



Squirrel Hill Historical Society

Squirrel Hill Historical Society

PO Box 8157, Pittsburgh, PA 15217
squirrelhillhistory.org
sqhillhist@shhsoc.org

REC'D CLERK'S OFFICE
2025 MAY 7 PM 1:26

City Clerk's Office
City-County Building, Room 510
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear City Clerk:

The enclosed petition requesting a public hearing is being submitted by board members of the Squirrel Hill Historical Society because we feel very strongly that Serpentine Drive in Schenley Park should be reopened to cars when repairs are completed. It seems illogical to permanently close one of the only two routes that connect the north side of the park with the south side (Panther Hollow Bridge being the other) without forcing traffic to go on long and hazardous detours outside the park. Bikes can share the road with cars, but trucks are prohibited in the park.

We feel this is both a historical and safety issue. A fact sheet about our position is enclosed.

We hope you consider our request for a public hearing. Serpentine Drive was intended from the start of the park in 1889 to be a driving road. Keeping this beautiful driving road closed to cars after a \$2.5 million repair job doesn't make sense to us.

Thank you.

Officers and Board Members of the Squirrel Hill Historical Society

Jim Hammond, President
Helen Wilson, Vice President
Alex Musicante, Vice President
Todd Miller
Audrey Glickman
Rodney Permigiani
Tony Indovina
Toby Chapman

The Squirrel Hill Historical Society Board's Position on Reopening Serpentine Drive in Schenley Park to Cars

The SHHS Board believes Serpentine Drive should be reopened to cars for both historical and safety reasons.

The SHHS opposes DOMI's current plan to keep Serpentine Drive closed to cars and open only to cyclists and pedestrians. DOMI says the road isn't wide enough for all three. The SHHS Board feels Serpentine was designed for vehicles and should be returned to that use when repairs are completed, and that pedestrian use should be restricted because parallel trails exist that go to the same places. (Bicyclists can use the road regardless.) Below are the reasons the SHHS Board holds this position. We are in the process of petitioning City Council to hold a public hearing to discuss this issue.

1. **Schenley Park opened in 1889. From its inception, the then-300-acre, now 454-acre park was designed to be a grand CITY park**, with attractions scattered throughout and events that drew, and still draw, thousands of people. The large size of the park necessitated a system of carefully designed roads for vehicles and bicycles that allow people to travel through the park to widely spaced venues without having to leave it. ONLY two roads keep traffic within the park when going from the north side of the park to the south side. Serpentine is one. The other is the Panther Hollow Bridge, currently closed. The deep Panther Hollow ravine divides the two sides of the park.
2. **From the very beginning of the park, Serpentine Drive was intended to be a driving road, never a pedestrian trail.** Several safe and scenic walking trails parallel Serpentine.
3. **At the top of Serpentine Drive, there is nothing close enough to walk to** except the Neill Log House, golf course, and homes close by. Few people will drive to Serpentine just to walk it, while people can drive the road to get to other places in the park and to Oakland.
4. **The number of people walking and cycling on Serpentine is very small**, as we observe from the times we work at the Neill Log House. We see very few walkers and bikers on Serpentine. **Most stay on E. Circuit Road because it's flat.**
5. **Serpentine is probably not ADA compliant** and possibly never could be.
6. **Very few pedestrians (and cyclists) will use Serpentine at night or in inclement weather**, while cars and bicycles can use Serpentine anytime the park is open.
7. **The Police and Park Rangers say the closure of Serpentine impacts emergency response time in the park.** (We're not talking about ambulances and firetrucks, only first-response vehicles.)
8. **Serpentine cost \$2.5 million to repair**, according to last year's city budget—a whole lot of money for a short walking trail that few pedestrians use.
9. **Accident statistics show that reported accidents INCREASED along the hazardous detour routes** (narrow Bartlett, Belgium-block Murdoch, sidewalk-less Darlington, congested Wightman)
10. **The only opposing views** the SHHS Board has heard are, "It's fun to walk on" and "it's redundant." The SHHS Board feels the road is NOT redundant. It keeps traffic safely in the park instead of routing it into nearby residential streets, some with no sidewalks. And when people say it's a nice place to walk, when asked how many times they walk it, they say, "Oh, maybe once in a while."

PETITION REQUESTING PUBLIC HEARING

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We, the qualified electors of the City of Pittsburgh, request Pittsburgh City Council to conduct a public hearing relative to reopening Serpentine Drive in Schenley Park to cars. The Squirrel Hill Historical Society board and the people signing this petition feel that this road was intended for vehicular traffic, including bikes but not trucks, and not intended for pedestrians, who have many nearby trails to walk on that go to the same places. Serpentine Drive is the only road on the eastern side of Schenley Park that keeps traffic inside the park instead of sending it on long, hazardous detours on nearby residential streets, including one that has no sidewalks. Except for the Panther Hollow Bridge, it is the only road that connects the north side of the park with the south side without forcing traffic to leave the park. It is also a safer connecting road to Oakland from the Greenfield Bridge.

We, the undersigned, intend to attend the public hearing.

(Please make sure names, address, and phone numbers are legible. Illegible addresses and phone numbers will not count toward the 25 signatures.)

Name (Print)	Signature	Full Address	Phone
JAMES A. HAMMOND	James A. Hammond	1549 BILTMORE LANE	517-914-0739
HELEN WILSON	Helen Wilson	3156 Beechwood BLVD	412 559 0756
MICHAELA YOUNG	Michaela Young	414 Susanna Ct.	412-421-4541
SUSAN WELSH	Susan Welsh	414 SUSANNA CT.	412 667-0808
Nicole Sutt	Nicole Sutt	4128 Reelin Rd	412-884-6422
MARTI SWETT	Marti Swett	4128 Beechwood	15217 412 894 6093
JAMES RAPE	James Maguire	209 Jasper St	15211 412 427 5917
Jesse Wilson	Jesse Wilson	413 N Beatty St	15206 412 860 8619
Jacqueline Reiser	Jacqueline Reiser	4311 Winterburn Ave	15207 412-848-0307
Nancy Pulsifer	Nancy Pulsifer	4337 Ludwick St	15217 412 302 5712
JUNE SNYDER	June Snyder	6413 Forward Ave	15217 412 779 8220
Judy Roach	John Rodgers	6486 Monitor St.	15217
Madison Smith	Madison Smith	4385 Graham St.	15203 716-640-8871

PETITION REQUESTING PUBLIC HEARING

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Name (Print)	Signature	Full Address	Phone
Tom Engel	<i>Tom Engel</i>	6337 Walden St.	412 422-7102
Deborah Knox	<i>Deborah Knox</i>	5600 Munhall Rd	412-344-3966
Betty Mae Siegel	<i>Betty Mae Siegel</i>	5600 Munhall Rd #906	412-422-1389
MARK WILLOUGHBY	<i>Mark D. Willoughby</i>	5600 MUNHALL RD #809	724-272-9556
Mary Goodman	<i>Mary Goodman</i>	2514 Mt. Lynn Rd	412-216-6070
10 BY CHICPEA	<i>10 By Chicpea</i>	6527 Lico St	412-719-8635
TOM POWERS	<i>Tom Powers</i>	1417 POWERS RUN RD.	412-298-5093
Linda May	<i>Linda May</i>	44 Timberline Ct 15217	412-521-6563
Rodney Perinjian	<i>Rodney Perinjian</i>	4337 Lydwick US217	412-521-6663
Julia Silverman	<i>Julia Silverman</i>	6537 N. Kille Ave 15217	412-404-9167
Judy Sullivan	<i>Judy Sullivan</i>	2535 Eldridge St 15217	(412) 521-2145
Patty Epps	<i>Patty Epps</i>	765 GREENFIELD AVE 15217	412-897-3344
FRANK WILLIAMSON	<i>Frank Williamson</i>	6624 KINGSMAN RD.	412 330 8030

Name (Print)

Signature

Full Address

AUDREY N. GUCKMAN

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3548 Beechwood Blvd, Pgh, PA 15217

412-481-4448

Todd Miller

Todd Miller

5547 Woodmont Street, Pgh, PA 15217

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Caroline Boyce

Caroline Boyce

1055 S. Negley Ave, Pgh, PA 15217

717-421-3657

CONTACT PERSON Helen Wilson, 3156 Beechwood Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15217 412-559-0751

(Name - Please print)

(Address)

(Phone)

Please submit petition to: City Clerk's Office, Room 510 City-County Building, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (412-255-2138). The Contract Person will be notified in writing when the public hearing is scheduled.

Squirrel Hill Historical Society, P.O. Box 8157, Pittsburgh, PA 15217