

Save Our Stillwell Woods Preserve

Protect Its Perpetual Preserve Status

The Blue Paper Project: a special edition

STATUS QUO

Stillwell Woods Preserve is one of Long Island's rarest assets: a biodiverse sanctuary accessible to hikers, cyclists, families, and wildlife alike. For decades, it has existed in an informal balance - leased to the Town of Oyster Bay (TOB), but protected by Nassau County as stewards of the preserve. That preservation is now being threatened.

In 2025, Nassau County approved the transfer of The Preserve and its adjacent ballfields to the TOB for \$1 - without any legal distinction between the ballfields and the "preserve". Without that clarity, Stillwell's "Perpetual Preserve Status" could easily (and quietly) be eroded by future development. And no matter what that might look like - a dog park, parking lot, another ballfield, a subdivision - any encroachment would set a precedent for more. History shows that when public land protections are not clearly codified, development is inevitable - and once wild habitat is lost, it does not return.

IMAGINE MORE

Stillwell Woods Preserve isn't a "thing" to be optimized; it is a legacy to be defended and maintained. It needs permanent legal protection. It is currently a haven - to visit, and to soak in both nature and calm. Here, students learn about Long Island's ecosystems by standing inside them. Families walk and bike through habitat allowed to flourish, and not to fragment - a place where simply, nothing is developed. A clear line declares: this land is ours as it is, it does not need to become something "more" - not now, not ever. Imagine not having to fight every decade to stop developers from nibbling away at its edges.

Save Our Stillwell Woods Preserve (SOS) is an informal network of nonprofit organizations and businesses coordinating messaging and strategy in support of the demands of a [change.org petition](#) to save the preserve. SOS, along with conservationists, educators, cyclists and residents are all sounding the alarm. Their vigilance needs our help!

Here's how we fight for the future of Stillwell Woods Preserve:

Codify a Clear Boundary Demand that the town's released survey be amended to clearly label and distinguish between their existing athletic field infrastructure and the undeveloped preserve habitats, which is necessary to make "perpetual preserve status" legally enforceable.

Pass a Perpetual Preserve Protection Covenant Work with state legislators to establish binding protections that prevent any future administration from developing the extant woodland & meadow habitat or removing or rerouting trails.

Organize and Amplify Post on social media using the phrase "SOS! Save Our Stillwell Woods Preserve". Create clear, plain language videos and infographics. Download and share this Blue Paper - online or by mail. Share IRL: write op-eds / letters-to-the-editor of local newspapers. TOB residents, see Your Move below!

Call for Transparency Push for a public hearing to have the TOB and Nassau County explain why protections were omitted from the transfer documents, and how they plan to restore trust. Invite residents, students, scientists, and local nature groups to testify.

Stillwell Woods Preserve is a living monument to the things we value - if we let this go, we signal that no land as yet undeveloped is safe from ultimate "extinction". If we move to protect it, we declare that some places on earth are worth keeping wild, and public.

GAME ON

Your Move!

NYS 10th District Assemblyman Steve Stern needs to hear from you - [click here to email a letter.](#)

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