

ERUV GUIDELINES
FROM
**THE RABBINICAL BOARD
OF GREATER PITTSBURGH**
AND
**THE PITTSBURGH ERUV
COMMITTEE**

אלול תשמ"ה

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to announce the imminent construction of the Pittsburgh Eruv. We have exercised the greatest care to ensure that our Eruv will serve its traditional purpose, to unite a community and bring its inhabitants closer together.

This project has been guided by a wealth of authoritative Halachic sources which encourage the erection of an Eruv around a community to decrease the possibility of Sabbath desecration and to permit greater freedom of movement in order to enhance the Oneg Shabbos.

(cf.) תשבג"ח"ב ס'ל"ז, שו"ת הרא"ש כלל כ"א ס"ח

שו"ת לבוש מרדכי ס"ד שו"ת החתם סופר א"ח ס"צ"ט

There are many prohibitions which an Eruv does not affect. An Eruv only permits the carrying of items which may be used on the Sabbath. Items which are "Mukzeh" may still not be carried. Some familiar items in this category are umbrellas, pocketbooks, wallets, money, coupons, tickets, tokens, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches, tools, electrical devices, writing implements, etc. Any activity which is inimical to the spirit of the Sabbath and, therefore, violates its sanctity remains strictly prohibited. We refer specifically to bicycle riding, ball playing (baseball, football, soccer, tennis, etc.) and skating.

Beyond the 39 Torah categories of activity which are prohibited on the Sabbath and the Rabbinic prohibitions, there is a category of "Uvda D'chol," activities which erode the sacred character of the Sabbath. We, therefore, urge all parents and teachers to impress upon the children the limited nature of an Eruv. Direct all questions regarding what is permitted and what is prohibited to your Rabbi.

A map of the Pittsburgh Eruv (Page 4) will be given to every Synagogue within the boundaries. The Eruv will be checked every Erev Shabbos. One cannot assume that the Eruv is up. Every household whose members plan to use the Eruv should call 521-9938 (Shaare Torah) or 421-9787 (Poale Zedeck) before candle-lighting for a recorded message on the status of the Eruv. Shuls and Minyanim are strongly urged to appoint callers so that the appropriate announcement can be made in Shul before people return home.

The Committee for Halachic Review for the operation, policy and guidelines of the Eruv includes Rabbi Baruch A. Poupko, Chairman, Rabbinical Board of Pittsburgh, and Rabbis Moshe Kletenik, Yisroel Miller, Benjamin Nadoff and Yisroel Pfeffer, members of the Rabbinical Board of Pittsburgh. Rabbi Moshe Kletenik has been designated to rule on all questions and issues of Jewish Law related to the Eruv as they arise.

Requested contribution for the first year is \$100.00 per family. While the future financial needs should be less, your support will still be needed to cover the costs of maintenance, inspection, insurance, etc.

We wish to express our thanksgiving to the Almighty for our success in this project. We also wish to express our gratitude to all those whose devoted efforts made this much needed and worthwhile project possible.

Carrying is permitted on both sides of any street in the interior of the Eruv area with the exception of a small section of Beechwood Boulevard (See Note #3 below). Special caution must be exercised while carrying on any of the boundary streets. Carrying is permitted on both sides of some streets, only one side of others, and, on still others, it is prohibited on both sides. Please study the map on the next page carefully and read the following special notes.

SPECIAL NOTES ON THE ERUV

1. Saline Street Extension: One should not carry on this street at all.
2. Brown's Hill Road: One should not carry on this street at all.
3. Beechwood Boulevard: The Eruv does not include the northern side of Beechwood Boulevard from the Parkway Westbound entry ramp to just before the Forward Avenue underpass. This area is readily recognizable because the sidewalk ceases on the northern side of Beechwood Boulevard between these points. One should cross to the southern sidewalk of Beechwood Boulevard for this section. It is important that one cross to the southern sidewalk before the last house on the northern side of Beechwood Boulevard. It is also important that one cross directly to the southern sidewalk of Beechwood Boulevard after going through the Forward Avenue underpass (Bear left, not right around barrier).
4. Forward Avenue to Commercial Road: One should not carry beyond the Mount Royal Apartment complex.
5. Greenfield Avenue: One should not carry on this street at all.

IS IT IN OR OUT?

The Schenley Park Playground at the corner of Hobart and Bartlett — OUT

Schenley Park Oval — OUT

"Old Frick" playground — OUT

"New Frick" playground — IN

Forward Avenue underpass — IN (See Parkway note above)

Parkway and Parkway ramps — OUT (See note above)

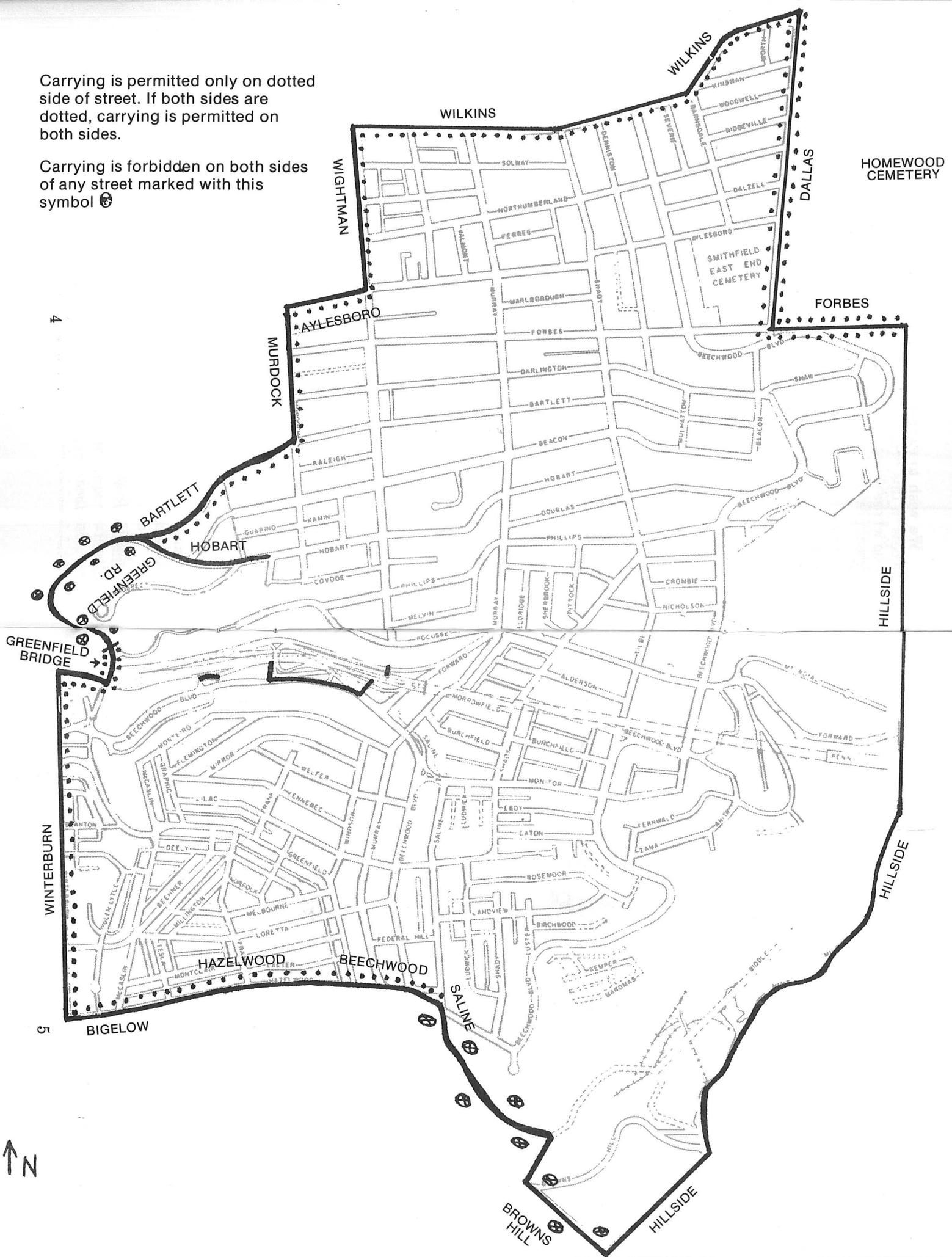
Greenfield Avenue Bridge — IN (Greenfield Ave. approach may not be used. See map.)

Jewish Home for Senior Citizens — IN (but impossible to walk to and remain within the Eruv at all times.)

Mount Royal Apts. Complex — IN

Carrying is permitted only on dotted side of street. If both sides are dotted, carrying is permitted on both sides.

Carrying is forbidden on both sides of any street marked with this symbol 



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Zachor Es-Yom HaShabbos LeKadesh - The Spirit of the Shabbos and its Preservation

With the erection of an Eruv in Pittsburgh, changes in the Shabbos routine will occur. Many of these changes will be welcome: overlooked items in one's pocket will no longer constitute infractions of Torah-law, families anchored to their homes with infants will be able to visit other homes, S'forim and Taleisos will be transportable to and from the shul. The purpose of this essay is to explain the spirit behind the Torah and Rabbinic Sabbath laws.

The Ramban in his commentary on Parshas Emor discusses the prohibition of certain activities not included in the thirty-nine categories of forbidden Melachos. The Ramban is troubled by the Torah's call for a "day of rest" even though it had previously prohibited all forms of Melacha. He concludes from this apparent repetition that we have an additional obligation of resting - Shvisa. The Ramban suggests that the laws of resting or Shvus might be by Biblical decree rather than Rabbinic injunction.

Briefly, Shvus or resting prohibits activities which are not "Shabbosdik." Were it not for these laws, says the Ramban, people could make deliveries with horse and wagon on the Holiday; the market would be full and bustling with all forms of business, stores would be open, and money-changers would function - for all these activities are not included in the prohibition of Melacha. The Ramban explains that the laws of Shvus which prohibit the secularization of our holidays are by Torah not Rabbinic decree (which doesn't change our obligation - it merely increases the consequences). These laws of Shvus protect the "Spirit of the Law" of Shabbos. Strenuous labor and athletics, for example, are not within the guidelines set for Sabbath observance.

The area of athletics - ball playing - is of special concern to the Rabbinical Board, the Eruv Committee, and the majority of the observant residents of this area. The temptation to be lenient with our children regarding this matter is great and much ball playing has been noticed on past Yomim Tovim. It seems that the Poskim who have suggested that "young" children are permitted to play ball on Shabbos have been misconstrued to allow everything shy of "little league" team for Shabbos and Yom Tov. This writer suggests that the intention of these Poskim was to tolerate a young child throwing a ball around the backyard while keeping himself busy. The Talmud Yerushalmi (פ"ד ת"ד) records that the city of Tur Shimeon was destroyed exclusively because of ball playing on Shabbos.

The Shulchan Aruch devotes a chapter to the "Laws of a Child on Shabbos" which merits reviewing in this context (See Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 348). The author (R. Yosef Karo) states "and so it is prohibited to accustom him (the child) in the violation of Shabbos and Yom Tov and even in areas that are of the category of Shvus." The Ramaw (R. Moshe Isserles) there comments that as soon as a child is

capable of being trained the father must stop him from this type of violation. The Mishna B'rura says "and know that the measure of (when to start) training in commandments is with each infant according to its aptitude and ability." In any event, a child reaches the stage of knowing right from wrong prior to his being able to participate in team athletics. No matter what, one would have to agree that ball playing is certainly not a proper Shabbos activity. Aside from providing less than optimal surroundings for one's own child, the Shabbos ball game serves as a Michshol (stumbling block) and temptation to other youngsters.

IN SUMMARY, THE RABBINICAL BOARD AND THE ERUV COMMITTEE IMPLORE THE PARENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY TO OFFER THE PROPER GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISION TO THE YOUNGSTERS SO THAT BALL PLAYING WILL NOT BE PART OF THEIR SHABBOS ACTIVITY.

In conclusion, the Eruv Committee prays that its efforts will find favor before the Al-mighty, serve as a credit to the community, and provide for a more meaningful and complete observance of the Shabbos so that we and all of ישראל כלל זוכה to see the fulfillment of the promise recorded in the Talmud אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי שמעון בר יוחאי אלמלי משמרין ישראל שתי שבתות כהלכתן מיד נגאלין.

מ' שבת ק"ח:ה.

If Israel were to observe two Sabbaths properly they would immediately be redeemed.

On Children...

אמר ריש לקיש משום רבי יהודה נשיאה אין העולם מתקיים אלא בשביל הבל היניקית של בית רבן, א"ל רב פפא לאבבי, דידי ודידך מאי, א"ל אינו דומה הבל שיש בו חטא להבל שאין בו חטא (חס' שבן ק"ל)

Resh Lakish said in the name of Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi: The world endures only for the sake of the breath of children of the "Rabbi's Cheder." Rav Papa asked of Abaye, what about mine and yours? -Abaye replied one can't compare breath in which there is sin to breath in which sin is not present.

With the establishment of the Eruv of Pittsburgh, the problem arises of young children attending services and disturbing them. It is important to explore the problem in two areas: first, the outlook of our Massora or heritage on bringing children to Synagogue services, and second, the avoidance of disruptions to the decorum of T'fillah Be'T-zibur - communal worship.

When Moshe approached the Pharaoh with the demand of the Creator: **שְׁלַח אֶת עַמִּי וַיַּחֲנוּ לִי בַמִּדְבָּר** "Let My people go that they may celebrate unto Me in the wilderness," (Ex. 5:1) Moshe was refused most abruptly. After seven horrendous plagues were visited upon the Egyptians, their arrogance was broken and Pharaoh agreed to negotiate with Moshe anew: **לָכוּ עִבְדוּ אֶת ד' אֶל־לִקְיִכֶם וּמִי הָהוֹלֵכִים** "Go serve G-d your L-rd, but who then are they that are to go?" (ibid X, 8). Moshe's response was concise: **בְּנַעֲרֵינוּ וּבְזִקְנֵינוּ נֵלֶךְ, בְּבָנֵינוּ וּבְבָנֹתָינוּ תֵינּוּ** "With our youth and with our aged will we go, with our sons and with our daughters!" (ibid X, 9), Pharaoh refused and retorted: **לָכוּ נָא הַגִּבּוֹרִים וְעִבְדוּ אֶת ד'** (ibid X,11) Rash comments: "Until now your request was 'Let us worship our G-d' and it is not the way of children to worship" (Rashi, ibid). It seems that the Egyptians could comprehend the concept of prayer as they prayed to gods themselves. The Jewish concept of T'fillah as Hirsch puts it (S.R. Hirsch, ibid): "When G-d calls us, He wants to see us with every member of our family," was not to be understood by the heathen Egyptians.

When the Jewish Nation stood at the foot of Mt. Sinai the L-rd demanded security or surety before He would entrust them with His Torah (Medrash Rabba, Shir Ha-Shirim 1:4). All offers - even the promise or our pious forefathers as guarantors - were unacceptable until we offered our children as bond. The young were the most acceptable security we could offer. Today, when we ask our Maker for His continued aid and guidance we would be well equipped to have the time-tested security at our sides — our children!

The obligation of a father to teach his young children to answer "amen" is mentioned as one of the first responsibilities of the father-child relationship. Rabbi Moshe Isserles says in his notes on the Shulchan Rauch **וְיִלְמַד בְּנֵי הַקְּטָנִים שִׁיעֵנוּ אִמֵּן כִּי מִיֵּד שֶׁהִתִּינוּק עֹנֶה אִמֵּן יֵשׁ** (שו"ע או"ח רמ"א) "and one is to reach his small children so that they answer 'Amen,' for immediately when the infant answers Amen he then owns a share in the world to come."

Despite the cherished place children enjoy in Jewish communal worship, there is no license to re-structure our synagogues as indoor playgrounds for the youth. On the contrary, the Mogen Avrohom in his commentary on the Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) mentions: **וְצָרִיךְ שְׂיַחֲנֵכֶם: שִׁיעֲמְדוּ בְּאִימָה וּבִירָאָה. וְאוֹתָן שְׂרָצִים וְשֹׁבִים בְּבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת בְּשָׂחוֹק מוֹטֵב** (בשם שני לוחות) "And one must train them (the youngsters) that they stand (in shul) with awe and respect. And as for those that run back and forth in the Synagogue in levity, it is better not to bring them." The decorum of the services must not be challenged by the young.

Undisciplined children create problems for themselves in shul. As the Mogen Avrohom points out (see above) one must train one's children to relate to the Synagogue with Yirah - awe and respect. Permit-

ting a youngster to roam freely and cause disturbances reinforces negative habits which may remain throughout his life. Moreover, parental example of talking in shul or of failing to show reverence fosters an irreverent attitude in the child resulting in double damage:

1. The disturbance caused to the Tzibur or community during prayer.
2. The poor foundation being set for the youngster is developing his own relationship to T'fillah and Kedushah in general.

Obviously, a youngster in shul should always be **at his parent's side** so that the parent can supervise him and monitor his spiritual development. To tax a child unfairly by demanding discipline from him beyond his ability is unwise. Many parents bring their youngsters to the Synagogue during the very last segment of the service, gradually lengthening the time as the child's attention span increases.

It is critically important to instill in one's children a sense of reverence and respect to the Synagogue and never allow them to disturb the decorum and sanctity of T'fillah Betzibur.

(These two essays were adapted with permission and edited from **A Guide to the Eruv of Kew Gardens Hills**, by Dovid M. Fuld)

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