

Déjà Vu: StepTrek Huge Success



The first Saturday of October is fast becoming a favorite of people both near and far as they make their annual pilgrimage to the South Side Slopes. This year we welcomed 800 people that enjoyed gorgeous 80+ degree weather as they sweated out their boredom with cookie cutter neighborhoods and suburbs as they climbed the steps of the slopes.



In our most financially successful trek in the 13 years of its existence (\$21,000 gross profit, \$9,000 net for StepTrek!), we expanded our signature event to include an orienteering course thanks to the Western Pennsylvania Orienteering Club and Alexis Rzewski. The event also featured mobile maps for smart phone users. The expanded StepTrek Marketplace welcomed both food and fashion trucks and fashion to create a great atmosphere among the music, volunteers, and trekkers. The PPG Zoo and Aquarium got into the fun this year with a chalk artist and shark mascot.



This event is defying the theme of this year's event of "What Goes up Must Come Down" as we grow to entertain and work out a consistent crowd of enthusiasts falling in love with what our neighborhood has to offer year after year. The successes of the past few years are going to allow us to even further expand this event in the years to come as the financial gains increase our ability to promote the event to an even wider audience.

Brian Oswald



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SSSNA Awarded \$45,000 Grant for Work in South Side Park

The SSSNA is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a \$45,000 grant from the Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development to continue the revitalization of South Side Park. This grant will be used to continue the great work that the Student Conservation Association has been doing in the park and also allow us to work with Mount Washington Community Development Corporation who has a proven track record in park revitalization.

In addition, the SSSNA will be working with the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to have a Park Coordinator to coordinate all of the various groups in the park and work to further engage the community. The SSSNA will continue to seek additional funding for additional park projects. More details will be announced on specific projects as we get to work.

Thanks to SSSNA members Brian Oswald, Moss Clark and the South Side Park Committee, Josh Nard at the Student Conservation Association, and all of the park volunteers for their efforts to keep South Side Park a priority in our Community.

Brad Palmisiano

OPENSACEPGH Plans for Our Parks

OPENSACEPGH is the open space, parks, and recreation arm of the City of Pittsburgh's first-ever comprehensive plan (PLANPGH), making recommendations for usage across the city. OPENSACEPGH has recently proposed changes for many of the open spaces located in the South Side Slopes. So that we can speak as a neighborhood about the recommendations listed below, the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association will be forming a working group of concerned residents to ensure the parks and open spaces in our neighborhood best serve the people who live and play here. If

you are interested in sharing your perspective, please contact Jamin Bogi at jamin.bogi@southsideslopes.org.

Arlington Park

Located on Salisbury Street between Fernleaf and Sterling Streets.

Recommendation: REDEVELOP

- Include this site along with Arlington Gym in the master planning effort for South Side Park. Retain a neighborhood park function in the vicinity, but consider the relationship of all three sites. Include trail connections and access from Arlington Park into Southside Park.
- Remove the closed pool.

Cobden St. Park

Cobden St. Park is located off Cobden Street.

Recommendation: NATURALIZE
PGHSNAP Action Planning Strategy: Enhance

- This site does not currently serve a neighborhood park function, as its level of development is very low. It is adjacent to a swath of tax delinquent or publicly owned property, all of which could be naturalized. Combined, the sites could be placed on the market, though interest may be unlikely due to the isolation.

Eleanor Street Park

Eleanor Street Park is located on Eleanor Street between Sierra and Primrose Streets.

Recommendation: INVEST

- Invest in this site to improve its appearance and function. Eliminate fencing at the perimeter, enhance pathways, and plant hill slopes with low maintenance shrubs and groundcover. Add trees.

Monongahela Park

Monongahela Park is accessible off Josephine Street.

Recommendation: REDEVELOP

- Redevelop the park to include a variety of neighborhood park elements.
- Improve the entry to the park.
- Develop the flat area at the southeast corner of the site as a formal park overlook, repurposing it from serving as a gravel parking area.
- Connect this site with a trail through the publicly owned swath of land connecting to Cobden Park, a site that is recommended for naturalization.

Winters Park

Winters Park is located off Shamokin Street.

Recommendation: NATURALIZE

PGHSNAP Action Planning Strategy: Stabilize

- This park would better serve the neighborhood if returned to its natural state because of its difficult location and its location in a Stabilize strategy area under PGHSNAP.

South Side Park

Recommendation: REDEVELOP

- Designate this site as a signature community park.
- Develop a master plan for future development of this park as a community park with a trails and outdoor recreation focus. Consider incorporating Arlington Park into this master plan effort.
- Develop a network of multi-use trails with varying levels of difficulty and multiple trailheads.
- Adventure recreation should be considered at the lower section of this park due to its

topography, entrance, and proximity to the Carson Street business district.

- Provide on-site parking – consider locating it off South 21st Street.

Jamin Bogi

Put a Lid on It: Keeping Trash Under Control

Ever wonder why there's so much litter in gutters, vacant lots, storm drains, and other places around the neighborhood? Believe it or not, improper trash storage is one of the main sources of street litter. Bags not tied properly, bags out days before pickup day that animals rip open are just some of the ways litter pollutes our community.



Trash improperly stored is an eyesore in our beautiful neighborhood

We've been spreading the word about how to store garbage so it doesn't end up as an ugly eyesore, or clog up our aging city storm water system. We've been doing walkabouts, talking to neighbors, asking them to help keep an eye on households who are not storing garbage properly, and how to submit reports via the city's 311 program, when necessary [dial 3-1-1 or visit: <http://pittsburghpa.gov/311/form>].

City ordinance states that garbage stored outside should be in cans with tightly fitting lids. All trash (in cans and bags) should be placed on the street after 6pm the day before pickup and put away by 9pm the day of pickup.

So, you might be asking, what can I do? If you keep trash outside, keep it in cans with lids. It's as simple as that.

If you have any helpful tips for storing your trash, or have problem properties in your neighborhood you'd like us to know about, please share with us [Email us at trash@southsideslopes.org]. We'll keep everyone posted on this initiative. This is a problem we can all help solve!

Kristen Raup



Trash properly stored in can with lid

South Side Slopes Trash Initiative Update

The Outreach Committee of the SSSNA met with Councilman Bruce Kraus to update him on our "trash tools" and Trash Initiative efforts. Councilman Kraus offered the following helpful tips:

- 311 reports- Neighbors should copy his office and here's how. When you get the service request number (not the ticket number) forward it to barbara.arroyo@pittsburghpa.gov from Councilman Kraus's office. He also mentioned that if you use the phone rather than computer

and call too close to closing time, you may not get a service request number so call early.

- If an offending property is a rental and we've tried 311, we can request a copy of the landlord checklist through Bruce's office. If it does not exist, there are fines involved. Please let us know of offending tenants and properties in your neighborhood by e-mailing trash@southsideslopes.org

- Landlord Project- Councilman Kraus will add his signature to a proposed letter to offending landlords from the three South Side community groups. The Councilman also said that his office could help us track down some landlords.

- Students become the solution. You may know that there is an effort going on in Oakland with Pitt students to help improve trash and other pressing issues and relationships with community members. We will be working to engage students in a similar fashion in the slopes through using Duquesne volunteers for our walkabouts.

- Councilman Kraus assured us that after the election, there will be a much more focused effort on cleaning up city neighborhoods and a major push for legal trash storage.

Betty Kripp

South Side Stories Returns to City Theater

South Siders and fans of the South Side, help spread the word. If you missed Tami Dixon's delightful and heartwarming SOUTH SIDE STORIES last season, City Theatre welcomes Tami back for a limited run of SOUTH SIDE STORIES, January 8 – 26, Wednesdays through Sundays in the Hamburg Studio Theatre. Tickets are on sale now via City Theatre's Box Office: 412-431-CITY (2489) or online, <http://www.citytheatrecompany.org/play/south-side-stories-2/>

President's Message: King of the Hillside

2013 has been a very successful year for the SSSNA. On top of another sensational StepTrek, we have recently been funded by PPND at \$45,000 for programming and trail building in South Side Park. This wonderful 65+ acre park has been a strong focus of this organization over the past few years, and the hard work is starting to be recognized as potential by the very people that will allow the successes to continue.

By being a recipient of these funds we are opening the door to making a reality what many of us involved in the South Side Park Task Force have long dreamed since we first stepped foot onto the plateau. Despite the encounters with vagrants and illegal campers who disrespect our neighborhood by littering and sullyng this wonderful green space; we are about to launch this park into the realm of Emerald View Park, or even Schenley and Frick, as we turn the tide towards positive use.

To make this transition we are going to need the assistance our neighbors to share in the work and success that will benefit us all by expanding our green space, and allowing for more outdoor recreational activities than anyone ever dreamed possible in our urban atmosphere overlooking the city. If you are able to take a walk in South Side Park please remember that campers and dirt bikes are illegal in a city designated park and the police are aware of the detrimental effects they have on our park. Please call 911 to report any of this activity so that it may be curtailed before they become too entrenched. They all have been warned by police of their illegal activities within the park, and the only way to ensure we can retake this green space is to keep the pressure on.

Brian Oswald, President

brian.oswald@southsideslopes.org

Paper Streets of Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh: Known primarily for sports, its undeniable loyalty to the colors black and gold, and in the past decade, as a transforming postindustrial city. Those were the stereotypes that followed me into my Shrinking Landscapes class at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. It was over a year ago that I sat in this class and was tasked with choosing a 'shrinking city' from a list of postindustrial cities in the United States.

After choosing a city, we were asked to research and create a guide or game that reveals a less-known aspect of the city. I selected Pittsburgh, not by chance but from the persuasion of a passionate University of Pittsburgh alum. She was the first person to introduce me to the innovation and resilience of this adaptive city.

During my initial research I discovered a little known fact about Pittsburgh's history that is still evident throughout the city: Paper Streets. In 1937 newspaper columnist Ernie Pyle wrote "[Pittsburgh] must have been laid out by a mountain goat. It's up and down and around and around and in betwixt." The stairs were built to help pedestrians navigate this daunting topography before the age of the automobile. In total there are 712 sets of stairs comprising 44,645 treads and 24,090 vertical feet, effectively making Pittsburgh the city with the most stairs in the United States.

Some of these staircases are legally called streets but only appear on a map, which gives them their appropriate name 'paper streets'. These pieces of infrastructure found everywhere connect homes, neighborhoods, communities, and the city. These steps are an integral part of the city's history and bear a relationship to Pittsburgh's many diverse ethnic neighborhoods. 66 of the city's 90 neighborhoods contain steps. The paper streets, invisible to the vehicle, are what stitch together the urban fabric of Pittsburgh.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. wrote, "No city of equal size in America or perhaps the world, is compelled to adapt its growth to such difficult complications of

high ridges, deep valleys, and precipitous slopes as Pittsburgh." My final project for the Shrinking Landscapes class was a map highlighting all of the steps of Pittsburgh's neighborhoods and a set of collector cards for each staircase. Together the map and collector cards recast the steps dealing with the steep slopes as a challenging game. If a partaker climbed all of the steps in Pittsburgh, they would have nearly climbed Mt. Everest.

It was through this class and assignment that I immediately realized that Pittsburgh is taking on a new identity. This tough, industrial and sports-crazed town is being looked to for its repurposing and adaptive attitude. Yes, Pittsburgh is considered one of America's shrinking cities, and yes, Pittsburgh is still climbing out of that time, but it is creating a strong community that embraces its past while transforming for its future.

The South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association is a prime example of a group that is dedicated to preserving these pieces of historic infrastructure for future generations. Their mission goes beyond maintenance to focus on the community that is directly linked by the steps and to create awareness of this unique feature for the rest of Pittsburgh. They host events throughout the year that range from cleaning up parks, removing invasive weeds, creating community gardens, lighting the stairs and their main event, Step Trek. This event takes participants on varying routes of difficulty throughout the neighborhood via several different sets of South Side steps.

As my research of Pittsburgh progressed, so did my appreciation of the city. I applied and was awarded the Penny White Grant at Harvard to come to Pittsburgh, walk the steps, and visit with the South Side Slopes Association. Their motto "Neighbors working together to make the Slopes a more livable, beautiful, and safe community" is exactly what I encountered on my first trip to Pittsburgh and my first visit with the association. They are helping people discover Pittsburgh one step at a time. In fact,

two friends that lived in Pittsburgh joined me for Step Trek last year. Even though both of them had lived in Pittsburgh for years this was the first time they had heard of and participated in the Step Trek, and I was struck by how many times they repeated "I had no idea this was here" as we walked up and down the stairs.

Community is not made overnight and does not simply happen with the right type of programming. Community happens organically. The South Side Neighborhood Association is building that community, a community of people discovering their neighborhood 'one step at a time'.

Anna J. Cawrse

St. Josephat Church to be Developed



The owner of St Josaphat Church located on Mission Street would like to inform the South Side Slopes residents that he has hired Peter Margittai Architects to develop the architectural documentation for converting the church into an apartment complex. The owner aims to create about 20 luxury apartments and 25 parking spaces on the property.

The architects will seek approval for the development proposal at zoning and community group meetings in the near future. Slopes residents are welcome to offer their input at these meetings. More updates on this project will follow as information becomes available.

Pavel Yakolev

Harvest Party Ends Main Growing Season and Bandi Schaum

On Saturday September 28th a Harvest Party was held at the Community Garden to end the second official growing season in style. Gardeners brought food and drink to share and enjoyed live music.

With the second season coming to a close, we look back on how far the garden has come. This year the City of Pittsburgh installed a water line in the garden. The Pavilion and a water collection structure were installed courtesy of the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association. A tool shed was built thanks to Grow Pittsburgh.

And while a lot has been accomplished there is still a lot of work left to do. Grow Pittsburgh will be leaving the garden at the end of this year, leaving the oversight in the hands of community representatives to ensure that it continues to grow and improve each year. The garden committee will be meeting once a month during the fall and winter to plan for next season. If you are interested in being a part of the committee or have questions about the garden please contact Sarah Shea at sarah.shea@southsideslopes.org
Sarah Shea

Help Support the SSSNA



Please help to Support the SSSNA and its mission of *neighbors working together to make the Slopes a more livable, beautiful, and safe community*. Donations are accepted through our website www.southsideslopes.org on the PayPal link on the right side) or you can mail a check to "SSSNA, PO Box 4248, Pittsburgh, PA 15203." You can also access our website via the QR code above.



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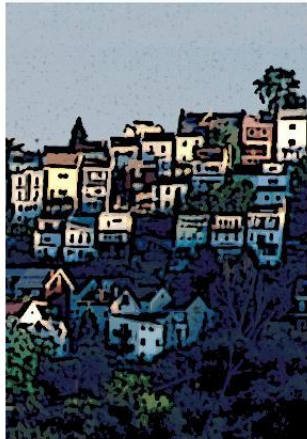
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Mark Your Calendars:

SSSNA Holiday Party-Tuesday, December 10th,
7 p.m., St. Paul's Monastery Retreat Center