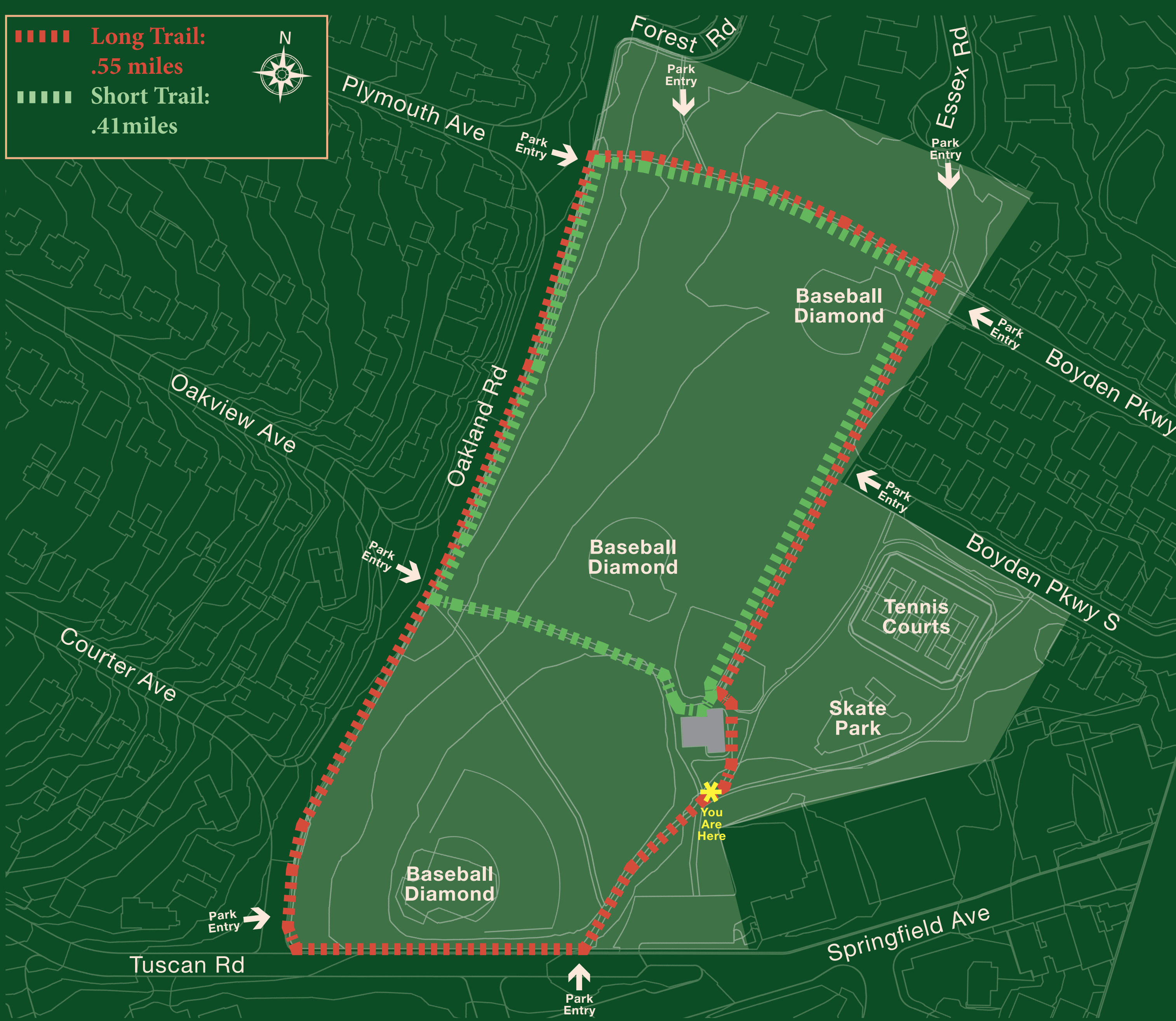


Maplecrest Park Walking Path

WELCOME to Maplecrest Park.

Below is a map showing the distances of the walking / jogging trails as well as information about the park's origin and its connection to Maplewood's history. We encourage residents to use our parks to stay healthy, socialize and connect with nature.

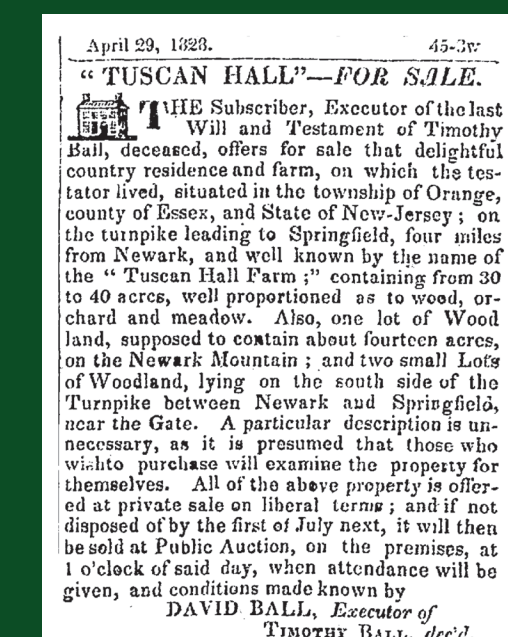
While many people were involved with the development of this park over the years, area residents are part of its living history as a public space. Please be responsible stewards of this unique natural and cultural environment and follow local township regulations as you enjoy the facilities.



What was Tuscan Farm?

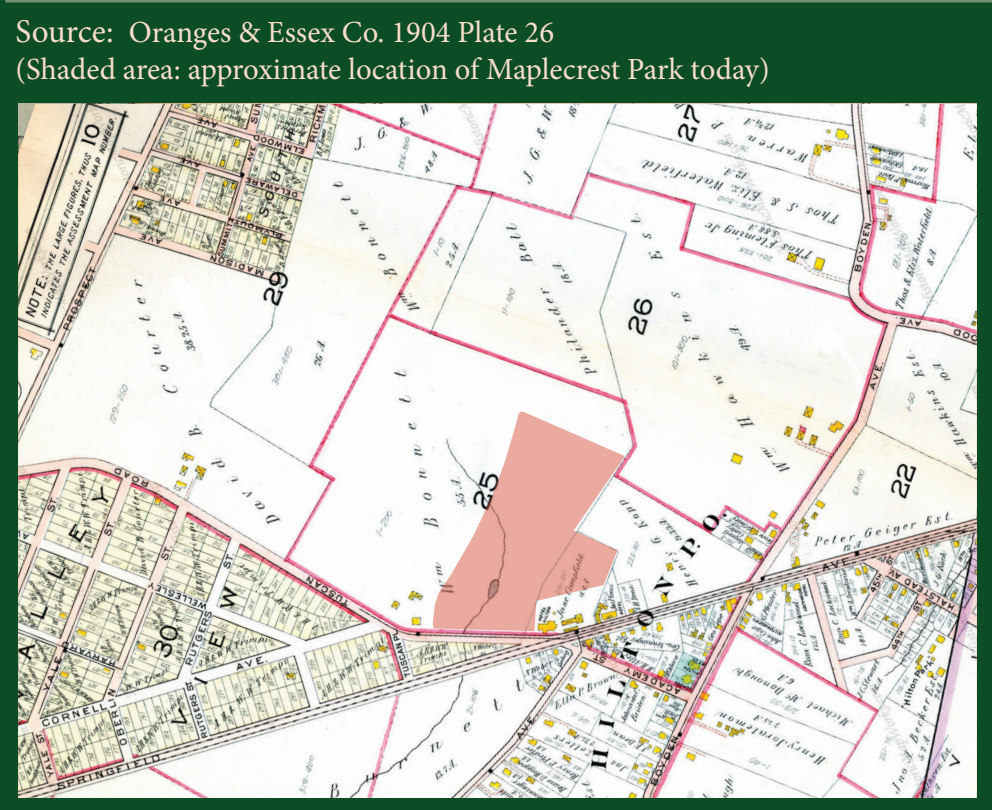


In 1775 Ezekiel Ball (1721-1804) built an impressive home on his land called Tuskin (or Tuscan) Hall opposite the Hilton Library, just west of today's park. It grew to be a key area landmark and the surrounding farmland, hill and road all took on the Tuscan name. In the late-1800s, the house and surrounding pastureland (including the future park) served as a well-known resort for Newark area businessmen and politicians.



Popular Newark Mayor Jacob Haussling and two partners formed the sometimes infamous Tuscan Farm Club here, which featured Saturday dinners until midnight.

Party lines were supposedly overlooked among members, but many political decisions were made in front of the fire. In 1904 a cemetery was proposed for Tuscan Farm but to the great benefit of today's park-goers, the water table proved too high.



Before It Was a Park
Thomas Ball (1687-1744), a patriarch of Maplewood's prominent Ball family, moved from the Newark Colony to the Uplands in 1718, building a home in Newark Farms (an early name of Hilton) near Oakview and Oakland. His landholdings were extensive and he left Ezekiel, one of his seven sons, a large section that included what would become

Maplecrest Park. This low-lying land had a small pond, later named for Newark Mayor Haussling, fed by a tributary of Lightning Brook. Near this was a marshy area, known as the "Cat Swamp." The natural brook and wet meadow made it ideal for pasturing livestock and trapping small game. In 1921, the Maple Crest Development Company purchased 90 acres of what had been the old Tuscan and



Courter farms for new building sites. They set aside 19 acres that the Township opted to buy in July 1922 to create a "public park...for the use and enjoyment of the citizens of Maplewood." Soon ballfields, tennis courts, a playground, and a shelter house were built; in the summer kids enjoyed games and arts and crafts and in the winter ice skating on a flooded field.

A Moment in Time
The "Maplecrest Oval," as the park was first called, was a popular site for competitive

baseball and football games played by league teams from all over central Jersey. The Mapes (as in Maplewood Maples) played the Hilton Separates, Newsteads of South Orange, Springfield Stars, Union Colored Giants of Newark, Seton Hall Freshmen and Woodbridge All Stars. A football game between the Mapes and the Irvington Cardinals drew 5000 viewers.

Living History
In 2016, the Township received the New Jersey Recreation and Park Association (NJRPA) Excellence in Design Award for the Maplewood Skate Park Project. Completed in 2015, the skate park is designed to serve the needs of local skaters of various levels of ability.

This project was provided by the Township of Maplewood, with funding and support from the Maplewood Open Space Trust Fund in partnership with the Maplewood Historic Preservation Commission.

