

Dover Stone Church Acquisition

The Dover Stone Church is listed on the New York State Open Space Plan as an important site to preserve.

When the privately owned 58.5-acre property was offered for sale by Kevin Cunningham in 2002, the Town of Dover moved to purchase this magnificent, and historical natural area so closely entwined in the town's history.

The Town of Dover Government, working cooperatively with Dutchess Land Conservancy and the Friends of the Dover Stone Church, a local citizens group, applied for and received grant funding to acquire the Dover Stone Church property.

The town received \$441,250 from Dutchess Co. OpenSpace/Farmland Protection Fund; \$350,000 from New York State Environmental Protection Funds; approximately \$250,000 from the Dutchess Land Conservancy; and \$41,000 raised locally by Friends of the Dover Stone Church, to acquire the site and rebuild hiking trails.

In an April 16, 2004 news release, Dutchess County Executive William Steinhaus credited Supervisor Jill Way and the Town Board for their vision for their community and in providing an economic boost to the region by creating another tourism destination for the beautiful Harlem Valley.

Monies raised by the Friends of the Dover Stone Church was through generous donations from local and surrounding area town residents and businesses, as well as through numerous fundraising events.

This historical site is now owned by the Town of Dover and open to the public. Enjoy your visit.

**Take Only Memories...
Leave Only Footprints...**

Park Rules / Safety tips

Site is open dawn to dusk, weather permitting

Hike at your own risk. Rough terrain, water hazards, trail and rocks may be uneven and slippery. Wear sturdy footgear.

Accessible to hikers only. No motorized vehicles or bicycles allowed.

Watch for ticks and venomous snakes.

Stay on the designated paths and marked nature trails to respect the privacy of adjacent private property owners.

No rock climbing allowed.

No swimming allowed.

Do not pick flowers, disturb plant life or wildlife.

No alcoholic beverages, firearms, camping, or fires allowed in the park.

No garbage disposal available – carry **out** what you **bring in**.

Children must be supervised.

Call 911 in case of emergency.

We welcome groups and organizations. You may call to arrange a guided tour of the Stone Church by contacting any of the following organizations:

Friends of the Dover Stone Church
P.O. Box 1, Dover Plains, NY 12522

Town of Dover (845) 832-6111

Dutchess Land Conservancy
(845) 677-0300

The Dover Stone Church Visitor's Guide



*Welcome to the Town of Dover
And the "Stone Church"
A remarkable geological and historical landmark located on
the
Stone Church Brook.*

*Enjoy a glimpse back into the early history of Eastern
Dutchess County and a site protected and preserved by
town residents
for you and future generations.*

*Route 22
Dover Plains, New York*

Directions

From Northeastern Dutchess County:

Take NYS Route 22 South to Dover Plains, NY.

From Southeastern Dutchess County, Putnam

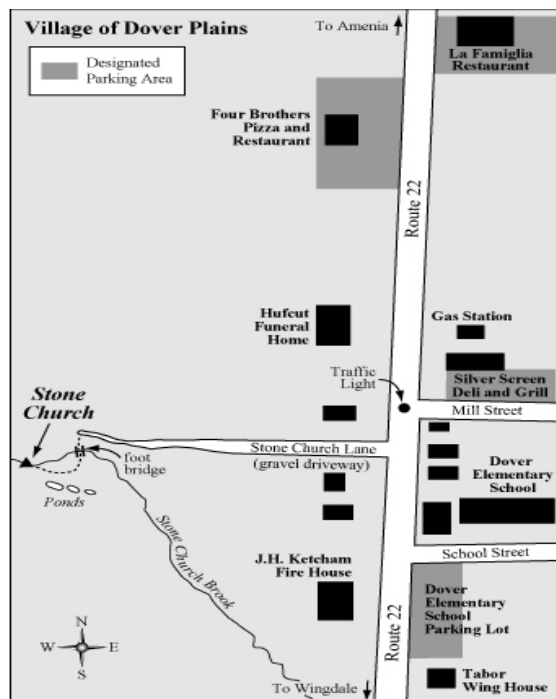
and Westchester Counties and NYC:

Take NYS Route 22 North to Dover Plains, NY

From Poughkeepsie, and points west:

Take Route 44 East and continue on to Route 343 East at Millbrook, NY. Stay on Rt. 343 for eight miles to Dover Plains and the junction of Route 22 South. Turn right onto Route 22 South to Dover Plains, NY.

Parking – See Map Below.



Parking Locations (See Map)

Dover Elementary School –

when school is not in session (after 3:00PM), weekends and holidays.

The Tabor Wing House

Silver Screen Deli

Four Brothers Restaurant, and,

LaFamiglia Restaurant

All within a short walking distance to the right-of-way lane leading to the Dover Stone Church.

Entrance

First right after the traffic light going south (*unmarked road - looks like gravel driveway*). **No vehicle access or parking is allowed at this location - see map.**

The right-of-way traverses private property.

Please respect the privacy of adjacent property owners. Follow the mowed right-of-way through the field. The entire hike is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ m

A Brief History of the Dover Stone Church

The first reference to the Dover Stone Church comes from legend dating back to the mid-1600's when Mashantucket Pequot Indian sachem, Sassacus, who, with his warriors, hid in the cave to escape capture and death by the English Army.

The Stone Church has been visited and sketched by famous artists and authors in the 1800's and 1990's that included:

- Asher Durand, engraver and landscape artist sketched the site in 1847 and was a central figure of the Hudson River School of Art.
- Benson Lossing, distinguished author and historian who lived in the Town of Dover in the late 1800's wrote a book entitled "The Dover Stone Church" and "The History of Dutchess County."

- "The Family Magazine" N.Y. published 1835-6 described the Stone Church as a "singular and interesting curiosity" and reports that the site was a popular attraction drawing thousands of visitors many of whom stayed at the Stone Church Hotel.
- During the Great Depression, Arthur Powell and other landscape artists painted the site through the WPA (Works Program Administration) enacted by President Franklin Roosevelt.

Features of the Dover Stone Church

Entrance: Large metamorphic rocks converge to form the entrance in the shape of a church's cathedral window. The gothic appearance of the entrance gave rise to the name "Stone Church."

"The Pulpit": Inside the cavern is a rock ledge, affectionately given this name by Richard Maher, a Dover resident who wrote the book, "Historic Dover" in 1908.

Stone Church Brook: This brook which flows through the Stone Church cavern is a tributary of the Ten Mile River. The Ten Mile River flows southeast and is a branch of the Housatonic River in Connecticut.

Waterfall: Inside the cavern, there is a 30-foot waterfall cascading into a pool of water that flows through and out the cavern entrance.

Planned Site Improvements

Hiking trails, nature walks, sitting areas, historical programs & environmental studies.

Other Hiking Locations

- Nature Conservancy Nellie Hill Preserve, Route 22, Dover Plains
- Nature Conservancy Roger Perry Memorial Preserve, Sand Hill Road, Dover Plains