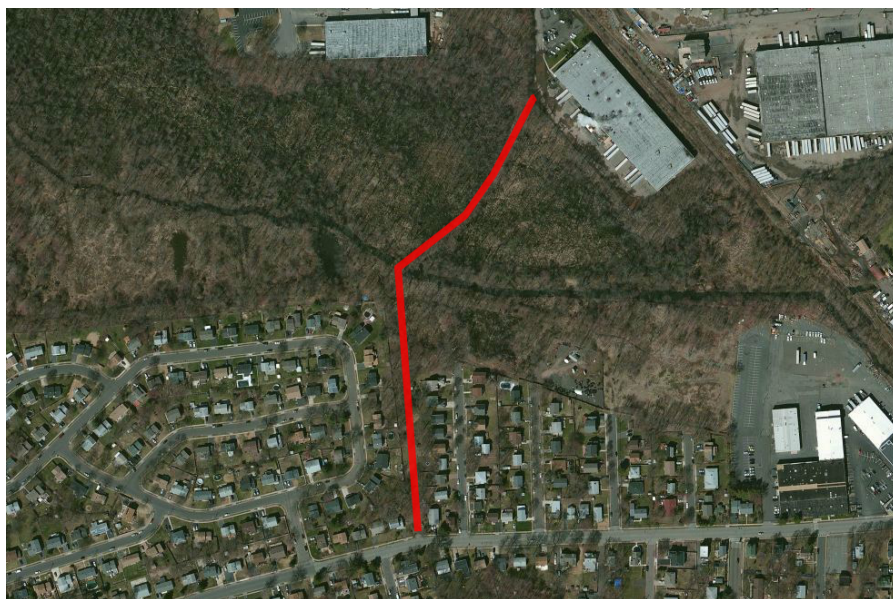
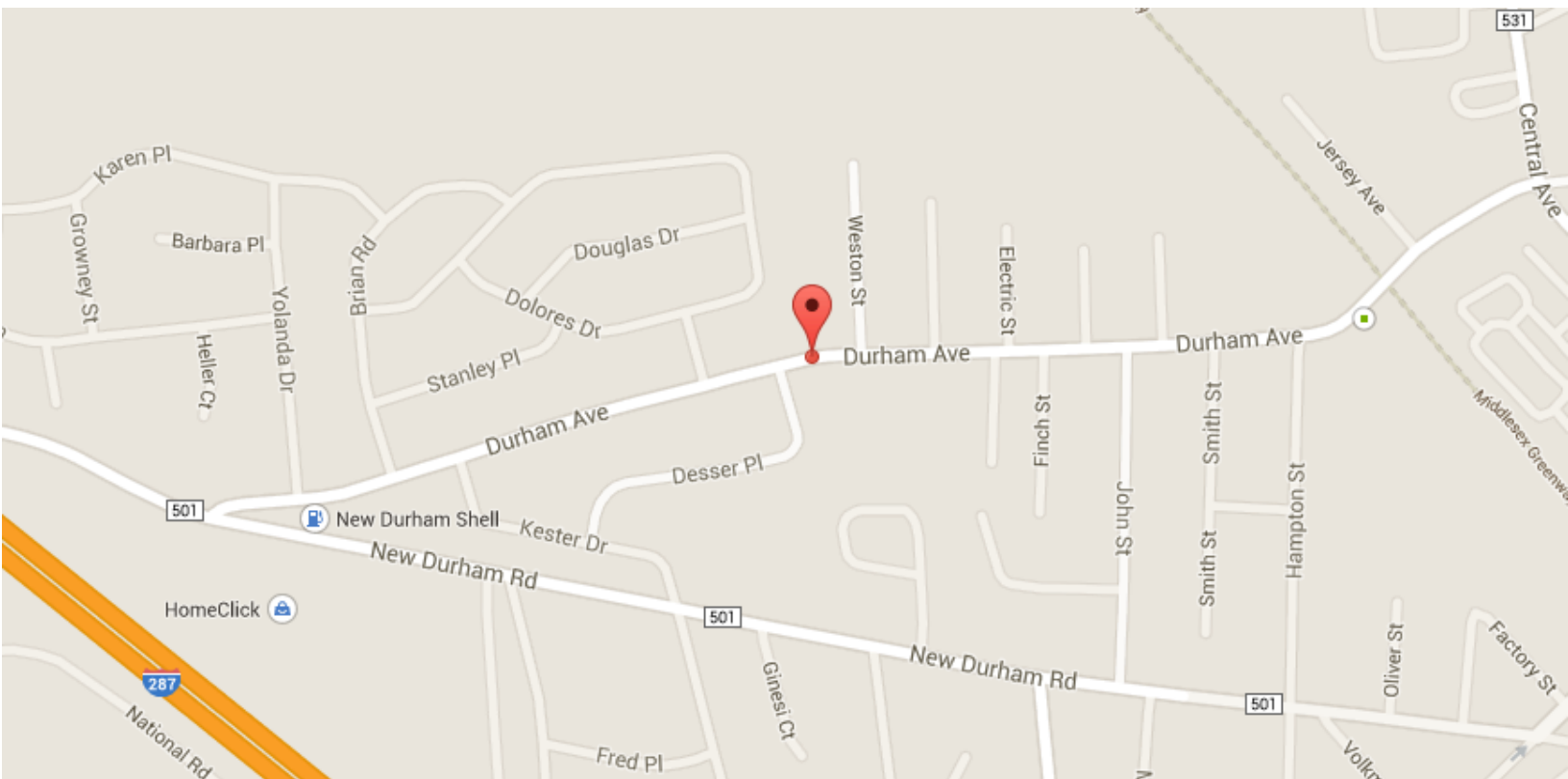
Bell Signs NJ

The Home Depot

Boro Hardware & Paint Co

Directions

The trailhead is located on Durham Avenue Metuchen, NJ 08840 in between Weston St. and Lisa Ln. The trail is marked with orange trail markers.



The Project

On April 15th, 2012, Nikolai Krebs began the journey of building a trail for his Eagle Scout Project. He met with the Borough of Metuchen's Environmental Commission, and after many trail plans and ideas, they reached the point in which the present trail was decided upon and approved by the Borough.

Once he had the green light to start building, members of Troop 17 and the community, lended their support in implementing the project.

The work included, clearing the half mile trail of debris and plant life, cleaning up large quantities of garbage, building a bench overlooking the stream, and building an entrance sign at Durham Avenue.

More than 30 people have helped out for shorter or longer periods of time to build the trail and the project was also economically supported by local businesses.



History

The trail is located at an old intersection between the decommissioned Lehigh Valley Railroad line from South Plainfield to Perth Amboy, and the Reading Railroad (now owned by Conrail) line between Manville and Port Reading. The Perth Amboy line was built in 1875 to transport coal to the dock in Perth Amboy, but was no longer needed in the 1970's and eventually decommissioned in 1991.

The intersection was made as a triangle with one of the angles connected to the Reading Line and the other two connected to the Perth Amboy line. This allowed trains from Manville on the Reading line to switch to the Perth Amboy line either towards Perth Amboy or towards South Plainfield. During World War II the tracks got to be part of the rail system that transported troops from Camp Kilmer to the ships bound for the war in Europe.

The Middlesex Greenway was created as a rail trail on the old Perth Amboy line and the Òpalanie Trail ties into the proposed Greenway extension towards South Plainfield.

