



## *Historic Route Series*

Throughout the last 19 years we have varied our StepTrek routes to allow for exploration of all the areas of our neighborhood and steps. This summer, we are releasing a variety of these historic routes where you can safely take an urban hike in our neighborhood, at your leisure.



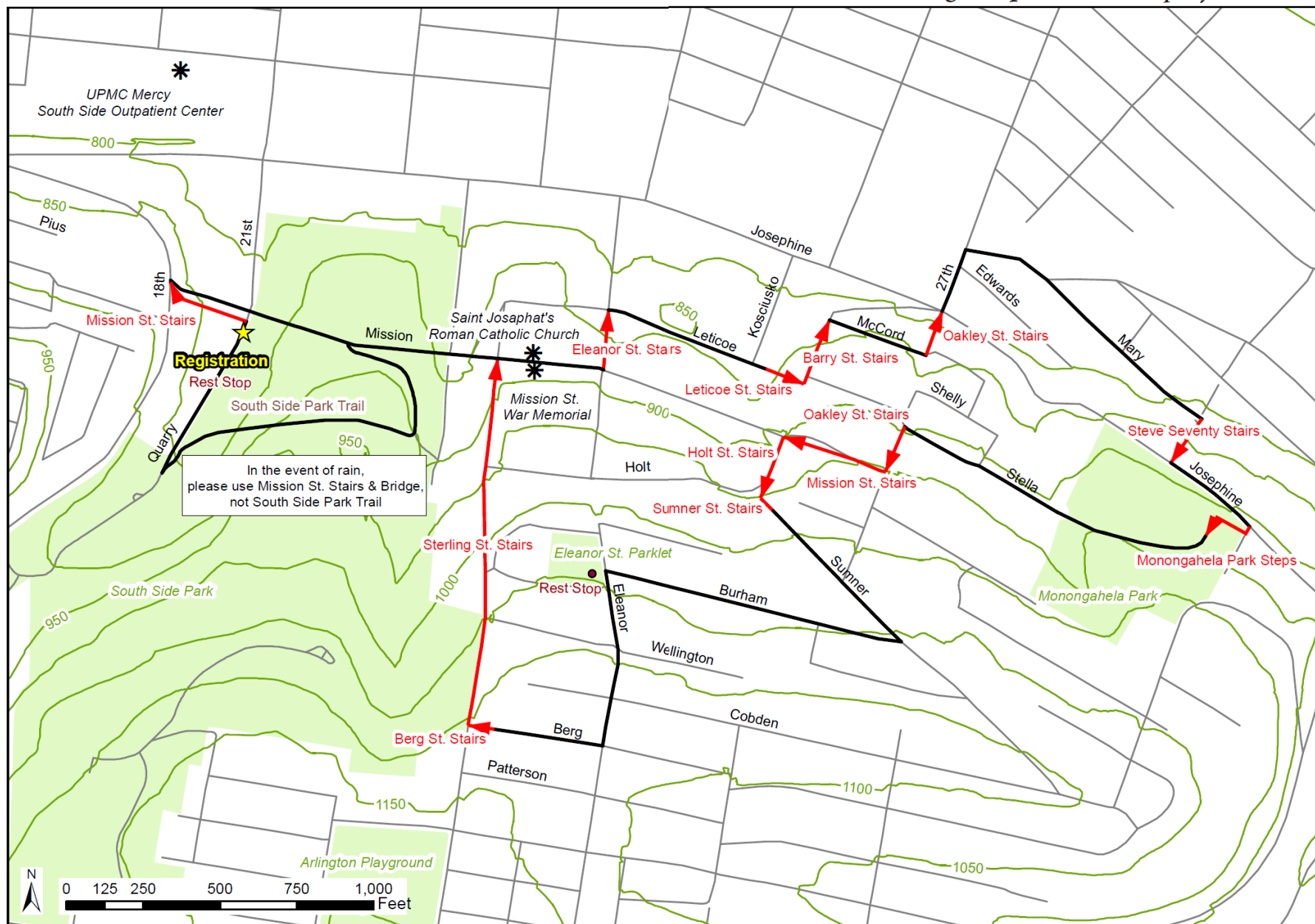
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# 2011 Black Route

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Pittsburgh StepTrek 2011 Maps by Tim Dolan



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1. **Start under the Mission St. Bridge** at the StepTrek Marketplace and registration in South Side Park.
- \* **South Side Park** - Efforts are under way to reclaim this 64-acre park that extends from Josephine St. below to the heights of the Slopes. In this hillside of mostly woods are ball fields and trails. Section by section, volunteers are working to make the green space more accessible by removing invasive knotweed and vines that choke the park. The South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association (SSSNA) partnered with the South Side Local Development Co. (SSLDC) on a comprehensive study and plan for the park that was funded by the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh. The plan is an example of how the South Side community collaborates to maintain and improve neighborhood assets.
2. **Mission St. Steps** – Climb the 102 steps under the Mission St. bridge to Mission Street. At the top of the steps, make a hard right onto the Mission Street Bridge.
3. **Join here from Gold Route: Mission St.** – Stay on Mission. The first bridge was built in 1939 as a project of the Public Works Administration under FDR. An SSSNA initiative brightened this area by replacing existing street lighting with higher wattage lamps. That's South Side Park below and rising up the hill to your right. After the bridge on the left is the Mission St. pumping station circa 1900, which delivers water into the neighborhood and surrounding area. Continue across second bridge.
4. **Mission St. at Sterling St.** – At this corner, on the left, is St. Josaphat Roman Catholic church
- \* **St. Josaphat Church** – Dedicated in 1916, the church was built to serve a Polish parish that was established in 1901. The building is Romanesque with a Byzantium influence evident in the arches, pillars and bell tower. The consolidation of Catholic churches a few years ago had limited its usage to weddings and funerals. The church closed permanently after a section of ceiling collapsed about the casket of the last caretaker during his funeral mass. The main altar held relics of St. Josaphat. In the rear, beneath the choir balcony, hung a picture of the Black Madonna. The church is slated to be converted into multiple living units by a Slopes resident. Many Polish descendants continue to inhabit this section of the Slopes. The names of relations and former residents who served in World Wars I & II are seen on the memorial tucked into the hillside across Mission St. from the church.
5. **Mission St.** - Proceed east along left side of Mission to Eleanor St.
6. **Eleanor St. Steps** – These steps begin at 2401 Mission Street. Descend the 100 steps to Leticoe Street. Notice the houses whose only access is from the steps. Moving day takes on new meaning here.
7. **Leticoe St.** – Walk up the street. In the 2500 block, just past the crest of the hill, look left to the houses tucked behind houses. Close quarters! Continue to Kosciuszko Way, named for one of the Polish generals who assisted America in its 1776 fight for independence.
8. **Leticoe St Steps** – Located at the eastern terminus of Leticoe St., these 3-ft. wide wooden steps were rebuilt in the 1990's. There are 57 steps. At the top is Barry St.
9. **Barry St. Steps** – Make left and keep left as you descend 26 steps, 5-ft. wide, built in 1945, to McCord St.
10. **McCord St.** – Make right and keep right on McCord to Oakley Way steps.
11. **Oakley Way Steps** – Make left. A total of 289 steps, the equivalent of 12 floors, stretch from Josephine St. below to Sumner St. above. Descend the 98 steps, built in 1928. Notice the foundations of long gone houses on the right. At Josephine St., cross at the stop sign to S. 27<sup>th</sup> St.
12. **S. 27<sup>th</sup> St.** – Continue down S. 27<sup>th</sup> St. to Mary St., located just before the railroad underpass.

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13. **Mary St.** – Make right and stay on the sidewalk. You are now in the area known as the Hollow. Stay right on Mary where it splits. Continue to Steve Seventy Way.
- \* **Steve Seventy Way** – The street is named after a Penna. State legislature who represented the area from 1979 to 1988. Since 1950, South 30<sup>th</sup> Street had been closed at the request of railroads serving the area's then-bustling steel mills. As a result, the only way into the largely Slovak community of the Hollow was along Mary St. Steve Seventy pushed to reopen the underpass to Sarah St., which came two years after his death in the 1990s and was renamed in his honor.
- \* **Kollar Club** – In the Hollow, a few blocks down on Mary Jane St., resides the John Kollar Slovak Literary & Library Society. Founded in 1913 and named for 19<sup>th</sup> Century Slovak poet, John Kollar, its original purpose was to teach English to Slovak immigrants and to orient them to their new life in America. The Pittsburgh Region is home to more Slovaks than any other area in the United States. The club continues in full operation preserving the Slovak language & culture, and serving as a social club and venue for live music.
14. **Steve Seventy Way Steps** – Make right and climb 108 steps to Josephine St. A third of the way up on the left, a set of steps connects houses built high above Mary St. that could not otherwise be accessed.
15. **Josephine St.** – Make left and walk up sidewalk. Across and lining the uphill side of the street are the concrete walls of a former water reservoir. Continue up to 3033 Josephine and cross at the walk.
16. **Northview St. Steps** – Climb 20 steps to Monongahela Park and descend ramp on right into the park.
  - \* **Monongahela Park** – Ahead is a large grassy field known as Monongahela Park. Years ago the area was a water reservoir. The basin was filled with earth in the 1950s. Cross the clearing and descend 18 steps to the basin. Cross the ball fields.
  - \* **Tear Drop Garden** – Neighbors have taken special care of the area and planted the garden against the metal railing. Its tear-drop shape originated the name. Look up and down the hill and you will see yellow markers of a 16" gas line that now occupies the former path of the J & L Coal Incline which carried coal from the American Mine near the top of the Slopes to J & L's iron making facility on the Flats below. The 1300 foot long incline was in operation from 1854 until sometime prior to 1930.
17. **Shelley St.** – Stay left and continue along Shelley where the Tear Drop Garden ends. A metal fencing divides the road. In 1935 the Work Projects Administration (WPA) terraced this part of the hillside and created the bi-level street topped with an iron fence. In 1998 Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation designated the Stella-Shelley fence as a historically significant landmark. Continue to 2724 Shelley where the road becomes Stella St.
18. **Stella St.** – Go ahead . . . toss your head back and give it your best Marlon Brando! On the left are two of eight townhouses built in 2003 by the South Side Local Development Company in cooperation with the SSSNA. These new homes had to be shoe-horned into the hillside. Continue walking. Past 2711 Stella, lean over the fence to peer into a garden landscaped with hosta, fruit and ornamental trees. Proceed to Oakley Way.
19. **Oakley Way** – Make left and climb 97 steps to Mission St.
20. **Mission St.** – Make right but keep to the left side of Mission. Climb 5 steps and continue walking. Ahead is St. Josaphat's Chapel and the spectacular view that takes in Mt. Washington, the West End Bridge, the roofs of the South Side and the City beyond the Monongahela River. Stay left and descend the 80 steps to Barry St. These 4-foot wide steps were built in 1950.
21. **Barry St. Steps** – Cross to the other side of Barry. Make a left and climb the 48 steps to the curve. At the top, cross Holt St. to the steps that start before the first house on the left.
22. **Sumner St. Steps** – These 85 steps lead through a canopy of trees. After the last step, keep walking along Sumner St., past Oakley Way.

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23. **Sumner Street** – Here, the lots start to widen into yards with gardens. As the road rises, notice the homes set below street level on the left side. Sets of steps drop down to a lower sidewalk. This is a feature of a few streets scattered about the Slopes. Turn around to take in the city view. Continue to Burham.
24. **Burham St.** - Make a right. Walk Burham to Eleanor St. and the small community park.
- \* **Eleanor St. Parklet & Rest Stop** - Every neighborhood needs a place where children can play. Tucked into the hillside, this parklet was rebuilt by Citiparks a few years ago. The terrace of playground equipment and benches offers a stunning view of downtown and the Point, and is a favorite site to watch fireworks. Take a breather to enjoy the view and a bottle of water.
25. **Eleanor St.** - Make left and continue up Eleanor St. on the left side. A much needed handrail assists the ascent up the steep slope. A classic paper street, it is the only “street” to climb from Josephine to the top of the Slopes. At night, the vertical path of its street lights are visible from Oakland and the Birmingham Bridge. Cross at Cobden St. and continue on right side of Eleanor to Berg St.
26. **Berg St.** – Make right and climb the nine steps on the right side. Continue walking along the paved portion of Berg to the steps at the street’s end. Stop. Relax. You have reached the highest elevation in the 2011 StepTrek! Take in the view of the rivers, downtown and the rooftops of South Side.
27. **Berg St. Steps** – Descend these 43 wooden steps constructed in 1997. In front is South Side Park.
28. **Sterling St. Steps** - At the end of Berg, turn right and descend Sterling St. steps. Built in 1951, the steps connect to Patterson St. above and Mission St. below. While descending these 253 steps, notice Oakland and the Flats in front. To the left is downtown.
29. **Mission St.** – If thirsty, stop in at Garvey’s for a cold one. When ready, make a left onto Mission. After the first bridge is the Mission St. pumping station. From here, trekkers have the option of returning to the StepTrek Marketplace (#30) or taking the optional course via the woods of South Side Park, which connects to the Gold Route and the and StepTrek Marketplace (#31).
30. **Return to StepTrek Marketplace** – Cross the second bridge to S. 18<sup>th</sup> St. Descend the 102 steps behind the bus shelter on the left to South Side Park and StepTrek Marketplace.
31. **Alternate Route through South Side Park to Gold Route** – Weather permitting, take the alternate route to a dirt trail that explores a section of woods inside the park. Volunteers and green "Alternate Route" signs will guide you. On the left, across from the pumping station, is a paved lane that leads past the Bandi Shaum sign. Ascend the lane. Pass the baseball field to the right. Continue up dirt path as it winds to the right. Cross the plateau at the top and enjoy the view of the City and Oakland. At the far end is a marked trail through the woods. Follow it for about a quarter mile to where it exits the woods above the serpentine steps. **Return to StepTrek Marketplace:** Descend 72 steps to return to S. 21<sup>st</sup> St. and StepTrek Marketplace. **To join Gold Route:** Cross above the steps and make left onto Saber Way. Please turn to the **Gold Route** narrative for directions.

SOUTH SIDE  
S L O P E S  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
ASSOCIATION

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# Save the Date!



# Oct 1-7, 2020

In our 20<sup>th</sup> year of the Pittsburgh StepTrek, the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association intends to support our community and region with an outdoor, family friendly, socially distanced, and safe event that will help people to get out and explore our neighborhood. We understand the implications of our current situation with the pandemic and financial fallout that has accompanied it. Our intent is to produce an enjoyable experience in our neighborhood, while keeping our distance from each other.

## StepTrek.org