



Frick Park

City of Pittsburgh Historic Landmark Nomination

Prepared by Preservation Pittsburgh



412.256.8755
1501 Reedsdale St., Suite 5003
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
www.preservationpgh.org

August 2023



HISTORIC NOMINATION FORM

Historic Preservation Staff Signature:

S. Chin

Fee Schedule

Individual Landmark Nomination: \$100.00
 District Nomination: To be determined

**Nomination is incomplete without historic preservation staff signature

1. HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY: Frick Park
 2. CURRENT NAME OF PROPERTY: Frick Park

3. LOCATION

- a. Street: 1981 Beechwood Blvd.
 b. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15217
 c. Neighborhood: Point Breeze/Squirrel Hill/Swisshelm Park/Regent Square

4. OWNERSHIP

- d. Owner(s): City of Pittsburgh
 e. Street: 414 Grant Street
 f. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15219
 g. Phone: (412) 255-2626

5. CLASSIFICATION AND USE – Check all that apply

<u>Type</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Current Use:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Private – home	<u>Park</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/> Private – other	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public – government	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public - other	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Place of religious worship	_____

6. NOMINATED BY:

a. Name: Matthew Falcone - Preservation Pittsburgh, Councilperson Barb Warwick, et al. (Geri Smith - Frick Park Friends, Regina Kakadelis - Point Breeze Organization, James Snow - Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Mike Hiller -UpstreamPgh)

b. Street: 1501 Reedsdale Street, Suite 5003, Pittsburgh, Pa 15233

7. DESCRIPTION (412) 417-5910 Email: mfalcone@preservationpgh.org

Provide a narrative description of the structure, district, site, or object. If it has been altered over time, indicate the date(s) and nature of the alteration(s). (Attach additional pages as needed)

If Known:

a. Year Built: 1919 (developed further in the 1930s, 1963, & 1996)

b. Architectural Style: Park

c. Architect/Builder: John Russell Pope, Innocenti and Webel, Simonds & Simonds

Narrative: See attached.

8. HISTORY

Provide a history of the structure, district, site, or object. Include a bibliography of sources consulted. (Attach additional pages as needed.) Include copies of relevant source materials with the nomination form (see Number 11).

Narrative: See attached.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

The *Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title 11, Historic Preservation, Chapter 1: Historic Structures, Districts, Sites and Objects* lists ten criteria, at least one of which must be met for Historic Designation. Describe how the structure, district, site, or object meets one or more of these criteria and complete a narrative discussing in detail each area of significance. (Attach additional pages as needed)

The structure, building, site, district, object is significant because of (check all that apply):

1. Its location as a site of a significant historic or prehistoric event or activity;
2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
3. Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
4. Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
5. Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail;

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6. Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource;
 7. Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 8. Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction;
 9. Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or
 10. Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.

Narrative: See attached.

10. INTEGRITY

In addition, the ordinance specifies that “Any area, property, site, structure or object that meets any one or more of the criteria listed above shall also have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration”. (Attach additional pages as needed)

Narrative: See attached.

11. NOTIFICATION/CONSENT OF PROPERTY OWNER(S)

1.3(a)(2) Community information process.

Preceding submission of a nomination form for a District, the Historic Review Commission shall conduct at least one (1) public information meeting within or near the boundaries of the proposed district, which shall include at least one (1) member of the Department of City Planning and one (1) Commission member, to discuss the possible effects of designation. Notice shall be given to the owners of property in the proposed district in accordance with Section 1.3(b) below. The final public information meeting shall be held no more than six months before the nomination form is submitted.

1.3(a)(1)(a) Subsection F.

In the case of a nomination as a Historic District, by community-based organizations or by any individual, but in either event the nomination shall be accompanied by a petition signed by the owners of record of twenty-five (25) percent of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed District.

- Please attach documentation of your efforts to gain property owner’s consent.-

** The nomination of any religious property shall be accompanied by a signed letter of consent from the property’s owner.

12. PHOTO LOGS: *Please Attach*

13. BIBLIOGRAPHY: *Please Attach*

14. NOMINATION FORM PREPARED BY:

a. Name: Angelique Bamberg; Meredith Warden for Preservation Pittsburgh

b. Street: 233 Amber St.; 1108 Lancaster Ave.

c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15206 / 15218

d. Phone: (412) 956-5517; (412) 315-5021 Email: _____

e. Signature: _____



HISTORIC NOMINATION – INSTRUCTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THE NOMINATION FORM

1. Indicate the original name of the property if it is currently known by a different name; e.g. Union Station.
2. Indicate the current name of the property
3. Indicate the street address for the property. For districts, attach a separate sheet listing the street address of each property included in the nomination and a clear street map of the area showing the boundaries of the proposed district.
4. Indicate the owner of the property and his or her mailing address. For districts, attach a separate sheet listing the owner of each property and his or her mailing address.
5. Check the classification as indicated.
 - a. **“Historic Structure”** means anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires directly or indirectly, a permanent location on the land, including walks, fences, signs, steps and sidewalks at which events that made a significant contribution to national, state or local history occurred or which involved a close association with the lives of people of nations, state or local significance; or an outstanding example of a period, style, architectural movement, or method of construction; or one of the last surviving works of a pioneer architect, builder or designer; or one of the last survivors of a particular style or period of construction.
 - b. **“Historic District”** means a defined territorial division of land which shall include more than one (1) contiguous or related parcels of property, specifically identified by separate resolution, at which events occurred that made a significant contribution to national, state, or local history, or which contains more than one historic structure or historic landmarks, or which contains groups, rows or sets of structures or landmarks, or which contains an aggregate example of a period, style, architectural movements or method of construction, providing distinguishing characteristics of the architectural type or architectural period it represents.
 - c. **“Historic Site”** means the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure whether standing, ruined or vanished, where the location itself maintains historical or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structures.
 - d. **“Historic Object”** means a material thing of historic significance for functional, aesthetic cultural or scientific reasons that may be, by nature or design, moveable yet related to a specific setting or environment.
6. Indicate the person(s) responsible for the nomination. Please note: According to the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

“Nomination of an area, property, site, or object for consideration and designation as a Historic Structure, Historic District, Historic Site, or Historic Object may be submitted to the Historic Review Commission by any of the following:

- a. The Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh
 - b. A Member of the Historic Review Commission
 - c. A Member of the City Planning Commission
 - d. A Member of the Pittsburgh City Council
 - e. The Owner of Record or any person residing in the City of Pittsburgh for at least one year (for the nomination of a Historic Structure, Site or Object)
 - f. A signed petition of 25% of the owners of record (for the nomination of a Historic District)
7. Write a physical description of the nominated property or district. Include the following information as applicable:
- architectural style(s)
 - arrangement of architectural elements
 - building materials
 - method(s) of construction
 - visual character
 - street pattern
 - density
 - type and arrangement of buildings
 - topography
 - history of the development of the area
8. Provide a narrative history of the structure, district, site, or object. Include the following information when available:
- History of the development of the area;
 - Circumstances which brought the structure, district, site, or object into being;
 - Biographical information on architects, builders, developers, artisans, planners, or others who created or contributed to the structure, district, site, or object;
 - Contextual background on building type(s) and/or style(s);
 - Importance of the structure, district, site, or object in the larger community over the course of its existence.
 - Include a bibliography of all sources consulted at the end. Where historical information is uncertain or disputed, reference sources in the text.
9. Listed below are the categories and criteria for historic designation as set forth in the Pittsburgh Historic Preservation Ordinance. Describe in detail how the structure, district, site, or object meets one or more of the criteria. According to that legislation in Section 1.4 of the Pittsburgh Historic Preservation Ordinance, *Criteria for Designation*, a building must meet at least one of the following criteria in order to be designated:
1. Its location as a site of a significant historic or prehistoric event or activity;
 2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 3. Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
 4. Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;

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5. Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail;
 6. Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource;
 7. Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 8. Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction;
 9. Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or
 10. Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.
10. In addition, the ordinance specifies that “Any area, property, site, structure or object that meets any one or more of the criteria listed above shall also have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration.”
 11. The nomination must be accompanied by evidence that the nominator has made a good-faith effort to communicate his or her interest in the historic designation of this landmark or district to the owner(s) of these properties. Describe how this was done, and attach evidence that the owner(s) of the nominated landmark or of the properties within the nominated district have been informed of the nomination. This may include a copy of a notification letter with a mailing list, a letter confirming phone calls, or a petition signed by affected property owners.
 12. Clear photographs of the nominated buildings or districts should accompany the nomination form. The applicant shall include photographs of all elevations of an individual building and its setting, or the front elevation of each building in a district. In the case of closely spaced buildings or rowhouses, several buildings may be included in one photograph. Each photograph must be labeled with the street address of the building(s) and the month and year the photograph was taken.
 13. Copies of major supporting documents should accompany the nomination form. Such documents may include, but are not limited to:
 - historic photographs;
 - historic and contemporary maps;
 - historic or contemporary texts describing the subject property or district;
 - historic or contemporary texts describing people, places, or events that comprise the historic context of the subject property or district.
 - Oversized materials (such as architectural drawings) and materials too fragile to copy may be accepted.

PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of the nominator to provide the Historic Review Commission and its Staff with information sufficient to fairly evaluate the nomination. **Incomplete nomination forms will not be accepted. Fee must be included. Nominations must be submitted in both electronic and hard-copy format.**

CHECKLIST: *Frick Park*

- #1-6 Nomination Form:** Address, Ownership, Classification, Nominator Info.
- #7: Description
- #8: History
- #9: Significance
- #10 Integrity**
- #11 Consent of Property Owners**
- #12 Photographs of Property:** numbered and labeled
- #13 List of Supporting Documents**

- Fee**
- Hard-Copy nomination**
- Electronic nomination (Word Format for text).**

Nomination form is incomplete without the signature of Historic Preservation Staff.

Please email HistoricReview@pittsburghpa.gov to schedule a meeting.

**Frick Park
Historic Nomination Form
Addendum**

Individual Property Historic Nomination Form Historic Name(s): Frick Park

Current Name: Frick Park

Location: Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Neighborhood: Squirrel Hill South

Ownership: City of Pittsburgh

Type: Site

Historic Use: Designed Landscape

Current Use: Landscape/Park, Recreation and Culture, Education

Descriptive Narrative

Year Built: 1919 (further developed in the 1930s, 1963, and 1996)

Architectural Style: Designed Landscape/Park

Architects: John Russell Pope, Innocenti and Webel, Simonds & Simonds

Creators: Henry Clay Frick, Helen Clay Frick

7. Description

Frick Park is the largest park in the City of Pittsburgh at approximately 644 acres. The park is located about 5 miles from downtown Pittsburgh in the city's east end. Its largest area lies south of Forbes Avenue and north of the Penn-Lincoln Parkway (U.S. I-376) between the neighborhoods of Point Breeze and Regent Square (to the park's east) and Squirrel Hill (to its west). Narrower segments extend the park north of Forbes Avenue alongside Homewood Cemetery to Reynolds Street opposite Clayton, the historic Henry Clay Frick estate; east, following the course of the Nine Mile Run stream valley on the northern edge of the Parkway; and south, following the Nine Mile Run stream below the Parkway almost to the Monongahela River.

On its interior, Frick Park's dominant feature is its natural landform of wooded slopes and valley floors, ridges, ravines, and creeks, which serve as a rich habitat for native plant and animal species. Fern Hollow (photo 1), Falls Ravine (photo 2), and Nine Mile Run (photo 3) form a system of lowland stream beds and watersheds. Steep, wooded hillsides lead from these up to plateaus, such as Clayton Hill and Riverview, with views of surrounding areas.

Trails ranging from 1/2 to 2 miles in length, from flat to steep, extend and loop through this landscape of wetlands and woodlands. The trails cross Nine Mile Run and other, smaller streams that meander through the park on simple footbridges (photo 4-5). Trails are paved in asphalt, gravel, crushed stone, or earth, depending on location and use. Some sections close to the Nine Mile Run stream bed are boardwalks, and wooden steps ascend some of the steeper hills (photo 6). Vehicular access, active use areas, recreational facilities, and architectural gateways are focused along the park's perimeter, where it abuts adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Park signage is rustic except for that incorporated into the five stone entrance structures designed for four park gateways by John Russell Pope (described below). Four of these ca. 1935 structures are shelters or gatehouses; one is a cairn. The park contains five additional buildings: the Biddle Building (ca. 1930), the Frick Park Lawn Bowling Club (1940), two buildings in the English Lane complex (1959), and the Frick Environmental Center (2016). A steel arch bridge carrying Forbes Avenue over Fern Hollow is located within the boundaries of the park. The park also

contains miscellaneous uncounted small structures and furnishings, such as simple picnic shelters, picnic tables, utilitarian restroom buildings, benches, bulletin boards, fencing, stairs, footbridges, interpretive signage, and trash receptacles (photos 5, 7).

Frick Park generally lacks firm boundaries among its various zones, but is large enough to be described in terms of them. Some of the park's areas retain characteristics associated with their previous uses along with design elements from the development of the park landscape during the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. These areas are described from north to south:

Homewood Gateway, Reynolds Street and Upper Frick Park

Frick Park above Forbes Avenue is the area closest to Henry Clay Frick's estate, Clayton. It is part of the 151-acre original Frick bequest and located directly east of Homewood Cemetery.

The Homewood Gateway is at the northernmost tip of Frick Park, opposite Reynolds Street from the Frick Art and Historical Center, a cultural complex which contains Clayton (now a house museum), various other buildings original to the Frick estate, an art museum commissioned by Helen Clay Frick and opened in 1970, and a modern visitors' center. The gateway is marked by a stone gatehouse built to the design of John Russell Pope ca. 1935 (photo 8). The gatehouse has an arched center pavilion with limestone trim, a tall slate chateausque roof which echoes that of Clayton, and a single chimney on one side. It is flanked by windowed storage rooms, accessed via doors inside the main arch, and angled stone walls. Limestone tablets in the walls, one on each side of the gatehouse, are inscribed "FRICK PARK." The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy restored the gatehouse as a pilot project of the Pittsburgh Parks Master Plan in 2000 and added new plantings of sugar maples, juneberries, flowering dogwoods, and forsythia to its setting.

A paved path leads through the arch into a pastoral landscape of lawn dotted with shade and specimen trees along Reynolds Street (photo 9). At the southeastern end of this are two 120-foot-square lawn bowling greens and the building of the Frick Park Lawn Bowling Club, a small stone structure constructed by the National Youth Association in 1940 (photos 10-11). Trails lead from the lawn area along Reynolds Street into the wooded interior of the park (photo 12). These trails descend to meet the Tranquil Trail, which follows the floor of Fern Hollow 1.2 miles north-south through the park (photo 13).

Forbes Avenue

Forbes Avenue runs east-west between Squirrel Hill and Point Breeze/Regent Square. It is one of only two local streets to cross Frick Park, but it does so far above the grade of the park itself.¹ A three-hinged steel arch bridge constructed in 1901 (reconstructed 1972) carries Forbes Avenue over the Fern Hollow Ravine below (photo 14). Another of John Russell Pope's 1930s gatehouse structures stands on the southwestern end of this bridge, where a short spur trail enters the park from Forbes Avenue to connect to the Clayton Loop Trail. This is a small shelter house with arched openings, a hipped slate roof, and a limestone tablet inscribed "FRICK PARK" (photo 15). West of the bridge, Forbes Avenue serves as the northern boundary of Frick Park; on its

¹ The other is Commercial Street through the Nine Mile Run park addition below the Parkway, an area not originally planned as park land.

opposite side lies Homewood Cemetery. A cylindrical stone cairn by John Russell Pope stands at the intersection of Forbes Avenue and Beechwood Boulevard. It has a copper pointed dome roof and flanking stone walls and bears a limestone tablet inscribed “FRICK PARK” (photo 16).

S. Braddock Avenue

At the eastern end of the Forbes Avenue Bridge lies the intersection of Forbes and S. Braddock Avenues; from here to Biddle Avenue along S. Braddock is the park’s most active edge. There is a large, nature-themed playground southwest of the intersection at Forbes and Braddock which features an imaginary stream, natural rocks, and native plantings (photo 17). South of the playground are a baseball field and Pittsburgh’s only red clay tennis courts, constructed with clay moved from the Pittsburgh Country Club purchased by the Frick Park trustees in 1936 (photos 18-19). South of the tennis courts is the Biddle entrance to the park. This features a surface parking lot with access to the head of the Braddock Trail and the Biddle Building, a one-and-a-half-story, red-brick, nominally Colonial Revival Style building designed by the Pittsburgh Department of Public Works in 1929 to house park offices and maintenance facilities (photo 20).

Clayton Hill

Clayton Hill, off of Beechwood Boulevard just south of its intersection with Forbes Avenue, contains much of the original Frick Park bequest (“Frick’s Woods”) and the park’s most formal landscape composition, designed by Innocenti and Webel in the 1930s and restored with the construction of the new Frick Environmental Center in 2016.

A governor’s drive off of Beechwood Boulevard defines a crescent-shaped lawn planted with mature shade trees (photo 21). On the park side of the drive are a pair of stone gatehouses designed, like the park’s other stone entrance structures, by John Russell Pope and constructed ca. 1935 (photo 22). The gatehouses have chateausque slate roofs and limestone trim. The larger of the two is fully enclosed and displays an arched entrance doorway, arched wall dormer, and a tall chimney. The smaller is an open shelter with ornamental wrought iron window and door grates.

The gatehouses flank a broad paved path leading through a double alley of trees to the site of the Clayton Fountain. The original fountain was removed in the mid-20th century; the current fountain is a modern interpretation on the original site (photo 23). Open meadows and demonstration gardens lie to either side of the path. South of the axial pathway is the 2016 Frick Environmental Center building (photo 24) and north of it is a sheltered parking lot. The Environmental Center’s design steps down the south side of Clayton Hill alongside a new amphitheater.

Beyond these features, meadowland transitions to woodland. The Clayton Loop trail encircles a part of the original 151 acres of Frick Park now called “Frick Woods Nature Reserve,” dedicated to ecological conservation and outdoor environmental educational (photo 25).

Riverview Hill

This is a major active use area accessed from Beechwood Boulevard approximately 3/4 mile south of the gatehouses at Clayton Hill. Riverview Hill includes 84 acres that served as a golf course and equestrian facility for the exclusive Pittsburgh Country Club prior to its purchase by

the Frick Park trustees in 1936. Landscape plans designed by Innocenti and Webel and carried out by the City in the late 1930s and 1940s strove to integrate the country club's groomed landscape into the more naturalistic one of Frick's Woods to the north.

Major work on this area of the park continued past the Innocenti and Webel era into the early 1960s. At Beechwood Boulevard between the Riverview entrance to the park and English Lane are ball fields and the Blue Slide Playground designed by Simonds and Simonds in 1963. Its terraced design steps down Riverview Hill to street level so that the playground intrudes minimally on the views from the ridge of the hill (photos 26-27). The Riverview Trail leads past the playground to a rolling meadow landscape, edged by woods and offering a view of the Mon River Valley (photo 28). On the northern side of the trail's entrance from Beechwood Boulevard is a long, sloping bowl used as a sledding hill, ending in grove of trees (photo 29). Farther along the Riverview Trail, an off-leash exercise area for dogs was established ca. 2000.

English Lane, a small, dead-end street off of Beechwood Boulevard, is the site of a complex of brick staff residences, offices, and park maintenance facilities constructed in 1959 to the designs of Wolfe and Wolfe, a Pittsburgh firm (photo 30). These buildings' International Style architecture contrasts with the eclectic designs of the park structures of the 1930s. However, their impact is minimal as they are hidden from view down the secluded lane and away from public use areas of the park.

Nine Mile Run

Nine Mile Run is an ecologically-restored stream whose landscape consists of stream banks and wetlands edged by wooded hills with trails following, and occasionally crossing, the stream bed (photo 31). The Penn-Lincoln Parkway (I-376 East) is carried over the valley on concrete arches (photo 3). A soccer field at the intersection of the Tranquil, Firelane, and Nine Mile Run trails is the only instance of an active recreational feature on the park's interior. The northeastern section of the Nine Mile Run stream valley above the parkway lies within Frick Park's historic boundary. Nine Mile Run south of the Parkway was incorporated into the park in 1996.

8. History

The land where 201 North Murkland Street would ultimately be constructed was once connected to several Native American tribes that changed over time. “The rivers that flow through western Pennsylvania drew many native people. This was likely what brought the mound-building Adena tribe to the McKees Rocks area, where they constructed burial earthen mounds. The Hopewell tribe came next, followed by the Monongahela people, who lived here until the early 17th century.”

Post-European contact, several groups from eastern colonies who were forced off their lands came to what is today Pittsburgh as refugees, including Delaware, Shawnee, and Iroquois peoples. “Because the area wasn’t the ancestral homeland for any of these nations, their cultures mixed.” Following the French and Indian War (as most historians in the United States still refer to the conflict) and significant battles like Pontiac’s War and the Battle of Bushy Run, tribal communities lost land and the number of Native Americans in what is today Pittsburgh and Allegheny County rapidly decreased.

As Pittsburgh grew from a tiny borough in 1794 to a city of nearly seven thousand people in 1816, the population gradually expanded beyond the historic “Point,” where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers meet to form the Ohio. In 1868, the largest annexation in Pittsburgh’s history added twenty-one square miles and 35,000 people to the city’s East End. The townships of Liberty, Collins, Peebles (future home of Frick Park), Oakland; part of Pitt Township; and Lawrenceville Borough were incorporated as the city was extended to Penn Hills (then Penn Township).

During the last half of the nineteenth century, the East End became an increasingly desirable place to live, especially for the city’s managerial and wealthy classes. Seeking to escape increasing pollution from growing industrial plants along the rivers and from crowding near the city centers of Pittsburgh and Allegheny, they were aided by improvements in transportation, such as completion of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1852 from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh through what was then largely undeveloped countryside and, by the end of the century, numerous streetcar lines and road improvements. The idyllic East End around the Railroad’s Homewood Station was heralded in one real estate promotion as “near to Nature’s heart, yet within easy distance of the hum of humanity.” The land that would comprise Frick Park was largely part of these estates, all of which would be purchased by Henry Clay Frick and incorporated into his own estate prior to the creation of the park.

Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919) was a Pennsylvania native, industrialist, and financier who became a millionaire through the activities of his H.C. Frick and Company, which supplied coke to Andrew Carnegie’s steel mills. Eventually, Frick became chairman of the Carnegie Steel (later United States Steel) Company. In 1881, the year he met and partnered with Carnegie, Frick married Adelaide Howard Childs of Pittsburgh and purchased an estate on Penn Avenue in a wealthy enclave of the city’s East End. This estate became Clayton, designed by Frederick Osterling in the Chateausque style. The Fricks had four children there: Childs (b. 1883), Martha (b. 1885), Helen Clay (b. 1888), and Henry, Jr. (b. 1892). Only Childs and Helen lived to adulthood; both would be instrumental in the development of Frick Park. The Fricks are buried in Homewood Cemetery adjacent to Frick Park.

Even though the Frick Family had relocated to New York City by 1905, they maintained Clayton and Helen Clay Frick remained attached to the Pittsburgh of her youth. Folklore holds that when her father offered to grant her any wish on the occasion of her society debut in 1908, she asked that he give a park to the children of Pittsburgh so that they could experience the deep pleasure she had had when roaming the undeveloped woodlands of her family's estate. In 1915, Henry Clay Frick wrote his will, bequeathing 151 acres of land south of his home on Penn Avenue to the City of Pittsburgh for use as a public park. Known as the Gunn's Hill tract, the land consisted of former farms, streams, and forested hills. Frick's bequest also provided a \$2 million endowment for additional park land acquisition and maintenance, to be managed by the Union Trust Company of Pittsburgh. The City was charged with the maintenance, improvement, and embellishment of the park, and the trustees with the oversight of these duties.

After Henry Clay Frick died in 1919, the first decade and a half after the execution of his will was marked by legal proceedings to transfer the land to the City and preliminary forays into park planning and construction. Park trustees soon began adding to the original park area. In 1924, Pittsburgh City Council voted to accept a deed for 189 acres, increasing the park to 340 acres, and authorized the engagement of a landscape architect, the Boston firm of Lowell and Vinal, to undertake master planning for the organization and linkage of park land. On June 25, 1927, the park officially opened to the public, though the first trail had not yet been constructed.

The most visible legacy of the park's earliest era was the construction of four park gateways, announced in 1931 and built by 1935 with \$70,000 in Works Progress Administration funds. They are: an arched gateway at Homewood Avenue and Reynolds St., paired gate houses at Beechwood Blvd., a small stone shelter on Forbes Ave., and a stone cairn at the juncture of Beechwood Blvd. and Forbes Ave. The structures were designed by the famed New York architect John Russell Pope (1874-1937), whose involvement in Frick Park in the early 1930s can probably be explained by the fact that he was simultaneously renovating the Frick residence on Fifth Avenue in New York City into a museum to house the Frick family art collection.

Despite the Great Depression, income from the park's endowment also allowed its trustees to continue to assemble hundreds more acres to be added to its area during the 1930s. Most of this land lay south of the original bequest, extending to the upper reaches of the Nine Mile Run basin. The largest acquisition was the former Pittsburgh Country Club, whose 84 acres carried the park southwest along Beechwood Boulevard. The club had lost members, and hence income, during the Depression and became available for purchase for \$197,500 in 1936.² The trustees also acquired an eight-acre parcel on Nine Mile Run that had been the site of the old Swisshelm grist mill, which had once ground most of the area's grain. South of this to the Monongahela River, however, most of the Nine Mile Run valley was unavailable for purchase as parkland, despite it having been repeatedly recommended for this purpose. Its proximity to both the riverfront and Pittsburgh steel mills made Nine Mile Run as or more attractive to industry, and in 1923 it had

² Matthew A. Beche, Daphne Quinn, Rita Walsh, "Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory for the Proposed Nine Mile Run Ecosystem Restoration Project, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania" (July 2000, on file at State Historic Preservation Office, Harrisburg, PA), 32.

been purchased by the Duquesne Slag Products Company, which degraded the stream and the landscape with the dumping of industrial waste through 1970.

In 1935, the landscape architecture firm of Innocenti and Webel was hired to design the further development of Frick Park, beginning a long and productive association. Initiatives recommended by Innocenti and Webel and implemented by the city included the construction of the Terminal Fountain in 1936 and the Clayton Hill Fountain in 1937; the development of the Bowling Green along Reynolds Street in the mid-1930s and its elegant shelter in 1940; and demolition of the old clubhouse and re-grading of the golf greens and tees on the old country club property. In 1940, Innocenti and Webel began to plant the park as a natural arboretum, arranging new plantings in large masses as natural ecological groupings. By 1942, the park's trail system appears to have been largely in place, and Frick Park included 457 acres, including ten double tennis courts, nine nature trails, seven shelters, and one baseball field.

In the same year, funding for Pittsburgh's city parks transferred from the WPA to the City's Public Works reserve. Progress on Frick Park trickled almost to a halt during World War II, though Innocenti and Webel did make recommendations concerning the construction of the Penn-Lincoln Parkway (now known as US I-376 or the Parkway East) on the Nine Mile Run portion of Frick Park in 1943-1944, proposing plans for grading, planting, and curb installation. During the ensuing years, they also pressed for the clean-up of industrial slag dumping in Nine Mile Run, sought to protect the park and stream during the construction of the parkway, developed efficient designs that would minimize the need for expensive maintenance, and emphasized a need for long-term planning to ensure the park would remain sustainable as a natural landscape. In 1948-1949, plans for the parkway were revised to accommodate an entrance to the park on Braddock Avenue.

Activity in Frick Park during the 1950s consisted largely of maintenance. Innocenti and Webel continued to make recommendations on specific issues, such as the continued reforestation of the country club property, the provision of shelter for children attending day camp in the park, and the relationship of the park to Clayton. In this regard, the landscape architects called for the area along Reynolds Avenue, which faced the rear of the Frick estate, "to be treated in a natural park manner similar to the Park itself, rather than an exhibition garden area," which would require prohibitive maintenance.³

Maintenance was becoming an increasingly vexing issue. In the 1950s, Frick Park—like many urban parks—began to suffer from a population shift from city to suburbs, decreasing city tax revenues, a decline in the skilled labor force, and increasing privatization of open space and recreation. In 1935, the Executive Director of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, Park H. Martin, toured Frick Park, met with landscape architect Richard Webel and Bureau of Parks Director Robert Templeton, and prepared a report on the status of the park. Despite the departure of Innocenti and Webel in 1957 and Frick Park's overall tendency toward decline in the mid-20th century, improvements were made during this period and evidenced increased involvement by the surviving members of the Frick family.

³ *Ibid.*, 34.

In 1959, the Pittsburgh firm of Wolfe and Wolfe designed the complex of staff residences, offices, and maintenance facilities on English Lane off of Beechwood Boulevard. These assumed the function of the earlier Biddle Building on S. Braddock Avenue, which took on a more community-oriented purpose. In 1963, the City hired the landscape architecture firm of Simonds and Simonds to design a large new playground (colloquially known as the Blue Slide Playground after its most conspicuous feature, a large concrete slide built into the hillside) at the Beechwood Boulevard edge of the Riverview section of the park.

Also in the early 1960s, Childs Frick donated money for the construction of a new nature center to replace the one funded by his sister Helen in the 1930s. After Childs Frick died in 1965, Helen Frick shepherded the project to completion, assuring that the building fit the contours of the surrounding landscape. With the opening of the Frick Environmental Center in 1979, the City's nature education programming was officially consolidated in the Frick Park facility.

Regarding recent developments, a reorganization of the Department of Parks and Recreation in 1992 left maintenance of Frick Park to the Department of Public Works, while the former Department of Parks and Recreation—now renamed CitiParks—administered programming. This bifurcation resulted in lack of consistent oversight over park planning, design, and construction, further degrading the park's aesthetic character. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy was formed in 1998, in part, to address this issue in Frick and other major city parks, and quickly undertook fundraising for park master planning and maintenance in partnership with the City. A demonstration project, the restoration of the Reynolds Street gatehouse, was completed in 1998.

Perhaps the most important development of the past 50 years has been the addition of 106 acres of the Nine Mile Run stream valley to the park in 1996, realizing the 1910 vision of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (see below) and increasing the park's acreage to 644. Slag dumped by the Duquesne Slag Products Company from 1923 to 1970 had accumulated to 17 million cubic yards in a steeply-sided heap 120 feet high. In 1996, the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh acquired 238 acres and began environmental remediation and redevelopment of 132 of them into a master-planned residential development known as Summerset at Frick Park. It deeded the remaining 106 acres to the City of Pittsburgh for an extension of Frick Park. New trails now follow the restored stream almost to its outlet at the Monongahela River.

In 2002, the Frick Environmental Center was destroyed by fire. A new LEED Platinum environmental center was built in 2016. Site work during its construction restored the historic entrance composition of an axial walkway leading from the park's Beechwood Boulevard gatehouses to the Clayton Hill fountain.

9. Significance

1) Its location as a site of significant historic or prehistoric event or activity

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

2) Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archeological, or related aspects of the development

of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 3) *Its exemplification of an architectural type, style, or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 4) *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history of development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 5) *Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail*

As a carefully-designed sequence of scenic landscapes, Frick Park holds significance within landscape architecture. Dating from the early-to-mid 20th century, its design is neither wholly romantic nor modern, but on the interior of the park, cultivates a sense of not having been designed at all. At the park's edges, where it touches adjacent residential neighborhoods, it provides sensitively-designed vehicular access, recreational facilities, and sometimes formal gateways leading through interim meadowlands to a scenic experience of native Pennsylvania woodlands and wetlands. The treatment of its perimeter, interior, and transitional zones is unique among Pittsburgh's designed landscapes and reflects early 20th century concerns about the separation of disparate uses and users, in particular pedestrians and automobiles. It is largely attributable to the landscape architecture firm of Innocenti and Webel, who assumed the park's planning and design in 1935 and remained involved until 1957. Significant contributions were also made by Ralph Griswold during the 1930s and 40s and by Simonds and Simonds in the 1960s.

Frick Park was not the first Pittsburgh park to be designed by landscape architects. In 1867, the City of Allegheny hired the New York firm of Mitchell and Grant to design the transformation of Allegheny Commons, a former public grazing land which had become a disused dumping ground, into an elegant public park. Mitchell and Grant's work was typical of post-Civil War landscape design and well-suited to its site, which was surrounded by established city blocks and narrow on three sides. Formal promenades, punctuated by sites for fountains or commemorative sculpture, in these narrow areas opened up into a pastoral, picturesque "pleasure ground" of lawn studded with specimen trees. A carriage drive allowed those who could afford such conveyance to ride through the landscape at a stately pace. The site also contained pre-existing intrusive uses: a penitentiary and a railroad. These Mitchell and Grant

dealt with as best they could, mainly through camouflage. Allegheny Commons' original design included copses of trees and an ornamental lake—later adapted for swimming, skating, and boating—but unlike the larger parks of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it did not include forests, streams, or wilderness areas.

Allegheny's and Pittsburgh's later Victorian parks—Highland, Schenley, and Riverview, all established ca. 1890—have more in common with Frick Park in terms of their expansive size, rugged terrain, and scenic views. These parks' locations on the outskirts of developed urban areas made such broad expanses and varieties of terrain possible. Pittsburgh's late Victorian parks were not designed by landscape architects, but by city engineers, starting with Edward Bigelow in the 1890s (the City of Pittsburgh would not have a professional landscape architect on staff until Ralph Griswold in 1934). Bigelow and his successors generally followed the model of the romantic landscape parks of Frederick Law Olmsted, heavily influenced by New York's Central and Prospect Parks and adapted to the rugged topography of western Pennsylvania.⁴ City civil engineers and horticulturalists cultivated park land and vegetation for romantic visual effect, including dramatic stonework, overlooks and vistas, open fields alternating with woods and groves of trees, fountains, and lakes.⁵ They designed curvilinear roads to wind through this landscape, leading to and around the uplands and plateaus upon which attractions were sited. In keeping with late Victorian and Progressive-era ideals about parks, many such attractions filled the interiors of Highland, Schenley, and Riverview Parks, with buildings and structures ranging in style from rustic—such as an early picnic shelter in Allegheny Commons (no longer standing)—to elaborate, such as the Schenley Park Casino (burned 1896) and Phipps Conservatory. Often, buildings associated with previous land uses were incorporated and repurposed in the parks, such as a farmhouse in Highland Park and a chapel in Riverview. Landscapes themselves also included formal elements, such as the Highland Avenue entrance gardens at Highland Park.

Frick Park's design sought to maintain and enhance a passive, immersive woodland experience on the interior while acknowledging the desire of park users for recreational opportunities by siting facilities—chiefly ball courts, playgrounds, and two lawn bowling courts—at the park's periphery, where it abutted adjacent residential neighborhoods. Its designers took a similar approach to sequestering motorized vehicles, which had not existed when Pittsburgh's previous parks were designed and so posed a new challenge for Frick Park's landscape architects. Evidence of their intent is found in the earliest designs for the park. Though the written materials of Lowell and Vinal and of Blum, Weldin, and Company, do not survive, some clues are found in news accounts proximate to the park's opening in 1927. On July 9 of that year, the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce published an article noting that the first planned trail—spanning two and a half miles through Fern Hollow from the Bowling Green to Beechwood Boulevard—was soon to be constructed, along with two children's playgrounds, shelter houses, picnic tables, and

⁴ Eversmeyer, 8:1.

⁵ *Ibid.*

locker rooms. The article further notes that while park entrances would be conveniently accessible by streetcar, many park visitors were anticipated to arrive by automobile, so that convenient access for motorists would be provided.⁶

In 1929, Frick Park Supervisor Harvey Crass elaborated on the accommodation of motor vehicles and recreational uses in Frick Park, characterizing playgrounds as a “side issue” to the park plan. He told the Pittsburgh Press,

We want to keep the park just as natural and as wild as we possibly can.... It is planned for nature lovers, for people who love to ramble around in picturesque outdoors. So it is not our plan to make many automobile roads through the park. We will build only the necessary ones to bring people into the park interior. Aside from that, all other paths will be five-foot trails.⁷

This was carried out. Only one lane, an extension of Lancaster Avenue in Regent Square, penetrates Frick Park to access an interior parking area and trailheads.

The Frick Park gatehouses were another early indication of the park’s designers’ approach to connecting its landscape to visitors and to the residential neighborhoods at its edges. While hardly grandiose, their design is refined, with rooflines conveying an architectural relationship to Clayton, the Fricks’ Chateausque Pittsburgh home. The stone gatehouses helped establish an urbane identity and sophisticated design vocabulary for Frick Park in its earliest era. For example, Innocenti and Webel’s formal strengths can be seen in the Clayton Hill entrance to the park, with its axial symmetry between the elegant, Pope-designed gatehouses at Beechwood Boulevard and a fountain placed by Innocenti and Webel at the far end of a double allee of trees.

Yet in most of the park, Innocenti and Webel successfully sustained a ruggedly scenic vision. They designed Frick Park’s trails to draw visitors to the interior of the park, and there to foster urban dwellers’ bond with nature by leading them through a picturesque, apparently unspoiled woodland interspersed with wetlands, meadows, and pastoral lawns shaded by scattered trees.

Actually, centuries of human use had already profoundly altered the natural landscape. Frick Park was assembled from a mosaic of tracts that had served as farms, forests, Native American hunting trails, Civil War fortifications, a golf course, and a grist mill. The essence of Innocenti and Webel’s design was to combine these various lands into a coherent whole that effectively recreated the experience of an untouched, scenic forest.⁸ This approach is perhaps most vividly illustrated by the deliberate reversal of the groomed country club property to meadow and woodland. Innocenti

⁶ H.W. Correll, “Frick’s Woods—How City’s Second Largest Park is Being Prepared to Delight Multitudes” (Greater Pittsburgh, July 9, 1927), NP.

⁷ Harvey S. Crass in Marie McSwigan, “Frick Woods to be Transformed into City Dwellers’ Paradise” (Pittsburgh Press, Jan. 25, 1929), NP.

⁸ Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, 33.

and Webel directed the demolition of the club house, re-grading of the golf course, elimination (or conversion to foot trails) of the bridle paths, and the removal of clay from the tennis courts to the park's Braddock Avenue edge, where new courts were constructed upland from passive use areas.

During the first and most productive ten years of their association with Frick Park, Innocenti and Webel worked in unique partnership with Ralph Griswold (1894-1981), an accomplished landscape architect in his own right. As the superintendent of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Parks from 1934-1945 and the first professional landscape architect hired by the city, Griswold was a strong advocate for the city park system. Though his specific contributions to Frick Park are not attributed, he headed the city's parks agency during Frick Park's most active years of development, and his expertise almost certainly helped guide the park from a patchwork of miscellaneous parcels to coherent public landscape. Griswold's understanding of both landscape design and, from the civil service side, efficient management, would have helped Innocenti and Webel and the Frick trustees to make sustainable decisions for the park's future.

Timing suggests that Griswold was responsible for securing the WPA funding that supported the construction of the park's first structures, the stone gatehouses and cairn designed by John Russell Pope. He may also have been influential in the decision to restrict active recreation, automobile access, and parking to the park's edges. The protection of pedestrians and pedestrianized experiences—such as parks—from the noise, pollution, and dangers of motor vehicles was a significant concern in the 1920s and 30s. In these decades, automobile ownership became more affordable and prevalent, and professionals concerned with the built environment faced new problems of integrating demands for motorcar movement, storage, and maintenance into their designs. Griswold's work as landscape architect for Chatham Village, a park-like planned residential community in the Mt. Washington neighborhood of Pittsburgh, in the early 1930s familiarized him with the challenge of separating a tranquil landscape and its users from vehicular roads and parking. It is not far-fetched to suppose that the solution on Mt. Washington—restricting commercial businesses and automobiles to perimeter roadways and preserving the interiors of blocks for a landscape designed for pedestrians—may have informed the similar treatment of the issue at Frick Park.

In the early 1960s, the respected modern firm of Simonds and Simonds left a limited but significant mark on Frick Park with one of its most popular features, the Blue Slide Playground at the park's Riverview entrance. The location of the playground at the neighborhood edge of the park was consistent with the precedent established by Griswold and Innocenti and Webel. Beyond its location, the playground is notable for its sensitive, tiered design, such that it is highly visible from the adjacent neighborhood but lies over a ridge and out of sight of the Riverview Trail on the park's interior. The playground is among Simonds and Simonds' significant contributions to public landscape design in Pittsburgh during the Modern era, including Mellon Square downtown and a redesign (only partially implemented) of Allegheny Commons Park on the North Side in 1966.

6) *Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

7) *Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States*

In contrast to earlier parks which were established and administered by city engineers, the circumstances of Frick Park's creation placed its development at a unique nexus of city planning, landscape architecture, and philanthropy. Frick Park was an early and influential example of public-private partnership to create a high-quality civic asset for Pittsburgh, and important cultural and social aspect in the history of Pittsburgh.

After the Civil War, the creation of urban parks, such as Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park in New York City in 1858, gained increasing importance in city planning in Allegheny, Pittsburgh, and elsewhere. Parks enjoyed widespread support: by the workers and families meant to enjoy them; by industrial leaders who anticipated more productivity from healthy, contented workers; and by Victorian reformers, who sought wholesome alternatives to taverns and street corners as places of leisure. In 1867, under the direction of city engineer Charles Davis, the City of Allegheny transformed a disused common grazing area adjacent to its downtown into an elegant, ornamental park, one of the first west of the Allegheny mountains.

A carriage drive allowed those who could afford such conveyance to ride through the landscape at a stately pace. Allegheny Commons' original design included copses of trees and an ornamental lake—later adapted for swimming, skating, and boating—but unlike the larger parks of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Allegheny Commons did not include forests, streams, or wilderness areas. Allegheny Commons was later adapted to include active recreational features, but as originally designed, it epitomized the Victorian ideal of a passive, pastoral, ornamental refuge from the rigors of urban life. Commemoration, another important function of Allegheny Commons, extended also to Schenley and Highland Parks. All of these parks acquired significant monuments, fountains, and other sculptures in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Allegheny Commons and later Victorian parks, such as Highland, Schenley, and Riverview, had a component of moral uplift to their purpose. Middle-class urban reformers saw parks as providing a wholesome environment for working-class leisure and believed in the civilizing influence of harmonious, artfully-improved natural landscapes. Pittsburgh City Controller Henry Gourley articulated this view in 1895: "Give the people attractive parks; show them beautiful things and give them innocent amusements to entice them away from degrading things.... Let us open the doors

which lead to pure influence and to the better side of human nature.”⁹ Some of the “innocent amusements” which appeared in city parks at around this time included picnic pavilions, bandstands, and carousels. Ornamental ponds such as Lake Carnegie in Highland Park and Lake Elizabeth in Allegheny Commons were stocked with fish. Schenley Park had a dance pavilion and a casino (the name at the time denoting an indoor arena for sporting events and theatrical productions). Both Highland Park and Riverview Park had zoos; Allegheny Commons and Schenley Parks acquired conservatories. (After Allegheny was annexed to Pittsburgh, only the Highland Park Zoo and Phipps Conservatory in Schenley Park were maintained.)

Planning for new parks in Pittsburgh continued in the early 20th century, although it was not always heeded by top city officials. Ten years before Frick Park was deeded to the City, the prospect of Nine Mile Run captured the attention of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.. Son of the designer of New York’s Central Park, Olmsted, Jr. was renowned in his own right for his work on the U.S. Capital McMillan Commission, his role in the creation of the National Park Service, and his design of parks, campuses, and master plans nationwide. In 1909, he was retained by the Pittsburgh Civic Commission, created by reform Mayor George Guthrie, to study the built and natural environment of the city and make recommendations for its planning and development. The Civic Commission adopted Olmsted’s report in December, 1910. At a time when Highland, Schenley, and Riverview Parks were in their infancy and few neighborhood parks existed, Olmsted advocated for the expansion of neighborhood parks and called the Nine Mile Run stream valley “perhaps the most striking opportunity noted for a large park.” A tributary of the Monongahela River, Nine Mile Run flows along a valley from the banks of the river in Duck Hollow, up under what is now the I-376 Parkway East, into land south of Frick’s original bequest. Olmsted wrote:

[The valley’s] long meadows of varying width would make ideal playfields; the stream, when it is freed from sewage, will be an attractive and interesting element in the landscape; the wooded slopes on either side give ample opportunity for enjoyment of the forest, for shaded walks and cool resting places, and above all it is not far from a large working population... and yet it is so excluded by its high wooded banks that the close proximity of urban development can hardly be imagined.¹⁰

Ten years later, Frick’s bequest made planning for a park in the vicinity of Nine Mile Run a real necessity. The volunteer Citizens Committee on a City Plan of Pittsburgh issued a report in 1923 (“Parks—A Part of the Pittsburgh Plan”) noting that 11,500 persons lived within a 15-minute walk of the as-yet undeveloped Frick Park and advising its enlargement and the preparation of plans for its development “after the most careful study and with the advice and assistance of the best landscape architect

⁹ Michael Eversmeyer, National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Highland Park, Pittsburgh, PA (draft, Harrisburg: PA SHPO, 2001), 8:1.

¹⁰ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., “Pittsburgh: Improvements Necessary to Meet the City’s Present and Future Needs” (Report to Pittsburgh Civic Commission, 1911), 119.

obtainable.” The report also echoed Olmsted’s earlier recommendation that the Nine Mile Run valley be acquired and developed for public recreation.¹¹ Instead, however, the Duquesne Slag Products Company purchased the sections of the stream valley closest to the river for the dumping of slag, a byproduct of steel production at the nearby Jones & Laughlin and Homestead Works steel plants.

Whereas Highland and Schenley Parks were planned and laid out by Bigelow and his successors in the Department of Public Works, in the 1920s the City of Pittsburgh contracted a landscape architecture firm, Lowell and Vinal of Boston, to undertake the master planning of Frick Park. This decision may reflect the increasing professionalization of the field of landscape architecture, higher expectations of public landscape design as city park systems matured, the influence and financial means of the Frick trustees, or all three. Lowell and Vinal’s plan was issued by February, 1927. However, Guy Lowell died shortly thereafter, and park planning was transferred to the Pittsburgh mining and civil engineering firm of Blum, Weldin, and Company. Neither of these firms’ plans survives, though some of their content can be inferred by early projects, such as the layout of the park’s first trails and the location of the Pope-designed park entrance gateways in the early 1930s.

Ultimately, the significant planning and design of Frick Park took place through the cooperative efforts of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Parks, the Frick Park trustees, and the landscape architects they hired from the 1930s through the 1960s. This collaboration distinguished the establishment, planning and development of Frick Park from that of the city’s previous parks.

In particular, the role of philanthropy in Frick Park was unprecedented. It began with Helen Clay Frick, Henry Clay Frick’s daughter, who urged her father’s bequest. A number of Helen’s personal experiences had acquainted her with the idea of transforming private land into public asset through philanthropy. When she was thirteen, Theodore Roosevelt—known as the “conservation president” for setting aside millions of acres of land as protected park, forest, and nature preserve—visited Clayton and dined with the Frick family. Helen also would have been familiar with heiress Mary Schenley’s gift of Schenley Park to the City of Pittsburgh when Helen was a baby, and her own father’s donation of a city block—also known as Frick Park—with lawns, play areas, and a water fountain to the nearby town of Homestead, where the Homestead Works of Carnegie Steel was located. Her upbringing in a wealthy family and her education, which included courses at the New York School of Philanthropy, also prepared her for charitable giving.¹²

¹¹ Citizens’ Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh, “Parks: A Part of the Pittsburgh Plan” (Pittsburgh: Municipal Planning Association, 1923), 30, 66.

¹² Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, “Frick Park’s Enduring Legacy: A Treasure by Design” (Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, 2013), 10, 15-16.

Although other Pittsburgh parks were also the products and/or recipients of philanthropy—such as Schenley Park, which was donated by Mary Schenley after Bigelow’s persuasion and features Phipps Conservatory, which itself was given by Henry Phipps—the structure of Frick’s bequest, which consisted of not only land but of an endowment to be managed by appointed trustees, ensured the gift’s lasting value and its ties in perpetuity to the guidance and support of the Frick family and trusted advisors. Only in Frick Park did philanthropy guide the ongoing planning and development of the public landscape from its donation to the City to its maturity. Frick Park’s unique circumstances set it on a course different from those of earlier parks administered by city engineers, even those which were or contained gifts. Managed by public servants, shaped by landscape architects, and guided, augmented, and protected by the Frick family and trustees, Frick Park represents an early and important example of public-private collaboration to develop a major public landscape in Pittsburgh.

The last of Pittsburgh’s large city parks and the only one entirely developed in the 20th century, Frick Park reflected different goals and values than earlier Victorian and Progressive era parks. Passive recreation and nature appreciation have been key experiences provided to users of Frick Park since its early development in the 1930s.

Around the turn of the 20th century, the purpose and appearance of urban parks continued to evolve as new social movements influenced park planners to shape them in new ways. In Pittsburgh, Olmsted’s 1910 report emphasized the “urgent civic need” for parks for “healthful recreation.”¹³ His observation echoed an important tenet of the early 20th century Progressive Movement, which brought an emphasis on the physical and moral benefits of healthful outdoor activity and organized athletics. Advocates sought to build playgrounds for children and sports facilities for adults. Pittsburgh’s vast industrial wealth also bestowed cultural facilities which needed suitable homes.

As public lands dedicated to recreation and enjoyment, parks naturally became the focus of many of these ambitions. From about 1910 to 1940, Pittsburgh added numerous small, neighborhood parks and playgrounds to its system. Meanwhile, Highland, Schenley, Riverview, and even Allegheny Commons Parks were loaded with a great variety of recreational facilities and attractions. Lakes were opened to swimming, diving, boating, and skating; boathouses and swimming pools were built. Organized sports facilities included tennis courts, ball fields, and the Schenley Golf Course. The number of construction projects in Schenley Park alone “demonstrates just how far from Olmsted’s notion of a park, as a refined and unsullied expression of nature, the Pittsburgh planners were willing to depart in their concern for maximum usability.”¹⁴

¹³ Olmsted, Jr., 113.

¹⁴ Hannegan, “Historical Summary: Schenley Park,” 99.

Frick Park was intended, from the beginning, to offer something closer to Frederick Law Olmsted's ideal. Its primary attraction was its rustic woodland landscape, designed for passive respite from the urban environment and communion with nature. Frick Park's planners and designers did not reject active recreational facilities, which were still in high demand in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. Rather, they committed to focus these at the park's edges, preserving the interior as an intact forest landscape. Frick Park's primary offering to its users was nature: immersion, appreciation, and education.

Even when the Frick trustees acquired a former country club property, already appointed with a club house, tennis courts, golf course, and bridle paths, the park's planners (then Pittsburgh Park Superintendent Ralph Griswold and landscape architects Innocenti and Webel) chose not to maintain these facilities in the interior of the park. Instead, they demolished the club house and reverted the golf course to meadow and woodland. They rejected horses, like motorized traffic, as disruptive to Frick Park's wilderness interior, and established a policy of confining tennis to the Braddock Avenue courts, eliminating the courts of the former country club and other, earlier courts at Kensington Street.

In 1949, after Griswold's departure from the Bureau of Parks, the City considered utilizing approximately 20 "convenient and available" acres of Frick Park's Riverview area as the site of a planned outdoor theater for the Civic Light Opera. Though the City Planning Commission and the Mayor favored the site, the park's landscape architects, Innocenti and Webel, opposed it, arguing that it would be vacant most of the year and "contrary to the spirit and intent of the original bequest of Frick Park."¹⁵ The facility, known as the Civic Arena, was eventually built in the Hill District.

All of this was consistent with the dedication of Frick Park to nature study, which was further underscored by the nature education program which began in the 1930s. While the romantic landscapes of Pittsburgh's 19th century parks had moralistic overtones of civilizing the lower classes, Frick Park brought a more modern emphasis on the natural science behind its scenic beauty. Helen Clay Frick donated a converted mansion on Beechwood Boulevard as a nature museum, and the City hired a naturalist, Dr. William LeRoy Black, to work there. Near the museum, workers from the National Youth Administration, a New Deal program that provided jobs and education for young people, built an outdoor Nature Study Amphitheater in 1939. Exhibits and programs highlighted the plants, animals, and ecology of the park. A nature study group, the Naturalist Society of Frick Park, published a newsletter, titled *Nature News*, between 1937 and 1939. Its first volume highlights Frick Park's unique character as a setting for scientific inquiry as well as passive immersion in nature in stating that "[Frick Park contains] 460 acres where nature may be seen at her best,

¹⁵ "Pittsburgh Regional Parks Chronology" (Prepared by Heritage Landscape, LLC for Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, 2000), 32-33.

affording a great outdoor laboratory where observations are made easier because of the absence of all the formal settings of a park.”¹⁶

In 1939, the annual report of the City’s Bureau of Parks proclaimed that nature education in Frick Park was “one of the outstanding nature education programs conducted by any park system in the country and has received national recognition.”¹⁷ These activities presaged the establishment of Frick Park as the locus of the Parks Department’s environmental education program in the late 1970s, housed in successive environmental center buildings near the original Nature Museum location on Beechwood Boulevard. Thus, Frick Park’s historic role as Pittsburgh’s outdoor nature classroom, which from the beginning distinguished it from Victorian and Progressive era parks, has been well-preserved.

- 8) *Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 9) *Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 10) *Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh*

As Pittsburgh’s largest park, Frick Park remains highly visible within the city landscape. Situated north of Penn-Lincoln Parkway (U.S. I-376) and mostly south of Braddock Avenue, the park is visible to traffic on both of these major roads, which numbers among tens of thousands of people every day. Frick Park also occupies a unique and distinctive geographic location as a large forest landscape within the bounds of a city known for its industrialization.

Likewise, the park’s 644 acres of mostly wooded land continue to evoke the feeling of a natural and rustic landscape where visitors can relax away from the urban environment. Frick Park is highly visible to residents of the nearest neighborhoods, as well as parkgoers hailing from other areas of the city and further away, who frequently use the park and its distinct peripheral features, such as the Riverview Hill

¹⁶ Naturalist Society of Frick Park, Nature News, vol. 1, April 1937, 17, in Marianne Maxwell, “A History of Pittsburgh’s Frick Park and the Urban Parks Movement in the United States” (Unpublished Master’s thesis, Pittsburgh: Carnegie Mellon University, 1984), 19.

¹⁷ “Annual Report of Bureau of Parks,” City of Pittsburgh, 1938, 1939, Nature Division Report.

and Braddock Avenue playgrounds. Frick Park continues to be a valuable civic asset for communion with nature and respite from urban life.

10. Integrity

Frick Park retains integrity of location, design, workmanship, and materials. Its location includes the original 151 acres bequeathed by Henry Clay Frick in 1919 and subsequent lands added by the Frick trustees during the 1920s, 30s, and 40s; the only changes to the park's boundaries have been its incremental enlargement after 1927.

The park's integrity of design, workmanship, and materials are evident in this historic treatment of the landscape and in the park's well-preserved historic gatehouses and other structures from ca. 1930-1940. Later additions to this landscape, such as the 1959 English Lane staff and maintenance complex, the 1963 Blue Slide playground, and 2016 Frick Environmental Center, are either discreetly sited away from main use areas of the park (English Lane) or carefully designed for compatibility with the park's historic design intent (the playground and environmental center).

**Frick Park
Historic Nomination Form
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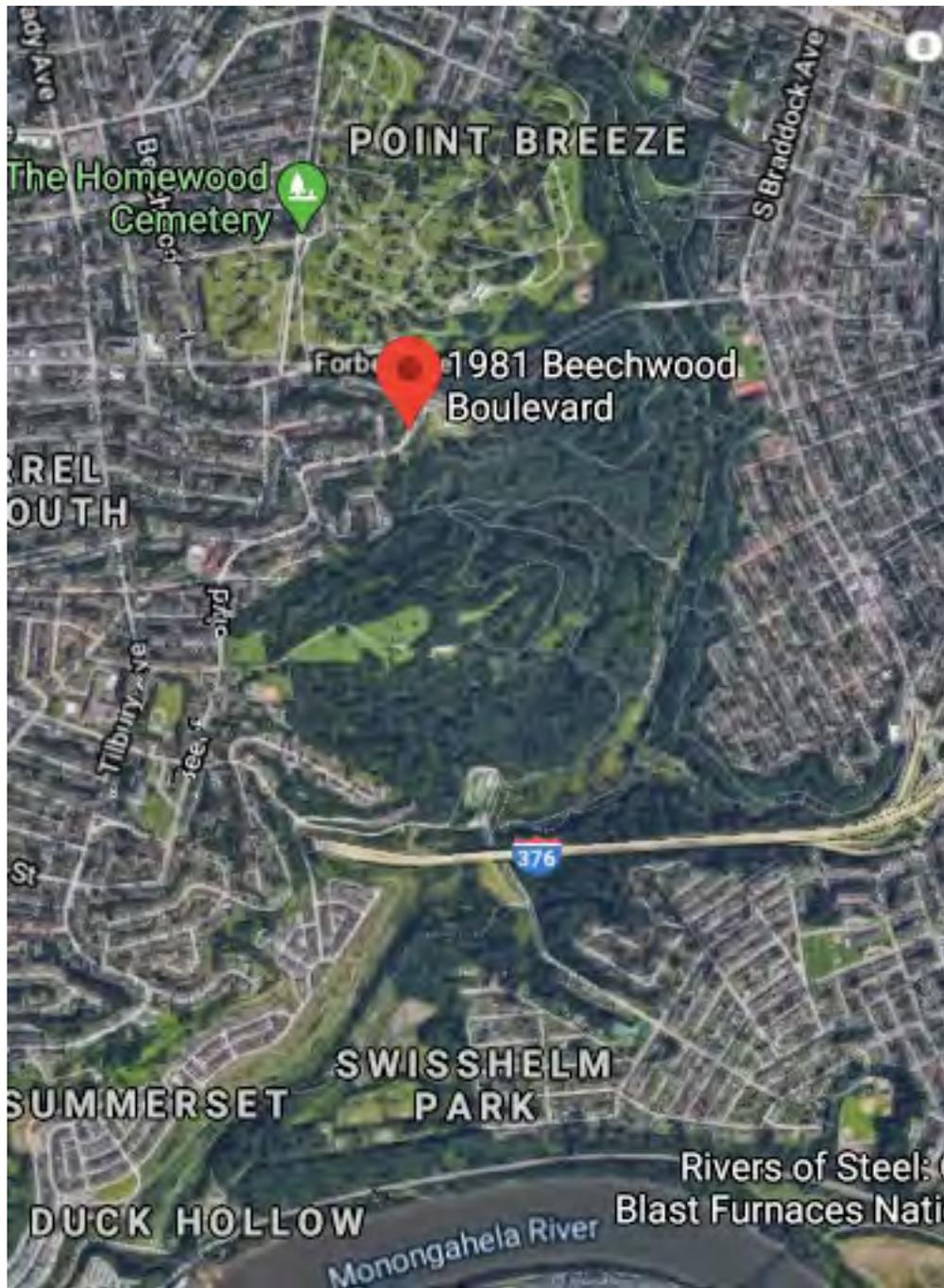
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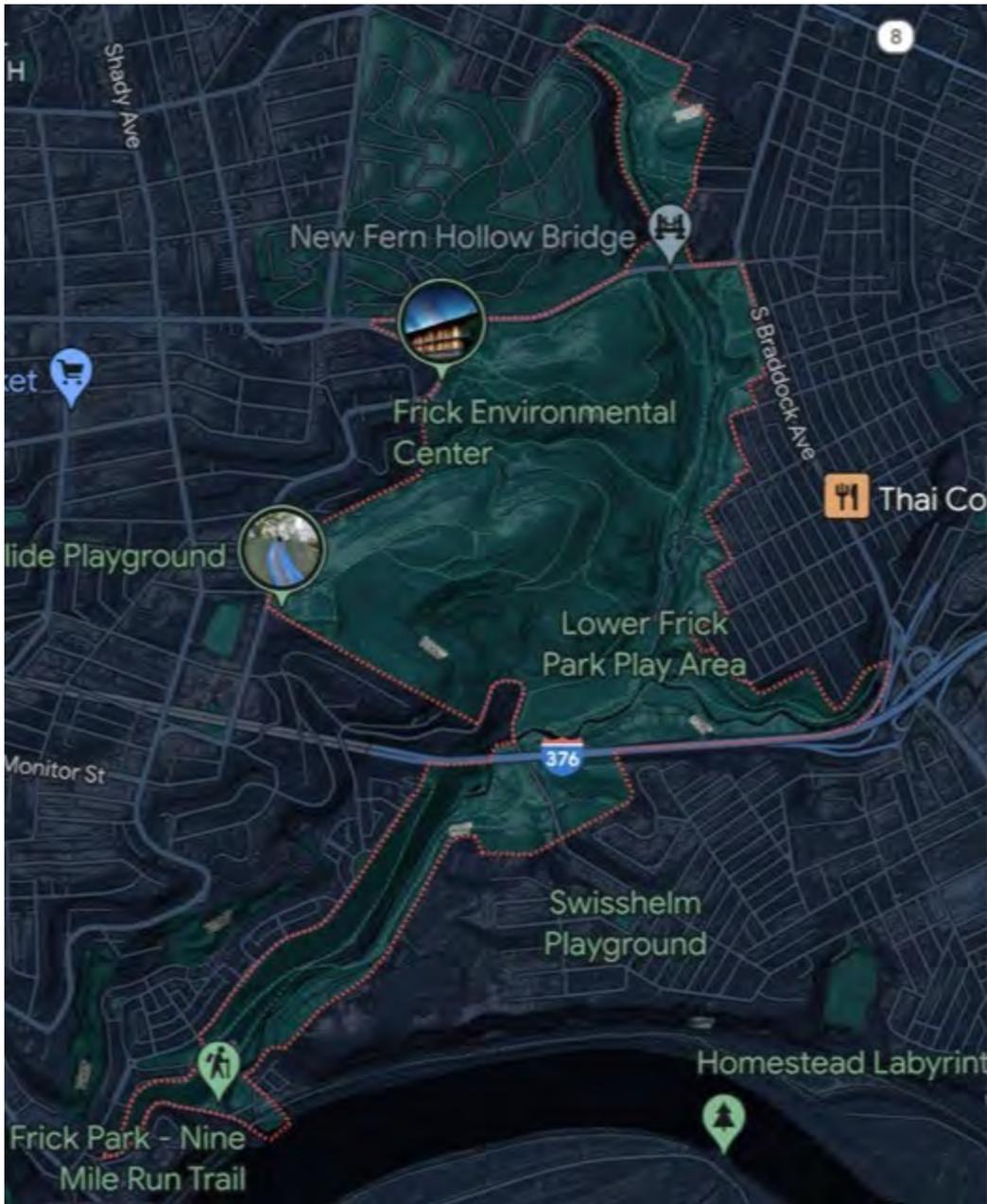
**Frick Park
Historic Nomination Form
Photo Log**

Map Overview



© 2020 Google Imagery

Site Plan



© 2023 Google Imagery (resource boundary is identified by the red dotted line)

Photo Log Key



Photo Log Key – Continued



Photo Log Key – Continued

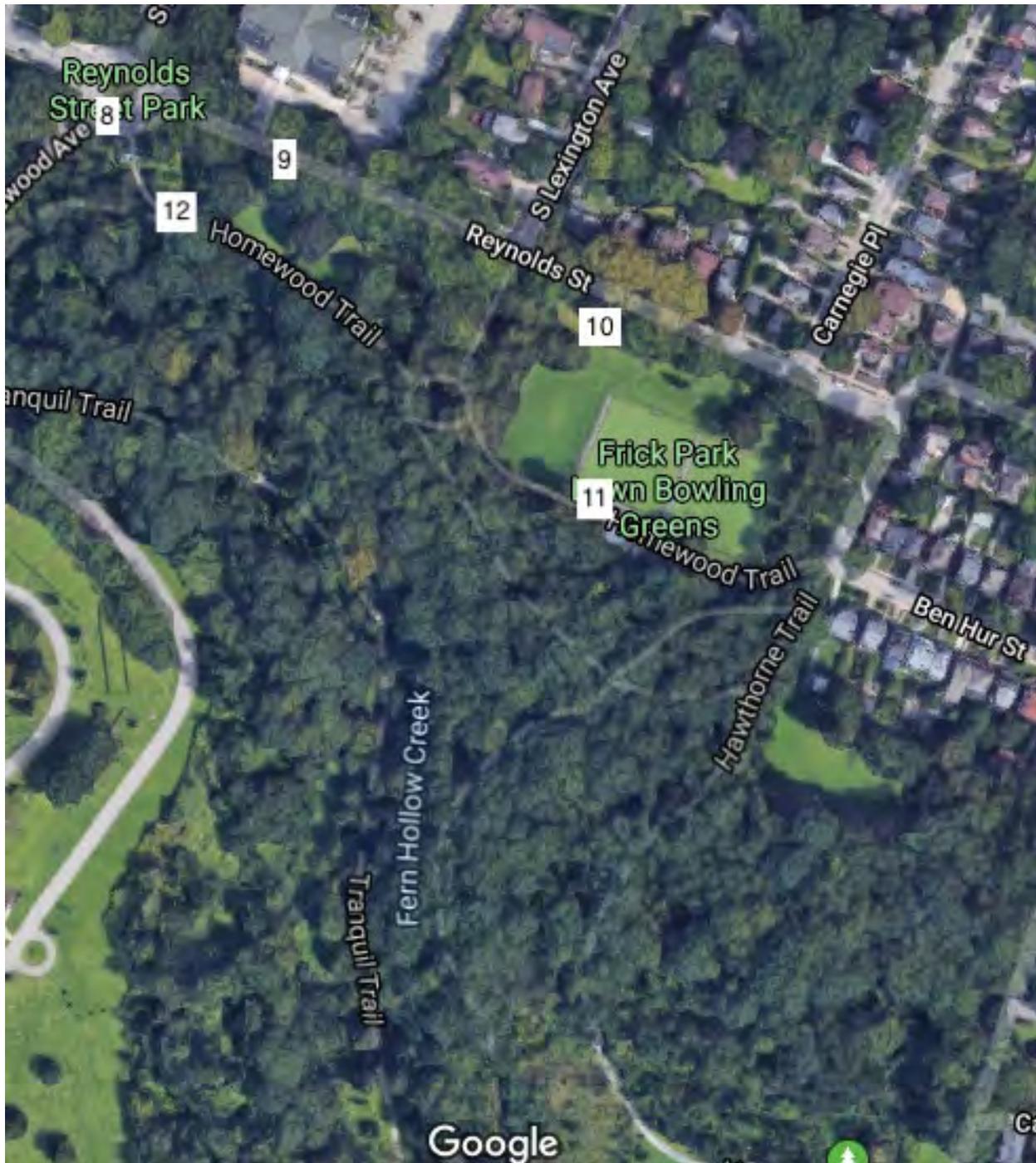




Photo 1. *Tranquil Trail through Fern Hollow (facing south).*

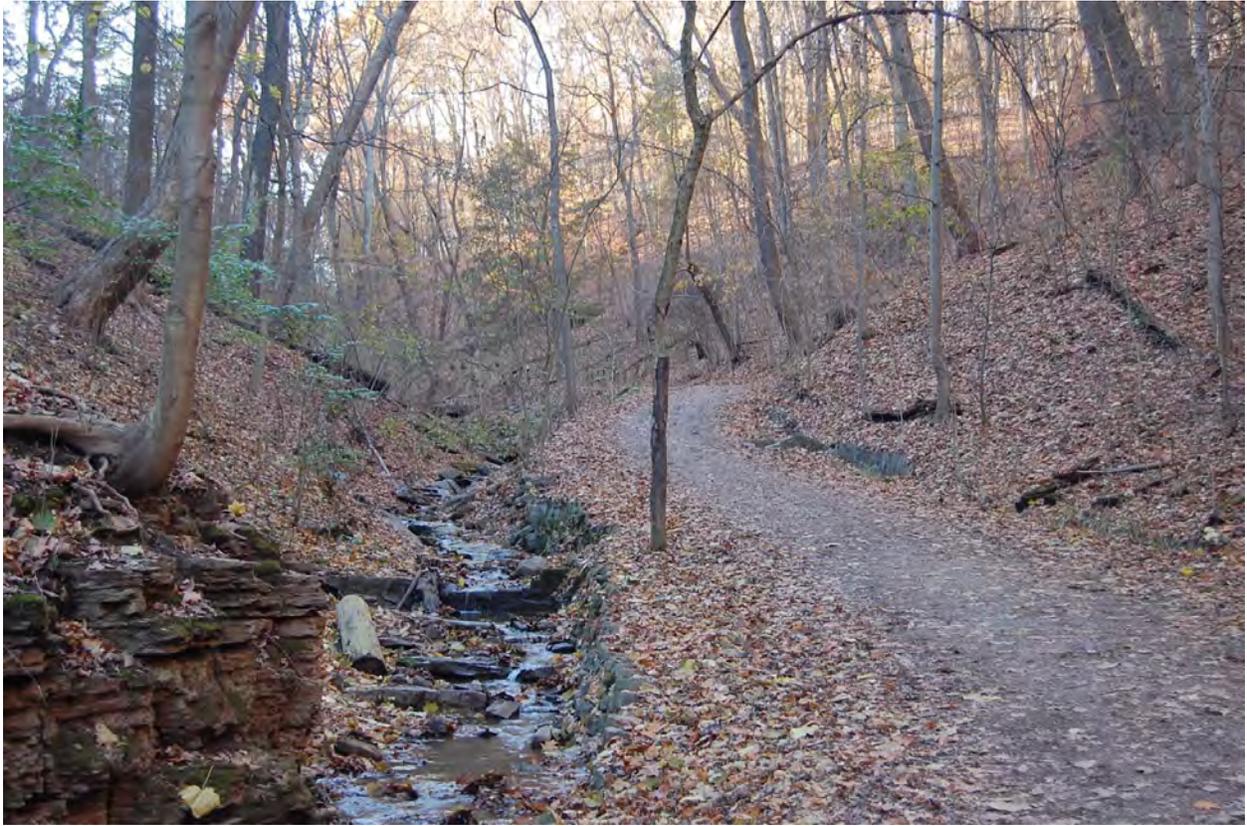


Photo 2. Falls Ravine Trail (facing west).



Photo 3. *Nine Mile Run and Penn-Lincoln Parkway (facing west).*



Photo 4. *Wooden footbridge over stream on Iron Grate Trail (facing north).*



Photo 5. Stone footbridge over stream alongside Tranquil Trail (facing northeast).



Photo 6. Wooden steps from Fern Hollow to S. Braddock Ave (facing east).



Photo 7. Rest room building, picnic shelter, and bulletin board at intersection of Tranquil, Falls Ravine, and Nine Mile Run Trails (facing southwest).



Photo 8. *Reynolds Street Gatehouse (John Russell Pope, 1931) (facing southeast).*



Photo 9. *Parkland landscape along Reynolds Street (facing northwest).*



Photo 10. *Lawn bowling greens at Reynolds Street (facing southeast).*



Photo 11. *Lawn bowling shelter, 1940 (facing southeast).*



Photo 12. *Entrance to Homewood Trail from Reynolds Street (facing southeast).*

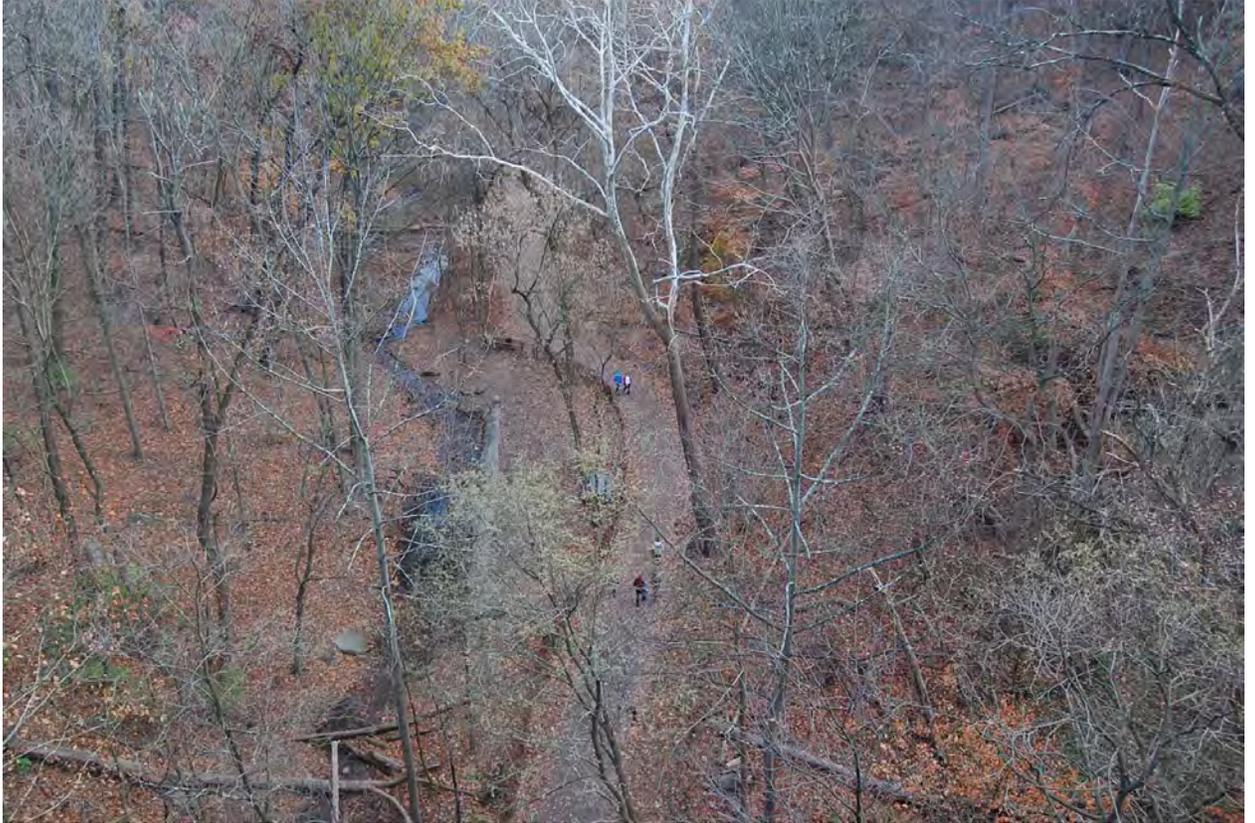


Photo 13. *Tranquil Trail from Forbes Avenue Bridge (facing southeast).*



Photo 14. *Forbes Avenue Bridge from Tranquil Trail (facing north).*



Photo 15. *Forbes Avenue gatehouse/shelter (John Russell Pope, 1931) at west end of Forbes Avenue Bridge (facing southeast).*



Photo 16. *Entrance cairn (John Russell Pope, 1931) at intersection of Forbes Avenue and Beechwood Boulevard (facing east).*



Photo 17. *Playground at Forbes and S. Braddock Avenues (facing southeast).*



Photo 18. *Bal field at S. Braddock Avenue (facing south).*



Photo 19. Red clay tennis courts at S. Braddock Avenue (facing northwest).



Photo 20. *Biddle Community building at S. Braddock Avenue (facing south).*



Photo 21. Approach to Clayton Hill/Frick Environmental Center from Beechwood Boulevard (facing north).



Photo 22. *Beechwood Boulevard gatehouses (John Russell Pope, 1931) frame axial view to Clayton Hill fountain (facing east).*



Photo 23. View from Clayton Hill Fountain (reconstructed) back to Beechwood Boulevard gatehouses; Frick Environmental Center at left (facing west).



Photo 24. *Frick Environmental Center and amphitheater (2016) (facing west).*



Photo 25. Entrance to Clayton Loop Trail encircling Frick Woods Nature Preserve (facing southeast).



Photo 26. *Riverview entrance and Blue Slide Playground off of Beechwood Boulevard (facing east).*



Photo 27. Riverview Trail facing back toward Beechwood Boulevard; playground hidden from view over rise in distance (facing southwest).



Photo 28. *Riverview Trail and Mon valley viewshed (facing southeast).*



Photo 29. *Sledding hill/bowl near Riverview entrance to park (facing northeast).*



Photo 30. Staff residence, office, and maintenance complex on English Lane (Wolfe and Wolfe, 1959) (facing east).



Photo 31. *Nine Mile Run Trail (facing northwest).*

**Frick Park
Historic Nomination Form
Supporting Documents**



Fig. 1. Frick Park Trustees' "Pictorial Map of Frick Park." 1939. Ezra G. Stiles, Union Trust Co. Accessed: <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~274129~90047905:Pictorial-Map-of-Frick-Park,-Pittsb.>

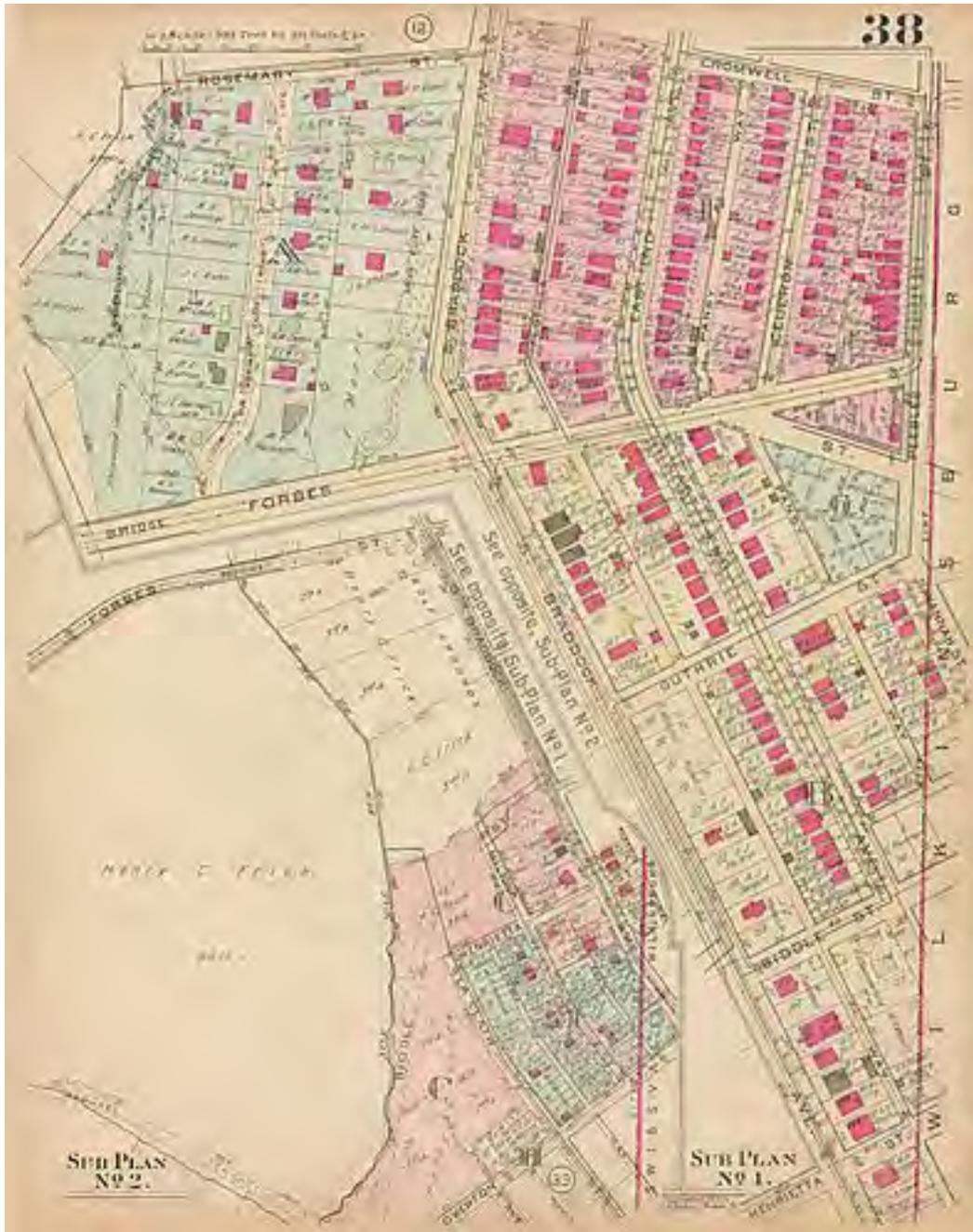


Fig. 2. *Point Breeze, Regent Square, Plate 38 B.* 1923. G.M. Hopkins & Co. G.M. Hopkins Company Maps, University of Pittsburgh. Accessed: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A23v0238b>.

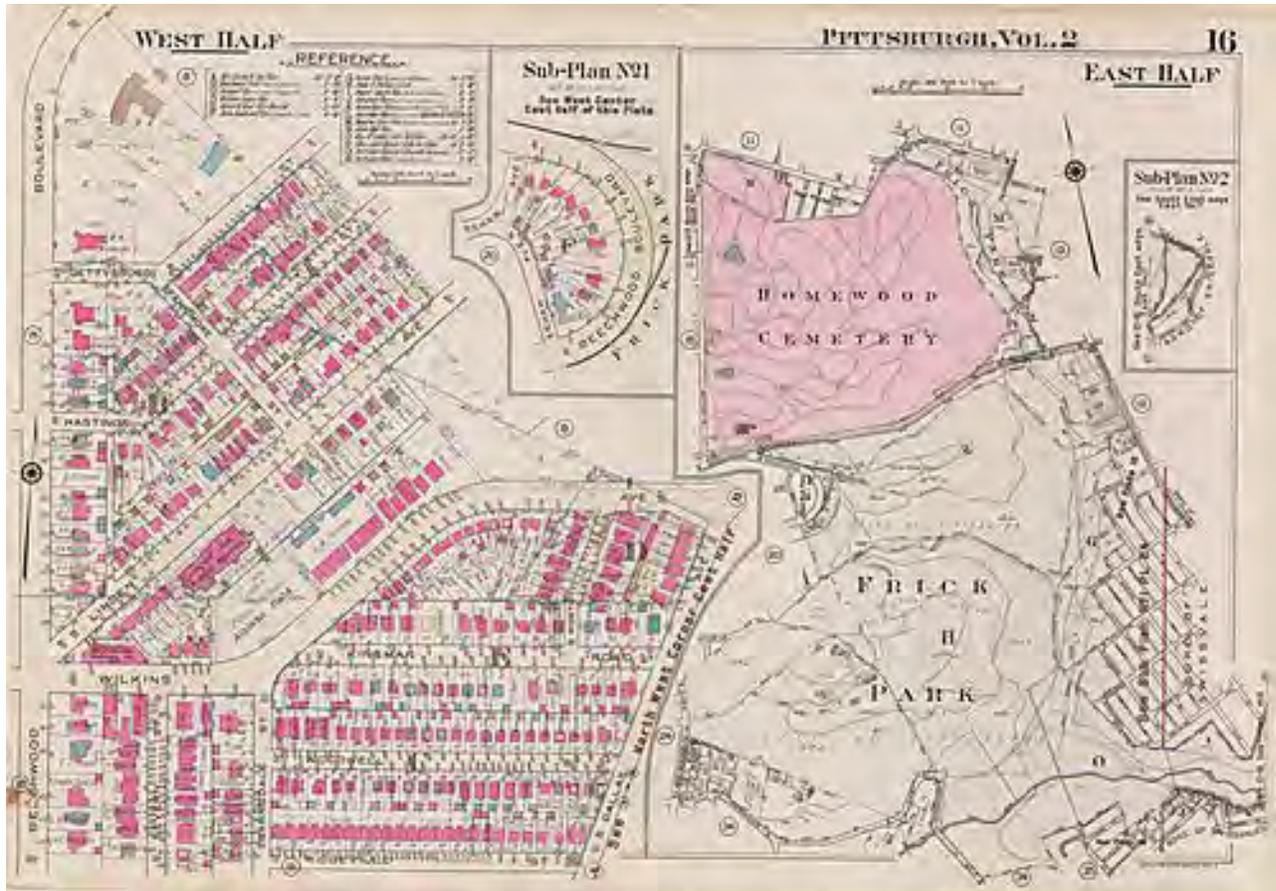


Fig. 3. Point Breeze, Regent Square, Squirrel Hill South. Plate 16. 1939. G.M. Hopkins & Co. G.M. Hopkins Company Maps, University of Pittsburgh. Accessed: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A39v02p16>.



Fig. 4. *Frick Park Main Entrance- Beechwood Blvd.* 1937. Allegheny Conference on Community Development Photographs Collection, Detre Library & Archives at the Heinz History Center. Accessed: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3AMSP285.B018.F16.I01>.



Fig. 5. *Frick Park (A View of Forbes Ave. Bridge crossing over Fern Hollow)*. June 23, 1914. Pittsburgh City Photographer Collection, University of Pittsburgh. Accessed: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A715.144143.CP>.