Girty’s Woods has considerable existing drainage issues. With the woods being along the ridge tops of Millvale it was a direct concern and design move to realign the trail based off the rule of a trail not exceeding certain slopes and also maintaining less than 45 degrees when crossing the crest of a contour.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Girty’s Woods was intended to prepare it for official use and to withstand the foot traffic of the community. Using knowledge gathered from prior research, trail restructure was conducted based on sustainability analysis. Designs for trail entrances were based on critiques and charrettes with community partners.

**EXISTING TRAIL CONDITIONS (FT)**

- **Sustainable**: 21,507
- **Non-Sustainable**: 63,546

**PROPOSED NEW TRAILS (FT)**

- **ADA Accessible**: 17.6%
- **Total Trails**: 73,816

**WATER TOWER TRAIL STRUCTURE**

Existing Trail (Red), crosses contours at an almost 90 degree angle.

**NON-SUSTAINABLE VS SUSTAINABLE TRAILS**

**FREDERICK ST TRAIL STRUCTURE**

Existing Trail (Red), crosses contours at an almost 90 degree angle.

**ADA TRAILS OUT OF NEW TRAILS**

**DREW REISINGER**

**LARCH 415**

**PITTSBURGH STUDIO**
Girty’s Woods has been used for generations, and many community members have their preferred entry point. Below is a site plan identifying the major points of entry, with Irwin Lane being the most popular and largest. Two designs are proposed with the first being Irwin main, right off the neighborhood. Irwin Main does not cross the Radio Tower lot that separates Irwin Lane and Girty’s Woods. Using land from a parcel purchase, 5 parking spaces and a bus turn around with a trail head complete this design. The second design uses the gravel road through the Radio Tower lot into Girty’s Woods to create a true entrance experience.

The new trails are in orange, while the pink squares represent the axons from page 1. Each identified point of interest represents an entrance that has been designed from minor changes to only slight path and vegetation rework.

Girty’s Woods Main

Right off the neighborhood this entrance is the most immediate vehicle parking spot.

With 5 parking spots off to the right and the staging area not much further, this design takes back what is just a wild grass field to incorporate a native cold grass prairie. The vegetation will also serve as a soft barrier to prevent cars from parking along the side. Within the grass and evidently in the staging area, natural stones/boulders of sandstone and other assorted rocks line the gravel road to serve as a harsh border. Instead of wooden picnic tables that could deteriorate or be vandalized, natural stone add for a more intimate experience as users lace up their boots.

Girty’s Woods Enter Girty’s

Further back into Girty’s Woods, “Enter Girty’s” allows for the user to be completely engulfed for the woods before leaving their car. Replanting what is a barren space, would be done through mass seeding, to allow for the natural forest succession to take place.

Similar to the other design, natural stones and boulders are used to create a hard buffer while also providing the necessary furniture through a natural and playful way.
SITE DESIGN CONTINUED

GIRTYS WOODS-MAIN
Using only the necessary amount of space needed from the parcel to achieve the turnaround and parking, the extra space will become a native cool season grass prairie/meadow.

MEADOW PLANT PALETTE

- Acer pensylvanicum
- Deschampsia cespitosa
- Sanguinaria canadensis
- Polystichum acrostichoides
- Elymus virginicus
- Kalmia latifolia
- Vaccinium corymbosum
- Gaultheria procumbens
- Quercus rubra
- Oxeye sunflower
- Symphyotrichum novae-angliae
- Veronica linifolia

FOREST PLANT PALETTE

- Acer rubrum
- Nyssa sylvatica
- Garrya elliptica
- Caudatea pittsburghensis
- Quercus rubra
- B. virginiana
- Acer rubrum
- Nyssa sylvatica
- Garrya elliptica
- Caudatea pittsburghensis

GIRTYS WOODS-ENTER GIRTYS
Stones bring the road present unwanted parking. Long sight lines allow for buses and cars to move freely and safely.

- Acer rubrum
- Nyssa sylvatica
- Garrya elliptica
- Caudatea pittsburghensis
- Quercus rubra
- B. virginiana
- Acer rubrum
- Nyssa sylvatica
- Garrya elliptica
- Caudatea pittsburghensis

DREW REISINGER
LARCH 415
PITTSBURGH STUDIO
When creating new trails, old trails shall be retired and replanted. The initial stage would be seeding the old trail with a seed mixture of early, fast rooting, successional trees. There could be some seeds of the native hardwoods to help boost their mass, but the already existing hardwoods would drop their seeds in the natural process. After the seeding, a jute mat would be placed to prevent erosion and protect the seeds.

In a few months, to a few years, the early successional trees would start to sprout and develop. In a few years after seeding, the early successional trees would be starting to grow and take their place in the forest. It is at this point the native hardwoods are starting to sprout and provide an understory.

In stage 4 which is roughly 5-8 years after seeding, the early successional trees have done their job of providing the needed shade to keep out weeds, while also allowing enough light for the native hardwoods to reach almost maturity. This is when the early successional trees shall be culled and ground into mulch.

Years later the once native hardwood saplings have grown to become mature trees, holding their own in Girty's Woods. They provide habitat and mast for local animals, as well as an experience for visitors.