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## Your family can plant virtual trees now in Chestnut Hill

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This 1953 photograph shows (left to right) Joseph Pirall, Russell Medinger and Mary Ann Stalb planting a tree near the intersection of Germantown Avenue and Bethlehem Pike. While the exact program with which this tree-planting event is unknown, it was presumably associated with the Chestnut Hill Development Group's efforts to make Chestnut Hill more attractive to

shoppers starting in the early 1950's. The Development Group would later be renamed the Chestnut Hill Business Association. (Photo courtesy by Chestnut Hill Conservancy)

Like the Pete Seeger song "Turn! Turn! Turn! (To Everything There Is a Season)," There is a time to plant, a time to reap.

With shelter in place mandates this year, it's more complicated for gardeners to plant with many of our favorite plant supply stores closed for the month. But with the help of the Chestnut Hill Tree Tenders, you and your family can do just that. During the month of April, the Chestnut Hill Tree Tenders are seeking your help to plant 50 virtual trees along our residential streets.

The Chestnut Hill Community Association (CHCA) will help them get the word out and collect commitment forms from homeowners in the area. Both groups will support the effort by sharing a virtual map and signs announcing the location of the future tree. Twice a year, the Tree Tenders solicit applications for free street trees through a citywide program of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), up to three trees per household. Currently, they are urging homeowners to apply now for the Fall 2020 planting. As PHS cannot grant all requests, the CHCA will consider covering the cost of a certain number of trees through its CHCA Tree Fund.

"This is a great opportunity for families with kids of all ages to "plant" a street tree and design a home school exercise around Earth Day, learning about the critical role of trees in combatting climate change, identifying tree species suitable for the urban environment, and enhancing the unique character of our neighborhood," said the current co-chairs of the Chestnut Hill Tree Tenders, Jean McCoubrey and Monika Hemmers. "During your daily walks or bike rides around the neighborhood, why not make a game out of identifying blocks in need of more street trees? Wouldn't it be a great reminder for our area kids to grow up with these trees and remember how their parents turned a time that was a little scary for them into a positive silver lining effort in their community. Let's plant some virtual trees that will grow with us."

"We are also interested in appealing to homeowners willing to coordinate with their neighbors to plan for four or five trees in a row for greater impact," said CHCA President Laura Lucas. "We've done that in two of our recent planting cycles and it really has contributed to greening Chestnut Hill on a larger scale in our residential neighborhoods. We will also be appealing to some area business and institutional leaders to help us green Chestnut Hill so the Tree Tenders can reach their goal of identifying 50 trees to plant."

Forms can be found on Chestnut Hill Community Association website at (<http://www.chestnuthill.org/>) [chestnuthill.org/docs/Street\\_Tree\\_Request\\_Form\\_General.pdf](http://www.chestnuthill.org/docs/Street_Tree_Request_Form_General.pdf) ([https://www.chestnuthill.org/docs/Street\\_Tree\\_Request\\_Form\\_General.pdf](https://www.chestnuthill.org/docs/Street_Tree_Request_Form_General.pdf)). Scan and return first two pages of the form by the end of April and we'll share our virtual tree map and signage for identified trees in May.

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