

# Chestnut Hill Local

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## Meet the 'visionaries' to spark at April 21 event

by Dan Macey for the Chestnut Hill Conservancy

It's been nearly 50 years since famed architect Louis Kahn characterized Chestnut Hill as a "spirit," in which "it seems as though the trees and gardens and the carefully scribbled streets have told everyone to be discerning about the steps they will take."

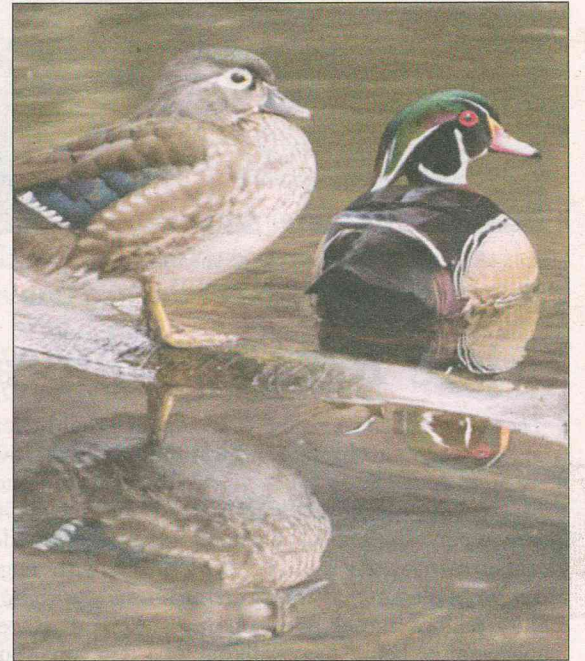
In the face of the urban growth much of the city of Philadelphia is experiencing, it is time to reflect on Kahn's words and publicly discuss Chestnut Hill's assets and the role growth could play in affecting the "spirit" of the community.

The Chestnut Hill Conservancy has gathered some of the most prominent local and national experts on urbanism, historic preservation and architecture's role in the community to spark a community discussion on the tensions between preservation and change facing Chestnut Hill. The Visionaries Roundtable, slated for 6:30 p.m. Friday, April 21, at Springside Chestnut Hill Academy, is intended to begin this dialogue.

### Who are the Visionaries?

The evening will begin with some remarks

(Continued on page 8)



**WOOD DUCKS RETURN** Wildlife photographers have once again converged on the banks of the Wissahickon to see and photograph the iridescent-hued wood ducks. Wildlife photographers drive hours to position themselves near the notoriously shy birds. Photographer Matt Peel left his home in Dorchester County, Md., at 4:45 am to sprawl eye-level with the birds. "I call myself a duck hunter with a camera," said Peel, from his muddy perch. (Photo and text by Art Howe) Above, Wood ducks in the Wissahickon. A female and male wood duck. (Photo by Arthur Drescher)

## Local developers behind plan to transform 'downtown' Wyndmoor



A preliminary rendering of the Wyndmoor Supply development shows a new market at the corner of Willow Grove and Traymore avenues and the new three story retail and condo property that will take the place of the former hardware store and gas station.

by Pete Mazzaccaro

A partnership of Wyndmoor residents won zoning Monday, March 27 from the Springfield Township Zoning Hearing Board to move forward with a town center development plan that will bring what they hope is a transformational change for a "downtown" in need of modernization.

The project's three partners, Jay Overcash, Gus Repetto and Bill Casey, all live in the neighborhood and are eager to bring a development to the area they can enjoy with their own children. It's a mixed-use development that will include a corner market, a coffee shop, yoga studio and a family friendly Mediterranean restaurant and wine bar. Repetto told the Local that they have preliminary deals in place with tenants, but don't want to reveal the names of businesses until the deals are finalized.

The restaurant, coffee shop and yoga studio will be on the ground floor of a three-story building that will have 10 condominiums on the top two floors. The building is being designed by the Philadelphia architecture firm DIGSAU, which has built a number of award winning projects in Philadelphia, Delaware

and elsewhere. It designed the café and welcome center in Logan Square, the Dogfish Head craft brewery in Milton, Del., and the Philadelphia Union's training facility in Chester.

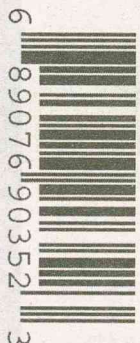
"The plan is to create a transformative project for Wyndmoor that will hopefully attract other developers and people to come in along the strip," Overcash told the Local in an interview last week. "We want it to have a village feel ... We want to select tenants and an aesthetic that would create walkable, friendly community environment consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods."

Repetto agreed, noting models for the development could be found in Ambler, Keswick and even Chestnut Hill.

"We're not trying to replicate Chestnut Hill," he said. "We're trying to maybe create an annex to it. This creates somewhere else for them to go as residents of Wyndmoor. Willow Grove Avenue needs redevelopment."

Overcash grew up in Chestnut Hill, on the 100 block of E. Hartwell Lane, before moving to Wyndmoor as a teen. He went to school, married and settled in Center City. When he and his wife had children, they moved back to Wyndmoor.

(Continued on page 7)



### What's Inside

Obituaries.....15  
CHCA Agenda.....3  
Sports .....16  
Local Life .....21  
This Week .....28-29  
Classified .....34

Librarian Pat Leeming 88, to retire

page 8

Obituary: Former CHCA president J.R. McAllister Borie

page 15

Chestnut Hill Local  
**Senior Life**  
News for Northwest Seniors

See Page 9



# Hill librarian Pat Leeming to retire at 88

by Brendan Sample

After nearly three decades of working for several branches of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Pat Leeming is now set to retire at the beginning of May. Though she is currently working at the Chestnut Hill Free Library, her impact on the community has reached out farther than just one institution.

Leeming began working for the Free Library of Philadelphia in 1989 when she joined the Andorra branch. This was the first paying job she had ever had, as she had previously focused on volunteer work and raising her children.

"I was at home raising 10 kids, or maybe they were raising themselves," Leeming joked.

Having put in 16 years at Andorra, Leeming went to the Lovett Memorial Library in Mt. Airy, but later came to Chestnut Hill when that branch closed for renovations. This sort of turnover is not uncommon for library employees and allowed her to gain a unique perspective on the different branches in Philadelphia.

"If they need you in another branch, you go, so we become familiar with the other libraries," Leeming said.

After putting in so many years with the Library, Leeming is now looking forward to retiring because the timing feels right. Her last day at the branch is May 5, though her plans for what she would like to do after retirement are still up in the air.

"I'm 88, and I just think it's time," Leeming explained. "Who knows how long we have? I had an aunt who lived to 104, so you never know, but that's why I decided to do it."

In addition to her library work, Leeming, who lives in Erdenheim, has been extremely active in her church, Our Mother of Consolation, for more than 60 years. Her dedication to the community has earned her a positive reputation among even those who don't know her directly.

"I always thought that Pat was a lovely woman in the community," said Mary Welsh, a former head of the Friends of the Chestnut Hill Library. "She's been a wonderful



Alani Tolliver (left) helps long time librarian Pat Leeming check in books. Leeming will soon retire at 88. (Photo by Brendan Sample)

supporter of Chestnut Hill who's always friendly and has cared greatly about this community."

Looking back on her time with

the various branches, there are a number of moments that stick out for Leeming, from cataloging hundreds of books on a day when

Andorra was closed to accidentally locking a patron in after hours. When considering the best things about her time, Leeming appreciated the variety of her tasks most of all.

"It's quite varied here," Leeming said. "You're helping patrons at the desk, you're shelving books, you're answering the phone, etc. I felt that each thing was good."

Though she doesn't plan on leaving the community any time soon, it's clear that Leeming will certainly be missed after so many years with the library. One patron even suggested that she should get her own parade down Germantown Avenue on the day of her retirement. Going into her final month of work, she can certainly take comfort in the many supportive friendships she has developed over the course of this time.

"I would say I've made a lot of friends in these years," Leeming said. "You know, the patrons and people with whom I work, and that's good. I still see them, so I'll just pick up from there."

Brendan Sample can be reached at [brendan@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:brendan@chestnuthilllocal.com)

## Who are the 'visionaries' sparking the conversation

(Continued from page 1)

from Louis Kahn's filmmaker son Nathaniel Kahn – a Chestnut Hill native – and continue with a provocative keynote by another Chestnut Hill native Witold Rybczynski, an internationally renowned and insightful architect-

tural commentator and thought-provoking author on culture and architecture.

"American cities are not shaped by architects, planners, legislators or mayors, but by the market, that is, by the people who live and work – and play – in them," Rybczynski said in his 2010 book "Makeshift Metropo-

lis: Ideas About Cities."

He is the emeritus professor of urbanism at the University of Pennsylvania and, from 2004 and 2012, served on the U.S. Commission for Fine Arts. He has been called "one of the best writers on design working today," and having "a special knack for making everyday objects and ideas seem captivating, in part because he places them in a larger historical narrative." He has written and co-authored 20 books – some best sellers – on culture, architecture, the home, design and urban history.

Following Rybczynski's talk, Gail Harrity, president of the Philadelphia Museum of Art since 2009 and its chief operating officer since 1997, will moderate a roundtable discussion on the conflicts between preservation and change. Before coming to Philadelphia, Harrity held the position of Deputy Director at New York's Solomon Guggenheim Museum, where she was the project director for the museum in planning for the Frank Gehry-designed Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain. Previous to that, she held a variety of senior positions at the Metropolitan

Museum of Art. She is a resident of Chestnut Hill.

Those participating in the roundtable are:

- David De Long, professor emeritus of architecture at the University of Pennsylvania where he chaired the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, as he had earlier at Columbia University. He received his Master of Architecture degree from Penn, where he studied with Louis Kahn, and his Ph.D. in architecture from Columbia University. As a licensed architect, he was an associate of John Carl Warnecke and Associates, Architects and Planners. He has served as guest curator for exhibitions at major museums, and among his many books are studies of Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, and Frank Lloyd Wright, among others.

- Bryan Hanes, founding principal of Studio Bryan Hanes and a registered landscape architect who has been involved in a diverse range of work, from significant urban and open space planning and design projects to small-scale designs for institutional and private clients. Each project strives to

acknowledge an understanding of the natural and cultural systems of a site. He has been instrumental in designing the Philadelphia Rail Park which is reclaiming abandoned Reading Railroad railroad tracks for a green space, a gathering space and a public space for all.

- Inga Saffron, the Philadelphia Inquirer's architecture critic who writes about architecture, design and planning issues. Her column, "Changing Skylines," has been appearing in the paper's Home and Design section since 1999. In 2014, she received a Pulitzer Prize in Criticism. In 2012, she completed a Loeb Fellowship at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design.

- Richard Snowden, the managing partner in Bowman Properties which owns and manages a portfolio of historic residential and commercial buildings in Chestnut Hill. His involvement with the historic preservation movement spans three decades and includes service on the boards of numerous historic sites and arts organizations, including the Chestnut Hill Conservancy (formerly Historical Society), the Andalusia Foundation, Cliveden, and the Library Company of Philadelphia, and he helped found and chair the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.

- Tickets to the Visionaries Roundtable can be purchased for \$10 (for students, \$5) through the Chestnut Hill Conservancy website, [www.chconservancy.org](http://www.chconservancy.org), or by calling 215-247-9329, x202. A "Meet the Speakers" reception with fondue and wine will begin at 6 p.m., and tickets for that are \$40 including the main event. A complimentary frozen yogurt social will follow the event, courtesy of Chill Frozen Yogurt.

The Visionaries Roundtable is generously sponsored by Chestnut Hill Conservancy 50th Anniversary Presenting Sponsor, the Nottingham-Goodman Group of Merrill Lynch, as well as Johnson, Kendall & Johnson, Krieger + Associates Architects, Kurtz Construction, and Dennis F. Meyer Inc., Old Village Master Painters, and Pure Insurance.

Dan Macey is Chestnut Hill resident and one of the organizers for the Visionaries Roundtable.

**MJ**  
**MOODY JONES GALLERY**  
PRESENTS  
*Pedro Tuller + Juan Gomez*  
*Reflection Harmonies*

RECEPTION  
FRIDAY, APRIL 14 5PM-8PM  
SATURDAY, APRIL 15 1PM-3PM

## Holy Week & Easter at St. Martin's

### Palm Sunday (April 9)

8:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:15 a.m. *worship.together*,  
and 11:15 a.m. **Festal Eucharist**

### Holy Wednesday (April 12)

6:00 p.m. **SUPPER at St. Martin's**  
7:00 p.m. **Stations of the Cross & Compline**

### Maundy Thursday (April 13)

5:30 p.m. **Kids' Maundy Thursday**  
6:00 p.m. **Agape Meal**  
7:00 p.m. **Footwashing and Choral Eucharist**

### Good Friday (April 14)

12:00 p.m. **Solemn Liturgy with  
Veneration of the Cross**  
5:30 p.m. **Kids' Good Friday Service**  
7:00 p.m. **The Seven Last Words of Christ**

### Easter Saturday (April 15)

5:30 p.m. **Kids' Great Vigil of Easter**  
8:00 p.m. **The Great Vigil of Easter  
Vigil party to follow**

### Easter Sunday:

The Resurrection of Our  
Lord (April 16)

8:00 a.m. **The Holy Eucharist**  
9:00 a.m. **Festal Eucharist**  
10:00 a.m. **Easter Egg Hunt**  
10:15 a.m. **worship.together Easter  
wiggles welcome!**  
10:45 a.m. **Easter Egg Hunt**  
11:15 a.m. **Festal Eucharist**

### Holy Week Especially for Kids

(best for those 0-10)  
*wiggles welcome!*

Thursday, Friday, & Saturday  
5:30 PM

### Easter Sunday

9:00 & 10:15 AM  
*egg hunts following*

Professional childcare available:

**Holy Wednesday - 7 PM**  
**Maundy Thursday - 7 PM**  
**Good Friday - 12 PM & 7:00 PM**  
**Easter Sunday - 9 & 11:15 AM**



CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS

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[StMartinEG.org](http://StMartinEG.org) ~ 215.247.7466

All Are Welcome