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HISTORY ✦ ARCHITECTURE ✦ OPEN SPACE

SNAPSHOT FY-2020

July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020

Despite—and perhaps because of—the challenges of a pandemic; social, economic, and political unrest; the need for greater racial equity in all we do; and ongoing teardown/infill redevelopment pressures; community stewardship means more now than ever before. Guided by the **2019–2022 Strategic Plan**, the Conservancy continued to serve as an educational center and leading advocate for the history, architecture, and open space of Chestnut Hill and surrounding communities in the Wissahickon watershed.

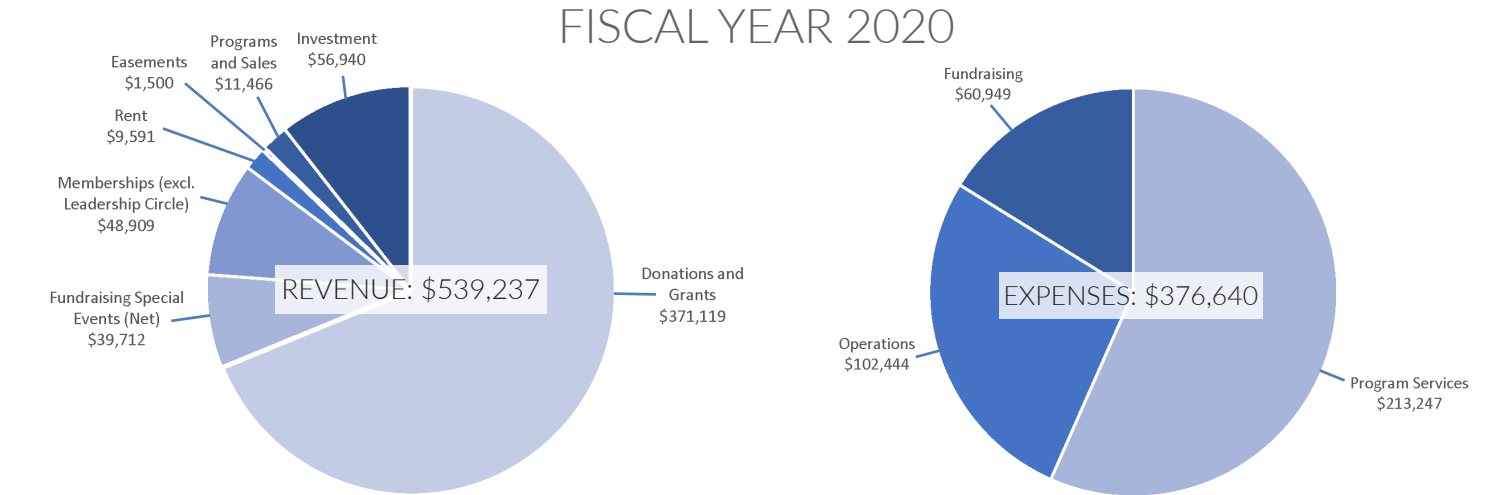
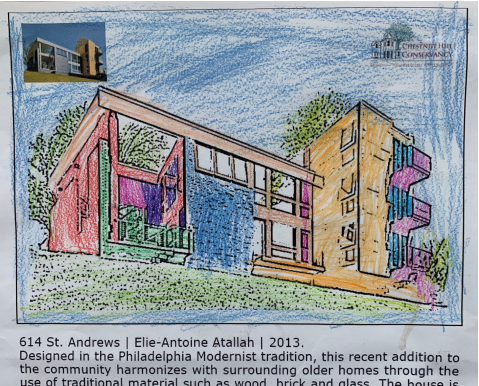
Several notable **preservation successes** included averting demolition of a significant part of the *Keewaydin* estate and continuing to advise neighbors on next possible steps. **208 Rex Avenue**, provisionally protected since 2017 “in review” by the Philadelphia Historical Commission, began moving toward ultimate designation. Quiet work to preserve the **Shipley White House** also progressed and became more public. And efforts to facilitate preservation in **Springfield Township** resulted in the Preservation Ordinance and Historical Commission now in place. The **Architectural Hall of Fame** added 5 properties to that distinguished list at a fabulous December 2019 gala, and several significant preservation projects were recognized with **2019 Preservation Awards**.

The Conservancy continued to hold **48 easements preserving 19 historic buildings and conserving over 100 acres of privately-held watershed land and trees**. This innovative, accredited Conservation and Easements Program, managed in partnership with Friends of the Wissahickon, continued strong in spite of reduced staffing for half of the year. Newly-adopted virtual meeting tools especially benefitted this program, facilitating better communications with owners, prospective buyers, and potentially-eased property owners.

The **Archives** assisted hundreds of researchers in person when possible and also online. **Donations** to the Archives continued steadily, and more than 540 volunteer hours were spent cataloging photos and transcribing oral histories. Images were posted weekly via **social media**, and several Local articles were written highlighting aspects of Chestnut Hill and vicinity history. As an archive of our social history, the Conservancy documented how the community has experienced and responded to the year’s challenges.

The Conservancy presented its third annual **Night of Lights** public exhibition pre-pandemic in October 2019, welcoming hundreds to stroll a Germantown Avenue commercial corridor vibrantly transformed with projected photos and films from the Archives, architectural lighting, live music, interactive elements, and an expanded opportunity for the public to record oral histories. Committed to continuing this exhibition during the pandemic, the Conservancy began planning the fourth (2020) exhibition in Spring 2020, retaining core elements, adding innovative virtual content, and encouraging physical distancing.

Some planned events and public programs were cancelled, but more were creatively reimaged for virtual presentation. In addition, during the earliest and most isolated days of the pandemic this spring, the Conservancy created “**History at Home**,” crafting and sending out free activities several times each week. This included narrated history-themed slideshow videos, educational content, a monthly “Bloom Where You Are Planted” view into all things green, as well as educational information and games.





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JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020

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