

CH Conservancy announces deal to preserve 30 W. Chestnut Hill Ave, 2 other properties

Posted on June 1, 2017 (<http://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2017/06/01/ch-conservancy-announces-deal-to-preserve-30-w-chestnut-hill-ave-2-other-properties/>) by Pete Mazzaccaro (<http://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/author/pete/>)



(http://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Story_Easement.jpg)

30 W. Chestnut Hill Ave. will be preserved thanks to the work of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy. (Photo by Pete Mazzaccaro)

by Pete Mazzaccaro

The Chestnut Hill Conservancy announced this week that it had reached a deal to preserve 30 W. Chestnut Hill Ave. in a conservation easement deal with property owner Main Street Development Company. The 130-year-old home made news in the Chestnut Hill Local last year when the owner removed all trees on the property and applied for a demolition permit to raise the home.

News of the home's impending demolition mobilized neighbors and the Chestnut Hill Conservancy, which managed to get the developer to negotiate a deal to preserve the property

"30 W. Chestnut Hill Avenue was a wake-up call for a lot of people to recognize that [demolition of intact historic resources] could happen in a second," said Lori Salganicoff, the Conservancy's executive director. "The demolition permit for that building was pulled the same day the developer took possession of the property. We were able to turn this property around, but we need to have better understanding of situations like this in order to plan for the future of Chestnut Hill. This is not likely to be the last challenge of this kind, but we hope this outcome encourages others to consider alternatives to teardown redevelopment in this remarkable neighborhood."

The negotiation that produced the eventual easement deal took 15 months with Glenn Falso Jr., Main Street Development Company's president, agreeing to renovate and preserve the original home built by Theophilus Parsons Chandler, who founded the architecture program at the University of Pennsylvania. The Conservancy agreed to allow Falso to subdivide the property and build a new, twin home next to the original.

"I am excited to be moving forward on this project and look forward to welcoming new neighbors to our beautiful new and rehabbed homes here," Falso said.

In addition to 30 W. Chestnut Hill Ave, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy has secured easements on two other properties: another historic home built by Chandler at 8310 Crittenden St. and an eight-acre tract of land along the East Brook, a tributary of the Wissahickon which runs through the Swan Pond of the Morris Arboretum.

Owners of the properties wished to remain anonymous.

"The protection afforded by this easement along the East Brook is extremely important to the Arboretum," said Paul Meyer, arboretum executive director. "We are very grateful to the owners for their generosity in protecting this ecologically important urban watershed."

All three deals come just before the Conservancy will be honored by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia for its preservation work at a ceremony on June 7.

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