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Letters, Jan. 30

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Hospital plans driven by marketing

The Development Review Committee (DRC) held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, January 21. It was very reassuring to this resident-for-the-last-60-years of Chestnut Hill. I am familiar with the Chestnut Hill Community Association (CHCA); my wife, Ann Ward Spaeth was active in the CHCA for many years, and I was once its president. The DRC has an important, tough job. At its last meeting it demonstrated great skill.

Perhaps 50 residents came to the meeting because of concerns about new signs Chestnut Hill Hospital (The Hospital) wants to erect. The Chair of the meeting, Larry McEwen, outlined the procedure clearly. He was a fine moderator assuring an orderly meeting and allowing every person who wished to speak the opportunity to do so. And he listened. The representatives for the hospital presented their plans. The members of the DRC asked questions and then several expressed their opinions. Ms. Cove spoke at length, and I feel sure the residents concluded that Ms. Cove is a knowledgeable person who understands what makes our "Greene Countrie Towne" a wonderful place to live, and who devotes her time to enhance that. She spoke strongly and eloquently. Ms. Salganicoff, Executive Director of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy, asked the sign designer excellent, pertinent questions, some related to long-term planning. Her thoughtfulness and concern were also reassuring.

It seemed that the major impetus for the new signs was branding and marketing. It is sad that the practice of medicine has devolved into being a business. As it has chosen to become profit-driven it has adopted business practices that characterize a capitalistic system. We have been fortunate to have a good hospital in our community. It deserves supporting. However, those needing care should remember to seek practitioners (in all fields) who are competent, compassionate and wise rather than those who are the best marketers.

George Spaeth, MD Chestnut Hill

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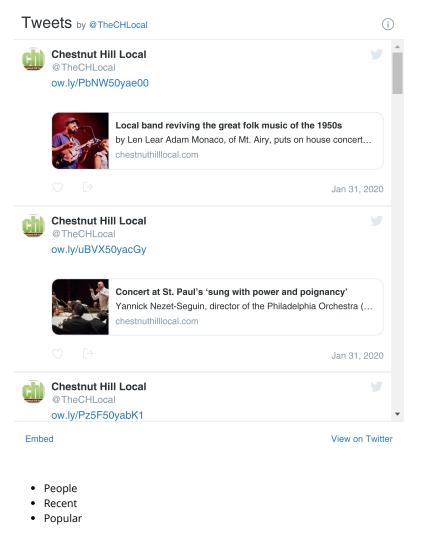
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