

Duke Farms Celebrates 5th Anniversary



Pictured: Committeeman Doug Tomson, Duke Farms Visitor Education Assistant Carl Cucchiara, Duke Farms Executive Director Michael Catania and Deputy Mayor Gloria McCauley

This month marks the 5th anniversary of Duke Farms opening to the public. At the May 9th Township Committee Meeting, Mayor Suraci and the Township Committee recognized Duke Farms on their 5 years of service to the community.

The cultural landscape which includes lakes, waterfalls, fountains, bridges, carriage ways, and three iconic stone barns (the Farm Barn, the Coach Barn, and the Hay Barn), was initially created in the late 1800s by James Buchanan Duke and his daughter Doris Duke. After a period of extensive renovations, Duke Farms reopened to the public, free of charge, on May 19, 2012. The renovations included two LEED Platinum buildings (the Visitors Orientation Center and the Orchid Range), a large photovoltaic solar array, geothermal heating and cooling, and a constructed wetlands wastewater treatment system among a wide array of demonstrations of sustainability and green architecture.

Duke Farms now provides a wide range of educational programs ranging from environmental education programs for children and adults, professional training programs, a 462 plot community garden, and a Bike Share Program, as well as meeting space for organizations involved in activities integral to the mission of Duke Farms. Since the re-opening in May of 2012, more than two million visitors have taken advantage of all that Duke Farms has to offer, and Duke Farms has quickly become both a regional destination and a place where visitors of all ages can enjoy both nature and a respite from their busy lives.

The Mayor and the Township Committee recognized Duke Farms for their efforts in environmental stewardship and the inspiration they provide for their visitors, express their sincere appreciation for the prominent and supporting role that Duke Farms has come to play in the local community, and extended their best wishes to Duke Farms for much continued success in the future.