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Discovering Chestnut Hill: The little parts of conservation that make up the big picture

Posted on November 15, 2019 (https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/11/15/discovering-chestnut-hill-the-little-parts-of-conservation-that-make-up-the-big-picture/) by Contributor (https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/author/contributor/)



(https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/WEB-Discovering-CH-111419.jpg)

A view of a meticulously-maintained eased property. (Photo by Kevin Hughes)

by Kevin Hughes

Chestnut Hill is a unique and beautiful place. Known for its open spaces, mature trees, exceptional architecture, and access to the Wissahickon Park, it's no wonder why the community was recognized by Forbes in 2007 as one of America's Top 7 Urban Enclaves. To many people who call Chestnut Hill their home, protecting and enhancing that beauty is a priority.

But this dedication to the protection and enhancement of the natural features of one's community may sometimes be stifled by a misconception that conservation is somehow bigger than anything an individual can accomplish. For me, this is a completely understandable misconception.

Let's think for a moment about the examples of conservation we see on a regular basis. In the news, we are exposed to the exceptional work of large conservation organizations protecting hundreds of acres of rural ecosystem in a single transaction, or even thousands of acres being added to an existing park. Stories perpetually circulate about wildlife organizations that are working to protect whole species that have inconceivably been on the edge of extinction for decades. With conservation examples like these surrounding us at all times, it may be hard to believe that the decisions you make in your backyard carry the same weight.

In past articles, I have described a legal instrument called easements, which allow landowners to protect their property in perpetuity. Easements are collaboratively drafted in conjunction with your friendly neighborhood land trust (that's us) to identify the things you want to see protected on your property – watercourses, trees, open space, etc. When finalized, this agreement is then attached to the deed of the property (ensuring it exists after a landowner's tenure on the property) and is enforced by the land trust forever.

Easements are one of the strongest conservation tools that exist. But, conservation does not just happen through easements. In an urban area like Chestnut Hill, conservation looks different than in other places. Though conservation can be thought of as the sum of a number of processes and parts in ecosystems everywhere, the small scale of Chestnut Hill makes these small parts seem more apparent.

To help facilitate implementation of the little parts of conservation that make up the big picture, the conservancy has developed an online conservation resource library that describes best practices from topics like pest management, tree planting, and invasive plant species detection and removal. This resource library will grow and evolve as we acquire new materials and test different formats. Since this is a resource library to support conservation of our shared community, we want to hear from you, too. What topics do you want to learn more about? What resources have you found that you feel could benefit your neighbors? How can we better help you?

Visit the conservancy's website (http://CHConservancy.org/conservation-resources) to review the conservation resource library page. As always, to learn more about how the Chestnut Hill Conservancy is protecting open space and natural resources or to provide feedback about how we can improve the online resources page, contact me at kevin@chconservancy.org

Kevin Hughes is the conservation and easements manager for the Chestnut Hill Conservancy.

This entry was posted in Discovering Chestnut Hill (https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/category/discovering-chestnut-hill/) and tagged Discovering Chestnut Hill (https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/tag/discovering-chestnut-hill/). Bookmark the permalink (https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2019/11/15/discovering-chestnut-hill-the-little-parts-of-conservation-that-make-up-the-big-picture/).

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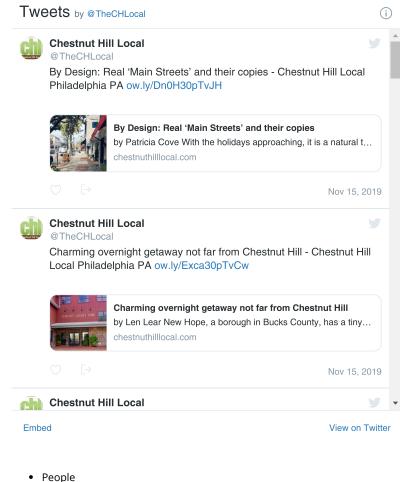
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