NAMING COMMISSION ON PUBLIC PROPERTIES
Application for Review

COVER FORM

CURRENT AND PROPOSED NAME OF PROPERTY/FACILITY:
Current – Unnamed Trail 1 / Proposed – Keeling Coal Trail

ADDRESS OF PROJECT PROPERTY:
City of Pittsburgh, South Side Park

HAS THIS PROJECT EVER COME BEFORE NAMING COMMISSION? NO

APPLICANT NAME: Friends of South Side Park (FOSSP) c/o Kitty Vagley & Janice Serra
ADDRESS: 122 S. 17th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203
PHONE: 412-901-1913
FAX: none
E-MAIL: friendsofsouthsideparkpgh@gmail.com

RELATIONSHIP OR ROLE IN PROJECT: FOSSP is an all-volunteer advocacy organization serving as a community liaison for the South Side Park. Friends of South Side Park mission is to protect, improve, revitalize and promote Pittsburgh’s South Side Park. Our vision aspires to preserve South Side Park’s rich heritage of its industrial past, while fostering collaboration, education, resources, and funding for a vital future, for all people to enjoy and share this restorative and treasured space.

CO-APPLICANT NAME: NONE

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROPERTY:
South Side Park is a 65 acre Signature Community Park within the City of Pittsburgh. Friends of South Side Park (FOSSP) and our partners are working to improve and make the trails within the park safer and more user friendly. Currently, there is a 900 linear feet trail within the park that is heavily used, but has no official name, and is labeled on our map as Unnamed Trail 1 - see Figure 1. The trail is also unofficially referred to as the 1040 Trail and the Coal Seam Trail in the Master Plan - see Figure 2. FOSSP and our community partners would like to see the trail officially named as Keeling Coal Trail. We chose the name Keeling Coal Trail because of the important role that the Keeling Company played in the historical industrial roots of what is now known as South Side Park.
Letter of Intent

June 8, 2020

Friends of South Side Park
122 S. 17th Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

The Naming Commission
Attn: Ms. Lisa Ray
Senior Secretary
Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

RE: South Side Park, Keeling Coal Trail Naming Commission Hearing Agenda Request

Dear Ms. Lisa Ray,

Friends of South Side Park is an all-volunteer group who meets regularly, and publicly (up until these unusual times) to discuss and plan our many ongoing revitalization and beautification projects within the City of Pittsburgh’s Signature Community Park, South Side Park. In addition to trail work, tree plantings, clean-ups, and fighting invasive plants, we have two main outreach events each year, Goat Fest and a Star Party (partnering with the City Rangers.) We also communicate and partner with multiple neighborhood organizations, park-serving non-profit organizations, and City departments in order to improve, beautify and make South Side Park safer and more user friendly.

To substantially help with wayfinding within the park, and harkening to the parks industrial historical roots, Friends of South Side Park would like to pursue officially naming a trail in South Side Park, currently known as Unnamed Trail 1, to become Keeling Coal Trail.

We respectfully ask to be placed on the agenda of the next Naming Commission meeting on July 6, 2020. Kitty Vagley and Janice Serra, Executive Committee Members of Friends of South Side Park are the project leaders and will be presenting the project to the Commission and attending the review on behalf of Friends of South Side Park.

Thanks for your consideration, kindly,

Kitty Vagley & Janice Serra
Friends of South Side Park
FOSSP
Narrative

(a) Name of public property or facility to be named or renamed -
Unnamed Trail 1 to be named Keeling Coal Trail within the City of Pittsburgh, South Side Park.

(b) Name of designee -
Friends of South Side Park (FOSSP) project managers Kitty Vagley and Janice Serra will serve as co-designees.

(c) Narrative on why designee was chosen and his or her connection to the property or facility -
Kitty Vagley & Janice Serra both serve on the Executive Committee of Friends of South Side Park and have been actively involved since its conception in May 2016. Both have a deep passion to bring South Side Park to its fullest potential, and have worked to bring many partners together in order to achieve fulfillment of the City of Pittsburgh, South Side Park Master Plan.
Figure 1 This is the current City of Pittsburgh official map for South Side Park. Unnamed Trail 1 can be seen as the dotted line just above South Side Park Trail.
NAMING COMMISSION OF PITTSBURGH

Application for Review

PROJECT NAME: South Side Park - Keeling Coal Trail

Figure 2 The 2018 City of Pittsburgh South Side Park Master Plan includes this trail, seen as item #30, using the unofficial name of 1040 Trail.

Figure 3 Perspective rendering (Studio Bryan Hanes) from the South Side Park Master Plan showing a coal car viewing deck as an example of historic interpretive art that could be placed along the Keeling Coal Trail.
Figure 4 This is one entrance to the Keeling Coal Trail, peeling off to the left from the Quarry Trail. Currently there is no signage.

Figure 5 The rock outcrop visible from the trail is approximately where the former coal seam ran along the 1040 contour through the park.
The Keeling Coal Trail provides some of the park's most secluded and peaceful hiking areas in the park. There are approximately five small stream crossings along the trail.

This is the other trailhead entrance, peeling off to the left (in photo), from the Bandi Schaum Trail. Again, no signage.
Figure 8  We've come a long way! 1910 photograph of South Side Park plateau area after industry left its mark. The narrow gauge railroad tracks are in the foreground. (provided by Bill Landon).

Figure 9 Miners in the Keeling Coal Company mine. http://wiki.carrick-overbrook.org/Keeling_Coal_Company
Figure 10  This “1872 Atlas of the Cities of Pittsburgh...” G.M. Hopkins & Co., shows where the Keeling & Co. Pit Mouth, Coal Railroad, Engine House, and Inclined Plane ran through the area that is now South Side Park. Plank Road is now 18th Street. The Pit Mouth is on current day St. Patrick Street (next to Arlington Fire Station). There will be a historical interpretive sign installed at the location where we believe the Keeling Coal Railroad crossed over what is the current location of our Unnamed Trail 1.
(e) Historical information – Keeling Coal Company

Friends of South Side Park supports the name Keeling Coal Trail because of the industrial historical significance that the Keeling Coal Company, led by Joseph Keeling, had on the area now known as South Side Park.

Information referenced below reveals a fascinating network of coal mining and transport, known as the “Coal Road,” that stretched from the South Hills of Pittsburgh through mostly underground tunnels, and brought the coal to the Pit Mouth, which is located in South Side Park, just below St. Patrick Street (behind the Arlington Fire Station #22). From the Pit Mouth, the coal made its way down an inclined plane, to a narrow gauge railroad, down 21st Street, and on to the Monongahela River for further distribution.

"The Keeling Coal Company (1861-1878) was a 19th-century coal mining company in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Its mines were located in the Pittsburgh Coalfield of western Pennsylvania. The Ormsby mine was an underground coal mine, originally opened in 1838 by the son-in-law of Oliver Ormsby, John Harding Page and Captain Phillips. The mine was served by a gravity plane, or incline, built between 1838 and 1844. It was operated by Doctor Oliver Harrison Ormsby, the son of the above named Oliver Ormsby, from 1851 to 1861. The Keeling Coal Company operated it from 1861 to May 1878. It was then taken over by the Birmingham Coal Company, which had Joseph Keeling as one of its partners. The mine was extensive, eventually connecting to the nearby Bausman Mine, which Keeling also operated. Coal from this mine was used in early steam engine experiments by the U.S. Navy on the Michigan.

The “Coal Road”, an underground transportation system connecting the Ormsby mine with other local coal mines was begun in 1867. Like many mine railroads in the Pittsburgh area, this was a 3 ft 4 in (1,016 mm) narrow gauge line. After the coal was removed, it was transported underground from the South Hills to industries along the Monongahela River. The "Coal Road" passed under three hills, under Mount Oliver, then a trestle over a ravine at the present location of Parkwood Road, then under the hill topped by Fort Jones, later St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church and St. Clair Village, then over another ravine at the present-day Wagner Street, to re-enter an underground mine section in Carrick near where Bruner Street is today. This mine connected with the 3 ft (914 mm) narrow gauge line of the Bausman Mine in Spiketown, now Carrick, and was still operational in 1899. Coal was transferred from Spiketown to the mine entrance on St. Patrick Street by a tail rope system which was later replaced by a steam locomotive that ran underground. The coal from the mine was transferred to the Birmingham Coal Railroad, a 3 ft 2 in (965 mm) narrow gauge railroad that ran down the middle of South 21st Street from an inclined plane railroad. When the engine-house of the coal road burned shortly before the expiration of Keeling's lease on the mine, the lease was not renewed; At about the same time, the Pittsburgh and Whitehall Railroad obtained an easement adjacent to the track in the center of South 21st St. "Keeling versus Griffin", Pennsylvania state reports. 56. 1869. pp. 305–307.

References

12 "1872 Atlas of the Cities of Pittsburgh... (map of incline and railroad)". Retrieved 2009-05-16.

(f) Biographies – NONE

(g) Other materials, as deemed necessary by the CNPP or applicant – NONE

(h) Report on local community support and outreach done to garner community support -

The South Side Park Master Plan, completed in 2018, involved extensive community meetings and input. Stakeholders approved of this additional trail as being a historical interpretive trail bringing attention to the coal seam that travels along the 1040 contour and its associated industry. However, since wayfinding in the park is poor, it is very important that we create signage throughout, and find an official name for this trail. The unofficial names of 1040 Trail, Coal Seam Trail, and Unnamed Trail 1, were either not proper naming format, or had already been used in another Pittsburgh park. We solicited our 400+ membership and 1,000+ Facebook Followers to submit potential names for the Unnamed Trail 1. Keeling Coal Trail was unanimously adopted at our November 20, 2019 General Meeting. Further, we have included several Letters of Support from various park stakeholders.
Letters of Support

Letter of Support #1 from Marcelle Newman, Assistant Director, City of Pittsburgh DPW

June 3, 2020
Lisa Ray, Senior Secretary
Naming Commission
City Planning
City County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Ms. Ray,

The City of Pittsburgh’s Department of Public Works is in favor of the application of Friends of South Side Park to name the unnamed trail in South Side Park “Keeling Coal Trail.”

Thank you,

Marcelle Newman
Assistant Director
City of Pittsburgh
Department of Public Works
Letter of Support #2 from Barbara Rudiak, President, South Side Community Council

Dear Ms. Ray:

The South Side Community Council has been supportive of South Side Park for fifty years. We endorse the petition submitted by Friends of South Side Park to name the unnamed trail near the South Side Park Trail. We ask that you allow the trail to be known as Keeling Coal Trail.

Thank you,

Barbara Rudiak, Ph.D.
President
Letter of Support #3 from Blake McLaren, Board of Directors President, South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association

6.4.2020

Lisa Ray, Senior Secretary
Naming Commission
City Planning
City County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Ms. Ray,

The South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association would like to formally voice our support in favor of the petition, submitted by Friends of South Side Park (FoSSP), to name the currently unnamed trail within South Side Park “Keeling Coal Trail”.

Our Board of Directors, Members of the Association, and fellow neighbors have worked closely with FoSSP to ensure that South Side Park is a beacon of natural space within the South Side Slopes Neighborhood and we will continue to stay invested to ensure its well-being.

Thank you for your consideration and for memorializing our support in the record.

Sincerely,

Blake M. McLaren
President of the Board of Directors
South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association
Letter of Support #4 from Bruce Kraus, Councilman, City of Pittsburgh, District Three

June 5, 2020

Lisa Ray, Senior Secretary
Naming Commission
City Planning
City County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Ms. Ray,

Please allow this letter to serve as a testament of my support for the application submitted by Friends of South Side Park for the naming of the unnamed trail in South Side Park. This Friends group has been a proactive and effective organization and has made a positive difference to the park.

Their choice of “Keeling Coal Trail” highlights the history of the Park and the region as well as the life of an ambitious South Side resident who lived in the mid-19th century. I look forward to seeing the trail receive its official title.

Thank you.

Kind Regards,

Bruce A. Kraus
City Council Member
Letter of Support #5 from Debra Morgan, President, The Arlington Civic Council

THE ARLINGTON CIVIC COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 43217
PITTSBURGH, PA 15210

June 4, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

The Arlington Civic Council is in support of the Friends of South Side Park’s request to name the unnamed trail the Keeling Coal Trail.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 412-481-6408 or via email at 3morgan229@comcast.net.

Sincerely,

Debra R. Morgan

Debra R. Morgan
President