Filley Park Restoration

Bond referendum proposal for
Completion of park restoration improvements
This evening, the Filley Park Committee is here to ask the Town Council to show their support by putting Filley Park on the ballot come November to complete the restoration.

But what’s on the ballot, isn’t just about what we finish but what we start.

A Filley Park, fully restored, will fill this town with a new-found pride and respect for our open spaces like never before.

A Filley Park, fully restored, will bring together people who live here or want to live where you can play, kick back, escape or take a breath - in your own backyard.

Fully restored, a beloved and beautiful Filley Park will create a lush oasis in the center of town, open to all to call their own - every single day.

Let’s get started.
To the right is a replica of the ‘Filley Park History’ interpretive sign, which is located near the bridge behind the parking lot at the park. The sign was commissioned, and text for the sign developed, by the Filley Park Committee. The sign theme and layout were created by Ravenmark, LLC of Berlin, VT.

The history interpretive sign is one more good reason to visit Filley Park!

**Nature’s Gift** Filley Park is a place that has sparked memories that span generations. It is a place for first dates and play dates. A place for fishing derbies and winter carnivals. A place to picnic or find peace among the trees.

**Filley Park**

**Bloomfield**

**A Rich History**

In 1910, Alfred N. Filley donated 6½ acres of hillside woodland to the Bloomfield Village Improvement Association. In 1930, Alfred Filley’s nephew and niece donated an additional 5 acres of meadow, extending Filley Park across Wash Brook to Tunes Avenue. The park reached its current size of 17 acres through six additional property acquisitions by the Association.

**From Land to Parkland**

Throughout the 1930s, the basic form of the park was created. Trees were cleared, the original dam was constructed, the pond dug behind the dam, and a new bridge was installed. Funding came primarily from federal work programs, with supplemental funding provided by the Town. In 1942, the western brook channel was dug, creating the island. In 1960, the Town took over maintenance of the park and assumed full ownership in 1978. From 1960 to 1980 the Town made additional improvements, including a new concrete dam, pond dredging and edging, bridge replacements, drainage, and the parking lot. The park persisted through many natural disasters. Three in particular, the 1918 chestnut tree blight, the 1938 hurricane and the Halloween ice storm of 2011, did significant damage to the park’s trees.

**A Park and a Community Unite**

Throughout its history, Filley Park contributed to the community and the community, in turn, contributed to the park. In 1932, many citizens and town organizations donated trees and shrubs, including an oak tree donated by elementary students to honor George Washington. In 1953, with the assistance of a number of volunteers, the Town celebrated Connecticut’s Tercentenary at the park. At a dedication ceremony in 1938, the Filley family was honored and the Village Improvement Association’s 50th Anniversary was observed. Filley Park has hosted Easter egg hunts, fishing lessons, nature walks, and many other gatherings large and small.

Ice skaters have flocked to Filley Pond whenever conditions allowed. The first of several winter carnivals was held in early 1959. The main event was to be an ice skating performance. As the date approached, the dam crumbled and the pond disappeared. The community came together to rebuild the dam and bring back the water, and the carnival went on as planned. This event attracted over 2,000 spectators from all over New England.

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The process of reinvigorating Filley Park began in 2008. By 2011, with the help of the Filley Park Committee – a team of dedicated volunteers – a clear vision for the park’s renovation was in place. In 2015, the streetscape phase of construction was completed. Stream and pond improvements were completed in 2019. Additional phases of the renovation will continue in the future. With the continued support of Town leaders, current and former residents, local businesses, student volunteers, and the Committee, Filley Park will continue to evolve as an enduring asset forever rooted in the Bloomfield community.
Filley Park was in decline

Something had to be done
Planning efforts began in 2008 with the creation of the Filley Park Committee.

A design consultant (F & O) was engaged in 2010.

The design concept (at left) was developed; and approved by Town Council in 2012.

Environmental / dam permits were obtained in 2014 based on design development drawings.

With permits in hand, construction could proceed ... in a phased manner as funding became available.
Streetscape and front plaza were completed in 2016

Funding provided by Town, CTDEEP, Saxton Trust
Stream & Pond restoration was completed in 2019

Funding provided by Town & CTDEEP
Arboretum Island will be completed in June 2021

Funding provided by Town & Community Donations through Filley Park Committee
Community Involvement!

Over $200,000 privately contributed to park restoration So Far!!
Project elements remaining to be completed:

- Natural Playground
- Trails
- Educational Signage
- South Parking Lot
- Pavilion
- Front Lawn
- North Parking Lot
- New walkways for improved connections
Future Elements:
Natural Playground

Combats nature deficit disorder
Promotes creativity & abstract thinking
Improves concentration & enhances motor skills
Future Elements:
New & Enhanced Trails & Educational Signage

Over one mile of wooded walking trail in Town Center
Interpretive signs to educate the reader on the wonders of nature being experienced
Future Elements:
Parking Lots, Main Bridge, Improved Connectivity

New parking lots at both ends of Park
New access bridge over Wash Brook
Accessible connections between Park elements
Future Elements:
Pavilion & Front Lawn
## Filley Park Restoration Project Completion Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drawings / Specs / Bid Documents</td>
<td>Nov-Dec</td>
<td>Mar-May</td>
<td>Mar-May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bid / Contract Award / PreConstruction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Apr-May</td>
<td>Apr-May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction - main bridge / south parking / trails</td>
<td>Apr-May</td>
<td>Jul-Sep</td>
<td>Jul-Sep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction - great lawn / natural playground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mar-Sep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Shutdown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb-Aug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction - north parking / educational signs / pavilion</td>
<td>Mar-Aug</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction - final restoration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project closeout</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Filley Park Restoration

## Completion Cost Estimate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Bridge</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground &amp; Trails</td>
<td>$230,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Parking Lot</td>
<td>$375,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Parking Lot</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pavilion</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>A/E/Admin Fees</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contingencies</td>
<td>$245,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing Costs</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Project Cost</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion:
by June O’Connor, Filley Park Committee Co-Chair

We showed you where Filley Park was at the beginning of this latest renovation 13 years ago.

Planning for this work began in 2008 with the formation of the Filley Park Committee. You’ve just been shown a presentation illustrating what has been accomplished up to this point; but we still have more to do. Imagine, a menagerie of kids in the playground, story hours underneath the island oak and strolling past 200-year-old trees. Imagine weddings, reunions, birthday parties. Imagine fishing derbies, concerts, ice cream socials, skating parties.

We can make this happen now. Or do we spend the next 10 – 15 years with the park in a nearly continuous state of construction of some sort; and the community constantly wondering if it will ever end. Do we throw away our community’s involvement, do we say good enough or do we finish what we started in 2008?

You now have a permanent Filley Park Committee and we’re very committed so either way you’ll be seeing a lot of us. We want to come back and show you what else we’ve accomplished.

Thank You!
Filley Park Restoration

Bringing Bloomfield’s Jewel Back to Life!

Photo credits:
- Dennis Hubbs
- Roseanne Azarian
- Fuss & O’Neill

Town Staff
- Town of West Hartford
- Miscellaneous