Preserving Pittsburgh’s Parks: the Wind & the Willows in the City of Steel
Pittsburgh Parks
Pittsburgh’s Parks Timeline

- 1788 – Allegheny Commons surveyed
- 1816 – Pittsburgh incorporated as a city
- 1867 – Allegheny Commons converted to public park
- 1889 – Schenley Park & Highland Park established
- 1894 – Riverview Park established
- 1906 – Pittsburgh annexed Allegheny City (Northside)
- 1919 – Henry Frick bequeathed 151 acres for the establishment Frick Park
Schenley Park

Entrance and Driveway, Schenley Park, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Individual landmark designations within the parks to call attention to the historic aspects they contain.
Organization desire to identify a project that:

- raised our profile
- built diverse partnerships
- captured community interest
- accomplish goals set forth in state & city preservation plans
- helped the environment
Why Parks?
List unlisted, historic parks on the National Register of Historic Places:
- Frick Park
- Highland Park
- Riverview Park

Once completed, designate each of the parks as City Historic Districts.
Frick Park
Individual Meetings & Discussions

- Brief project description
- Listen
- Discuss goals
- Discuss concerns
- Answer questions
- Follow up communication
Challenging Preservation Perceptions

- Partner Concerns
  - Impact & restrictions
  - "Parks are deed restricted & already protected"
  - Conflicts of interest

- Public Concerns
  - Input
  - Timeline
  - Personal
Typical Threats to Urban Parks

- Institutional & Development Encroachment
  - Higher Education
  - Private Institutions within the parks
  - Public Schools
  - Private homes
- Past Insensitive Treatments
  - 1960s Concrete
- Utilities
- Freeways
- Natural Threats
Grant Opportunities
- PHMC Keystone Construction & Planning Grants

Planning Tool
- Understanding Contributing & Non contributing elements

Recognition
- Civic pride

Protection
- Compliance
Managing Challenges

- Inter-Partner Relationships
- Political Backing & Change
- Differing Goals
- Funding
Initiative Growth & Evolution

- Partner Requests
  - City of Pittsburgh – Mellon Park

- Community Requests
  - Westinghouse Park

- Expanded Scope
  - Smaller historic City parks
  - Larger County Parks

- New Partners & Funders
  - Allegheny County
Takeaways

- Partnerships
- Untraditional preservation
- Conservation
- Recognition
- Protection
Questions?

“We must stop eating!” cried Toad as he ate another.
Pittsburgh Parks Initiative:

http://www.preservationpgh.org/parks-initiative