



August 24, 2010

**The Hill District Consensus Group hereby approves and adopts the *Find the Rivers!* Greenprint as an ecologically sound and sustainable framework for future investment and development in the Hill District, anticipating that plans for specific projects, including funding and maintenance, can be considered on an individual basis.**

**The Consensus Group further affirms the Greenprint Vision, Principles, Projects, Design Guidelines and Development Standards as core elements of the Hill District Master Plan.**

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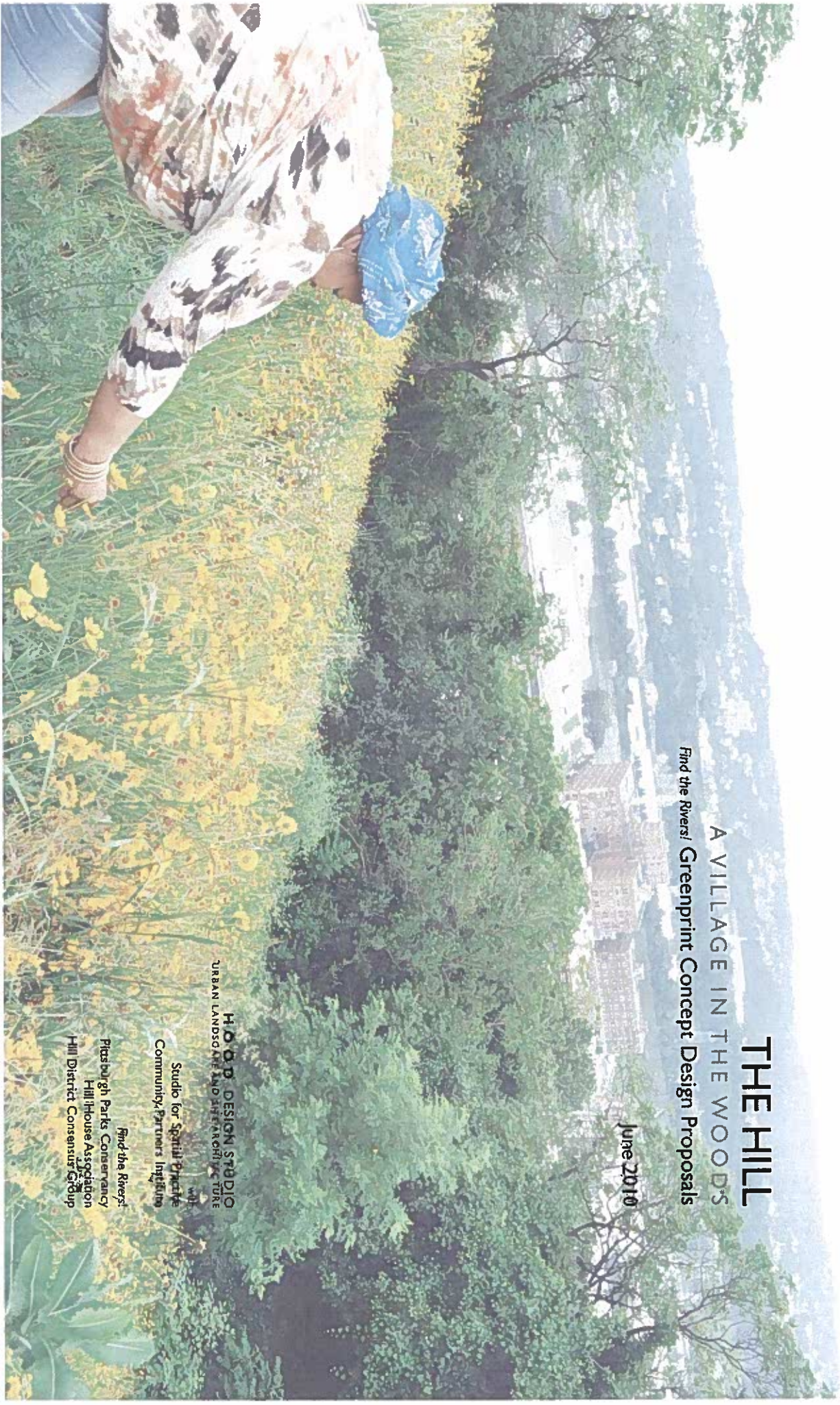
*Greenprint Vision:* Establishes a healthy place with urban development that works in concert with the natural ecology of the Hill District, "A Village in the Woods."

*Greenprint Principles:*

- The Woods – Enlarge parks; enmesh existing housing with adjacent green spaces; add plantings; extend street tree plantings into Village.
- Village – Establish a compact development zone within the street-grid core of the Hill; improve public spaces and expand green spaces within the Village.
- Conveyance – Improve the ways in which people and natural systems move around the community, including stairways, trails, and water flow.

*Greenprint Projects:* Proposals and opportunities for capital improvements, leadership, and innovation in the local economy.

*Greenprint Design Guidelines and Development Standards:* Recommended practices and standard designs for the Hill District that complement the City of Pittsburgh's design and development guidelines at the level of the neighborhood.



# THE HILL

A VILLAGE IN THE WOODS

Find the Rivers! Greenprint Concept Design Proposals

June 2010

**H.O.D. DESIGN STUDIO**  
URBAN LANDSCAPE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Studio for Spatial Practice  
Community Partners Institute

Find the Rivers:  
Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy  
Hill House Association  
Hill District Consensus Group

# THE HILL A VILLAGE IN THE WOODS

## PROJECT INTRODUCTION

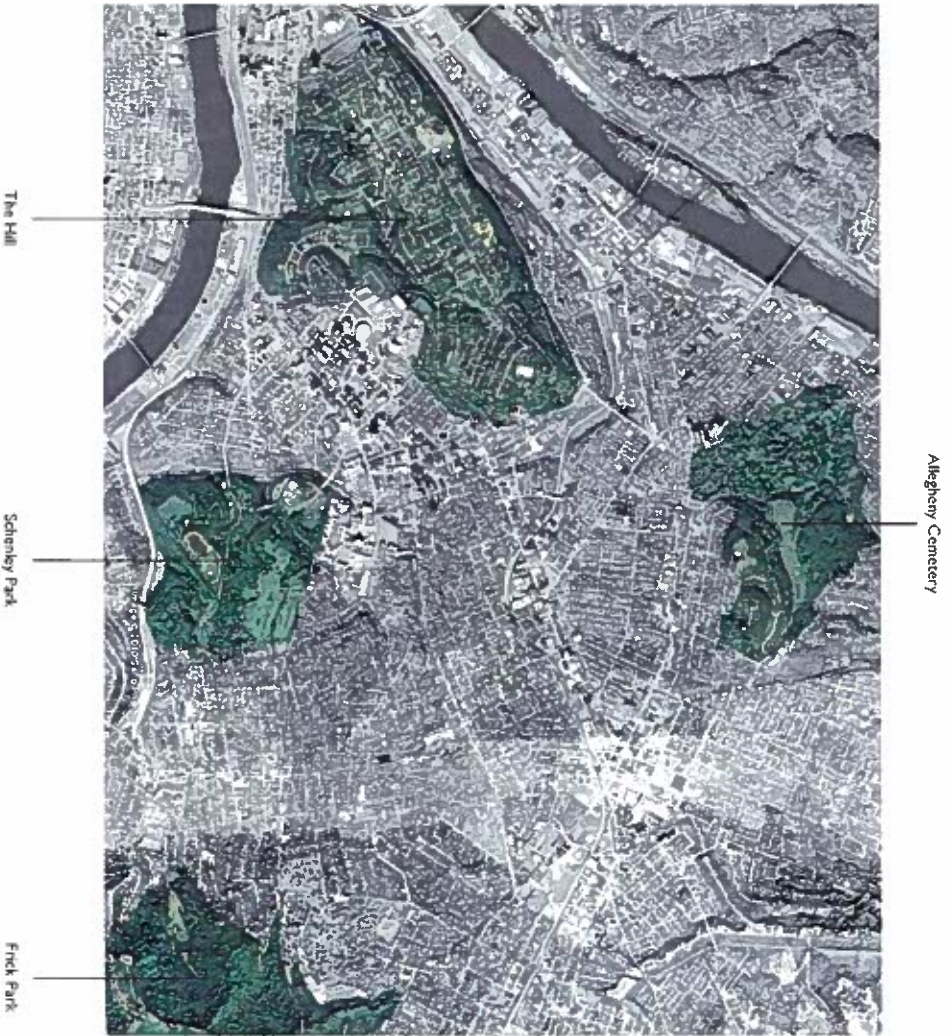
**The Greenprint**, a project of *Find the Rivers*, re-connects both the Hill District to its specific landscape and community members to the greater Pittsburgh area. It also strengthens social ties through linkages to adjacent neighborhoods. The plan is threefold: it establishes a healthy place with urban development that works in concert with the natural ecology; it identifies projects and opportunities for leadership and innovation in a local economy; and it re-frames the identity of the Hill as "A Village in the Woods," an example of urban beauty.

### The Hill in Context

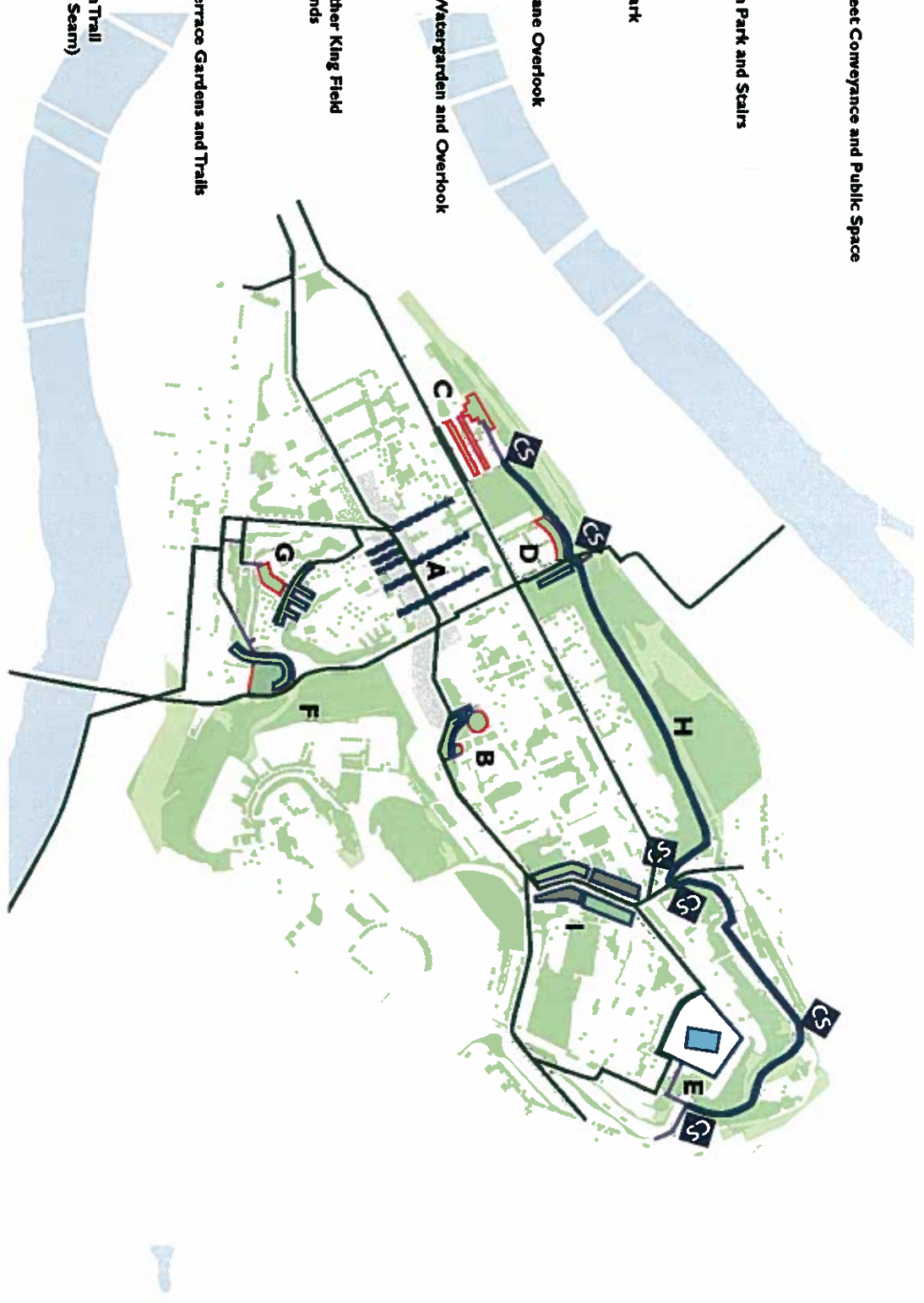
The Garden City movement, America's rural lifestyle legacy, and transcendentalist ideologies have all influenced community building and landscape over the past two centuries. These values and ideas inspired early suburban development and new communities outside of the city's edge. Today many of these developments have been engulfed by the expanding city. Some have preserved their "green" ecology and formal logic while maintaining their economic, social, cultural and political values. Places like Chestnut Hill and the Wissahickon in Philadelphia, PA, Frick Park, Chatham Village, and Shenley Park in Pittsburgh, and Radburn, NJ exhibit this formal logic. They remain communities set within a verdant, wooded landscape. Woodlands, ravines, and riparian areas are commingled with parks and streets and housing. They are enmeshed with the larger landscape.

"Sampling" particular landscape components from the above mentioned 19th and 20th century planned developments, the Hill's landscape structure is a thick verdant edge, with an open center. The edges are bound to the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers. The wooded edge condition (elements such as bluffs, hillsides and terraces) reveal a site specific ecology that has emerged from the shifting rise and fall of the rivers that formed the fallow coal seam urbanures. The center contains the valleys, tributaries and convergences (abandoned stream channels and riparian areas that cross the hilly central area before reconnecting to the rivers). The community's cultural and artistic legacy is a key component of the center. This duality gives clarity to the topography of the neighborhood-- a set of hills on a hill.

The Hill is an emergent landscape. Its ecological and industrial context has created a new landscape, one that is again at the scale of the river(s) with the larger landscape. The term "Woods" is common language. Not a woodland or a single forest, "Woods" implies a thick collection of trees and shrubs with mythical appeal, brimming with things unknown and unexplained. In contrast, the Village is not like a downtown or main street in its character, but is rather a collection of community buildings and landscape. Thus, the new terminology: Woods, Village, and Convergence. Historically, the community has been plagued by disinvestment and abandonment. That situation raises the question: "If the value of middle-to-upper-class communities is directly related to its landscape context, why can't urban neighborhoods take advantage of their unique landscapes?" That question is particularly relevant now that densities are reduced and industries have been removed from these natural settings. Currently there is great interest in the Hill because of its proximity to downtown, Oakland, and the University. City government owns large parcels of land. Gentrification is a real threat. How can urban communities, like the Hill, retain their identity and capitalize on their geographies? The Greenprint builds upon the Hill's existing landscape resources to provide a framework for wrestling with these huge challenges.



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- Project B  
Coal Seam Park and Stairs
- Project C  
Cliffside Park
- Project D  
Memory Lane Overlook
- Project E  
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- Project F  
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- Project I  
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# THE HILL

## A VILLAGE IN THE WOODS

### DEDICATION

This document is dedicated to all of the Hill District residents and business owners who took the time to attend meetings and provide invaluable input. We'd especially like to acknowledge the late Mr. Dwayne Cooper who was a committed neighborhood leader, an early supporter of *Find The Rivers!*, and a staunch advocate for The Greenprint.



Photos by Hood Design

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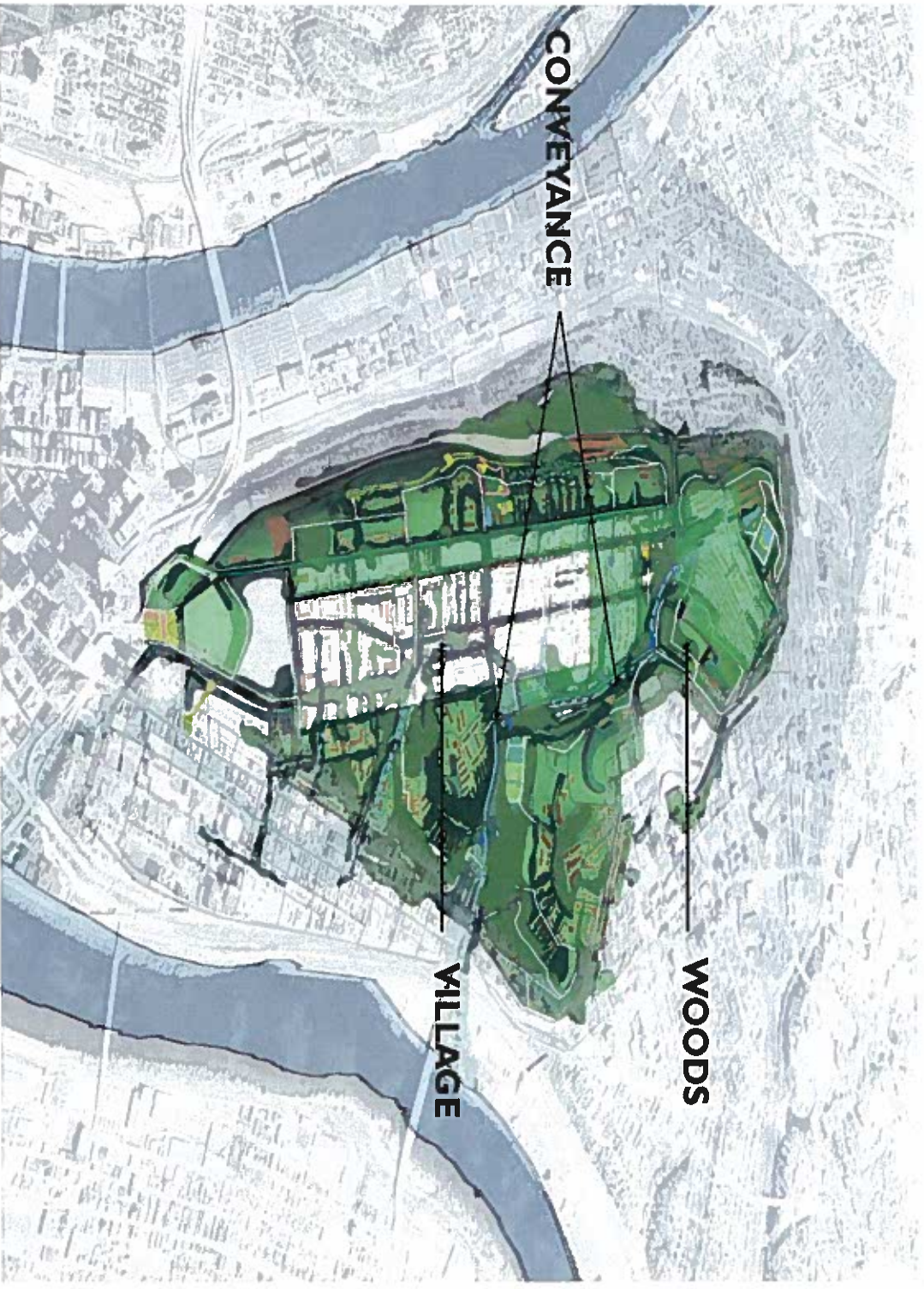
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The Hill: A Village in the Woods

**Greenprint I to Greenprint II**

In Phase I of the Greenprint project, the Hill neighborhood has been reconceptualized as a village set in the Woods along the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers in Pittsburgh. The project seeks to reinforce the Village as a compact development zone with a strong civic identity; the Woods as a managed woodland with vital connections that link stairs, open space, and housing; and a conveyance system that finds opportunities for human circulation and ground/soil/water systems in both the village and woodland settings. Phase II has two major objectives:

- to effectively integrate the Greenprint concepts and principles into the forthcoming Master Plan and for the Hill District; and
- to develop a set of specific projects for implementation of these landscape concepts.

Specific implementation projects build on the methodology, research, and framework outlined in the first phase:

**Woods**

The Woods are characterized by dense, vegetated areas on topographically challenged and hilly terrain. Tree planting is distinguished as native upland and urban in concept. Considerable understory planting is recommended for bio-diversity and wildlife habitat. Built landscapes around them create larger patch ecologies and green public spaces. Formally, the Woods create a contiguous landscape figure. Strategies for the Woods include:

- Enlarge existing parks by meshing with adjacent green by:
- promoting non-contiguous, large patches of land that support diverse species and rich habitats (Patch Ecology);
  - creating immersive green spaces that give a sense of inside and out; and
  - developing performative large-scale leisure/recreation program.

Enmesh existing housing with adjacent green by:

- promoting Patch Ecology;
- subordinating the car; and
- developing interior green spaces in housing that are connected through plantings to larger ecological systems.

Enmesh circulation with adjacent green by:

- creating soft shoulders at roadways in the Woods; and
- revealing relationships of circulation to natural features.

**Village**

The Village is the densest area of commercial and social activity in the Hill. The Village should promote a "civic ecology" by which urban and neighborhood spaces utilize sustainable practices for infrastructure and leisure.



Housing Enmeshing with Oak Hill Housing



Park Enmeshing with Cliffside Park



Housing Enmeshing with Bedford Ave. Housing



Enmeshing Horton Avenue (Chevonek Osipow Tributary)



Enmeshing Coal Seam Trail

Strategies for the Village include:

Interconnect sustainable civic and neighborhood space:

- promoting "civic ecology" (physical environmental systems);
- developing formal planning systems that create inhabitable outdoor spaces such as Allees and bosques; and
- promoting diverse program for public spaces.

Create distinct urban edges through:

- porches/doorways, street edges;
- multi-use auto space; and
- courts and plazas.

Develop visible infrastructure through:

- utilizing performative edges (flow-through planters, etc.); and
- using distinct materials.

**Conveyance**

Conveyance recognizes that the Hill features a collection of stream tributaries that have historically and contemporarily transported people, water, and wildlife through the community – down and out to the rivers. Strategies for Conveyance include:

Supporting the health of ponds and streams through:

- slowing water with catchments;
- promoting Patch Ecology; and
- performative planting/remediation systems.

Improving stream/runs by:

- revealing buried creeks;
- conceptualizing water as infrastructure;
- developing the relationship of water to circulation; and
- manipulating the rate of flow with obstructions or freeing obstructions.

Developing urbaneries by:

- creating immersive spaces that give a sense of inside and out
- creating a planned relationship to adjacent buildings; and
- promoting Patch Ecology.

# THE HILL A VILLAGE IN THE WOODS

Greenprint Phase II has utilized the above strategies to develop specific design guidelines and projects that reinforce and physically describe the goals and strategies set forth in Phase I. A compact development zone (the Village), and a managed Woodland, are the basis for three design initiatives that can be implemented. Landscape strategies for the Village and Woods districts are rooted in the local ecology and long term sustainability of the Hill. New development is promoted through performance standards and guidelines that suggest it happens in a manner that sustains the two new districts, while being respectful of their history. Specific Village and Woods projects include: planting design; rehabilitation/redesign of selected steps located in seven distinct geographical neighborhoods of the Hill; and a new Civic Landscape located within the Village in relationship to Centre Avenue's new development.

Out of these initiatives, the following design projects emerged:

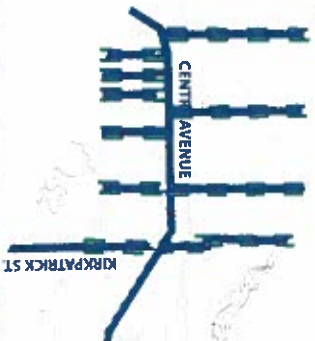
## The Village – Detailed Proposals and Development Standards for Centre Avenue Centre Avenue, A New Public Space – Street Furnishings/ Rowing – Development Opportunities – Planning

The Village proposal arises not as something new, but as something built out of the existing cultural landscape. Inspired by August Wilson's original theater backdrops of street scenes and Scrib's scenes of the Buick, Corbett, and Togg, archaic/past streets, the design of corners, stops, and doorways along Centre Avenue is conceived as a backdrop by which to celebrate and validate the vitality and performance of street life in the Hill.

Centre Avenue currently exhibits the highest concentration of business, places of cultural importance, institutional importance, and social life in the Hill District. Currently there are no designed public spaces along the street, only the corner that displays a sculpture at Dinwiddie Street with sloping landscape timber walk. There is an abundance of vacant parcels that give the street its open quality. On most days during the year, people come down to Centre Avenue to shop, walk, meet and socialize. It is within this context that the Centre Avenue proposal is developed. Community leaders and residents helped identify these particular practices along Centre Avenue, confirming that the street is the heart of the Village. The design guidelines are based on four key areas of focus: – Corners, Stops, Doorways, and Development (fill) Opportunities -- and suggest that site amenities and improvements can reinforce and build upon the current street life. Existing site characteristics and social practices were identified through community participation and site observation. Site improvements and furnishings designed along Centre Avenue (and in some cases Centre's cross streets) when amassed and added together, accumulate into a larger, idiosyncratic environment.

## The Woods – Steps/Woods Planting Projects Stair Rehabilitation – Open space – Site Furnishings – Development Opportunities – Woods Planning

The design and development of the Woods as a public landscape emerged from community input, including local experts, residents, neighborhood institutions and non-profits. The Woods occupy a large geography in the Hill landscape; to make manifest a sense of connection and identity, we have chosen to organize the Woods around the stair circulation system. Eight stairways were selected and from these projects were developed as larger landscape units, each consisting of a rehabilitated stair/pathway system associated with single or multifamily housing and existing open



space. These projects are not distinct spatial objects in and of themselves, but instead explore a new typology of landscape cultural infrastructure that challenges common categorization (namely park/streetscape/etc.). Within the Woods there is also the potential for landscape-based enterprises that promote sustainable economic development opportunities such as urban farming, agriculture, and livestock management of invasive species.

The steps/woods projects arose from the identification of existing assets to the landscape of the Hill. These proposals are not new spaces, but improvements to existing landscape elements that are currently of value to people living in the Hill; they are vital with use, be it formal or informal, and are imbued with a rich historical and cultural past. These projects are about revealing the value of the existing landscape of the Hill. The goal of our proposals is to

formalize, reinforce, and legitimize existing social and cultural practices in the landscape, thereby changing larger perceptions of the Hill District.

Design decisions were framed by the following criteria:

- **Existing connections** that link historic stairways with single and multi-family housing existing open space, and adjacent neighborhoods (Bigelow Boulevard on the north side; Updown on the south side; Okhand on the east side, and Downtown on the west side);
- **Topography** – As the community helped identify and characterize the internal neighborhoods of the Hill District, and it became apparent that their boundaries were foremost conceptualized through topography, namely the seven internal hills of the Hill District. From this information, projects could be identified in geographically diverse areas, with as much equity as possible.
- **Geomorphology** – Local ecologies within the Hill District were examined for the ways in which landscape is characterized by a range of factors: slope, soils, orientation, coal mine seepage and subsidence, and issues with invasive species (largely Japanese knotweed) and infestation (mostly pear trees).

**Conveyance – Conveyance/Circulation Projects**

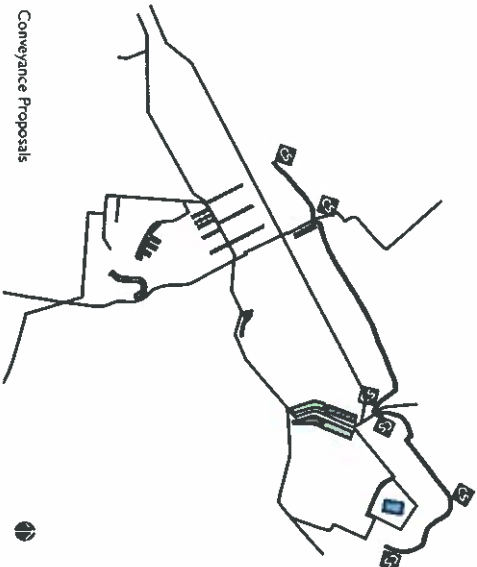
*Conveyance / Circulation – Site Development – Planings*

Conveyance, the third identifying characteristic of the Hill landscape, refers to how people and water are conveyed through the neighborhood between internal geographies and also out to external neighborhoods and rivers (the Monongahela and the Allegheny).

There are three project areas that deal with the history and present-day effects of the coal mining history embedded in the landscape of the Hill (for a technical summary see Appendix C – Coal Seam Notes). They include Herron Avenue Geothermal Corridor, a major circulation route, with thermal groundwater opportunities and visible contamination of surface water seeping from the coal seam; the new Coal Seam Trail, which traces the elevation on the north slope where coal is present; and the Chauncey Coal Mine Seam, a contaminated tributary emerges from a coal seam adjacent to a public stair.

Additional projects deal with the conveyance of water in Woods locations associated with open space and/or housing: Memory Lane Housing Rain Gardens run adjacent to Ammon Playground; Addison Terrace Gardens and Trails improve the landscape between dense multi-family housing; Martin Luther King Field Wetlands collects water run-off at the base of a hill that encircles the baseball field.

Centre Avenue Tributary is the conveyance project in the Village. Functioning as a low point in a small valley in the Hill, Centre Avenue drains storm water that flows down cross-streets. To mitigate the contamination of this surface water, new flow-through planters flank cross-streets.



# THE HILL A VILLAGE IN THE WOODS

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## LAND OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE HILL

The Greenprint proposes a new mode of public land use and conservation. The mapping on the opposite page shows present (2010) property ownership and zoning in areas that have been identified through community participation and site observation as having significant ecological/cultural value to the neighborhood landscape: sites which consequently became the focus of our design proposals.

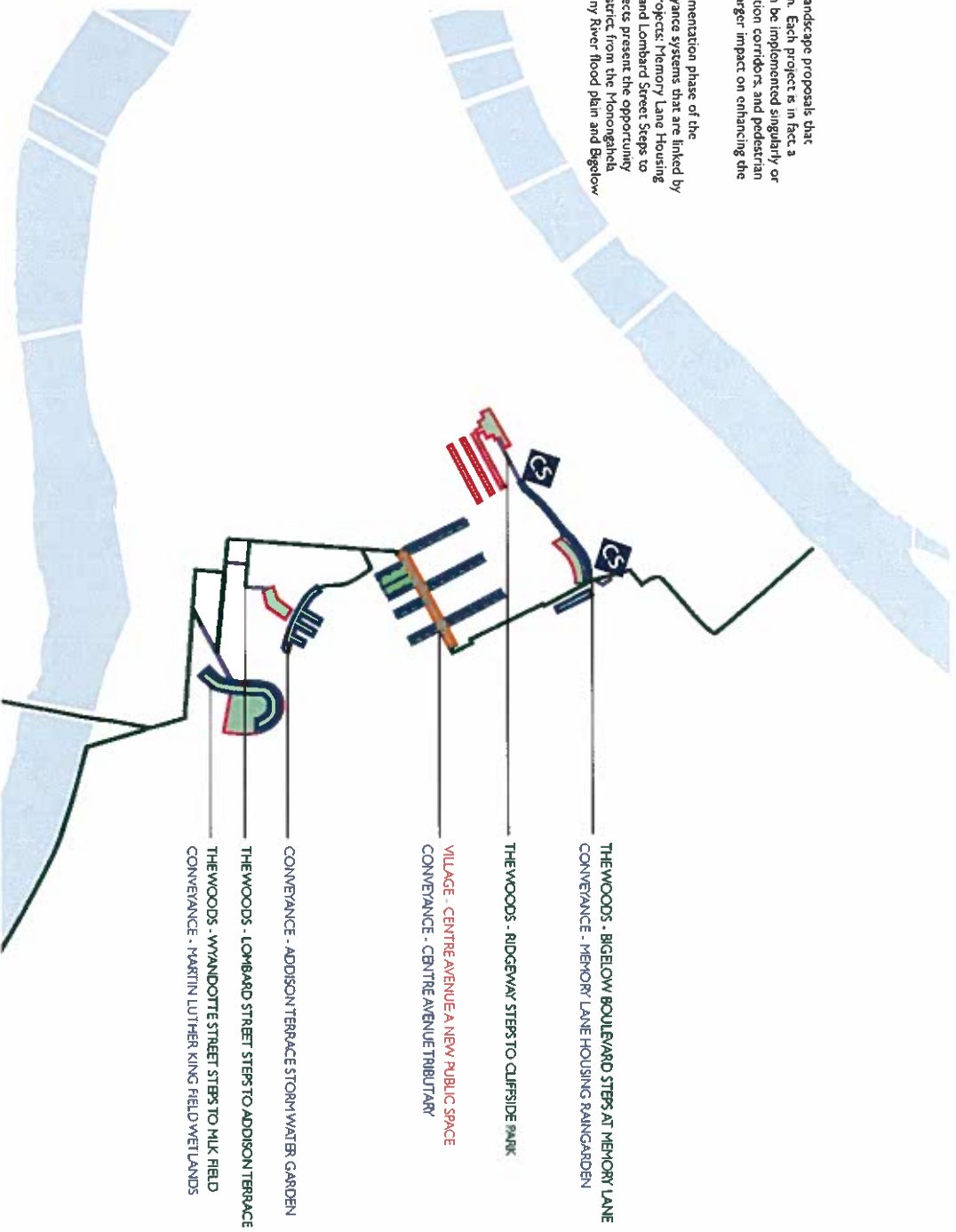
The mapping outlines sites that are protected from future development through their zoning status as either hillside or parks and open space. Parcels important to the Greenprint Projects outside of these areas are keyed according to the following categories: flat vacant public parcels, hillside vacant public parcels, vacant right-of-way parcels, and private, vacant lots to consider adding to public greenspace.



**Hybridized Implementation**

The Greenprint projects outlined in this book are a catalogue of landscape proposals that offer possibilities for "hybridized" (multiple/mixed) implementation. Each project is in fact a combination of multiple proposals within the project area that can be implemented singly or combined with others. Unlike through primary viewsheds, circulation corridors, and pedestrian stairways and trails, these projects form a network that makes a larger impact on enhancing the neighborhood than would a single conventional project.

The diagram below demonstrates a strategy for an implementation phase of the Greenprint. Shown here are new Village public spaces and Conveyance systems that are linked by primary circulation and views to other Woods and Conveyance projects: Memory Lane Housing Rain Garden and Bigelow Steps, Ridgeway Steps to Cliffside Park, and Lombard Street Steps to Addison Terrace Housing Gardens and Trails. Together, these projects present the opportunity to network new public spaces and passageways across the Hill District from the Monongahela River flood plain and Fifth Avenue at the south end, to the Allegheny River flood plain and Bigelow Boulevard at the north end.



# THE HILL A VILLAGE IN THE WOODS

## THE HILL NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

(See City of Pittsburgh Urban Development Guidelines for more extensive standards and guidelines. The Hill neighborhood guidelines compliment the Pittsburgh Urban Development guidelines).

### Context and Character

#### The Landscape: The Hill, Woods and Village

The Allegheny and Monongahela River and its flood plain define the Hill neighborhood. A series of hillsides were mined for coal reserves and stream tributaries were altered, a testament to the environmental and cultural transformations that formed present day downtown Pittsburgh. The steep wooded slopes and low-lying tributaries are characteristic of the neighborhood.

#### Guidelines:

- Restore historic tributaries to the surface where possible.
- Preserve existing hillsides and hilltops.
- Minimize the cutting and removal of soil and vegetation during development of slopes and hillsides.
- Develop a long term landscape management strategy for the Hill Woods and streetscapes.

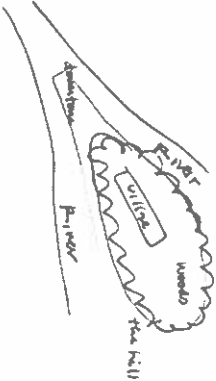
#### Historic Streets and Blocks

The Hill's system of streets and blocks has been altered over the years due to development, transportation and neglect. The east-west running avenues – Centre, Bedford, Webster, and Wylie – are significant to the cultural and social history. These streets allow for the visual and physical experience of the rolling hills as well as distant and neighborhood views. Herron Avenue and Kirkpatrick Street run north-south, reinforcing historic tributaries and circulation patterns.

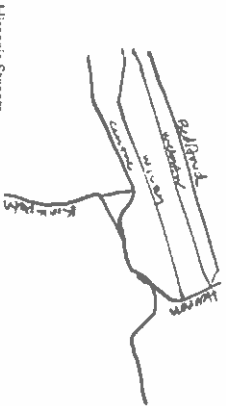
- Preserve/restore Wylie Avenue connection to downtown.
- Preserve Centre Avenue as major circulation spine.
- Maintain existing street widths for the following streets: Centre Avenue, Wylie Avenue, Herron Avenue; and Kirkpatrick Street.

#### Architectural History/Character

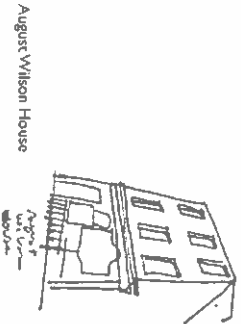
The Hill neighborhood is a collection of building types found throughout urban Pennsylvania. The single row house and duplex are remnants in the neighborhood. The double porch apartment building and 2,3-story storefront can be found on Wylie and Bedford Avenues. Many of the historic structures have been abandoned or removed on Centre and Wylie Avenues. As the center piece streets to the Village, buildings of historic importance should be identified and preserved. Playwright August Wilson's childhood home, at 1727 Bedford Avenue, should be preserved as well as other significant buildings that reflect the neighborhood's cultural legacy.



Hill Landscape



Historic Streets



August Wilson House

These include: St. Benedict, the Ploor, the Kaufmann Hill Settlement House and Theatre, First Carnegie Church, Second Carnegie Library, New Grenada Theatre, Crawford Grill, West Funeral Home, the original Carnegie Library, and A. Leo West School.

- Preserve/restore historic buildings along Centre Avenue and Wylie Avenues.
- Develop a list of buildings for Historic designation in the Hill, including the August Wilson childhood home, historic Carnegie buildings, and Second Carnegie Library.

**Sympathetic Infill**

The Hill neighborhood redevelopment should respect the historic building pattern as well as develop new infill strategies that reinforce the unique environmental setting. Large-scale housing projects and large-scale institutional development have historically redeveloped hilltops and hillslides. This has led to the loss of physical continuity of hillside and historic disrupting neighborhood circulation and use patterns. Infill development should build upon the Wood and Village character of the Hill neighborhood.

**Guidelines:**

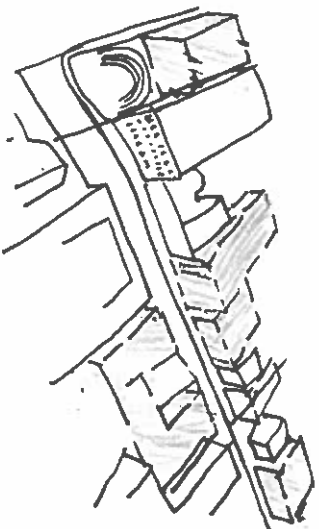
- Recreate the street wall along Centre and Wylie Avenues (zero setback).
- Keep main building entrances at Centre and Wylie Avenue.
- Discourage Planned Unit Development/encourage scattered sites.
- Respect 2-3 story building heights along Centre and Wylie Avenues.

**Gateways and Vistas**

Entry into the Hill neighborhood is marked by the steep ascent from the adjacent rivers. Centre Avenue, Wylie Avenue, Herron Avenue, and Kirkpatrick Street are the primary roads that provide access to the neighborhood. Herron Avenue and Kirkpatrick Street relate to the hydrology of the Hill by following historic tributaries. Centre and Wylie Avenues are streets that follow the topography as they move southwest to northeast. The seven hills of the Hill provide stunning views and vistas to adjacent and adjoining neighborhoods and the three Rivers. The Herron Hill Reservoir, in the Sugar Top neighborhood, is one of the most important vista points in the neighborhood, and one of the highest elevations in Pittsburgh.

**Guidelines:**

- Identify Centre Avenue, Wylie Avenue, Herron Avenue and Kirkpatrick Street as gateway streets.
- Preserve and build public spaces upon key visual vantage points such as the New Coal Seam Trail, Herron Hill Reservoir, Centre Avenue, and the Zone 2 Police Station.



Sympathetic Infill

## Civic Art

### Art in Public Places

The Hill neighborhood hosts an abundance of art in the public realm. Civic ornament and monuments are visible throughout. The Carnegie buildings, St. Benedict the Moor, and the Art Deco features of the Grenada Theater are prime examples. More recently, single autonomous works have been commissioned, i.e. sculpture at the corner of Dinwiddie and Centre Avenue, Freedom Corner at Crawford Street and Centre Avenue, and murals on the sides of buildings along Centre Avenue.

Guidelines:

- Use public infrastructure as an opportunities for public art.
- Develop a mural program using scrim to attach to derelict building facades.
- Integrate art with new development in the Hill, i.e.: facades, fencing, paving, lighting etc.
- Support the development for a public art gallery/center along Centre Avenue.
- Develop a lighting/signage program for the Hill's Public Stairs.
- Create a cultural history walking tour.

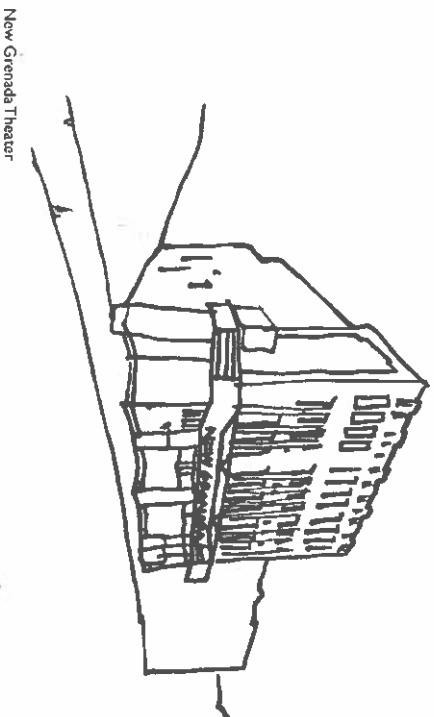
### Use Public Infrastructure Improvements to Enhance the Public Realm

Building on the city's long tradition of utilizing public infrastructure to embellish the public realm, as exhibited in the "high caliber of bridge design" crossing the two rivers, the Hill District is poised to follow this rich tradition. The Hill hosts a diversity of public infrastructure opportunities based on its natural and cultural history:

- Promote the use of geo-thermal energy along Herron Avenue.
- Install a new false-cap at Herron Hill Reservoir at Williams Park to create a water garden.
- Rebuild the pedestrian stair circulation system.
- Create Green Street infrastructure through Best Management Practices (BMPs).

### Celebrate Pittsburgh's History and Identity

As suggested in the City of Pittsburgh's Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, Pittsburgh's strong and distinctive image results from the interaction of the natural landscape, social history, and built environment. Understanding these complex relationships as they relate to development can encourage projects to be site-specific and to reflect their time and place. The natural and cultural environment of the Hill has symbolically shaped its landscape and history in complex ways over time. Mining, particularly of coal, is a result of natural geological transformations of the riverine



New Grenada Theater

morphology and diverse cultural transformations that resulted from this resource. Development projects can reinforce the following natural, social, and built characteristics of the Hill:

- The history of coal mining and the seam where coal had been extracted
- The city's riverine ecology and its dynamic hydrological flux.
- August Wilson's landscapes and streetscapes.
- Multicultural landscapes: i.e. Polish, Jewish, etc.
- Religious structures (churches, storefronts, etc.)
- Entertainment (social and entertainment clubs).

### Pedestrians First

#### Concentrated, Mixed-Use Development

The Hill District has two major nodes of concentrated development along its major circulation spine, Centre Avenue. This area is designated by the Greenprint as the Village landscape. Concentrated, mixed-use development is suggested along this corridor. Historically, concentrated development graced Wylie Avenue as well, but over time, most commercial activity has shifted to Centre Avenue. Today, two major five-point intersections serve as distinct nodes for the Village, which connect to adjacent streets, such as Wylie Avenue. The intersections of Centre Avenue and Dinwiddie Street, and of Centre Avenue and Kirkpatrick Street, create bookends for arrival and departure into the community. Currently, the rehabilitation of the Elsie H. Hillman Auditorium at the Kaufmann Program Center, the construction of a new drugstore and grocery, and the refurbishing of the Grenada Theater anchor the western five-point intersection of Dinwiddie and Centre Avenue. At the easterly intersection of Centre and Kirkpatrick Street, a new YWCA Library and infill housing create the context for future development.

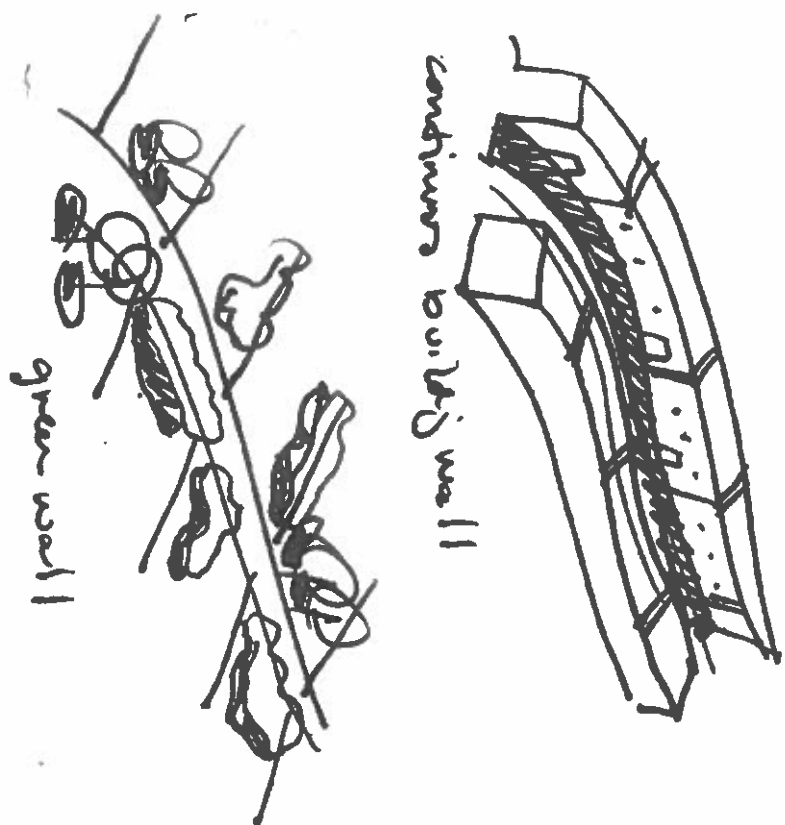
- Encourage local idiosyncratic mixed-use, i.e. African-centered marketplace/office space, barber shop/retail, YWCA housing.

#### Respect the Street Wall

The proposed Village and Woods concepts suggest different treatments of the street's built edge condition. The experience and preservation of the built and natural landscape is key in each context. Within each environment, the streetwall serves as a threshold to the private realm.

Within the Village, the streetwall should be respected and built to the property line along Centre and Wylie Avenues where possible. Setbacks should be discouraged along these historic corridors and the streetwall should be seen as a continuous element.

In the Woods, the street is defined by a "green" wall. Here trees and understory vegetation complement the street edge, smelting it into the landscape. Setbacks are



encouraged for single-family residential units. Yards and gardens reinforce the green streetwall creating a horticultural threshold between public and private spaces. Multi-family development should encourage courts, gardens and yards as transitions from the street. In the woods, the street wall disappears into the field, whereas in the Village the streetwall reinforces the corridor.

#### Place Activity at the Street Level

In the Village and Woods, the street is the primary public space that unites the neighborhood and city. The street is the place where activities are validated and encouraged in both environments.

In the Village, the street is seen as a place for the everyday: corners, stops and doorways are the primary places of activity. These places should encourage use through the development of street furnishings and specialty materials. Idiosyncratic to the Hill, these landscapes and activities reinforce the cultural seating. In the Woods, street activity is encouraged through new trails and street improvements. The Coal Seam Trail and Conveyance Landscapes relate the street to the Hill's cultural and natural history.

#### Develop New Public Spaces in Key Locations and Keep the Streets as Primary Space

Primary opportunities for new public spaces are along Centre Avenue, particularly at corners, doorways, and where cars pull over to stop. Corners at the two five-point intersections along Centre Avenue at Dinwiddie Street and Kiripatriki Street are prominent locations of social activity in the Village and present strong opportunities for new larger public spaces in relation to the street.

#### New Public Spaces

Opportunities exist for the creation of new public spaces in the Village and in the Woods landscape. These new spaces should be developed in relationship to existing public spaces and rights-of-ways. In the Village a new public space is developed at the corner of Centre Avenue and Dinwiddie Street adjacent to the police station and across from the historic theater. Here the new development recovers space from a parking area and returns it to the public realm. Also, public stairs and streets are designated as major public spaces.

#### Public Seating

See Village and Woods Development Standards (pp. 23-25) for suggested site furnishings for seating in the Village and Woods.

#### Use Urban Monuments and Wayfinding Systems to Develop Clearer Pedestrian Orientation

See Village and Woods Development Standards (pp. 23-25) for suggested signage for streets, transit, and stairways, and trail markers for the Coal Seam Trail.

#### Trees

In the Village, prioritize street tree planting along cross streets to Centre Avenue which extend from single and multi-family housing down to the Central Business District. Trees in the Village should be planted in formal rows, consistently spaced, and structural soil and/or tree grates

should be utilized to prevent soil compaction and ensure the growth of healthy trees. See pp. 27-47 in the Village section for street-by-street planting designs.

In the Woods, tree planting should be along vacant property lines and in new planters along streets and should be planted in a staggered manner with undersory and groundcover planting beneath. Important views should be preserved by selecting smaller tree varieties spaced more generously. See pp. 59-64 in the Woods section for planting designs and species suggestions.

### C. Design Standards

As per the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning Urban Design Guidelines:

#### References

<http://www.cityofpittsburgh.pa.us/dcd/UDGUIDE.PDF>

City of Pittsburgh: Department of City Planning, "Urban Design Guidelines," Pittsburgh 1998.\*

\*The Hill neighborhood guidelines should remain consistent with updated City of Pittsburgh Urban Design Guidelines.

OVERVIEW

The new Village proposal arises not as something new, but as something built out of the existing cultural landscape. Inspired by August Wilson's original theater backdrops of street scenes and Serlio's scenes of the *Bucolic, Comedic, and Tragic* archetypal streets, the design of corners, stops, and doorways along Centre Avenue is conceived as a backdrop by which to celebrate and validate the vitality and performance of street life in the Hill.

Centre Avenue currently exhibits the highest concentration of business, places of cultural importance, institutional importance, and social life in the Hill District. Currently there are no designed public spaces along the street, only the corner that displays a sculpture at Dimwiddle Street; a lot that has a single sculpture and sloping landscape timber walls. There is an abundance of vacant parcels that give the street its open quality. On most days during the year, people come down to Centre Avenue to shop, walk, meet and socialize. It is within this context that the Centre Avenue proposal is developed. Community leaders and residents helped identify these particular practices along Centre Avenue, confirming that the street is the heart of the Village. The design guidelines are based on four key areas of focus -- Corners, Stops, Doorways, and Development (Infill) Opportunities -- and suggest that site amenities and improvements can reinforce and build upon the current street life. Existing site characteristics and social practices were identified through community participation and sensitive site observation. Site improvements and furnishings designed along Centre Avenue (and in some cases Centre's cross streets) when amassed and added together, accumulate into a larger, idiosyncratic environment that re-emerges from the place.

1. Corners

Corners are places from which to see and be seen. Connecting corners at intersections create crossroads with visual accenting pavements. Adding handicap ramps, lights, seating and signage builds upon the existing uses and creates a setting for socialization, way finding and circulation.

2. Stops

Traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular, stops along Centre Avenue. For pedestrians, the stops are transit-oriented and for socializing. Drivers stop their cars at intersections, for parking and for socializing. Site amenities such as signage, shelter, canopy, benches, lighting and new paving are developed to facilitate and reinforce each of these existing social practices.

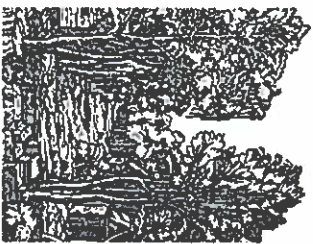
3. Doorways

People congregate on Centre Avenue around doorways. Whether at the barber shop, Hill House, or Family Dollar Store, people meet at the building's entry. Observing the existing building uses and activity, new site amenities are added at existing businesses' doorways pronouncing their existence with physical programs: seating, lighting signage, and paving. These improvements reintegrate existing social capital into the scene.

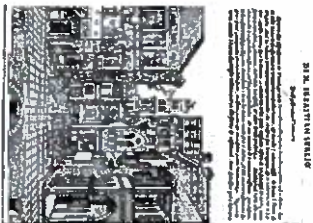
4. Development (Infill) Opportunities

Future infill development opportunities along Centre Avenue will be important, if the street is to maintain a vibrant and distinct urban edge. The following principles will assist in guiding future development to help achieve this goal:

- Conform to historical buildings;
- Eliminate setbacks in parcels along Centre Avenue;
- Eliminate curb cuts along Centre Avenue, with the exception of alleys;
- Place parking lots behind buildings that face Centre Avenue;
- Provide service access to buildings in alley, back or side;
- Respect existing building heights, typically at 2-3 story street height
- Encourage mixed-use; and
- Incorporate lighting when possible.



Serlio Street Scenes: the Bucolic, the Comedic, the Tragic



August Wilson Street Scene



The New Granada Theater at Deviliers Street and Centre Avenue

# WOODS

## LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

### OVERVIEW

The design and development of the Woods as a public landscape emerged from community input, including local experts, residents, local institutions and non-profits. The Woods occupy a large geography in the Hill landscape. To make manifest a sense of connection and identity, we have chosen to organize the Woods around the stair circulation system. Eight stairways were selected and from these, projects were developed as larger landscape units, each consisting of a rehabilitated stair/pathway system associated with single or multifamily housing and existing open space. These projects are not distinct spatial objects in and of themselves, but instead explore a new typology of landscape cultural infrastructure that challenges common categorization (namely park/streetscape/etc.). Within the Woods there is also the potential for enterprises that promote sustainable economic development through opportunities such as urban farming, agriculture, and livestock management of invasive species.

The Steps/Woods projects arose from the identification of existing assets of the Hill. These proposals are not new spaces, but improvements to existing landscape elements that are currently of value to people living in the Hill; they are vital with use, be it formal or informal, and are imbued with a rich historical and cultural past. These projects will reveal the value of the existing landscape of the Hill. The goal of these proposals is to formalize, reinforce, and legitimize existing social and cultural practices in the environment, thereby changing larger perceptions of the Hill District.

Design decisions were framed by the following criteria:

- **Existing connections** that link historic stairways with single and multifamily housing, existing open space, and adjacent neighborhoods (Bigelow Boulevard on the north side, Updown, Oakland, and Downtown).
- **Topography** – As the community helped identify and characterize the internal neighborhoods of the Hill District, it became apparent that their boundaries were conceptualized through topography, namely the seven internal hills of the community. From this information, projects could be identified in geographically diverse areas, with as much equity as possible.
- **Geomorphology** – Local ecologies within the Hill District were examined for the ways in which landscape is characterized by a range of factors: slope, soils, orientation, coal mine seepage and subsidence, and issues with invasive species (largely Japanese knotweed) and infestation (mostly pear trees).

Each of the landscape unit proposals integrates the following elements/areas of focus: *Stair*, *Open Space*, *Expansion*, and *Development Opportunities*.

#### Stair

The Hill District is laced with over 30 historic pedestrian stairways that link to adjacent neighborhoods over steep hillsides. Many of these stairs are still vital corridors for residents, though they have been largely unmaintained and are in need of repair and landscape clearing to improve visibility/safety.

#### Open Space

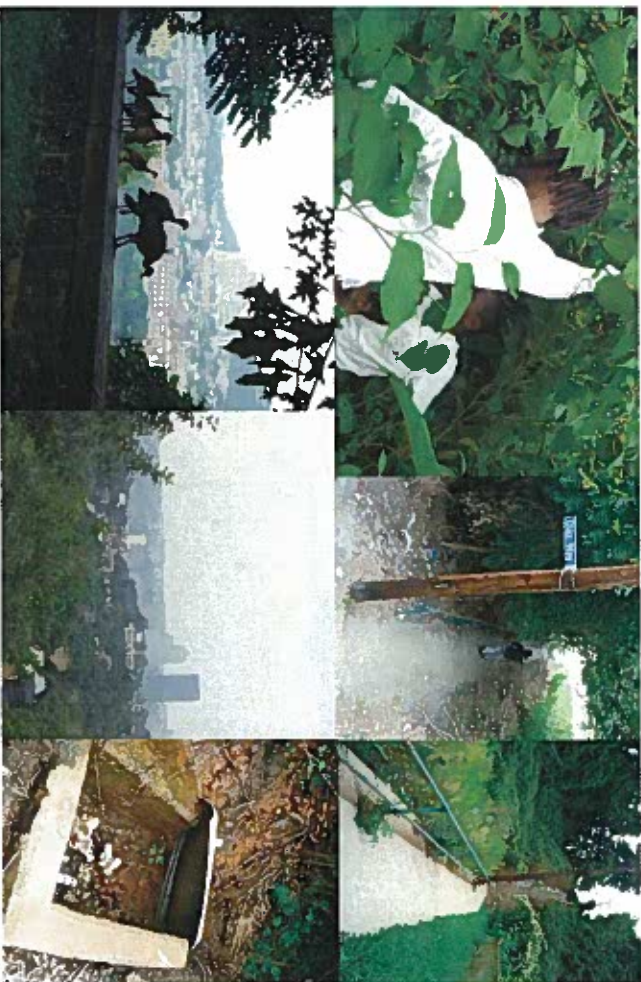
Each project is associated with an existing improved open space, creating a network of through-spaces and stay-spaces.

#### Expansion

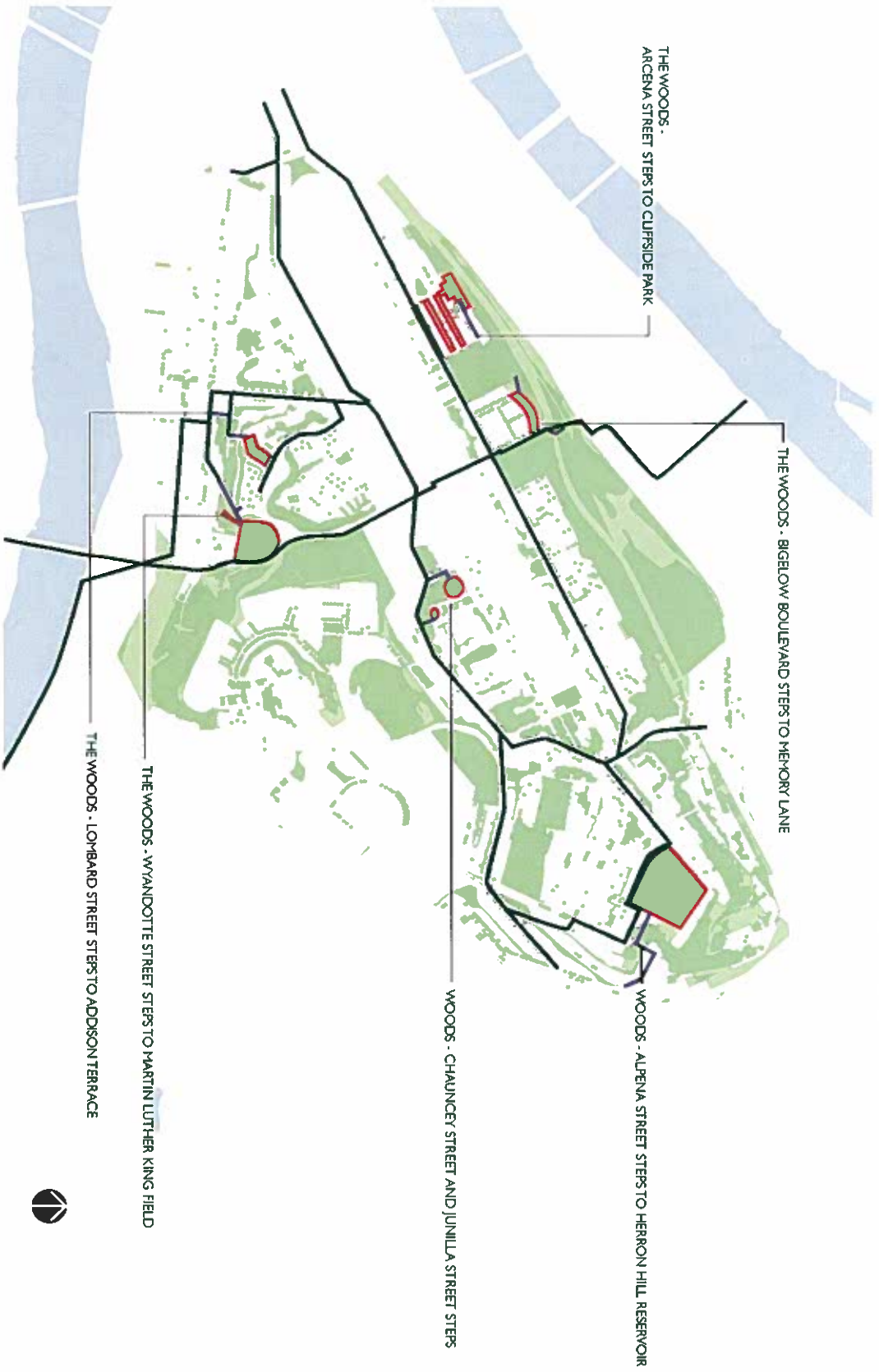
Key areas important to each project were identified as being important for future maintenance and stewardship of project areas. Each project outlines opportunities associated with expansion of the Woods.

#### Development Opportunities

Development opportunities have been identified for adjacent parcels to Greenprint proposals. They suggest opportunities for historic preservation, art, landscape protection, and economic development that are particular to place.



Woods/Steps/Views



# CONVEYANCE

## LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

### OVERVIEW

Conveyance, the third identifying characteristic of the Hill landscape, refers to how people and water move through the neighborhood: between internal geographies and also out to external neighborhoods and rivers (the Monongahela and the Allegheny).

There are three project areas that deal with the history and present-day effects of the coal mining history embedded in the landscape of the Hill (for a technical summary see Appendix C – Coal Seam Notes). They include Herron Avenue Geothermal Corridor, a major circulation route, with thermal groundwater opportunities and visible contamination of surface water seeping from the coal seam; the new Coal Seam Trail, which traces the elevation on the north slope where coal is present; and the Chauncey Coal Mine Seam, a contaminated tributary emerges from a coal seam adjacent to a public stair.

Other projects deal with the conveyance of water in Woods: locations associated with open space and/or housing. Memory Lane Housing Raingardens run adjacent to Ammon Playground; Addison Terrace Storm Water Gardens improve the landscape between dense multi-family housing and Martin Luther King Field Wetlands collects water run-off at the base of a hill that encircles the baseball field.

Centre Avenue Tributary is the conveyance project in the Village. Functioning as a low point in a small valley in the Hill, Centre Avenue drains storm water that flows down cross streets. To mitigate the contamination of this surface water, new flow-through planters flank cross streets.