



## **Chestnut Hill Residential Conservation, Preservation and Development Study 2017**



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Due to a generous grant from the William Penn Foundation, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy & Historical Society (CH Conservancy) and Chestnut Hill Community Association (CHCA), undertook a study for the purposes of:

- Responding to increasing teardowns, subdivision and redevelopment pressure on residentially-zoned parcels, with the goal of more effectively guiding conservation, preservation and development efforts.
- Collecting and mapping previously unconnected data and plans and identifying gaps for future data collection.
- Preparing the community for informed public discussions and decision-making, and improving coordination efforts by community organizations.
- Preparing for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission's launch of the Northwest Philadelphia District Plan process, an element of the city's **Philadelphia 2035 Comprehensive Plan**, to begin in fall 2017.

## **Steering Committee Members:**

- Co-Chair and Project Manager Lori Salganicoff, Preservationist and Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Co-Chair Joyce Lenhardt, Architect (CHCA)
- Eli-Antione Atallah, Architect
- Richard Bartholomew, Planner, Architect
- Barbara Baumbach, Realtor (Chestnut Hill Business District)
- Patricia Cove, Preservationist, Designer (CH Conservancy, CHCA)
- Steven Gendler, Economist, Developer (CHCA)
- John Landis, Planner, University of Pennsylvania (CHCA)
- Maura McCarthy, Conservationist (Friends of the Wissahickon)
- Mindy O'Connor, Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Patricia Pregmon, Easement Attorney
- James Querry, Landscape Architect, Philadelphia University
- Peter Saylor, Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Richard Snowden, Developer (CH Conservancy, CHCA, Chestnut Hill Business District)
- Ian Hegarty, Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Natural Lands Trust served as consultant to the study committee, with GIS mapping, data gathering and facilitation provided by Megan Boatright, Manager GIS & Cartography Services; and, Ann Hutchinson, AICP, Senior Director Municipal Planning. In addition, PennPraxis graduate student Madeleine Helmer prepared a study of **Tools for Managing Change** (Appendix 1); and Philadelphia University student C. Rachel Wolford mapped the Chestnut Hill National Register Historic District properties. Prior to this study, this building-specific historical information was only available in text format until Rachel linked the information to building footprints in a GIS database. While there are many attributes of information

in the final dataset, the attributes used in the Natural Lands Trust mapping work were ‘levels of significance’ and ‘era of construction.’

**Meetings of the Steering Committee and Key Stakeholders occurred as follow:**

- January 26, 2017 – Steering Committee Meeting 1
- February 2, 2017 – Joint meeting of Historic District Advisory Committee and Land Use Planning and Zoning Committee
- February 23, 2017 – Steering Committee Meeting 2
- March 11, 2017 – Steering Committee Meeting 3
- April 13, 2017 – Steering Committee Meeting 4
- April 21, 2017 - CH Conservancy **Visionaries’ Roundtable: Preservation & Change in Chestnut Hill**
- May 11, 2017- Steering Committee Meeting 5
- May 31, 2017 – Joint meeting of CH Conservancy and CHCA to present study results

(See Appendix 2 for Meeting Minutes)

**Summary of Work**

**GIS work completed for the Chestnut Hill Conservation, Preservation, and Development Study**

Natural Lands Trust was tasked with compiling existing GIS layers that were most relevant to conservation and preservation efforts. Existing data came from the Open Space Showcase, the 2006/2007 Protect Our Watershed Program, the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, the National Register of Historic Places, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, Philadelphia University, Chestnut Hill Conservancy, and Friends of the Wissahickon, as well as other public sources.

In addition to collecting existing data, the study committee worked with Natural Lands Trust staff to determine a “future wish list” of data and/or analysis that would be helpful in making decisions.

The final mapping products created by Natural Land Trust staff were:

- A set of maps (6 posters) that were on display at the Visionaries Roundtable event in April, 2017.
- An electronic map (PDF format) that allows a user to turn data layers on and off. There are approximately 30 layers in this map (See Appendix 3 for a list of layers included on the map).
- A “future wish list” of data and/or analysis needed, prioritized as higher, medium, and lower (See Appendix 4).

**Community Issues and Priorities to be address in the Northwest Philadelphia District Plan.** In preparing for the Northwest Philadelphia District Plan, the Study Committee answered the following questions:

1. In your experience, where does the most important opportunity lie to preserve the natural and built environment in Chestnut Hill?
2. What is the most important threat to the built and natural environment in Chestnut Hill?

Appendix 5 captures their responses. Natural Lands Trust conducted a similar exercise with stakeholders at a February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Historic District Advisory Committee and the Land Use Planning and Zoning Committee (See Appendix 6 for the results).

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, Steering Committee members participated in a “next steps” exercise, building on earlier internal and stakeholder input. The exercise incorporated backwards mapping, a tool from the *Theory of Change*<sup>1</sup>, designed to establish a framework for achieving positive change. The exercise resulted in Priority Projects and Next Steps that were presented to the community at a May 31<sup>st</sup> meeting (see Appendix 7).

In addition, a presentation of “next steps” by Study Committee member John Landis, further augmented this work, noting three specific proactive measures that could be taken to manage change:

1. The need to balance preservation, conservation and environmental conservation with appropriate new and affordable investments, including:
  - High quality and affordable infill housing
  - Upgraded local parks, greenspace and pedestrian by-ways
  - Sidewalk improvements, especially to and from SEPTA
  - Improved stormwater management and green stormwater infrastructure (GSI)
  - Plans to reduce retail vacancies
2. More clearly defined preservation challenges. Specifically, protect historic properties most susceptible to market based change, conducting a land residual analysis.
3. Environmental protection in the Wissahickon watershed, by broadening the conservation perspective to look at GSI investments; greening roads and parking lots; and, creating common stormwater storage areas.

This five month intensive study gives the CH Conservancy and CHCA both compiled data and a priority interventions for managing change and participating in the Northwest Philadelphia District Plan.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on Theory of Change, visit [www.theoryofchange.org](http://www.theoryofchange.org)



## Tools For Managing Change: Strategies to Guide Growth and Promote Preservation in Chestnut Hill

May 2017

Chestnut Hill is a Philadelphia neighborhood with a unique and distinguished local identity. An early railroad suburb of Philadelphia, Chestnut Hill boasts residences by the City's leading 19<sup>th</sup> century architects such as G.W. & W.D. Hewitt, Horace Trumbauer and Wilson Eyre and prominent 20<sup>th</sup> century architects including Louis Kahn, Mitchell/Guirgola and Robert Venturi. In 1997, then Mayor Ed Rendell declared Chestnut Hill a "Philadelphia's Garden District," a testimony to the neighborhood's natural wonders, found in the Wissahickon Valley portion of Fairmount Park and in local conservation areas such as the Morris Arboretum. These defining features can be retained and enhanced as Chestnut Hill welcomes change and growth. **Planning methods, programs and policies** will influence development in Chestnut Hill to preserve valued qualities and features while also promoting a vibrant, livable and inclusive neighborhood. This report presents strategies for managing change in Chestnut Hill, providing recommended Tools that can be implemented locally to guide development and preservation. These Tools have been divided into three themes, reflecting the three leading issues perceived by the Chestnut Hill community: 1) Preserving Architectural Integrity; 2) Managing Subdivision and Redevelopment of Land; and 3) Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed.

### 1. Preserving Architectural Integrity

#### 1.a. Local Historic District

##### *Tool*

A local historic district is a collection of historic resources that are within a geographic boundary or linked thematically. A National Register Historic District does not place obligations or restrictions on

the owner. A local historic district does place restrictions on the building owner, providing more protection to the building and neighborhood.

In Philadelphia, the Historical Commission designates and oversees local historic districts. Anyone can nominate a district for review by the Commission. For buildings in a local historic district in Philadelphia, the Historical Commission has jurisdiction over the “entire exterior envelopes of buildings, their sites and all site appurtenances”(Philadelphia Historical Commission).

The Commission’s staff reviews all building work that requires a permit or that changes a property’s external appearance, including roofing, masonry and pointing, gates and fences, painting and window replacements. Most of these reviews are approved within a few days by Commission staff. For more complicated cases, the Historical Commission and the Architectural Committee will conduct a review. The Commission determines its decision based on The Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings,” as well as a consideration of the proposed work, its compatibility within its surroundings, and the design. For larger projects, the Commission recommends conferring with staff early in the project’s planning stages. The Philadelphia Historical Commission does not have control over new construction, but has a 45-day period of comment.

There are 125 locally designated historic sites in Chestnut Hill, with a high density situated on Summit Street north of Germantown Avenue. Chestnut Hill was designated as a national historic district in 1985, and includes 1,987 contributing properties. The District recognizes Chestnut Hill as a distinct residential neighborhood with a range of architectural styles, and significant historic resources dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Example*

Brookline, Massachusetts is a good example of a community that has used local historic districts to influence new development. In Brookline’s five historic districts, the Preservation Commission has the power to “prevent demolition or inappropriate alteration of exterior features of any building within the district, as well as the construction of any new building which would be incongruous with the historic aspects or architectural characteristic of its surroundings”(Brookline Preservation Commission). The town has created Specific Design Guidelines to encourage appropriate design and ease the application process.

The Brookline Preservation Commission reviews all new construction, including new buildings on subdivided properties. Applicants meet with Commission staff for a preliminary design discussion before the formal design process. The criteria for new construction includes guidelines for the placement and size of garages, and the Commission will make recommendations as to the size, shape, and setbacks of the building.

### *Impacts*

A 2010 study carried out by Econsult for the Preservation Alliance of Philadelphia identified positive economic impacts linked to the local historic districts in Philadelphia, including a positive effect on property values. According to the report, homes within a local district are found to trade at a 22.5 percent premium to homes that are not in historic districts. The homes in a historic district have a 2.0 percent increase in values related to the city average once they are designated, and each following year they appreciate at an annual rate that is 1 percent higher than the city average (Econsult 2010).

Chestnut Hill can pursue designation as a local historic district. The protections provided by a historic district will regulate alterations to existing buildings, preserving the architectural integrity of the neighborhood's many significant structures. A historic district will also help to maintain property values.

### *Sources*

The Brookline Preservation Commission "Design Guidelines for Local Historic Districts" (Brookline: Department of Planning and Community Development, 2003) (accessed 3/2017 <http://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3495>)

City of Philadelphia "City Of Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 14-1000 With Pertinent Excerpts From Other Sections Of The Zoning Code" 2012, (accessed 2/2017 <http://www.phila.gov/historical/PDF/historic%20preservation%20code%208-22-2012.pdf>)

City of Philadelphia "Philadelphia Historical Commission Rules & Regulations" 2010, (accessed 2/2017 [http://www.phila.gov/historical/PDF/Rules\\_Regs\\_2112010.pdf](http://www.phila.gov/historical/PDF/Rules_Regs_2112010.pdf))

Econsult Corporation "The Economic Impact of Historic Preservation in Philadelphia" report for Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia 2010, (accessed 3/2017 [http://www.preservationalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Econ\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](http://www.preservationalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Econ_Report_Final.pdf))

## **1.b. Overlay Zoning District for Historic Properties**

### *Tool*

A Historic Resource Overlay District is designated on the municipal Zoning Map or through designating criteria, such as properties identified on a Historic Resource Inventory. In addition to the permitted uses of the underlying zoning district, the properties are also allowed additional uses and often relief from area and bulk regulations such as setbacks, impervious cover or height limitations. To remain within the Historic Resource Inventory and benefit from the additional permitted uses, the property must maintain its criteria of integrity.

### *Example*

In Lower Merion, the Historic Resource Overlay District includes Class I Historic Resources and Class II Historic Resources. The Historical Architectural Review Board or the Historical Commission must first review the additional permitted uses prior to the Board of Commissioners' approval, although these bodies are only advisory. Uses permitted by a Class I Historic Resource include the following: a bed and breakfast, studio, gallery or gift shop, accessory apartment, a historic resource home occupation for employees, a large house converted into a multifamily home, and a religious building converted into dwelling units. Uses permitted by a Class II Historic Resource are more expansive, including those uses for Class I Resources with more options.

### *Impacts*

The Historic Resource Overlay District in Lower Merion Township serves as a supplemental tool for a community that retains a large amount of historic fabric, enhancing existing preservation restrictions. Lower Merion has seven local historic districts, and the Historic Resource Overlay includes buildings within these districts as well as individually locally listed structures. According to the Lower Merion Preservation Planner, the Historical Commission does not receive very many requests for the additional permitted uses that are incentivized by the Historic Resource Overlay District, but the tool is found to be a good contribution to an existing set of preservation tools. The township recently received a request for the conversion of a space above a carriage house to be used as an apartment.

### *Sources*

Interview with Preservation Planner, Lower Merion Township, March 17, 2017.

Lower Merion Township, "Article XXVIA: Historic Resource Overlay District", (accessed 3/2017 <http://www.ecode360.com/6534511>)

### **1.c. Demolition Delay and Review**

#### *Tool*

A demolition delay ordinance can be created as an amendment to the building code, as a stand-alone ordinance, or as a bylaw in an existing historic preservation or zoning ordinance (Paulus 2007). Demolition review (also referred to as "demolition delay ordinance" or "demolition ordinance") is a tool that "provides communities with the means to ensure that potentially significant buildings and structure are not demolished without notice or some level of review by a preservation commission"(Miller 2006). Demolition review does not prevent demolition but it allows for a time period for review, to find alternatives to demolition, to preserve or document certain characteristics or to pursue local historic designation and may therefore be a deterrent.

#### *Examples*

The demolition review process allows communities to protect historic assets without listing all of them locally. Some demolition reviews apply to all buildings over certain age. In Boston, all demolition permits go through the landmark commission, which establishes the age of the building to determine eligibility, with those over 50 years old subject to the policy. In Wilton, Connecticut, the applicant of the demolition permit is responsible for proving the age of the building. Other demolition review processes apply to structures that have been already recognized in a survey or on a state or national register. Furthermore, other demolition ordinances are applied by geographic area, covering all buildings within a certain extent. For example, Baton Rouge and Boston are cities that have written demolition ordinances for all buildings in the downtown. In Boston, demolition review applies to buildings within certain boundaries (as well as all structures over a certain age). Some of these geographic areas include residential neighborhoods, such as the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Design Overlay District.

Demolition review is practiced in many cities, including Boston, Portland, Washington, D.C., Cambridge, Chicago and Denver. The activities that trigger a demolition review vary by city, and often are defined as a minimum percentage of the building that is demolished or removed. As Miller (2006) writes in a comprehensive study for the National Trust, demolition ordinances vary in their success. For communities with understaffed historic preservation offices, demolition review is an effective method for protecting historic resources.

### *Impacts*

Demolition reviews are suited to cities that lack the capacity to locally list all of their historic resources, and therefore need a tool to ensure that historic buildings, or those that contribute to a neighborhood, are not demolished without notice. This tool is not as proactive as sometimes necessary, because preservation is only triggered by potential demolition. However, demolition delays do work. In Massachusetts, demolition reviews are “considered overwhelmingly successful”(Miller 2006).

Demolition review would be an effective tool in the City of Philadelphia, particularly because the city lacks a citywide survey of its historic fabric and a property cannot be nominated for local historic protection once its demolition permit has been filed. A demolition review would be an effective mitigation strategy, and it would allow more open and transparent transactions on the part of both developers and preservationists. Today, preservationists in Philadelphia conduct nominations in a guarded and hurried process to outpace the filing of potential demolition permits, causing tensions between city officials and preservation advocates. A transparent demolition review would involve a public process, and would give advocates and community members the time and platform for discussing potential demolitions. For Philadelphia, the triggers for a demolition review would need to be such that they protect the City’s widespread historic fabric but not dissuade development and growth. If age is the variable that catalyzes demolition review, the City would need to conduct a study to determine the actual ages of buildings, as much of the public records are inaccurate.

### *Sources*

Julia H. Miller, “Protecting Potential Landmarks Through Demolition Review” (Washington: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2006)

Emily Paulus, “Protecting Historic Resources Through Demolition Review” (Concord: New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, 2007), (accessed 3/2017  
[https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/publications/documents/demolition\\_review.pdf](https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/publications/documents/demolition_review.pdf))

## **1.d. Local Tax Credit for Historic Rehabilitations and Restorations**

### *Tool*

An enabling legislation by a state can give localities the ability to adopt local tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic buildings. In practice, some tax credits are targeted at a certain building type and others are more general, depending on what type of rehabilitation investments the state seeks to encourage.

### *Examples*

The South Carolina Abandoned Buildings Act is a 25% tax credit for the rehabilitation of vacant buildings for commercial use. The bill applies to all vacant buildings. Preservation advocacy groups encourage developers to combine the credit with the 10 percent state and the 20% federal historic preservation tax credits for historic rehabilitations.

Baltimore City Tax Credit for Historic Rehabilitations and Restorations offers a 10-year credit granted on the increased property value. The credit applies to residential and income-producing commercial historic properties. To receive the credit, the building must be situated within a National Register or local historic district, the property owners must invest at least 25% of the home's assessed value into the rehabilitation project, and the project must adhere to Baltimore City's historic preservation guidelines (National Trust 2014).

North Carolina's State Mill Rehabilitation Tax Credits target the rehabilitation of historic textile, tobacco or furniture plants. The credit can be applied to income and non-income producing properties for a certified rehabilitation. The credit varies throughout the state, but some counties will provide as much as a 40% state tax credit.

### *Impacts*

The passage of the South Carolina Abandoned Buildings Act was partly supported by a study revealing its economic benefits. According to a National Trust report (2014), a study found that "every dollar spent on the tax credit will generate an additional \$19 to \$21 in South Carolina's economic output. For every \$500,000 of tax credits earned by developers, it will create between 100

to 150 new jobs”(National Trust 2014). Challenges to this program include a low per-project cap of \$500,000, which advocates would like to see lifted to encourage larger projects.

Since the establishment of the Baltimore City Tax Credit in 1996, more than 3,300 buildings have been restored. Over \$850 million has been invested in historic properties. The investments have leveraged more than \$4 billion in additional economic activity.

Since the State Mill Rehabilitation Tax Credits in North Carolina was enacted in 2006, over \$431 million has been invested in completed projects (and, as of 2014, another \$628 million was planned).

#### *Sources*

“‘Extra Credit’ Rehabs.” *Forum Journal* 28 no. 2 (Winter 2014).

“Baltimore City Tax Credit for Historic Restorations and Rehabilitations” Baltimore City Website, 2016, (accessed 3/2017 <http://chap.baltimorecity.gov/tax-credits>)

### **1.e. State Tax Credit for Historic Rehabilitations and Restorations**

#### *Tool*

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program is provided for the rehabilitation of historic income-producing buildings, offering tax credits equal to either 10% or 20% of the renovation costs. More than half of states in the United States offer additional tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic properties, with some offering credits for the renovation of owner-occupied homes.

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program offers a 10% credit for the rehabilitation of buildings built prior to 1936 but not considered historic, and a 20% credit for rehabilitation and preservation work to a certified historic structure that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places or as contributing to the significance of a registered historic district. The National Park Service, the Internal Revenue Service, and State Historic Preservation Offices administer the 20% credit.

State Historic Tax Credit (HTC) programs exist in approximately 30 states, including Pennsylvania. State HTC programs vary widely, by the subsidies they provide and the money available each year in credits. Adopted in 2012, the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Tax Credit (HPTC) applies only to

income-producing properties. The state is limited to distributing \$3,000,000 in tax credits per fiscal year. In preparation for the passage of the Pennsylvania HPTC, the state calculated that a program in Pennsylvania would “enable the feasibility of 25 to 50 percent more rehab projects per year”(Oakman and Ward, 2013).

A nationwide study finds that states with HTC programs are found to leverage more federal economic development resources from the federal HTC program (Oakman and Ward, 2013). In the first year of the Pennsylvania HPTC program, the number of qualified applicants outnumbered the \$3 million in available funds, with 15 projects receiving credits through the program (Doyle, 2014).

### *Examples and Impacts*

The current federal HTC program only applies to income-producing property. Some states offer HTC programs for historic owner-occupied homes. A Historic Homeownership Assistance Act was proposed as a federal program to offer tax credits for owner-occupied homes, but it has not been enacted. The federal HTC program spurred over \$25 billion in private investment in its first 25 years, and a historic homeownership model could promote similar investments (Rypkema, 2002).

The Connecticut Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit program is designed for owners of historic owner-occupied homes. The program offers a 30% tax credit, up to \$30,000 per dwelling unit, for the rehabilitation of 1 to 4 family buildings. The building must have one owner-occupied unit for five years. The program applies to homes that are listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places, and it is largely administered by the State Historic Preservation Office.

The Delaware Historic Preservation Tax Credits are available for owner-occupied residences. A study finds that in the first 10 years of the program, from 2001 to 2010, the \$34.3 million in tax credits spurred private investment of over \$166 million in rehabilitation expenditures (Rypkema, 2010).

### *Sources*

National Park Service, “Tax Incentives for Preserving Historic Properties”, (accessed 3/2017 <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>)

National Park Service, “Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings: 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary” (National Park Service, Washington: 2012)

Donovan D. Rypkema “Historic Preservation and Affordable Housing: The Missed Connection”, for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2002

Jeffrey Oakman and Marvin Ward, “Leveraging Federal Economic Development Resources With

State Historic Rehab Tax Credits”, in Proceedings of NTA 105th Annual Conference on Taxation, Providence, RI, 2013.

Scott Doyle, “Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Tax Credit: Year One Recap”, Pennsylvania Historic Preservation website, July 2014 (accessed 3/2017 at <https://pahistoricpreservation.com/year-one-recapawards-pas-historic-preservation-tax-credit/>)

Donovan D. Rypkema and Caroline Cheung, “The Delaware Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program: Good for the Economy, Good for the Environment, Good for Delaware’s Future”, report for the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, 2010.

## **2. Managing the Subdivision of Land**

### **2.a. Transfer of Development Rights**

#### *Tool*

The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program is a zoning tool that allows the development potential from lands desired for conservation and limited development (a “sending area”) to be transferred to areas where growth and development is planned (a “receiving area”). The sending area is conserved through a conservation easement or covenant, or it is restricted by low-density residential or agricultural use.

In a TDR program, owners of environmentally sensitive lands or historic landmarks can voluntarily sell the development rights of their property to developers in a designated area targeted for development. As the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association describes: “These landowners are given an option under municipal zoning to legally sever the ‘development rights’ from their land and sell these rights to another landowner or real estate developer for use at another location. The land from which the development rights have been severed is permanently protected through a conservation easement or other appropriate form of restrictive covenant, and the development value of the land where the transferred development rights are applied is enhanced by allowing for new or special uses, greater density or intensity, or other regulatory flexibility that zoning without the TDR option would not have permitted”(Pennsylvania Land Trust Association). Recipients of the development rights apply the transfer in the form of increased density or new uses.

To establish a TDR program, a municipality must establish the option in the municipal zoning ordinance. A sending area must be designated geographically or by criteria, determining an area of high conservation value. Philadelphia currently does not have TDR transactions in the zoning code, although the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code provides an enabling legislation for Pennsylvania municipalities. Four municipalities in Lancaster County have enacted this program towards the preservation of agricultural lands.

Philadelphia developed a TDR program 1991 but it was written out of its zoning ordinance in 2012, mainly due to lack of interest and application in the City. The TDR program was established as an effort to protect historic landmarks in Center City, allowing more than 200 historic property owners the opportunity to sell their development rights to developers of new buildings in locations targeted for growth and density. The proceeds would be used for maintenance or improvements to the landmarks. The TDR program provided additional density bonuses to new development, with these bonuses priced slightly less than other bonuses in order to make the program more financially attractive to developers (Harris, 1992). According to conversations with Philadelphia practitioners, the Philadelphia administration has expressed an interest in reestablishing a TDR program (interview with Preservation Alliance, 2017). If a TDR program were to be created, the City would conduct public discussions concerning the appropriate receiving zones for added height bonuses. In addition, the City would need to designate an entity to track the development rights, acting as the “bank” for the development rights receipt and sale.

### *Example*

In King County, Washington, TDRs have been used to protect low-income housing, historic landmarks and rural land on the outskirts of Seattle. A decrease in development pressure in downtown Seattle threatened the system’s success, at which the city established a TDR bank (Marquitz, 2004). Since its inception, the program has successfully protected 141,500 acres of rural/resource land (King County website)

### *Impacts*

TDR programs are complex structures and they are not always successful. A study by Pruetz and Standridge finds that an effective TDR must have a receiving site with enough demand to motivate developers to buy the additional development rights for added density. In addition, the authors find that a successful TDR program has strict development regulations in the sending-area. In most of the

successful TDRs studied in the report, the sending area is rural in character with a density of one dwelling per 5 acres.

#### *Sources*

Pennsylvania Land Trust Association, "Transfer of Development Rights", (accessed 2/2017: <http://conservationtools.org/guides/12-transfer-of-development-rights>)

Rick Pruetz and Noah Standridge, "What Makes Transfer of Development Rights Work?" American Planning Association December 2008

Phyllis J. Marquitz, "Transfer of Development Rights", The Agricultural Law Resource and Reference Center, Penn State, June 2004 (accessed 3/2017 at <https://law.psu.edu/centers/aglaw.cfm>)

King County Website, "Transfer of development rights in King County, Washington" (accessed 3/2017 at <https://green2.kingcounty.gov/TDR-Exchange/>)

Donna Harris, "Philadelphia's Preservation Incentive: The Value of the TDR", *Forum Journal* 6, no. 5 (September/October 1992)

Interview with Advocacy Director at Preservation Alliance of Philadelphia, March 20, 2017.

## **2.b. Neighborhood Conservation District**

#### *Tool*

Administered by the Planning Commission, a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) is an overlay district used to preserve neighborhood character in areas that may lack the historical, architectural, or cultural significance to qualify as a local historic district. A NCD establishes specific guidelines for alterations to existing structures and the design of new buildings.

NCDs are tools used "preserve neighborhood character, retain affordable housing, and protect an area from inappropriate development by regulating new construction" (McClurg, 2011). A NCD is used for an area that may not have the consistent historical, architectural or cultural significance to qualify as a local historic district.

In Philadelphia, Queen Village and Overbrook have the designation. Enabling legislation for NCDs was passed in Philadelphia in 2004. The Philadelphia City Planning Commission administers the District, with a planning department staff member representing the NCD. The NCD applies

restrictions to the design of new construction and alterations to existing buildings. In Queen Village, for example, NCD review is triggered by new construction, use of vacant lot, demolition, and alterations of buildings. The guidelines apply to windows, materials, building height, signs, parking, and street frontage of residential and commercial/industrial properties. To protect the character of the street, the Queen Village NCD also regulates fencing and curb cuts on private property. As of Spring 2017, the City of Philadelphia is reportedly hesitant to take on more Neighborhood Conservation Districts because of the resources required to develop and maintain a NCD.

### *Example and Impacts*

Neighborhood Conservation Districts do not prevent the subdivision of land, but they can influence the setbacks, street frontage and massing of the new buildings introduced within the neighborhood. By retaining the spatial characteristics of the street front, new subdivisions will less dramatically change the character of the neighborhood. West Chester, Pennsylvania contains several Neighborhood Conservation Districts. The Districts include regulations pertaining to minimum lot width and size per “Block Class.” Some of the neighborhoods include larger lots with wide street fronts that are protected through the Neighborhood Conservation District.

### *Sources*

Philadelphia Zoning Code, Final Report (November 17, 2011), (accessed 3/2017 [http://www.preservationalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/zcc\\_NCO.pdf](http://www.preservationalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/zcc_NCO.pdf))

Jessie McClurg, “Alternative Forms of Historic Designation: A Study of Neighborhood Conservation Districts in the United States” (University of Minnesota: 2011), (accessed 3/2017 [http://www.cura.umn.edu/sites/cura.advantagelabs.com/files/content-Ddocs/CD\\_Reporter\\_Final.pdf](http://www.cura.umn.edu/sites/cura.advantagelabs.com/files/content-Ddocs/CD_Reporter_Final.pdf))

“14-504 /NCO, Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District” in The Philadelphia Code electronic version, (American Legal Publishing Corporation: 2017).

Rebecca Lubens and Julia Miller, “Protecting Older Neighborhoods Through Conservation District Programs” *Preservation Law Reporter* (Jan.-Mar. 2002-03)

## **2.c. Revolving Fund**

### *Tool*

A revolving fund enables the rehabilitation and maintenance of historically significant properties through purchase or donation. Administered by a nonprofit, a revolving fund can be used to give loans for rehabilitations, or to buy properties and resell them with certain preservation restrictions.

There are two types of revolving funds: a loan fund and an acquisition fund. Both are performed by a nonprofit corporation. The nonprofit will include additional preservation restrictions upon the buildings that are subject to the acquisition or loan, through easements and protective covenants. An acquisition fund is used by the organization to purchase, restore and then resell a property. The entity will use capital to acquire the property in fee simple, and then use more capital to fund rehabilitation, eventually recuperating these finances through the resale of the property. The capital is then used to purchase and restore another property. A loan fund is used by the entity to loan capital to another entity (organization or individual) in order to rehabilitate or acquire a property. The loan is repaid with interest over a determined term, with those payments deposited back into the fund to be used for other loan projects.

With a revolving fund, the acting organization can target the needs of a specific neighborhood and follow a targeted mission. The organization should establish goals, objective, policies and procedures. A stated preservation mission will help guide decisions about acquisition or loans, as staff members make decisions about the fund and board members deliberate and approve those decisions. The board of directors or, more likely, an overseeing committee will be responsible for the fund. The composition of the overseeing committee is vital to the success of the program. The committee should be a small group that includes professionals “such as bankers, real estate agents, developers, architects, contractors, lawyers, accountants, planners, business leaders, social service providers, government officials, neighborhood leaders from target areas, and/or other well-connected individuals”(National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2014). As the National Trust writes, it is also important to have staff with experience in real estate and financing. Depending on the size of the fund, this staff could be a single employee who is dedicated to managing the program solely or manages the program with other tasks. The National Trust also recommends that the organization seek consulting services of a real estate attorney during transactions, and the services of banker or accountant to either develop accounting systems and records for the fund, or manage the fund on behalf of the organization. Other consultants can assist with the rehabilitation building project.

### *Example*

The Historic Savannah Foundation Revolving Fund acquires properties through donation, options or outright purchase of historic properties. A property qualifies for the Revolving Fund if it is endangered, has historical significance (National Register listed or eligible) and marketable for sale. The fund then markets the house locally and nationally to find a buyer who agrees to preserve and maintain the integrity of the structure.

Historic Boston Incorporated (HBI) protects properties with easements as properties move through their revolving fund, or receive other types of assistance. The easements protect properties in perpetuity from “from unsympathetic or inappropriate exterior or interior alterations, neglect, or demolition”(National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2014).

### *Impacts*

The Historic Savannah Foundation tracked the economic impact of its revolving fund’s efforts in a defined neighborhood. In 2003, the Foundation purchased 13 properties in the Thomas Streetcar District, a neighborhood known for its many abandoned and neglected properties. The funds were made available from a \$250,000 private donation, a grant from the 1772 foundation, and contributions from community members. The rehabilitation of these 13 properties motivated the improvement of adjacent properties, catalyzing the revitalization of the neighborhood. The HSF determined that from 2001 to 2013, values for the 13 HSF properties increased from 69% to 2522%, and the values of neighboring properties increased from 268% to 3385% (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2014).

Nonprofit organizations are not exempt from property taxes, though they may be able to seek exemptions. If a nonprofit intends to resell a property for residential or private use, however, it would not be sensible to remove the property from tax rolls. Additional costs for properties should also be taken into account upon the acquisition, including expenses such as security, emergency maintenance and utility costs (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2014). The revolving fund will also need to cover costs of loan repayments, bank service charge, an annual audit or financial statement, and additional staff.

### *Sources*

National Trust for Historic Preservation, “SCAD Measures Revolving Fund Impacts”, *Forum Journal* 29 no.1 (Fall 2014).

## **2.d. Easements and Acquisition Methods**

### *Tool*

An easement, also known as a covenant or restriction, is a private, legal interest that imposes protections upon a property. The easement remains attached to the property as it transfers hands to subsequent owners. An organization can craft an easement to achieve certain intended preservation outcomes and protect certain aspects of a property.

Easements can be used to preserve land (conservation easements) and architectural features (preservation easements). Preservation easements protect historic buildings, and conservation easements prevent development of open spaces and environmentally significant lands (Watson et al, 2007). A conservation easement restricts use of a property, is recorded with the deed and grants the right to enforce the restriction to a tax-exempt charitable organization or a government agency (Small, 1992). The landowner must voluntarily give up certain development rights, and the owner may continue to live on the land. In the instances where a charitable donation of the easement is offered, and meets the conservation purpose test of the federal tax laws, the owner may be eligible for a tax donation. Preservation easements control changes to a building's character defining features, by regulating additions or requiring maintenance. Preservation easements can protect only the exterior of a building, or the entire structure including the interior.

Easements are usually perpetual, but "term" easements are also implemented to last for a defined period of time (two or three decades, for example). Purchasing an easement is often more advantageous to a nonprofit than buying a property outright, because the nonprofit will not be encumbered with the costs of owning, maintaining and managing the property (Watson et al, 2007).

### *Other Methods for Controlling Property Rights*

If an organization finds it challenging to acquire a property outright in fee simple or to purchase an easement, there are other strategies for gaining control of a property. As above, a revolving fund can serve as a mechanism for acquiring and reselling a property with an easement attached. An

installment plan is another method for creating an easement, as the organization contracts with the property owner to buy the easement in an installment plan, “enabling the organization to spread its outlay of funds over several years and the owner to spread out the capital gains from the sale” (Watson et al, 2007). In a Bargain sale, the easement is sold for less than its full value and the owner may receive a charitable contribution deduction, on federal income taxes, for the difference between the sale price and the actual value of the easement.

A property can be acquired through various methods aside from an outright purchase. In a Bargain Sale agreement, the property is sold for less than its fair market value. This technique can help leverage grant funds by providing a match, donated by the owner, therefore reducing the amount of funds that need to be raised to preserve a property. In some instances, the seller may receive a charitable contribution deduction in income taxes for the difference. An Option is a legally binding agreement that allows the holder of the option to purchase or lease the property at a fixed price within a specific period of time. This strategy allows the holder to have the time to find a buyer or raise capital to purchase the building. A property may be also conveyed to an organization with certain conditions, such as a Life Estate wherein the donor occupies a property for the remaining duration of her/his life. Depending upon the conservation goals, a life estate give property might be owned and operated by the organization, or might be sold as income property, funding other preservation/conservation mission-related activities. Right of First Refusal is a legal agreement that allows an organization the ability to match any purchase offer on a property within a certain period of time, such as 30 to 90 days.

### *Example*

Historic Richmond uses right of first refusal paired with preservation easements to protect buildings that it has purchased and resold through its revolving fund. Many of the buildings that Historic Richmond has protected through its revolving fund, about 95%, have since been locally protected through the Richmond preservation zoning ordinance, rendering the existing protections less necessary. Though Historic Richmond usually waives its Right of First Refusal to purchase a property, however, retaining that connection to a property does allow the organization to connect with the property owners and have a conversation about maintaining the structure and its significance (Historic Richmond interview, 2017).

### *Sources*

Preservation Leadership Forum, *Preservation Basics: Preservation Revolving Funds* (Washington:

National Trust for Historic Preservation, October 2014).

Elizabeth Watson et al, *Establishing an Easement Program to Protect Historic, Scenic, and Natural Resources* (Washington: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2007).

Interview with Preservation Specialist at Historic Richmond, March 20, 2017.

### **3. Protecting The Wissahickon Watershed**

#### **3.a. Environmental Land Use Standards**

##### *Tool*

Environmental standards for development can help protect a watershed. The Chestnut Hill neighborhood lies within the Wissahickon Watershed Overlay District (WWOD). The district regulates development to prevent flooding and improve the quality of the creek. The City's Impervious Coverage Map defines the geographic areas of the neighborhood that are more strictly regulated; this Map should be further reviewed to ensure that the Wissahickon Creek and its tributaries are adequately protected. Land use standards can reduce stormwater runoff, through: watershed planning, land conservation, aquatic buffers, site design, erosion and sedimentation control, stormwater best management practices, and the regulation of non-stormwater discharges (Finkler, 2010).

The WWOD states that new construction and earth disturbances must be regulated by setbacks, prohibiting new impervious ground cover "within 200 feet of the bank of a surface water body or within 50 feet of the centerline of a swale" (Philadelphia Code, 14-1603.2). In addition, all land within the overlay district is mapped to show the limit of impervious ground coverage that is permitted, ranging from 20% (Category 1) to no limit (Category 5). For those designated as Category 5, there is no limitation of impervious ground coverage, however lots larger than one-half an acre must be developed to reduce runoff. For categories 1 through 4 where impervious cover is limited from 20% to 45%, respectively, additional impervious coverage may be permitted in accordance with certain stormwater runoff management practices and approval by the Water Department and other agencies. Lastly, earth moving regulations apply to all new development and earth disturbance: "during and after construction and to all construction site clearing and earth moving within the Wissahickon Watershed" (Philadelphia Code, 14-1603.2). This applies to earth moving or additional impervious coverage over 500 square feet, except those located within the Category 5 Impervious Coverage Map.

### *Example*

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation promotes Low Impact Development (LID) as a method for managing stormwater. LID encourages soil infiltration by minimizing impervious surfaces, conserving natural vegetation, and protecting streams and wetlands (The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, 2004). The Foundation suggests that new development reduce impervious cover by 10 to 50 percent and preserve 40 to 80 percent of sites as open space by clustering buildings. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation suggests cluster zoning and natural area conservation to preserve forests, shallower front setbacks to shorten driveways and create more inviting walkable neighborhoods, alternative smaller turnarounds in cul-de-sacs to reduce the landscaping in the middle of a roundabout, shared driveways that, reduced parking, and narrower streets to reduce impervious surfaces. Although use of reduced impervious cover, redesigned cul de sacs and clustering have more applicability to lower density suburban contexts, the LID use of underground infiltration systems, porous sidewalks and street tree stormwater treatment trenches, could all contribute to improved water quality in the Wissahickon watershed.

### *Impacts*

The William Penn Foundation is undertaking a ten-year effort, known as the Delaware River Watershed Initiative (DRWI) with the goal of protecting and restoring water quality. The science (provided by the Academy of Natural Sciences and other partners) and modeling from this effort, along with research at the University of Pennsylvania could help inform the most effective places for mitigating stormwater impact.

Natural Resource Protection Ordinances establish performance standards for development that reduce or mitigate the impact to natural systems. The WWOD could be updated to incorporate such standards that typically limit disturbance to steep slopes; limit the percentage of trees that can be removed; establish replacement standards for tree removal; and require restoration of stream buffers, a welcome addition to the current setback in the WWOD.

### *Sources*

United States Environmental Protection Agency, *Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters*, (Washington: United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2008)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation, "A Citizen's Guide To Stormwater Management in Maryland" (Annapolis: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, 2004)

Peter Finkler, "The Need to Reduce Impervious Cover to Prevent Flooding and Protect Water Quality", Report for Providence Water Supply Board and the National Park Service, 2010.

### **3.b. On Site Septic Monitoring**

#### *Tool*

A monitoring, rehabilitation and replacement program for septic tanks reimburses residents the cost of repairing or replacing a septic tank. An onsite septic tank should be inspected and maintained every 2 to 3 years. If a tank is not properly maintained, untreated or undertreated wastewater is released into the watershed, releasing nitrates and phosphates that degrade habitats and contaminate drinking water. Several thousand homes in Philadelphia manage their own sewage with on-site septic tanks. Many of these homes are in Chestnut Hill, although their locations are not recorded and tank maintenance is not monitored.

#### *Example*

The Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) was established to protect the watershed that serves New York City and its suburbs. The region has approximately 22,000 residential properties serviced by private septic systems, posing a particular risk to the New York City watershed (NYC DEP). To ensure that untreated water is not released into the watershed, the Corporation administers the Septic Rehabilitation and Replacement Program to offer all residents in the West-of-Hudson NYC Watershed a reimbursement of 100% of the costs of repairing or replacing a septic tank. The New York Department of Environmental Protection assists the program, providing \$84 million in funding. Since its establishment in 1997, the Septic Rehabilitation and Replacement Program funded the repair or replacement of 4,600 septic systems (NYC DEP). The CWC also offers maintenance and regular pump-outs for homeowners.

#### *Impacts*

In the Philadelphia suburbs, many municipalities have adopted septic system registration, inspection and maintenance programs. As daunting as the task may sound, municipalities are typically covered by only a handful of septic companies. Reaching out to the service providers, and making them aware of registration requirements, creates ready-made proponents who want to be in the business and will seek out homeowners.

### *Sources*

Catskill Watershed Corporation website, (accessed 3/2017 CWOnline.com)

New York City Department of Environmental Protection website "Septic Systems", (accessed 3/2017 [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/watershed\\_protection/septic\\_systems.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/watershed_protection/septic_systems.shtml))

### **3.c. Urban Forestry**

#### *Tool*

Trees filter and regulate the flow of water, slowing the fall of rainwater and infiltrating water into the ground. This process of absorption and slowing prevents flooding during rain events that can shock a city's drainage and carry contaminated stormwater to a river. Forests also help to remove nutrients such as phosphates and nitrates, and contaminants such as oils, pesticides and solvents from soil and water (Cotrone).

#### *Example*

In Savannah, a tree ordinance ensures that the existing tree canopy is not threatened: "Except as provided in this chapter, a property owner shall not clear (as defined in section 4-10004) or permit the clearing of property or the removal of any tree without first obtaining a clearing permit as provided for in section 4-10006." The city's ordinance also provides for the protection of all trees over 2 inches in diameter on undeveloped land, or over 15 inches in diameter on developed property.

#### *Impacts*

An urban greening program in Chestnut Hill could take a multi-pronged approach combining both regulatory tools and voluntary efforts. For example, the subdivision and land development ordinance could require street trees along all street frontages; and parking lot landscaping. The zoning ordinance could require trees along watercourses, triggered by permits. The non-profit community and civic organizations could undertake voluntary tree planting programs.

Educating landowners about the benefits of native plants, and providing lists of plant material suitable for different circumstances (for example, shade trees, buffer plantings, parking lot landscaping, streambank restoration) can also help to restore the land and water quality. A subdivision and land development ordinance can include approved plant species. Local non-profits can educate owners and encourage the use of native plants through plants sales, demonstration gardens, and educational forums.

Chestnut Hill retains large institutional properties where best management practices and tree planting can be executed to help restore the health of the watershed. In many of the watershed's remaining forests, deer browse has eliminated the understory, the next generation of forest. Without regeneration and management of invasive plants, management of deer and planting of trees and native vegetation, the health of the watershed is unlikely to improve. A non-profit conservancy or private consultant may assist with stewardship planning for landowners. Institutional landowners are already being targeted through outreach efforts in the Philadelphia Upstream cluster, as part of the William Penn Foundation's DRWI.

#### Sources

City of Savannah, "Landscape and Tree Ordinance", (accessed 3/2017

<http://www.savannahga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/880>)

Vincent Cotrone, "The Role of Trees and Forests in Healthy Watersheds", PennState Extension, (accessed 3/2017 <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/green-industry/landscaping/culture/the-role-of-trees-and-forests-in-healthy-watersheds>)

Natural Lands Trust *Land for Life – A Handbook on Caring for Natural Lands* (Natural Lands Trust, July 2014).

Chestnut Hill Conservation, Preservation & Development Study  
Steering Committee Meeting

Minutes of Meeting on January 26, 2017

Location: 8708 Germantown Ave

Called to Order: 7:30 a.m.          Adjourned: 9:30 a.m.

**Attending:**

- Lori Salganicoff · *Co-Chair and Project Manager*, Preservationist; Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Joyce Lenhardt · *Co-Chair*, Architect (CHCA)
- Ann Hutchinson- *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust
- Megan Boatright – *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust
- Elie-Antoine Atallah · Architect
- Barbara Baumbach · Realtor (CHBD)
- Patricia Cove · Preservationist; Designer (CH Conservancy, CHCA)
- Lexa Edsall · Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Steve Gendler · Economist; Developer (CHCA)
- John Landis · Planner, University of Pennsylvania (CHCA)
- Maura McCarthy · Conservationist (FOW)
- Mindy O'Connor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Patricia Pregmon · Easement Attorney
- James Querry · Landscape Architect, Philadelphia University (telephonic presence)
- Peter Saylor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Richard Snowden · Developer (CH Conservancy, CHCA, CHBD) (telephonic presence)
- Ian Hegarty · Philadelphia Planning Commission
- Angelina Jones, Conservation and Easements Manager, CH Conservancy
- Rachel Wolford, Intern, Phila Univ.
- Madeleine Helmer, Intern U of Penn
- Celeste Hardester, CHCA Development Review Facilitator, Steering Committee Minute-taker

**Not Present:** Richard Bartholomew · Planner; Architect; Lexa Edsall · Planner (CH Conservancy); Henry Stroud · Conservationist; GIS Expert

- I. **Introduction and purpose** – Lori Salganicoff provided the meeting agenda and Project description of purpose, schedule, committee members, and a description of the “Visionaries Roundtable, “, scheduled for April 21<sup>st</sup>. (For those not attending the meeting, see attachment at the end of these minutes.)

She gave an overview of the history of land use management plans that have been done over the years, going back to the early 1980s ([Mobilize to Thrive: Chestnut Hill Regional Area Study](#), Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission; [Protect Our Watershed Land Conservation and Stewardship Plan \(2006-07\)](#), Friends of the Wissahickon; ‘[Chestnut Hill Historic District’ Application to the National Register of Historic Places \(1985\)](#), Chestnut Hill Conservancy; [Chestnut Hill Land-Use Guidelines \(1982\)](#), Chestnut Hill Community Association)

More recently, Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) helped in the creation of a map of properties, identifying over 1000 that could be built upon by subdividing.

A key component of the Project will be to prepare for the remapping that will be done this fall by the PCPC as part of the 2035 plan. The Project will not identify fixes, but will identify existing conditions as they affect historical architecture, cultural landscape, privately-held space, view-shed, environment, and the affect of development on the watershed and Wissahickon Creek. The William Penn Foundation has funded this study to help us manage this.

Madeleine Helmer will be working on a satellite project identifying different management tools available to municipalities, including incentives and regulations.

Joyce Lenhardt expressed the value of the Project getting us to a place where we are able to plan how we want to address future development, citing that our review committees are often in a reactive mode of reviewing plans presented by developers that require prompt response without the opportunity to view their plans in a larger context.

Ian Hegarty said that PCPC will provide Conservation Land Use Studies.

Lori said that Philadelphia University will be providing a 3-D map this summer.

- II. **Opportunities and Threats exercise** – Ann Hutchinson asked the committee to pair off in identifying: 1. In your experience, where does the most important opportunity lie to preserve the natural and built environment in Chestnut Hill? 2. What is the most important threat to the built and natural environment in Chestnut Hill?

Index cards were used to document the input. These cards will be summarized in a document separate from these minutes. Some points were verbalized that may not have been recorded on the cards, including:

- Identifying how CH will fit into 21<sup>st</sup> century architecture so that new construction, while intending to honor traditions in style, does not become a mockery of that tradition
- A discontinuity of values between properties
- Will Chestnut Hill remain popular with potential new homeowners? Is property structure right for people buying into the 21<sup>st</sup> century market?
- Poor developer participation
- City support for what CH offers: lack of coordination between City agencies and staffing within agencies; lack of zoning expertise at City Council level
- Moving quickly enough to see what developers see.
- Corner properties at heightened risk
- Being informed: people assuming there is protection where it does not actually exist
- Modeling change in areas and how it can relate to core values
- Ability to educate in how to do sensitive development

- III. **Steering Committee process, meeting schedule, and final product** to express the core values of Chestnut Hill and implementing the necessary data sets to identify these values

**Future Meeting schedule:**

- **February 2, 2017 – 6:00 PM to 7:30 pm** – Joint meeting with the Historic District Advisory Committee and the Land-Use Planning and Zoning Committee – AT CH HOSPITAL;

This meeting will introduce this project to the larger community of volunteers involved in development-related issues: CHCA/CHHS boards, HDAC, DRC, LUPZ, Streetscape committee. Their input will be sought for ideas and concerns. Breakout sessions will be held to conduct group discussions, similar to the Opportunities/Threats analysis.

Group leaders will be: Lori Salganicoff; Joyce Lenhardt, Patricia Cove, Maura McCarthy, Steve Gendler, Angelina Jones, Madeleine Helmer. Ann will be sending instructions to them prior to the meeting. (We have more names than will be needed.)

Ideally, there will be about 50 attendees.

Objectives of public meeting will be to collect information so we can communicate with the public as part of the public process at the end of this project. We will look at all the factors that we are evaluating, and run them by the attendees, asking them to rank them. Goal would be to winnow them to the top 3, so we can translate them to actionable items for the planning process. Out of these top three, we will probably learn what the actual top 6 are, and these six will be the actionable items. We should only talk about these six going forward. (Lori suggested the Green Book from 1982 probably already identifies these 6.)

**Ann has agendas for subsequent meetings, which are on the following dates:**

- **February 23, 2017 – 7:30 – 10:00 AM** – Steering Committee meeting
- **March, 2017** – Maps: Megan Boatright is pulling together various map studies, which will be reviewed at the March meeting. Additional maps that will be needed/helpful include:
  - Land Cover Data/Impervious surfaces
  - Storm water
  - Public Sewer
  - Tree/Open spaces (Henry Stroud)
  - Topographical
  - Streams/Woodlots
  - Public Transportation
  - Paper Streets (Jim Querry said these are managed in Streets Dept., if they are right-of-ways, and that they are eliminated at City Council)
  - Pocket Parks (Barbara B has this list.)
  -

Rachel Wolford is working on a Development Map , covering five periods of development

Megan says that the maps cannot be completely overlaid because it will be too much detail. She will be providing spreadsheets of information to accompany the maps.

- **April 13, 2017** – 7:30 – 10:00 AM – Steering Committee meeting  
This meeting will be to plan for the April 21<sup>st</sup> special meeting. (Promotion of this meeting should begin well in advance of April 13.
- *April 21, 2017 – 6:00 PM – CH Conservancy's program "Visionaries' Roundtable: Preservation & Change in Chestnut Hill" (some maps revealed and put to use, if possible)*
- **May 11, 2017** – 7:30 – 10:00 AM – Steering Committee final meeting (giving Natural Lands Trust a few weeks to pull report together)

**Other:**

Demographics and subdivisions were discussed as a way to identify vulnerabilities. City demographics are mapped by census tracts; we may be able to get census info down to the block level, according to Ian Hegarty. Ann suggested doing surveys by foot. We know the community, know so much about who lives here, history, changes over time. We would divide CH into regions and pair off, walking around to identify vulnerabilities; look at an address and identify how it is listed on various data sets.

Maura suggested that ideally a great deal of this information will be on a server that can be updated and managed by our organizations. How much information should be online about a given property, based on privacy concerns, will need to be evaluated.

Outcome: All of this work will be preparatory to the Northwest Philadelphia District Plan to be initiated in the fall of 2017. It was noted that, ideally, a secondary outcome of the work of this committee will be to bring in younger members to participate in planning and preservation efforts going forward. Additionally, there could be a process for informing Realtors about CH core values, and the plans that support them.

As recorded by Celeste Hardester, CHCA Development Review Coordinator

[celeste@chestnuthill.org](mailto:celeste@chestnuthill.org)

215-518-1799

## **Chestnut Hill Conservation, Preservation & Development Study Steering Committee Meeting**

Minutes of Meeting on February 23, 2017

Location: 8708 Germantown Ave

**Called to Order: 7:40 a.m.          Adjourned: 9:30 a.m.**

### **Attending:**

- Lori Salganicoff · *Co-Chair and Project Manager*, Preservationist; Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Joyce Lenhardt · *Co-Chair*, Architect (CHCA)
- Ann Hutchinson- *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust
- Richard Bartholomew · Planner
- Elie-Antoine Atallah · Architect
- Barbara Baumbach · Realtor (CHBD)
- Patricia Cove · Preservationist; Designer (CH Conservancy, CHCA)
- Steve Gendler · Economist; Developer (CHCA)
- John Landis · Planner, University of Pennsylvania (CHCA)
- Maura McCarthy · Conservationist (FOW)
- Mindy O'Connor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- James Querry · Landscape Architect, Philadelphia University
- Peter Saylor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Richard Snowden · Developer (CH Conservancy, CHCA, CHBD)
- Ian Hegarty · Philadelphia Planning Commission
- Angelina Jones, Conservation and Easements Manager, CH Conservancy
- Rachel Wolford, Intern, Philadelphia Univ.
- Madeleine Helmer, Intern U of Penn/Penn Praxis
- Celeste Hardester, CHCA Development Review Facilitator, Steering Committee Minute-taker
  
- **Not Present:** Lexa Edsall · Planner (CH Conservancy); Henry Stroud · Conservationist; GIS Expert; Patricia Pregmon · Easement Attorney; Megan Boatright – *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust

### **I. Development Management Tools – Strategies for managing change – Madeleine Helmer, Penn Praxis**

This presentation is based upon three primary objectives, with potential strategies for each: **Preserving houses/properties; Managing subdivision; Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed.** A handout was provided that summarizes each tool. The following notes contain presentation points accompanied by committee input.

#### **A. Preserving Houses/properties:**

- create a Local Historic District Overlay - needs approval of Philadelphia Historic Commission; (CH currently has 125 locally designated sites; in Pennsylvania, Act 167 authorizes the creation of State Historic Districts; Act 237 authorizes Local Districts)
- Demolition Review system – this can take 30-365 days; some municipalities (Boston) use this strategy
- Local tax breaks for historic rehabilitations (for residences, Baltimore refunds through transferable tax credits based on increment of reassessed value)

- Fire Escape regulations – re-use of large properties for condos/apts can be discouraged by these regulations

## **B. Managing subdivision**

- Neighborhood Conservation Overlay
  - in Philadelphia, there are four
  - West Chester has several, pertaining to lot size and block class;
  - Question was raised as to whether NCO's can be used to manage subdivision
  - Can the NCO have landscape criteria that could fit much of the Northwest? Can there be a partnership with other council-manic districts that to whom these concerns apply? Does the City need to be incentivized to be responsive to our concerns?
  - Committee members expressed interest in exploring NCO status
- Minimum lot-size zoning
  - We can review current City zoning districts (categories of zoning options – e.g. RSD-1 is the largest at 10,000SF) to see if there is one we can add to City Zoning Code that could be included in the NCO. (When this concept was explored years ago, there was a lot of resistance to it.)
  - If we downzone to a larger zoning district, and we use signature properties in more developed areas as reason to do this, should we try to pair downzoning with an incentive? Some thought not – that we need to promote health and welfare

- Revolving Fund – Loans for rehabilitations (these have been effective in Savannah)

## **C. Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed** (controlled by Wissahickon Watershed Overlay District regulations)

- Impervious land cover limits
- Tree Ordinance
- Green storm water infrastructure – this is not available to Chestnut Hill because we don't have combined waste/storm water system. (In the Northwest section of Philadelphia, funding for this is available as far as Mt. Airy.) This issue is a possible opportunity for seeking advocacy to try to get funds available to us. (Another limitation is that funding is available only where the City can add to cumulative green space.)
- Septic tank monitoring – there are still septic systems in Chestnut Hill, especially north of Evergreen Ave and east of Germantown Ave. (A side-effect of this condition is that it *has* controlled development.) An important issue is to find out if septic systems are failing, and to document where we have a problem. (In the Catskills, there is 100% reimbursement for replacing a septic.)
- Infill and Redevelopment

## **Additional tools suggested after presentation**

- Transfer of development rights – TDR's require enough pressure from sending zone to receiving zone. There may not be enough pressure here for this to work, but it could be helpful to have if it is an option. Miami has a TDR plan that could be good to look at.
- Easements – need to add this to the list; also philanthropy
- DRC process serves as protection tool

- Options for adding more tax incentives as preservation tools (e.g. NYC has incentive program for preserving Brownstones.)

#### **Next Steps**

- Suggestion made that we need to look at an overlay that preserves houses and manages subdivisions, looking specifically where we are vulnerable
- Divide up the neighborhood into sections and create teams to walk the sections and document properties: ownership if known, condition, size of lot and location on block, and known factors that safeguard or threaten.
- Send Lori Salganicoff any other ideas for tools, etc.

- II. District Plan** – Ian Hegarty, AICP, Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
Presentation of the Philadelphia 2035 Plan (last plan was done in 1960, and it focused largely on center-city). This plan focuses on entire City, with 3 goals:
- Thrive: economic, land use, location
  - Connect: transportation, facilities, systems under streets
  - Renew: Open space preservation, public realm (private property we all see);
- Handouts of the Philadelphia 2035 Planning Process and the Upper North Plan were provided.

Upper Northwest District process will probably begin in the Autumn of 2017. This district includes Chestnut Hill, E. and W. Mt. Airy, E. and W. Germantown down to Wister.

Within each district plan, they assess demographics, trends, individual properties (does zoning for its location make sense?); private parcel use . This allows for corrective zoning and seeing where there are vacancies that could allow for development.

Apply recommendations of City-wide goals. For instance, how people are able to cross streets is a big issue throughout the City. How can the work of our steering committee be connected to City-wide goals?

District Planning Preliminary Process includes SWOB (strengths, weakness, opportunities, barriers) – this helps identify hotspots and what can City do to elevate strengths and diminish barriers. Issues addressed will include Storm Water Management, as well as issued like relocating City facilities. Preliminary process will result in something like 60 recommendations. Focus areas will be where several recommendations come together.

A recommended zoning map is part of the plan. There are two big types of zoning recommendations:

- corrective zoning: aligning zoning to existing uses on the ground
- advance the plan zoning: facilitate housing, commercial, perhaps creating a new, larger zone district for large lots

We can look at setting up a legal structure for preventing new development and preservation. This will need to be balanced with how we accommodate new development.

Lori S. asked if it would be helpful to inventory density to balance areas where density could go, that there isn't as much room for development in Chestnut Hill as one might think. Maura M. pointed out that the district plan needs to serve the entire district, not just Chestnut Hill. John L. asked about the possibility of having two district planning processes for these widely varying areas, but Ian said there isn't capacity for that.

Ian suggested that we can use the Upper North plan as a model when we think about formulating our own recommendations. He encouraged us to consider partnering our plans with other watershed areas in the City (there are 5). Lots of them have large-house properties contiguous to them and we are more likely to get support for our preservation plans if they can also be applied to other communities. Look at how preservation options that allow buildings to remain if the use is changed (and land around it wouldn't be developed.) (It was observed that we need to be mindful not to wind up with repeats of Greylocks.)

Ann said that some communities in southeast Pennsylvania have zoning with historic overlays that allow a house can be broken up into condos but the land not developed. Perhaps there will be some modernization/expansion but not on the front façade.

Maura reminded that we want to allow for continued growth so we don't become frozen. Connectivity to other parts of the Northwest would help. Lori observed that we need to be a growth spot that keeps on growing down the hill, agreeing that we need to be careful not to become frozen, and that incentives to build outside of Chestnut Hill would help Chestnut Hill.

Maura asked about connectivity, and connecting with other RCO's about what we are doing. Lori pointed out that development is already incentivized in Chestnut Hill; other communities need more of this.

### III. **February 2<sup>nd</sup> Stakeholder Meeting Results and Data Needs**

Ann Hutchinson provided a handout summarizing the results of this meeting

### IV. **GIS Data List** – Using the Data Categories list Exercise #3 from the Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, Committee members checked the four that we would most like to see on the final map. (8 – 10 will be provided, but they want to see our top 4).

### V. **April 21<sup>st</sup> , 6:00 pm: Visionaries Roundtable** – Denise Scott-Brown will be unable to speak, so another is being sought.

**Next Study Committee meetings: March 21, April 13<sup>th</sup>, and May 11<sup>th</sup>, all at 7:30AM.**

## **Chestnut Hill Conservation, Preservation & Development Study Steering Committee Meeting**

Minutes of Meeting on March 21, 2017

Location: 8708 Germantown Ave

**Called to Order: 7:35 a.m.          Adjourned: 9:40 a.m.**

### **Attending:**

- Lori Salganicoff · *Co-Chair and Project Manager*, Preservationist; Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Joyce Lenhardt · *Co-Chair*, Architect (CHCA)
- Ann Hutchinson- *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust
- Richard Bartholomew · Planner
- Barbara Baumbach · Realtor (CHBD)
- Steve Gendler · Economist; Developer (CHCA)
- John Landis · Planner, University of Pennsylvania (CHCA)
- Maura McCarthy · Conservationist (FOW)
- Mindy O'Connor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Patricia Pregmon · Easement Attorney
- Megan Boatright – *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust;
- James Querry · Landscape Architect, Philadelphia University (on phone)
- Richard Snowden · Developer (CH Conservancy, CHCA, CHBD)
- Rachel Wolford, Intern, Philadelphia Univ.
- Madeleine Helmer, Intern U of Penn/Penn Praxis
- Celeste Hardester, CHCA Development Review Facilitator, Steering Committee Minute-taker
  
- **Not Present:** Lexa Edsall · Planner (CH Conservancy); Henry Stroud · Conservationist; GIS Expert; Elie-Antoine Atallah · Architect; Patricia Cove · Preservationist; Designer (CH Conservancy, CHCA); Peter Saylor · Architect (CH Conservancy); Ian Hegarty · Philadelphia Planning Commission; Angelina Jones, Conservation and Easements Manager, CH Conservancy

### **I. Draft Report: Tools for Managing Change – Strategies to Guide Growth and Promote Preservation in Chestnut Hill – Madeleine Helmer, Penn Praxis**

An update of February's presentation addressing three primary objectives, with potential strategies for each: **Preserving houses/properties; Managing subdivision; Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed.** A handout was provided. The following notes contain presentation points accompanied by committee input.

#### **A. Preserving Houses/properties:**

- Local Historic District Overlay – may be limited by capacity of Philadelphia Historic Commission, and adequate support of property owners
  
- Overlay Zoning District for Historic Properties – Helpful to have incentives for people to participate such as accommodations that permit internal re-use while maintaining historic exteriors, or tax abatements; we could identify a number of buildings that have potential for adaptive re-use for the interior and get overlays applied to them so variances would not be required when developer becomes interested. We

could create a “Match.com for Development” where we introduce high-quality developers to candidate properties.

- Demolition Delay and Review– This needs to be accompanied by an investment tool to provide an advantage to this.
- Local tax breaks for historic rehabilitations – State Tax Credits are against income; what about other taxes, like property tax breaks?

Lori Salganicoff reminded the Committee that this is the time to identify any additional tools that should be considered, Any additional ideas can be to Madeleine or Lori.

#### **B. Managing subdivision**

- Transfer of Development Rights
- Neighborhood Conservation Overlay –

Idea suggested of a “Conservatorship” where a NP can acquire a building proven to be blighted; this tool is being used by CDC’s kind of as a Land Bank. Commerce Dept and PADVC (?)

- Revolving Fund

#### **C. Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed** (controlled by Wissahickon Watershed Overlay District regulations)

- Environmental Land Use Standards
- On Site Septic monitoring
- Urban Forestry
- Additional tools provided by committee:
  - Easement program should be included in this section as well, as a key tool for protection of the Watershed.
  - Pervious/Impervious conditions can be less important than street alignments, how water comes off the streets, downhill to sewers or missing sewers – the threat is both erosion and runoff, and we may have a street issue here in Chestnut Hill.
  - What does every nature preserve do to contribute to protection of the Watershed?
  - Because we haven’t addressed public infrastructure problems, no matter how well a private property is developed, the management of the public ways has been unchanged.
  - Green Infrastructure can be another category for protecting the Watershed
  - CGA has a Complete Streets Plan – being overseen by the Business Association could be a critical component, overlaid with some property development planning, to meet these goals

**Timeline for getting additional ideas to Madeleine – within next two weeks**

## II. **Review of Datasets to be included in current study and future data list**– Megan Boatright, NLT

### **A. Handout provided listing**

- data layers available
  - data layers still being worked on
  - data layers for future wish list
  - online resources
- Additional comments made by committee:
- This is our tool chest for evaluation, we can mix and match data. Is there anything missing from the list?
  - From the planning perspective, there are three ways to use this:
    1. What are the critical resources and how much of them are there? What are they, what is the spatial distribution – what are they, old houses, or what?
    2. Vulnerability mapping – we need some sort of analytical thing that assesses vulnerability; we need to think about what our vulnerability model is: threats to demolition of historic structures, and threats of subdivisions. We need to get some economic data in here, Zillow data and things like that. We want to move towards what appraisers call a Land Residual Model that looks at the underlying value of the land. To the extent that a high underlying value of the land as an alternative use is a positive number, this increases the vulnerability.
    3. Performance mapping – particularly the mapping of environmental systems. This is where we come back to the runoff question.
- e.g. CARP and SAMP models - there are 3-4 models.
- We might find that that our watershed work is great paired with individual property owners but unless it is coupled with common access right-of-way, maintenance protocols, and infrastructure standards that municipalities need to implement, it's really not going to make a significant difference.
  - We need layers that provide performance standards to developers. What are additional municipal burdens? Layering these costs on as part of a development fee for signature properties could be a mechanism.
  - We could create an inventory of mid-century “Brady-bunch” houses that, when they become available, we could encourage developers towards. However, a lot of these houses are in some of the more problematic areas for the watershed.
  - It's really the inventory of what's there – the spatial coincidence of data.

The idea of vulnerability is a physical or economic model, susceptibility to change model.

- We have focused on pervious vs. impervious surfaces and getting appropriate development, and have pushed this about as far as we can; next level: Performance of the Infrastructure systems, and starting to get some models for that.

We'll be seeing more rain events. These will exacerbate runoff.

PhD Student at Penn using a model on a supercomputer called Parflow (experimental), which models subsurface water conditions that can be more important than surface.

Now that we have these data layers, what are the ones that are critical? We can have a Regret model – what would we regret losing?

- 1) What is the data we want to use? Definition of criteria
- 2) What is the susceptibility to change?
- 3) Get serious about runoff issue/hydrological performance

For the work of the Steering Committee work, 2 and 3 could be held as recommendations for the future. Our task is the first point, discerning which of the data we want to use. This will be the capstone of the group.

- Madeleine's casting of these issues – architectural integrity; Managing subdivision; Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed capture our mission and goals, so we can hone in on the priorities that addresses those goals.

- Having identified the critical resources, we want to make sure we have a list of programs that can protect them, and the data sets that go with those goals. If you are protecting architectural integrity, do we have as many layers as we can?

Force the group into decision making, and identify the top three set of principals to parse the data.

In terms of critical resources, we probably have enough GIS layers, but we might think about Architectural character – and consider having a record of street view so we have a record of what these things look like.

- CH Conservancy is working on this inventory, with level of significance, date of construction, integrity of building, and to have a photographic library, and that all this information will become searchable.

## **B. MAPS:**

Megan has categorized and grouped information into a set of maps of our critical resources that will be present on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Where are we now? What does our community look like in terms of these critical resources?

Categories include:

1) **Natural features**; Wissahickon Watershed map at the Planning Commission – unable to get a copy of it. Commission says it needs to be ground-truthed so it hasn't been put into GIS and digitize it. We can just take a photo of it.

2) **Land and watershed conservation opportunities**; Easement manager working on expanding the list. This also can include subdividable properties that may not be adjacent to park but still affect the watershed

3) **Wissahickon Watershed Overlay District** - We need the boundaries on the map to line up with the Chestnut Hill National Historic District boundary. Discussion about map showing community of Chestnut Hill vs the District. Impervious surfaces on commercial vs residential lots

4) **Historical resources and preservation opportunities**; PhilaU is working on building footprints, not the parcel. Five historic eras, levels of significance. Dot colors of buildings need to stand out more, and separately from lot. A neat analysis tool would be to look at ratio of footprint to the lot. See locations where lot coverage is a lot less than is allowed by zoning. Those also would be attractive for subdividing. There is a subdividable lots layer that we think PCPC would be working on. How many buildings are in the Philadelphia Register, now many are significant, how many are historic. Map showing eras of construction will not have dots. Historic waterways can be included on the map.

5) **Zoning**; Important not to give people impression that low density is actually low. It can be just a portion of an acre. We are trying to demonstrate the vulnerability, this map isn't doing this yet. . Gradations of density. 19-20 colors representing density.; use gradations of colors to indicate related densities. We are trying to demonstrate vulnerability. We can add sidebars to the map that point to specific sections and point out how, absent these protections (easement, historic designation, etc) this property could have become subdivided into X lots.

5) **2015 Aerial Imagery**. Color-coding on maps is based on property proximity to parks, if it has a PNDI hit (Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory) within an acre range, adjacent to a stream. We can do a couple of callouts demonstrating the impact of easements . . . here is how this area looked 30 years ago and here is how it looks now.

For the April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, build the maps rather than combine too much data on one.

### III. **Visionaries Meeting : April 21. 6:00PM, Cherokee Campus of Springside Chestnut Hill Academy**

**Next Study Committee meetings: April 13<sup>th</sup>, and May 11<sup>th</sup>, all at 7:30AM.**

Minutes by Celeste Hardester, April 4, 2017

## **Chestnut Hill Conservation, Preservation & Development Study Steering Committee Meeting**

Minutes of Meeting on April 13, 2017

Location: 8708 Germantown Ave

**Called to Order: 7:30 a.m.          Adjourned: 9:30 a.m.**

### **Attending:**

- Lori Salganicoff · *Co-Chair and Project Manager*, Preservationist; Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Joyce Lenhardt · *Co-Chair*, Architect (CHCA)
- Ann Hutchinson- *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust
- Ian Hegarty · Philadelphia Planning Commission;
- Richard Bartholomew · Planner
- John Landis · Planner, University of Pennsylvania (CHCA)
- Mindy O'Connor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Patricia Pregmon · Easement Attorney
- Megan Boatright – *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust;
- James Querry · Landscape Architect, Philadelphia University (on phone)
- Richard Snowden · Developer (CH Conservancy, CHCA, CHBD)
- Rachel Wolford, Intern, Philadelphia Univ.
- Patricia Cove · Preservationist; Designer (CH Conservancy, CHCA)
- Peter Saylor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Angelina Jones, Conservation and Easements Manager, CH Conservancy
- Celeste Hardester, CHCA Development Review Facilitator, Steering Committee Minute-taker
  
- **Not Present:** Barbara Baumbach · Realtor (CHBD); Steve Gendler · Economist; Developer (CHCA); Maura McCarthy · Conservationist (FOW); Madeleine Helmer, Intern U of Penn/Penn Praxis; Lexa Edsall · Planner (CH Conservancy); Henry Stroud · Conservationist; GIS Expert; Elie-Antoine Atallah · Architect;

### **I. April 21<sup>st</sup> Visionaries Roundtable: Preservation and Change in Chestnut Hill** Lori Salganicoff

To date, 200 people have registered for the event. We plan to provide questions for the moderator, Gail Harrity, to ask the panel. Questions to come from this Committee and from attendees. John Landis suggested sending the questions to Gail ahead of time so they can be organized and shared with the panel prior to the event.

Volunteers needed for registration, handling walk-ins, manning the maps that will be on display.

This Roundtable reprises a similar CHHS panel discussion that was held nearly 50 years ago, with a panel comprised of Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, Romaldo Giurgola, and moderated by Evan Turner, Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

### **II. Revised maps and database update** Megan Boatright, NLT

Maps were reviewed for final detail clarification prior to presentation at the Roundtable. Comments included:

### **A. Natural Features Map**

- The 19118 Zip Code doesn't exactly match the region encompassed by the Chestnut Hill Conservancy, as a small piece of it is outside of Philadelphia (regardless of its being generally considered to be part of Chestnut Hill). As far as the District Plan is concerned, it will not be part of the plan, and thus needs to be identified. The Post Office is the best resource for identifying exactly what would be excluded.
- Add an inset map showing all of Philadelphia, highlighting where Chestnut Hill is located
- Make the creeks look more blue
- Make legends larger
- The legend should indicate that green is "Wooded Area"
- Orange is not a good color for indicating steep slope – instead use relief map symbology or a grey scale effect
- Smaller side maps could be used to indicate land cover, slope, boundaries of immediate Watershed around the Wissahickon
- Show wooded area included in slopes (note: the Steep slope district covers this entire area).

### **B. Existing Public and Protected Lands**

- Preservation façade easements – more exist than are shown on this map
- View easements are not shown on the map
- Façade easements don't protect the land and are irrelevant to this map.
- We could call the map Protected Properties, rather than Lands
- More easement information is needed
- Add buildings that are on the Philadelphia Register
- Use a red-dotted outline of what is included in Preservation territory (Tim provided lists from Open Space Showcase)
- Meta-story of the map – Show what has been protected already and what could be done going forward

### **C. Land and Conservation Opportunities**

- this map is from 2006 information
- 7 ordinals on one map is too much
- Rename this map 'Protect Our Watershed Conservation Map'

### **D. Historical Resources and Preservation Opportunities**

- Change 'Opportunities' to 'Values'
- Do not identify properties that are listed as Intrusive – turn this layer off
- Several Significant and Contributing buildings not on the map that should be added
- Change color scheme to match those used on the Conservation map
- For Significant and Contributing buildings, pick a range of colors, with darker as more valuable (purple and red generally imply threat; green is positive)
- Meta-story of the map: there are 2500 buildings: \_\_\_\_% are Significant and Contributing yet most are not protected. Identify by color which are and are not protected.
- Chestnut Hill Village should be omitted from the map

- Lori and Megan will get together with Richard Bartholomew to review this map

#### **E. Historical Resources and Preservation Era of Construction**

- Shows trends in development over five eras
- this map is not needed for the Visionary Roundtable

#### **F. Zoning (Existing)**

- Do impervious surface map separately by block, with percent of imperviousness (this data available from the Philadelphia Water Department)
- Send John Landis the data and they can rasterize it
- Communicate via Info graphics about what could happen with existing zoning and subdivisions

#### **G. Introductory Board**

- Create a board that explains overall what these maps are, what this study is about
- Invite people to indicate if they are interested in attending follow-up sessions

### **III. Upcoming**

The next steering committee session will be devoted to an exercise called Backwards Mapping/Theory of Change. We'll be divided into three groups: Preserve Architectural Integrity, Manage subdivision and redevelopment, and Protect the Wissahickon Watershed.

Also on the agenda, how and with what partners does our work move ahead?

Richard Snowden asked about obtaining census data over the past 50 or so years

Philadelphia University is working on 3D mapping

Autumn – Philadelphia City Planning Commission will come to commence the Upper Northwest District Plan public meeting process

PDF's of the maps will be emailed to us about one week before the next meeting.

**Next Study Committee meeting May 11<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30AM.**

## **Chestnut Hill Conservation, Preservation & Development Study Steering Committee Meeting**

Minutes of Meeting on May 11, 2017

Location: 8708 Germantown Ave

**Called to Order: 7:30 a.m.          Adjourned: \_\_\_\_ a.m.**

### **Attending:**

- Lori Salganicoff · *Co-Chair and Project Manager*, Preservationist; Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Joyce Lenhardt · *Co-Chair*, Architect (CHCA)
- Ann Hutchinson- *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust
- Ian Hegarty · Philadelphia Planning Commission;
- Mindy O'Connor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Patricia Pregmon · Easement Attorney
- Megan Boatright – *Consultant*, Natural Lands Trust;
- Richard Snowden · Developer (CH Conservancy, CHCA, CHBD)
- Patricia Cove · Preservationist; Designer (CH Conservancy, CHCA)
- Peter Saylor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Angelina Jones, Conservation and Easements Manager, CH Conservancy
- Barbara Baumbach · Realtor (CHBD)
- Maura McCarthy · Conservationist (FOW)
- Eileen Javers, CH Conservancy
- Celeste Hardester, CHCA Development Review Facilitator, Steering Committee Minute-taker
  
- **Not Present:** Steve Gendler · Economist; Developer (CHCA); Lexa Edsall · Planner (CH Conservancy); Henry Stroud · Conservationist; GIS Expert; Elie-Antoine Atallah · Architect; Richard Bartholomew · Planner; James Querry · Landscape Architect, Philadelphia University; John Landis · Planner, University of Pennsylvania (CHCA)

### **I. Theory of Change exercise: Based on Aspen Institute process of Backwards Mapping and Connecting Outcomes with Interventions** Ann Hutchinson-

A. The committee was divided into three working groups:

Theme 1: Preserving Integrity of Architecture and Cultural Landscape

Theme 2: Managing Subdivision and Redevelopment

Theme 3: Protecting the Wissahickon Watershed

The exercise of backwards mapping starts with identifying desired outcomes, and working backwards through 3) measuring success, 2) identifying interventions to solve a problem, and 1) identifying the problem. The iterative process works back and forth across the steps to confirm flow from problems to outcomes.

Ultimate goal of exercise is to identify management tools to hand over to the CHCA and CH Conservancy for the next phase of preparation for development planning and the District Plan 2035.

## **B. Results for Theme 1: Desired Outcome: Preserving Integrity of Architecture and Cultural Landscape**

***The Problem:*** Significant buildings are not being preserved/saved

***Interventions:***

- By the end of summer 2017, identify the significant resources that need to be protected, with a risk analysis to understand what are our highest priorities to protect
- Create appropriate incentives (dimensional, financial, promotional) for a developer to do what is appropriate for CH

***Measures of Success:***

- Proactive, not reactive, protections are in place for significant resources

***The Problem:*** City setbacks and scale inadequate to conditions here; Not enough constraints and incentives to direct new construction

***Interventions:***

- Appropriate management tools: Conservation overlays, Philadelphia Register, types of downzoning
- Contextual new standards or zoning tools created for new construction to contribute to architectural integrity of community

***Measures of Success:***

- Dimensional and Financial incentives exist to encourage preservation, conservation, appropriate new construction

***The Problem:*** Insufficient recognition of great architecture and design and open space ; Significant resources are not being preserved and some houses are not well maintained

***Interventions:***

- Education and stealth advocacy to broaden community knowledge and informed choices (Visionaries Roundtable, Great Houses Tour, Ask the Expert program, etc; all the things we are doing to have fun, to enhance awareness – e.g. tree surveys)
- Develop more ways for realtors and owners to be aware of the significance of their resources

***Measures of Success:***

- Resources are well-maintained, and those not maintained receive incentives for repair/restoration

## **C. Results for Theme 2: Manage Subdivision and Redevelopment**

***The Problem:*** Easements: Cost of running easement program, and maintenance of eased property (making sure covenants are kept); General lack of people/resources to manage programs we do have that are independent of the City to preserve properties; City does not recognize conservation easements for tax purposes; Easements are novel and unfamiliar in an urban environment

***Interventions:***

- Easement program expanded – identifying properties and engaging property owners

- Partnering with other organizations/coalition building/grant resources
- Educate the public and the City about the value of eased properties; there is a disconnect between eased properties and the taxes that are assessed, so if there is a way to link those so that properties that are eased don't have as much development potential and therefor should be taxed at a different rate

***Measures of Success:***

- Five easements per year
- Grants to cover easement costs
- Achieve recognition by City and owners that eased property does have value and that it is taxed at a lower rate
- Recognition by City that eased property has value

***The Problem:*** Current Zoning doesn't recognize actual size of lots here, and environmental sensitivity of the land – controls that are not precise

***Interventions:***

- Formulation and introduction of a Zoning Overlay that makes sense, including an Overlay or additional Zoning Districts to better recognize sizes and shapes of properties  
Go after resources so we can create that map
- Create a package of incentives; density exchange transfer of rights, or a broader exchange within the City
- Mitigation requirements in exchange for Zoning variance

***Measures of Success:***

- Achieve recognition by City and owners that eased property does have value and that it is taxed at a lower rate
- Identify priority properties for conservation and locations for density on a map and policy statement that will serve the neighborhood
- Resources to proactively evaluate and plan for property potential development

***The Problem:*** Backlash concern about “zoning away” property rights that makes people defensive about keeping their rights

***Interventions:***

- Modify tax abatement program to give more preference to properties that have historical or conservation value
- Encourage good, sympathetic developers to be a trusted resource for community (work towards identifying what those qualities are)
- Reaching out first, proactively not reactively, in managing development and developers

***Measures of Success:***

- Citywide density exchange where there are sending and receiving properties so we are able to create incentives for conservation, and that the new development that comes to the neighborhood is of an appropriate scale and design values
- Introduce a tax abatement program for NOT tearing up an historic property, and do this by incorporating it under a political umbrella that adds points for, for instance, affordable housing, watershed protection, stormwater management, and put that all in the tax incentive program

#### **D. Protect the Wissahickon Watershed**

**The Problem:** Fragmented development process makes preservation and conservation difficult; Relatively little money and political will

**Interventions:**

- Tree canopy : Research existing canopy and goal setting; bring together partners already working on canopy issues and get their expertise to set goals and also to do the work of planting trees (PHS, Treevitalize, Treetenders, etc) ; appraise what tree canopy is worth and build a canopy quid pro quo that becomes part of CHCA review process
- Open Space Conservation: Use existing land studies (and expand them) to ID and pursue land targets – publicity and engagement with land owners, and work on Policy change/driving the conversation)
- Open Space Conservation: Buy existing properties - fee simple acquisition of target properties (including identify source of funding for this)
- Policy Change: Work with City and NGO partners to ID and remedy gaps in communication; CH Conservancy primary on OPA spearhead/driving force;
- Policy Change: CH Conservancy as head of ID Conservation District/Conservation Overlay with Council
- Policy Change: Working with Council to enact policy that encourages easement donations through district

**Measures of Success:**

- Tree canopy conservation
- Open Space Conservation – A \_\_\_\_% increase in conserved land; a Strategy for protecting \_\_% of conserved land
- Policy Change: PWD, L&I, PCPC all working of same specs and standards agreed upon across the board; work with OPA to create a deduction for assessed value of conservation land; ID Chestnut Hill as a Conservation District; a policy within City Council that encourages donation in district of easements (enacted)

II. **Revised Map and database update – Megan Boatright, NLT presented final PDF Map**  
(Minute taker left meeting at this point)

III. **May 31st joint meeting** of CHConservancy and CHCA Boards and Committees, location Sugarloaf, 6:30pm



## CHESTNUT HILL RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION + DEVELOPMENT STUDY 2017

**Map Data layers** (electronic map with many layers that can be turned on and off):

- Parcel boundaries – 2015 data, Phila City Planning Commission, obtained 3/2017
- Waterways – DCNR’s PA MAP Program
- Roadways – DCNR’s PA MAP Program
- Steep Slopes – color-coded by percentage:
  - < 15% - no color
  - 15% - 24%
  - >= 25%
- Contour lines (5ft interval)
- Landcover University of Vermont 1m Landcover Data, WPF funded for the DRWI
- Wooded areas – includes all 4 categories of tree canopy
- Landuse – Open Data Philly (2017 data)
- Public/Protected:
  - Publically Owned Land – full parcel polygon shown
  - Conservation Easement held by local conservation groups
  - Preservation/Façade Easement – diamond shape shown on parcel
- Parcels identified as priority and high priority for conservation in the 2007 Protect Our Watershed (POW) Study by FOW
- Floodplains (100-year and 500-year) - FEMA
- Impervious surface – Philadelphia City Planning Commission, POW Study
- Historical streams (circa 1842) – Philadelphia City Planning Commission
- Trails
- Soils – USDA-NRCS
- Philadelphia Register of Historic Places (approx. 90 points)
- Chestnut Hill National Register Historic District properties – mapped by Philadelphia University
  - Levels of significance
  - Era of construction
- Zoning – Philadelphia City Planning Commission
- SEPTA routes – Open Data Philly
- 2015 aerial imagery – Open Data Philly
- Pocket Parks – surveyed by CH Business District
- Parks & Recreation assets layer - Open Data Philly: Philadelphia Parks and Recreation owned facilities, can be used for programming and inventory purposes
- Green stormwater infrastructure – City Metadata Catalog:
  - GSI – Private Retrofit Projects: one project at Weavers Way Co-Op.
  - GSI – Private Regulation Projects: numerous projects within Chestnut Hill zip code. This data may change/update frequently.

**PRIOR COMMUNITY PLANS** (available on [CHConservancy.org](http://CHConservancy.org) & [ChestnutHill.org](http://ChestnutHill.org))

- [Mobilize to Thrive: Chestnut Hill Regional Area Study](#), Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- [Protect Our Watershed Land Conservation and Stewardship Plan \(2006-07\)](#), Friends of the Wissahickon
- [‘Chestnut Hill Historic District’ Application to the National Register of Historic Places \(1985\)](#), Chestnut Hill Conservancy
- [Chestnut Hill Land-Use Guidelines \(1982\)](#), Chestnut Hill Community Association

**ONLINE RESOURCES that should be accessed for up to date information:**

- Philadelphia Register of Historic Places: <http://www.phila.gov/historical/register/Pages/RegisterofHistoricPlaces.aspx>
- Property assessments: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/opa-property-assessments>
- Vacant Property Indicator: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/vacant-property-indicators>
- City Owned Vacant Property: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/city-owned-vacant-property>
- Tax Delinquent Properties: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/property-tax-balances>
- City of Philadelphia Metadata Catalog: <http://metadata.phila.gov/index.html>
- Stroud’s WikiWatershed/Model My Watershed: <https://wikiwatershed.org/>
- Greater Philadelphia History Network: <https://www.philageohistory.org/geohistory/>

**Data/Studies that are considered a future wish list:*****Higher Priority***

- Sub-dividable lots –This sensitive data layer will need to be determined how best to handle so it does not get shared publically. Per Ian Hegarty email dated 04/25/17, there are no plans for PCPC to update this layer. An accurate analysis would need a lot-by-lot review and time is not available for that.
- Public sewer (info based on billing data) – according to PWD, they “are not able to share any underground infrastructure data for water & sewer.” There is a “Combined Sewer Service Area” layer in the City of Philadelphia Metadata Catalog, but it does not include Chestnut Hill.
- Wissahickon Watershed Overlay District – based in conversation with Ian, this map that exists in hard copy only will need ground-truthing to be digitized into a GIS layer.
- Building condition – would need local field work to build this data layer.
- Floodwater inundation
- Parking – supply/demand; off-street parking; parking pads in front of houses

***Medium Priority***

- Demographics – Census level. Would need GIS analysis work.
  - General:
    - Census tract level would need GIS analysis.
  - Property specific:
    - Density by building footprint (compare to Census tract average, predict empty nesters)
    - How long properties have been owned by current landowner – is this in the property viewer assessment viewer listed in online resources?
    - Primary or secondary home – would need local field work to build this data layer.
  - ESRI’s Tapestry Segmentation project (based on zip codes): <http://www.esri.com/landing-pages/tapestry>
- Utility locations (including ROWs) – city planning commission did not have this readily available.
- Auto traffic (volume, routes, traffic density, traffic controls, etc.) – DVRPC?
- Street condition/capacity/rating

***Lower Priority***

- Swales
- Impact of climate change – needs more specifics. Additional analysis might be required.
- Sidewalks – at a basic level, you can see this on the impervious surface layer. This really should be a ground-truthed layer with additional information regarding sidewalk condition. There is a curblane layer in the City of Philadelphia Metadata Catalog that might add to a sidewalks analysis.
- Patterns of movement/where do people go day-to-day?
- Viewsheds/Vistas
- Lot assembly & redevelopment potential – would need extensive analysis. Where to begin?
- Trees – needs more context, what data is needed? Why?
  - ITree: <https://www.itreetools.org/>
  - Tree Tenders, PA Horticultural Society: <https://phsonline.org/programs/tree-tenders/>
  - Open Tree Map: <https://www.opentreemap.org/>

## Chestnut Hill

### Conservation, Preservation & Development Study

January 26, 2017 Study Committee response to questions.

CH – Chestnut Hill

CHC- Chestnut Hill Conservancy

1. In your experience, where does the most important opportunity lie to preserve the natural and built environment in Chestnut Hill?
2. What is the most important threat to the built and natural environment in Chestnut Hill?

Responses, summarized, by themes

Threatened by....	Opportunities for...
<u>Trends that Compromise Community and the Environment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging demographic, especially critical when can't manage large properties</li> <li>• Lack of young professional</li> <li>• Misunderstanding, residents may assume protection and effective regulations, where none exists</li> </ul>	<u>Maintaining Eden</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People like life in CH and want to sustain &amp; improve it</li> <li>• Reinforce the character of CH, inviting broad-based participation from stakeholders</li> <li>• Encourage healthy occupancy of properties and care for open spaces</li> <li>• Highlight access to trails, transportation &amp; aesthetic environment</li> <li>• Celebrate uniqueness of CH</li> </ul>
<u>Misunderstandings Among People</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If committees are perceived as too adversarial, residents, builders, may disengage</li> <li>• Lack of understanding about easements and how they work</li> <li>• Health of business district and residential districts intertwined, lack of understanding of importance of preserving facades</li> <li>• Lack of shared perception of "historic"</li> </ul>	<u>Building Community</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw upon community strength, from collaborative organizations to an engaged populations to create a more resilient community</li> <li>• Educate and assist owners, developers, especially regarding sensitive development/renovation, historic importance and the watershed</li> <li>• Build upon the strong sense of place</li> </ul>

<p><u>Lack of Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of planning</li> <li>• CHC needs additional funding to meet their mission and goals</li> <li>• City may lack resources to support local historic district designation</li> <li>• Lack of business district cohesion</li> <li>• Loosening of guidelines previously effective, now compromised</li> </ul>	<p><u>Applying Tools</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with the city on the District Plan</li> <li>• In partnership with city leadership, get the zoning right, considering remapping, overlay zones, incentives for flexible use of larger homes, transfer of development rights and subdivision limitations</li> <li>• Consider local historic designation, in order to have protective “teeth”</li> <li>• Apply, “ramp up” the easement program</li> </ul>
<p><u>Inappropriate Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New development eroding character, “death by a thousand cuts”</li> <li>• Tear downs, subdivision of large lots (including unknown future of Woodward holdings), variance requests and many folks desire to move here</li> <li>• Automobile dependent development pressure that increases impervious cover and impacts greenspace</li> <li>• Lack of understanding and/or compliance with historic guidelines and resulting eroding of neighborhood character and quality of life</li> </ul>	<p><u>Managing Change</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be proactive and target priority properties for conservation</li> <li>• Work with developers to find common goals and new projects that enhance the community and meet developers’ needs</li> <li>• Consider how at risk properties can evolve, such as the Woodward and other large tracts; corner properties; larger buildings that require interior flexibility or alternative uses, etc.</li> <li>• Strive to retain CH’s uncanny ability to maintain aesthetics while adapting to the contemporary world</li> </ul>

# Chestnut Hill

## Conservation, Preservation & Development Study

### Summary of February 2<sup>nd</sup> Stakeholder Meeting

#### Group Exercise #1

Five tables of 6 to 8 participants completed the exercise. A summary of the responses to the questions follows.

1. List three top priority threats that your table believes the community should address. The list of threats is provided for inspiration, you need not limit your response to those items.

- Development pressure
- Development and developers
- Subdivisions of large lots, needing further attention
- People don't understand what makes Chestnut Hill special
- Lack of planning
- Inability to plan far enough into the future; diversity sustainability
- Lack of response of CHCA/CHC in local community and in faith due to lack of engagement
- Consolidation of ownership & vacancies impacting Germantown Avenue as spine of Chestnut Hill that holds the community together
- Loss of historical aesthetic qualities, such as front yard parking
- Threat to our Character – signage, and Germantown Avenue Guidelines
- Surrounding Communities' Zoning, - ie Erdenheim farm
- Zoning amendments that allows unwanted development
- PZC maximum property size inconsistent with lot sizes in Chestnut Hill
- Lack of fit between existing housing and aging populations
- Crime and Police responsibility
- Have not protect everything that needs to be protected
- [Poor] health of the business district

2. List three top priority opportunities that your table believes the community should address. The list of opportunities is provided for inspiration, you need not limit your response to those items.

- District plans
- Fine tune zoning
- Garden community – green parks connection
- Different types of density within the neighborhood with some dense developments that are well-designed
- Young families moving in
- Reinforce character through our existing ORC process
- Encourage healthy occupancy of properties, open space and encourage conservation easements
- Larger lot sizes, greater street frontage, activation of accessory building provisions
- Expand inclusivity with variety of participant for input, engagement
- Pedestrian oriented community, walkability and connected with public transit
- Green TOD
- Modification of existing housing forcing population, taking advantage of mixed-modal transportation, and pedestrian mode
- Education
- More Harry Potter-like opportunities

3. Is anyone at your table aware of strategies, programs, incentives used elsewhere that encourage preservation, conservation and manage change ? If so, write them down!

- Graphic guides for development
- Example brownstones in NYC encourage people to preserve their historic homes
- Transfer of Development Rights



# CHESTNUT HILL RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION + DEVELOPMENT STUDY 2017

## May 31 2017 Key Stakeholders Meeting *STUDY RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS*

### AGENDA

**WELCOME .....** **Eileen Javers and Laura Lucas**  
*Presidents of CH Conservancy and CHCA*

**STUDY PURPOSE AND GOALS .....** **Joyce Lenhardt and Lori Salganicoff**

- In response to increasing teardown, subdivision and redevelopment pressure on residentially-zoned parcels, effectively guide conservation, preservation and development efforts
- The Study sought to collect, map, and begin to evaluate previously unconnected data and plans
- The Study will provide a flexible tool to prepare the community for informed public discussions and decision-making, and will help coordinate efforts by different organizations
- This will be especially useful in the fall of 2017, when the Philadelphia Planning Commission commences the Northwest Philadelphia District Plan, one of the final elements of the city's [Philadelphia2035 Comprehensive Plan](#).

**RESULTS .....** **Lori Salganicoff, Angelina Jones, Joyce Lenhardt**

- Development Management Tools
- Study Maps including Case Studies

**FALL 2017 UPPER NORTHWEST DISTRICT PLAN .....** **Joyce Lenhardt**

**SUMMER 2017 NEXT STEPS .....** **Lori Salganicoff and John Landis**

- Immediate project 1: Prioritize properties to protect
- Immediate project 2: Further examine "Development Management Tools" possibilities
- Key stakeholder groups figure out other immediate project
  - How do zoning districts support present conditions and needs; what areas are vulnerable to out-of-scale development
  - Parking study
  - Other? Please suggest, and volunteer and add your name

This Study, and tonight's refreshments, were made possible by a generous grant from the **William Penn Foundation**.

Meeting space provided by Chestnut Hill College

Wine provided by Bowman Properties, Ltd.

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (and community affiliations)**

- Co-Chair and Project Manager Lori Salganicoff · Preservationist; Planner (CH Conservancy)
- Co-Chair Joyce Lenhardt · Architect (CHCA)
- Elie-Antoine Atallah · Architect
- Richard Bartholomew · Planner; Architect
- Barbara Baumbach · Realtor (CHBD)
- Patricia Cove · Preservationist; Designer (CH Conservancy, CHCA)
- Steve Gendler · Economist; Developer (CHCA)
- John Landis · Planner, University of Pennsylvania (CHCA)
- Maura McCarthy · Conservationist (FOW)
- Mindy O'Connor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Patricia Pregmon · Easement Attorney
- James Query · Landscape Architect, Philadelphia University
- Peter Saylor · Architect (CH Conservancy)
- Richard Snowden · Developer (CH Conservancy, CHCA, CHBD)
- Ian Hegarty · Philadelphia Planning Commission

**MEETINGS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

- **January 26, 2017** – 7:30 – 10:00 AM – Steering Committee kick-off meeting
- **February 2, 2017** – 6:00 PM – Joint meeting with the Historic District Advisory Committee and the Land-Use Planning and Zoning Committee
- **February 23, 2017** – 7:30 – 10:00 AM – Steering Committee meeting
- **March, 2017** – to be determined
- **April 13, 2017** – 7:30 – 10:00 AM – Steering Committee meeting
- **April 21, 2017** – 6:00 PM – CH Conservancy's special program [Visionaries' Roundtable: Preservation & Change in Chestnut Hill](#)
- **May 11, 2017** – 7:30 – 10:00 AM – Steering Committee final meeting





## CHESTNUT HILL RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION + DEVELOPMENT STUDY 2017

### Identifying Priority Projects and Next Steps

*a draft analysis done by the **Steering Committee***

Following Steering Committee meetings and stakeholder outreach from January to April 2017, the Committee convened to discuss how to identify and address critical issues. The results below reflect one work session and are intended as starting point in identifying specific actions towards the three desired outcomes that will be introduced to the City of Philadelphia District Planning process, anticipated in the Fall of 2017.

The results identify problems, interventions and measures of success. This will require further discussion and participation by Chestnut Hill community organizations, residents and business owners. The Chestnut Hill Conservancy and Chestnut Hill Community Association welcome your thoughts on this initial draft, as well as constructive suggestions for moving forward.

#### Guiding Principle 1: Preserve Integrity of Architecture and the Cultural Landscape

The Problem	3-5 Interventions	Measures of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant building not being preserved/saved</li><li>• Not enough constraints and incentive to direct new construction</li><li>• City setbacks and scale standards inadequate to conditions in Chestnut Hill</li><li>• Some houses not well maintained</li><li>• Lack of recognition of great architecture, design &amp; open space planning</li><li>• Easements are novel/unfamiliar</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant resources to be protected identified by end of summer 2017</li><li>• New contextual standards or zoning tools created for new construction to contribute to architectural integrity of community</li><li>• Education, stealth advocacy to broaden community knowledge and make informed choices</li><li>• Create appropriate incentive (dimensional, financial, promotional)</li><li>• Development management tools as appropriate (eg Conservation Overlay, Philadelphia Register)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Realtors &amp; owners are aware of significance of their resources</li><li>• Dimensional/financial incentive exist to encourage preservation, conservation, appropriate new construction</li><li>• Proactive, not reactive protection in place for significant resources</li><li>• Resources are well-maintained (those not maintained receive incentives to repair/restore)</li></ul>

## Guiding Principle 2: Manage Subdivision and Redevelopment

The Problem	3-5 Interventions	Measures of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City does not recognize conservation easements for tax purposes</li> <li>• Possibly “zoning away” property rights</li> <li>• Lack of people/resources to monitor &amp; manage programs</li> <li>• Easement costs</li> <li>• Maintenance of eased properties</li> <li>• Current zoning doesn’t recognize size of land &amp; environmental sensitivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigation requirements in exchange for zoning variance support</li> <li>• Identify priority properties &amp; locations for density; create map/statement/guidelines; and identify Yield map</li> <li>• Educate public and city about value of eased properties</li> <li>• Coalition-building</li> <li>• Encourage good/sympathetic developers as trusted resource for community, able to be proactive rather than reactive</li> <li>• Easement program expanded – identifying properties &amp; engaging property owners</li> <li>• Modifying tax abatement program to favor historic and conservation properties</li> <li>• Formulate and introduce a zoning overlay w/incentives (density exchange)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to be proactive rather than reactive in managing development/developers</li> <li>• 5 easements per year</li> <li>• Grants to cover easement costs</li> <li>• Recognition by city that eased property has value</li> <li>• Taxed at lower rate</li> <li>• Resources to proactively evaluate and plan for property potential development</li> <li>• Citywide density exchange new development of appropriate scale/quality/design</li> <li>•</li> </ul>



## Guiding Principle 3: Protect the Wissahickon Watershed

The Problem	3-5 Interventions	Measures of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fragmented development process makes preservation/conservation difficult</li> <li>Little money and political will</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wissahickon watershed overlay mapped &amp; layer in GIS</li> <li>Use existing land studies to ID &amp; pursue land targets (publicity, engagement) that ties into, expands policy work</li> <li>Research existing canopy &amp; goal setting. Bring together partners to building canopy into CHCA review process. Consider quid pro quo for developers</li> <li>Work with City &amp; NGO partners to ID and remedy gaps in communication with CHCons primary on OPA-spearheading/driving force</li> <li>Make CHCons head of ID Conservation District w/Council. Working w/council to enact policy that encourages easement donation through district stds</li> <li>Fee simple acquisition of target props</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree canopy conservation = no net loss and higher representation of three species, and new planting native</li> <li>Open Space conservation = a X(tbd)% increase in conserved land; a strategy for protection of X% of conserved land</li> <li>Policy Change = PWD, L&amp;I, PCPC all working off same specs/standards; OPA deduction for assessed value of conservation land; ID Chestnut Hill as conservation district; and, policy that encourages donation in district and easements enacted.</li> </ul>

### Online resources that should be accessed for up to date information:

- Philadelphia Register of Historic Places: <http://www.phila.gov/historical/register/Pages/RegisterofHistoricPlaces.aspx>
- Property assessments: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/opa-property-assessments>
- Vacant Property Indicator: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/vacant-property-indicators>
- City Owned Vacant Property: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/city-owned-vacant-property>
- Tax Delinquent Properties: <https://www.opendataphilly.org/dataset/property-tax-balances>
- City of Philadelphia Metadata Catalog: <http://metadata.phila.gov/index.html>
- Stroud's WikiWatershed/Model My Watershed: <https://wikiwatershed.org/>
- Greater Philadelphia History Network: <https://www.philageohistory.org/geohistory/>