

IV. COMMUNITY VALUES AND CONCERNS ASSESSMENT

Citywide Issues of Concern

A number of issues that concern Mount Washington are actually related to larger issues affecting the city as a whole and even the region. The citywide issues are summarized here, followed by a section on concerns specific to Mount Washington.

Coordination with the City Government

The fiscal health of the City of Pittsburgh has been precarious for some years, culminating in the emergency declaration of extraordinary efforts to put the city on a stronger financial footing in 2005. Great concern about short and long term fiscal solvency remain. Among items of discussion is the importance of tax revenues for city budgets. Accordingly, subtracting land from the tax rolls by declaring it parkland is a point of the discussion. (The costs of such green space, however, may be lower than taxable land—see “Values of Green Space” in Section I.)

In addition, the city's financial stability is directly related to its ability to manage public spaces, whether the goal is preventive maintenance, restoration and replacement of aging infrastructure, repair and cleaning of facilities, or landscape management. Currently the City is operating under direction from the Act 47 (legislation applicable to “distressed” communities) management team and the “Oversight Board” imposed by the Legislature. Pressure to generate new revenues is intense as is pressure to reduce the ongoing city budget. The CDC is tracking the city's financial condition carefully and remains poised to speak out for important needs on Mount Washington. Recommendations for action in this report are made with the realities of the city's financial situation in mind.

In November 2005, the city of Pittsburgh elected new leadership. After one administration for the past dozen years, the community now has an opportunity to forge a relationship with a new administration and the potential new appointees in key agencies. The CDC has already begun discussions with the incoming administration. Working through Mount Washington's elected City Councilor, the CDC introduced the concept of the Grandview Scenic Byway Park to the City Council in November. On December 13, 2005, the Council voted to designate all city-owned properties in the Emerald Link area, except those in the Saddle, as the “Grandview Scenic Byway Park.” It remains vital to orient the new administration to the values and concerns of Mount Washington residents.

Ownership of Undeveloped Parcels

The study area includes four established city parks (over 129 acres), a recognized greenway of 50+ acres and various other publicly and privately owned undeveloped properties. In order to assemble all of these properties together into a comprehensive conserved greenway, a number of steps must be taken, many of which require coordination with City of Pittsburgh departments and City Council.

The majority of the properties within the study area are city-owned parks, designated greenway and other city-owned properties. MW CDC is currently working with the City of

Pittsburgh to have all of these parcels declared a single park, Grand View Scenic Byway Park. Pittsburgh City Council voted unanimously on September 21, 2005 to approve legislation that requests the Mayor to establish Grand View Scenic Byway Park and places a moratorium on all development of public land within the Grand View Scenic Byway Park study area with the goal of creating the park. The legislation authorizes the city to place a six-month moratorium on the sale or transfer of certain city-owned properties within the study area in order to allow a period of study to review the correct assemblage of property to form a contiguous park, and the proper maintenance required to guarantee the structural integrity of all park hillsides. The final vote of approval was made December 12, 2005.

One complication that may arise regarding the designation of all the publicly-owned parcels in the study area as a park is that some are owned by the City of Pittsburgh, while others are owned by the (3TB) of the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County and Pittsburgh Board of Education. Three Taxing Bodies acquire land by seizing properties that are tax delinquent. In order to transfer 3TB properties to sole City ownership, the Board of Education and Allegheny County must relinquish their rights and City Council must vote to accept sole ownership.

Once Grand View Scenic Byway Park is established, all of the block and lot numbers within the park should be merged into a single block and lot number. This will be a complex process which will require some intermediary steps such as vacation of paper streets and acquisition of some privately owned parcels that are embedded within some sections of the park as outlined below. Within each section of the study area it is recommended that each section be consolidated into one block and lot parcel. However, this can be undertaken as one consolidation of the park as a whole rather than section by section.

MWDC also desires to see that Grand View Scenic Byway Park be permanently protected through a deed restriction on the entire park or other such permanent protection.

In addition to the publicly owned parcels, some privately owned parcels are essential to establishing the continuity of the proposed park. When Grand View Scenic Byway Park is established, acquisition of these properties and their addition to the park will require an act of City Council. The approach to acquiring these properties depends upon whether they are tax-delinquent or not and the priority of their acquisition depends upon their location within the study area.

In some cases these properties are embedded in a recognized greenway (Duquesne Heights Greenway), and are therefore preventing the vacation of the streets and consolidation of the parcels within the greenway. Acquisition of these properties is a priority, because they are blocking further consolidation and protection of the adjacent greenway parcels. Some of the properties are not tax delinquent and their owners should be approached regarding donation or sale to the City for inclusion in the greenway or park. Other properties that are tax delinquent can be donated to the City in lieu of taxes by the process outlined below.

- 1) Obtain agreement from property owner;
- 2) Obtain agreement from the City Councilor for the district;
- 3) Obtain agreement from Director of Finance Department;
- 4) Pass City Council Resolution to accept the properties in lieu of taxes;
- 5) Deed from owner to city with deed restriction specifying greenway or park use;
- 6) Pass City Council Resolution to annex the properties to Grand View Scenic Byway Park.

Several tax-delinquent properties have been identified that would be valuable additions to the greenway and are listed later in the plan. For all of those identified, MWCDC with support from ALT and the City of Pittsburgh will have to take the following six steps to have them donated to and accepted by the City of Pittsburgh in lieu of taxes to be added to Grand View Scenic Byway Park.

In some cases properties adjacent to or within the proposed park may be included in the Treasurer's Sale. MWCDC should monitor the Treasurer's Sale list and request that properties that are appropriate for addition to the proposed park be pulled from the sale and follow the process above to have them donated to the city in lieu of taxes and annexed to the park.

MWCDC and the partners involved in this process should take as many of these properties as possible through the six steps together at one time, rather than repeatedly going to City Council with one or two properties.

Other properties are simply adjacent to parks or green space and could be valuable additions to the proposed park if they could be easily or inexpensively obtained. These properties are a lower priority for acquisition unless they have special environmental qualities or add other value such as access to the park. The acquisition of these properties, whether tax-current or tax-delinquent, would follow the same process outlined above.

Hillsides Protection and Zoning

Pending before City Council is adoption of the 2004 "Hillsides Report," commissioned by Council to outline concerns and approaches to better protecting and managing the city's many hillsides. The award-winning technical report, prepared by Perkins Eastman, provides an analysis of current hillside development patterns in Pittsburgh. The report recommends maintaining key existing patterns of use that minimize visual and physical disruption of the landscape. Construction, suggests the report, should help "in-fill" existing development and utilize existing sewer lines, roads or other infrastructure to avoid building on currently green or open space. The report further recommends avoiding all slopes of 40% or more and adding careful additional standards for areas of 25% slope or more. The City's Planning Department has prepared revised zoning and management regulations based on this report, including using 25% slope and existing patterns of development on hillsides as guides for deciding where and whether to allow additional hillside development. As of publication of this report, the issue of hillside zoning is still unresolved.

As in past decades, controversy has developed over the extent to which hillsides should be developed. Two city agencies, the Planning Department and the Urban Redevelopment Authority, have come to different conclusions about whether these hillsides should be available for development. The resolution of these differences could have profound impact on the concept of the Grand View Scenic Byway Park linking existing green space on Mount Washington because so much of the Study Area is on relatively steep slopes.

The zoning of these steep slopes within the Study Area is in question because under the city's last zoning code and maps these areas were combined with parks in a Parks and Open Space district. In the new City of Pittsburgh Zoning Code there is only a Parks district or a Hillsides district. The process for re-mapping these areas of Mount Washington and

Duquesne Heights as one or the other was halted by MWDC because residents and the organization did not want to see more development of the green hillsides of the neighborhood, as would be allowed by current Hillside zoning, particularly those that are city-owned. At this time, MWDC is working with the Department of City Planning to re-start the mapping process, with the understanding that all of the publicly-owned green space within the study area will be zoned Park rather than Hillside. This is in keeping with MWDC's work with City Council to establish Grand View Scenic Byway Park.

The CDC is, however, closely watching the hillside zoning discussion and advocating through public involvement to support the guidelines proposed in the Hillside Report. The most recent action taken by the CDC Board commits to working with the Planning Department to develop zoning codes that closely adhere to the Hillside Report Recommendations.

Local Values and Issues

A number of issues have recurred in community discussions of the Study Area and its existing and potential green spaces. These are summarized in relation to the six key green spaces that form the backbone of the Study Area. Key values identified for each of the segments of the Study Area are also noted.

Key Values

Grandview Park: Grandview Park has high value to the community as a social and cultural meeting place. As a multi-purpose green space, this park attracts users who appreciate a variety of uses including views of the city, enjoyment of the playground for small children, strolling, walking trails below the observation platform, and events such as movies and music that take place on the observation platform. During community meetings, participants expressed the desire to enhance this cultural meeting-ground usage of the park. The overall desire is to restore the park to its former glory, including such iconic amenities as the merry-go-round that once graced the park. There is a great desire for the park to be able to host festivals and other cultural events that enhance the role of the park as a meeting ground for the entire community.

The Saddle: Generally the Saddle is viewed as an undeveloped green space with environmental value to the neighborhood and the region. At a public discussion, the Saddle was called the "lungs and the soul of the area." While the Saddle is valued for its trails, they are only partially delineated and there is a general sense that the recreational uses of the area are generally not well known.

While greatly appreciated, there is awareness that the Saddle bears many scars from its industrial use in the past, from undermining and coke ovens to significant dumping sites of industrial debris. It was also noted that the Saddle is a significant part of the green "face" that Mount Washington presents to downtown Pittsburgh. Finally, residents are acutely aware that the Saddle is at the heart of the current discussion in Pittsburgh about the possible development of green hillsides in the city and surrounding areas.

Grand View Overlook Park: This segment of the Study Area is viewed as a premier resource for the city of Pittsburgh. By some estimates, over 1.5 million visitors view the spectacular outlook over Pittsburgh's Point and downtown from Grandview Avenue each year. The fact that so many people come to Mount Washington to enjoy the view lends weight to the

idea that visitors might also enjoy other green spaces on the mountain. Residents of Mount Washington prize this view as one of the unique features of their community, but they also perceive it as a valuable asset for the entire region.

Below the overlook pods built in 1970 and along the north face of the mountain is an area the City designated as "parkland." Despite the pride and appreciation of the view, residents consider the current condition of the overlook pods and surrounding hillside area to be deplorable. Serious repairs are needed, the hillside vegetation is unattractive, and there is a need for repeated maintenance due to the past treatment (e.g., topping of trees and bushes) that has allowed primarily invasive plants to colonize the area.

Grandview Avenue is used extensively as a physical recreation resource. The path from downtown, up McArdle, to either the East or West end of the avenue and back is a favorite route of serious lunchtime runners. Like other visitors, walkers and joggers appreciate the view. But more importantly, the north edge of the avenue, with only one intersection, offers the opportunity to proceed for a considerable distance without the vehicle/pedestrian conflicts presented by most city streets. The safety and ease of this route makes it very popular for pedestrians. In addition, Grandview is featured in the 60-mile route of the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh's "Pedal Pittsburgh," an event that sends bicyclists throughout the city to discover the neighborhoods and unique design of the city.

The key values of this area are as a green visual backdrop for the city below, as a major promenade for residents and visitors and as a remarkable viewscape for visitors to the top of Mount Washington.

Duquesne Heights Greenway: When the land identified as the Duquesne Heights Greenway was given "greenway" status in the 1980's, the intent was to create an opportunity to expand both green space and public access to some portions of undeveloped land on Mount Washington. Over the years, the limitations of this greenway designation have become apparent as the greenway has remained largely unmarked and in fact the signs and guideline fencing put in place have fallen into disrepair. The greenway is viewed by the public as underutilized. Its highest potential value is perceived as enhancing the quality of life for young families who want convenient access to outdoor recreation and trails. It is also viewed as having potential educational value to the community and as offering green respite to those who find its path.

Olympia Park: This well used park is valued for its active recreational facilities that support ballgames and other organized sports. The playground is often busy, and all facilities are in good repair.

Mount Washington Park: This segment of the Study Area is least well known to the public and possibly least used. Residents view its relatively undisturbed forestland as a peaceful natural oasis, but its relative isolation has limited the perceptions of its environmental qualities. It does have the adjacent Dilworth Field, home to the Little League Baseball and Softball teams, and there is also a children's playground and a WPA-era field House. These may be more known and valued than the undeveloped woodlands that make up the rest of the park.

Facilities and Infrastructure

Grandview Park: Concerns focus on the built infrastructure of the park, particularly the bandshell or viewing stand that was constructed in 1970. This structure is aging and unattractive. While still structurally sound, it is not an enhancement to the site.

Some of the paved pathways across the park are in need of repair for the safety and comfort of pedestrians. Residents are also interested in having handsome trash receptacles, benches and lampposts to enhance the paved portions of the park pathways.

Additional ideas have been voiced in public meetings such as developing camping facilities or bringing back the Merry-Go-Round.

The Saddle: Some of the streets cutting through the Saddle require attention. Erosion is a concern particularly alongside newly installed roads. There is a need for a sidewalk along E. Sycamore Street, and the city steps from Vinecliffe to Sycamore need to be cleared of overgrowth.

Grandview Byway Overlook Park: This is the most heavily used portion of the Study Area for visitors to Mount Washington. The immediate need is for repair of the viewing "pods" that overlook the spectacular panorama of the City of Pittsburgh and its three rivers. The pods and their railings need significant repair or redesign and replacement in order to make the Byway an inviting and enjoyable place to visit. The sidewalks also need to be repaired or replaced. There is a lack of signage or any information about the historical and cultural significance of the location and the views. The entire length of the Byway needs additional street furniture, lighting and safe pedestrian access. These improvements are also called for in the Grandview Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (CMP) completed in fall, 2005. The CMP provides an excellent basis for future action on these needs.

Duquesne Heights Greenway: Currently the existing fencing, signs or other construction in the greenway are in serious disrepair. Many of the delineating fences have fallen over and are disappearing beneath the overgrowth. Access points need to be identified (including negotiations with private land owners for easements or other access agreements), then marked with signs and in some cases, railings. Trails or paths need to be marked and improved.

Olympia Park: This park includes a playground, playground equipment, a gazebo, large baseball field and a recreation center. All structures and facilities are generally in good condition.

Mount Washington Park: At this time this park has the ball fields used by local Little League teams and a playground for children, all in good repair. Other than these, the park is notable for its lack of developed structures, and it currently serves primarily as undeveloped green space for habitat and public enjoyment. Signage noting the ecological and habitat value of the forest cover and landscape would be ideal to help people fully appreciate the importance of the parkland for the region. Intermittent trails are also visible, but could use improvement and possibly extension.

Maintenance

The four city parks in the Study Area will be maintained according to the newly revised protocol for the City's Public Works Department (which is responsible for Parks and Recreation). Table 3 presents the outlined task and frequency schedules for the major Mount Washington parks. The details of maintenance standards and procedures are presented in detail in the Department of Public Works, Standards and Procedures: Park Facility Maintenance Programs, January 2004.

Grandview Park: Community residents are interested in regular graffiti clean up, particularly at the viewing platform, as well as trash removal, repair and maintenance of both structures such as the viewing platform and the playground. In addition, preventive maintenance of all structures is needed, including the recently renovated stone entrance stairs. This area will also need ongoing maintenance of the landscape through the city parks department.

The Saddle: Currently the major concern in the Saddle area is trash clean up and trail maintenance. At the present time these must be done primarily with local volunteers as the city does not have a comprehensive program to clear trash or maintain trails on public land that is not parkland.

Grandview Avenue: Basic facilities management is required at the overlooks, sidewalk and fencing maintenance is needed along the Byway, trash management is needed along the entire length of the area, and view maintenance is needed. Currently the view is maintained by drastic topping of the existing vegetation. Residents hope that this situation can be remedied by changing the plantings on the hillside to plants that do not exceed heights that are compatible with the views of the city.

Duquesne Heights Greenway: At the present time there is little to maintain along the greenway other than some partial trails. In future, after improvements to the greenway trail, boundary markers and directional signs, general maintenance of all of these features will be needed. Some dump sites exist and efforts are needed to remove these and control future litter and dumping. Again, until such time as the area is designated as parkland, all these efforts will need to be led by residents.

Olympia Park: Current facilities need routine and preventive maintenance to keep facilities in good condition, per the new Department of Public Works protocol. Dumping has been a problem in areas at the edge of the park. Annual clean ups by citizens would be valuable to control this problem.

Mount Washington Park: The recreational facilities in the park require ongoing preventive and routine maintenance, following the revised Public Works Department standards and maintenance protocols. However, if trails are better established and signs are added, there will be additional need to maintain these features.

Table 3. Pittsburgh Department of Public Works Park Maintenance Protocols

OLYMPIA PARK						
FUNCTION	QTY UNIT	UNIT (minutes)	ONCE (minutes)	ONCE (hours)	ANNUAL FREQ.	TOTAL HOURS
Litter - general	351.7 msf	1.67	587.3	9.8	120	1174.7
Empty trash cans	10 cans	7.2	72.0	1.2	168	201.6
Mow open areas w/580D	235.2 msf	0.3	70.6	1.2	19	22.3
Mow close areas w/20" mower	0.7 msf	9	6.3	0.1	19	2.0
Mow close areas w/hydromower	46.3 msf	3	138.9	2.3	19	44.0
Broadleaf weed control (hand)	47 msf	6	282.0	4.7	2	9.4
Broadleaf weed control	235.2 msf	1	235.2	3.9	2	7.8
Overseed (hand)	47 msf	7.2	338.4	5.6	1	5.6
Overseed	235.2 msf	1	235.2	3.9	1	3.9
Liming (hand)	47 msf	7.2	338.4	5.6	1	5.6
Liming	235.2 msf	1	235.2	3.9	1	3.9
Topdress (hand)	47 msf	7.2	338.4	5.6	1	5.6
Topdress	235.2 msf	1	235.2	3.9	1	3.9
Edging (hand)	39.5 clf	5.4	213.3	3.6	1	3.6
Spray w/truck sprayer	8.3 msf	14	116.2	1.9	3	5.8
Spray w/small tank	1.5 mlf	40	60.0	1.0	3	3.0
Fertilize w/tractor	235.2 msf	6	1411.2	23.5	2	47.0
Fertilize w/hand sprayer	47 msf	6	282.0	4.7	2	9.4
Aerify ground	282.2 msf	6	1693.2	28.2	2	56.4
Trim hedges w/power trimmer	1 clf	90	90.0	1.5	3	4.5
Trim small trees	16 tree	10	160.0	2.7	1	2.7
Repair mounds and holes	2 fields	60	120.0	2.0	5	10.0
Drag infield	2 fields	25	50.0	0.8	20	16.7
Line field (baseball/softball)	2 fields	20	40.0	0.7	1	0.7
Line field (football/soccer)	1 field	60	60.0	1.0	1	1.0
Blow/Sweep court (basketball)	1 court	7	7.0	0.1	34	4.0
Install/remove nets (basketball)	2 nets	15	30.0	0.5	4	2.0
Reline court (basketball)	1 court	45	45.0	0.8	1	0.8
Blow leaves w/tractor	120.5 msf	1	120.5	2.0	2	4.0
Blow leaves w/hand blower	59.4 msf	5	297.0	5.0	2	9.9
Leaf removal w/power vac	1.3 msf	5	6.5	0.1	2	0.2
Clean catch basin	8 basin	60	480.0	8.0	1	8.0
Clean gutter	0.4 mlf	30	12.0	0.2	4	0.8
Snow removal (snow blower)	19.4 msf	6	116.4	1.9	13	25.2
Snow removal by hand	1.1 msf	80	88.0	1.5	13	19.1
Spread salt by hand	20.5 msf	5	102.5	1.7	13	22.2
Playground inspection	1 each	60	60.0	1.0	12	12.0
Playground maintenance						30.0
TOTAL						1789

MT. WASHINGTON PARK						
FUNCTION	QTY UNIT	UNIT (minutes)	ONCE (minutes)	ONCE (hours)	ANNUAL FREQ.	TOTAL HOURS
Litter - general	241.7 msf	1.67	403.6	6.7	80	538.2
Empty trash cans	12 cans	7.2	86.4	1.4	104	149.8
Mow open areas w/580D	162 msf	0.3	48.6	0.8	19	15.4
Mow close areas w/hydromower	4.5 msf	3	13.5	0.2	19	4.3
Broadleaf weed control (hand)	4.5 msf	6	27.0	0.5	2	0.9
Broadleaf weed control	162 msf	1	162.0	2.7	2	5.4
Overseed (hand)	4.5 msf	7.2	32.4	0.5	1	0.5
Overseed	162 msf	1	162.0	2.7	1	2.7
Liming (hand)	4.5 msf	7.2	32.4	0.5	1	0.5
Liming	162 msf	1	162.0	2.7	1	2.7
Topdress (hand)	4.5 msf	7.2	32.4	0.5	1	0.5
Topdress	162 msf	1	162.0	2.7	1	2.7
Edging (hand)	3.8 clf	5.4	20.5	0.3	1	0.3
Spray w/truck sprayer	1.3 msf	14	18.2	0.3	3	0.9
Spray w/small tank	1 mlf	40	40.0	0.7	3	2.0
Fertilize w/tractor	166.5 msf	6	999.0	16.7	2	33.3
Aerify ground	166.5 msf	6	999.0	16.7	2	33.3
Trim small trees	14 tree	10	140.0	2.3	1	2.3
Prune shrubs	5 shrub	12	60.0	1.0	1	1.0
Fertilize shrubs	5 shrub	6	30.0	0.5	2	1.0
Cultivate shrub bed	0.1 msf	30	3.0	0.1	1	0.1
Repair mounds and holes	2 fields	60	120.0	2.0	5	10.0
Drag infield	2 fields	25	50.0	0.8	20	16.7
Line field (baseball/softball)	2 fields	20	40.0	0.7	1	0.7
Blow/Sweep court (basketball)	1 court	7	7.0	0.1	34	4.0
Install/remove nets (basketball)	2 nets	15	30.0	0.5	4	2.0
Reline court (basketball)	1 court	45	45.0	0.8	1	0.8
Blow leaves w/tractor	115.2 msf	1	115.2	1.9	2	3.8
Blow leaves w/hand blower	9.1 msf	5	45.5	0.8	2	1.5
Leaf removal w/vac	0.5 msf	5	2.5	0.0	2	0.1
Clean catch basin	5 basin	60	300.0	5.0	1	5.0
Clean gutter	0.2 mlf	30	6.0	0.1	4	0.4
Snow removal by hand	6.3 msf	80	504.0	8.4	13	109.2
Spread salt by hand	6.3 msf	5	31.5	0.5	13	6.8
Playground inspection	1 each	60	60.0	1.0	12	12.0
Playground maintenance						30.0
TOTAL						1001

Development Issues

There is no doubt that Mount Washington can be enhanced with the development of key properties adjacent to permanently protected green spaces in the Study Area. The more securely the Study Area is protected, the more valuable adjacent properties will become. The better maintained the parklands are, the more desirable these locations will be. Using the Hillside Report as the general guideline for selecting appropriate sites for development, the Mount Washington community should be able to identify compatible projects for development. Given the complexities of the geology of the area, each project will need site-specific study. Nevertheless, the CDC will work to help identify and shepherd appropriate development that complements the efforts to protect and improve the green infrastructure.

There are a variety of pending proposals for development within or adjacent to the Study Area. The CDC is tracking these projects through its various task forces and will stay engaged throughout the resolution and decision making process for each site. Cases that particularly need attention are itemized under their respective locations below.

Grandview Park: At one time MWDC worked with the property owner of a large parcel adjacent to Grandview Park to develop a site plan for the development of 20 to 30 townhouses. One of the ideas generated for the site plan involved a trade of some of the privately-owned land for an equal area of publicly-owned park land. This idea and the project have not progressed in the last two years, however should a project develop on this site in the future there is no doubt that neighbors and residents would be resistant to any transfer of park land to private use.

The Saddle: Most of the property in the Saddle is owned by the city or three taxing bodies, and due to the view from the area, the City has some interest in developing this property for tax reasons. The City of Pittsburgh recently completed a study on the viability of developing in the Saddle with Strada as the consulting firm. The results of the study were reported back to the community and the recommendation to build in part of the Saddle was presented for public comment. The solution recommended by the consultant allowed for the construction of approximately 20 single-family homes or townhouses that run along Neff Street, into the woods connecting to Cola Street and on both sides of the newly paved Unnamed Way. The majority of the surrounding wooded site would be untouched, allowing for an expansion of the Grandview Park. The City would also provide access between Grandview Park and the Saddle; however, due to the need to keep Cola Street open as an emergency roadway, this access might be over or under a city roadway.

It was suggested that in exchange for the community agreeing to this "area of development," the City might be willing to make all the remaining public acreage of the Study Area into a Park. It was also suggested that a portion of the proceeds from the sale of this land might be used for work on the proposed Byway Park. However, this was prior to the legislation that has gone through City Council requesting that the Mayor establish Grandview Scenic Byway Park, which includes all of the city-owned properties in the Saddle.

As of November 2005, Pittsburgh Department of City Planning staff still has instructions to issue a Request for Proposals for development in the area identified by the consultant. It will be included in the RFP that the development will receive no public subsidies and will have to comply with all current and proposed hillside zoning regulations. It remains to be seen how

current city interest in developing this area will balance with the community's desire to see this area remain green and be included in the proposed park.

Grandview Avenue Overlook Park: There are several current development issues under consideration by the City of Pittsburgh that could greatly affect the development of this segment of the Study Area:

One Grandview - One Grandview is a prime site on the north side of Grandview Avenue adjacent to the Monongahela Incline that has been vacant and boarded-up for over 20 years. The site also connects to the green space of the Saddle to the east. A number of redevelopment plans for this site have come and gone over the years, with no success to date. The most recent proposal has been put forth by local architect Luke Desmone of Desmone and Associates. Desmone's design includes 50 hotel rooms, over 100 condominiums, a restaurant, fitness center and spa and plenty of underground parking. Desmone has presented his plan to the neighborhood at an MWCDC Community Forum, and participants expressed general support and enthusiasm for a well-designed and well-thought-out development on this prominent and long-neglected site. The project still needs financing and site control, and there will be community concerns to resolve with any redevelopment of this site. The community and MWCDC continue to closely monitor any proposals for this site.

Grandview Avenue - Several condominium developments have been proposed for Grandview Avenue in the last three years, both on the east and west ends of the avenue. These proposals are controversial because they are replacing single-family residences with 4 to 14-unit condominiums, and supplanting buildings of less than 40 feet with buildings up to 100 feet in height. Four such projects have received approval from the City, of those at least two are currently in litigation, and none have begun construction. Concerned residents organized and successfully lobbied for a zoning change for the eastern end of the avenue to prevent future developments over 40 feet, with the exception of the One Grandview property. Other residents continue to work with MWCDC's Public Realm and Planning and Zoning committees to modify the Grandview Avenue Public Realm Zoning to see to it that the western end of Grandview receives similar protection.

Duquesne Heights Greenway: There are no known development proposals for this area.

Olympia Park: There are no specific development issues at this time.

Mount Washington Park: No specific development issues are known.

Property Protection and Acquisition

As mentioned above, under Citywide Issues of Concern, MWCDC is working to protect all city-owned property within the study area by establishing Grand View Scenic Byway Park. At the same time, many privately owned parcels are surrounded by parks or greenway land, have frontage only on paper streets, or are adjacent to the Study Area. The CDC will work with the

City and encourage the owners of such properties to donate or sell the land to be included in the park or greenway as outlined above. (See Appendix E.)

In addition to this work with the City, MWDC has worked with Allegheny Land Trust to identify tax-current privately owned parcels in the Study Area. There are a number of properties that could be valuable additions to the park. Ten properties have been identified as priorities for acquisition because their locations are critical to the continuity of the proposed park. These properties range in size from 2,000 square feet to 10 acres or more, and together total about 40 acres with an appraised value of \$400,000. MWDC's efforts to purchase property to add to the proposed park will start with this "top ten" list.

Within each section of the study area, particular ownership and protection issues have been identified and are detailed below.

Grandview Park:

Within the defined study area around Grandview Park there are a total of 56 lots; 2 of these lots are the original Grandview Park, and 40 other lots are also city-owned. Some of these have been annexed to the park by an act of City Council and others are included in the proposed Grand View Scenic Byway Park. If that should not be established these properties will still need to be consolidated into Grandview Park. 11 properties are privately owned and tax-current and 3 are privately owned and tax-delinquent. These 14 properties will be acquired through donation or purchase to be included in the park.

In a future, lower-priority step, MWDC may wish to work with property owners with steep rear lots regarding subdividing their property and donating the hilly rear part to the City for inclusion in the park.

The Saddle:

The City Planning Department's interest in development in this area, as well as the Hillside Zoning revisions being considered by City Council, have a direct bearing on the disposition of much of the city-owned land in the Saddle. However, if the final legislation for the establishment of the park, due in City Council no later than December 21st, 2005, includes all of the city-owned property in the Saddle, then the development proposals and hillside zoning will no longer have any bearing on the publicly-owned property in this area.

One ownership and protection issue to be watched in the Saddle is the use and recent paving of the Un-named Way. This road is contributing significantly to erosion in the area. Residents of Neff Street have used the Un-named way for over 21 years so they have a right to access by "right of adverse possession." If access must be maintained, then a better solution should be found to the current configuration of this road.

The Saddle section of the Study Area includes 54 properties. Forty-four of these lots are city-owned, all of which are included in the list of parcels proposed for Grand View Scenic Byway Park. Of the other 10 parcels, 5 are privately owned and tax-current, 2 are owned by the Port Authority, 1 belongs to Conrail, 1 belongs to the Pittsburgh Public Parking Authority, and 1 belongs to Allegheny County.

The five privately owned lots are all adjacent to one another and the owners may be hoping to develop them, although no development plan is proposed at this time, with the exception of the One Grandview design that relates to one of the five properties. The status of these properties will be monitored.

The Port Authority, Conrail, Pittsburgh Public Parking Authority, and Allegheny County properties should all be approached in a similar manner. The two lots owned by the Port Authority are on the north side of McArdle Roadway, intermixed with City of Pittsburgh property. The Conrail property is also on the North side of Grandview Avenue. The parking authority property is on Beam way. The Allegheny County property is over the entrance to the Liberty Tunnel. All three entities should be approached to obtain an easement to allow maintenance and planting of this site in keeping with the management of the rest of the park/greenway.

Grandview Overlook Park:

The zoning in this area is a mix of "Parks and Open Space" and the "Grandview Avenue Public Realm District." Both of these zoning designations have been the topic of neighborhood concern in recent years, as mentioned in the sections on Hillside Zoning and Protection and Development Issues.

Grandview Avenue is also the most recognized section of the Grand View Scenic Byway, a Pennsylvania Scenic Byway since 2003. However, McArdle Roadway and East Sycamore Street, the road that winds through the Saddle, are also part of the Byway. MWDC has developed a Corridor Management Plan for the improvement and enhancement of the infrastructure and visitor experience of the Byway and its famous views. The Corridor Management Plan is a companion to this Master Implementation Plan that outlines the maintenance and improvement of the green space along the Byway.

The Grandview Overlook Park section of the Study Area includes 15 parcels. Nine of these are city-owned of which 3 are currently considered Grandview Overlook Park, and the other 6 are included in the legislation to create Grand View Scenic Byway Park. Five properties are owned by other public entities or corporations (Commonwealth of PA, Port Authority, Duquesne Incline, and Martin Media), and MWDC will work with the property owners of each to obtain an easement for maintenance of the green space on these properties. One property is privately owned and within the commercial area along Grandview. Only one of the properties in this section is privately owned and on the high priority list of parcels to purchase to preserve the continuity of the green space on the north side of Grandview.

Duquesne Heights Greenway:

The officially designated greenway is in public ownership (some 60 acres, held primarily by the City and 3 taxing bodies). Private owners hold adjacent lands both undeveloped (some 30 acres) and developed (about 2.5 acres). In this segment 95 acres are zoned Parks and Open Space and about 2.5 acres are zoned Residential R2-L.

The Duquesne Heights Greenway section of the Study Area includes 312 parcels, most of which are city-owned, are currently designated as greenway and are to be included in the proposed Grand View Scenic Byway Park.

Two properties within this section of the Study Area are owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Martin Media billboard company. Easements for management will be sought for these two properties.

There are also 21 privately owned parcels in this section of the study area. Three of these parcels are large, undeveloped parcels of hillside over Route 51, located between sections of the greenway. MWDC is seeking to purchase these properties in partnership with Allegheny Land Trust. The other seventeen properties are a combination of small tax-current and tax-delinquent properties that are adjacent to or embedded in the greenway. These will need to be donated to the city or purchased for inclusion in the park.

The nine properties that are embedded in the greenway are a priority for acquisition as they complicate the process of vacating streets and consolidating parcels. The Duquesne Heights Greenway appears on the map as a number of individual lots separated by streets. One might expect to drive in and see houses in this area, although it is undeveloped green space. Throughout the greenway, once embedded lots are acquired, the paper streets should be vacated, and all lots should be merged into one for the whole greenway. The advantage to the city of this is that it cleans up the map so that people don't expect streets where there are none and the inventory of "unused land" is lowered significantly making it look as if the city is healthier financially (since the list goes by number of properties rather than acreage)

This process begins with the County Assessor's office in cooperation with the City Real Estate and Planning Departments. For city owned properties that do not share a road with a private property the street vacation and consolidation process can begin immediately. For city owned properties that share a road with a private property owner, MWDC and the City of Pittsburgh will need to work with the private property owners in order to vacate ½ of the roadway for green space.

Olympia Park and Chatham Village:

Olympia Park is a 9-acre recreational park zoned "Parks and Open Space." This park is not protected in perpetuity by deed restrictions, but it is not under any pressure for development and it is a well-used and active neighborhood park.

Chatham Village (46 acres) is privately held land, and while it is zoned Multi-Unit Residential, a significant portion of the land is held as green space as a buffer for the residential units. Some 30 acres are designated "clean and green" under the state's agricultural lands legislation, a status that discourages clearing or construction on the land. As some of the most ecologically important land in the Study Area, it is important that this land continue to be so well managed and protected. MWDC will work with Chatham Village with the intention of establishing a trail easement through the green space. Public access to the walking trail through this area would be an asset to the neighborhood, if the board and residents of Chatham Village are willing to share this green space.

Mount Washington Park:

This park contains approximately 39 acres primarily zoned "Parks and Open Space" but not protected by deed restriction. The Mount Washington Park section of the Study Area

includes 36 parcels, 27 of which are city-owned. All of these properties are included in the proposed Grand View Scenic Byway Park.

The other 10 properties are owned by the Pittsburgh and West Virginia Railroad, Port Authority and one private owner: 2 are railroad, 5 Port Authority and 3 are privately owned. Easements for maintenance will be sought for all of these properties.

Management and Stewardship

For each of the key green space segments of the Study Area, a number of management and stewardship issues need to be addressed. As part of this planning process, the Mount Washington CDC has identified a set of potential partners for the implementation phases of this work. Appendix F lists the most promising potential partners.

For all of these segments, safety considerations need to be a focus. All trails that are going to be improved and identified for public use should be reviewed for safety.

See the trail analysis and recommended pilot projects for specific priorities to increase connection and walkable trail mileage in the Study Area. All trails will need signage of two types:

- 1) Directional signs showing distances, destinations and connectivity (or lack thereof, since a number of trails will essentially be spurs from a main path); and
- 2) Informational signs depicting the environmental features of interest in the area, and, potentially other points of interest, such as historical facts, views and background information on the entire green space project.

Type one should be the priority, and type two can be added as additional trails are improved and funding is found for the educational dimensions of the full project.

For each segment, there needs to be an active group of residents who will act as caretakers and “eyes” on the park. The CDC has begun the organizing work to develop such groups, but it will require considerable effort to make these viable groups with sufficient energy and skill to support the stewardship of these segments. Specifically management will include trail improvements, trail maintenance, sign development and maintenance, graffiti control, trash patrol, and use/abuse alerts. In several segments, notably the Duquesne Heights Greenway and the Saddle, there are reports of illegal hunting and also reports of considerable ATV use that in some places is causing erosion and other landscape damage. Careful consideration needs to be given to appropriate management of public use of these lands. Support for appropriate uses that respect the nature of the landscape needs to be developed.

Education and Programming

There are numerous opportunities for adding educational substance to the Grandview Scenic Byway Park project. In general, there is a great need to inform people about the existence of the lesser-known green spaces on Mount Washington. For walking trails, scenic views and parks, directional signs are needed to indicate opportunities for residents and visitors alike. In addition, there are wonderful opportunities to inform people about both the

historical and environmental significance of the segments of the Study Area. With the confluence of historical events represented at the three rivers, Mount Washington is literally the place to enjoy an overview of Pittsburgh and United States history. The outlooks along Grandview Avenue and selected other views in the Study Area offer natural points to present instructional information.

The restoration projects that will hopefully be evident throughout the Study Area during the implementation phases will offer a different type of opportunity to inform passersby about the value of green space, and the details of specific restoration efforts. Public information will be an important tool for recruiting general support and even volunteers and partners for ongoing work.