



Dear Friends,

As the Executive Director of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy, I am writing concerning the Greylock estate at 209 W. Chestnut Hill Avenue, and to underscore the Conservancy's unwavering commitment to the conservation and preservation goals that we have vigorously championed for over 55 years.

In addition to being an active preservation advocate and research archive, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy is an accredited land trust, holding 52 easements that protect over 105 acres of open space and 21 historic buildings in the communities surrounding Wissahickon Park (the Wissahickon watershed).

The Conservancy has been connected to Greylock since 2001, when a conservation easement was donated to the organization by its former owner. A preservation easement and an amendment to both were subsequently completed in 2004. Visit www.chconservancy.org/Greylock for a brief timeline and links to the easement documents.

Over the past decade, Conservancy staff and members of the Conservation and Easements Committee (a joint committee of the Conservancy and Friends of the Wissahickon), when requested, have diligently reviewed and provided feedback on numerous project proposals to restore and develop the site.

In the past few weeks, a proposed redevelopment project for the Greylock estate has been in the community spotlight as the owners pursue variances through Philadelphia's zoning process. Because the current proposal will require amendments to the easements, the Conservancy has decided not to participate in the variance process as a Registered Community Organization and is remaining impartial as these variances are considered by the community.

Conservation easements, while perpetual, may occasionally need to be amended to best meet their conservation objectives, due to the inability to predict all the circumstances that may arise in the future. As described by WeConservePA (formerly the PA Land Trust Association), "conservation easements are intended to last—to ensure protection of important resources, no matter people's whims—through the decades and centuries. However, the world changes and so do understandings of how best to meet conservation objectives. A land trust must be prepared to address these changes in order to ensure that its conservation work is effective while assuring its supporters and the public that it is a reliable agent of conservation."

At this time, it is premature for the Conservancy to consider whether to amend Greylock easements. Once the zoning approval process has concluded, the Conservancy will, if requested by the owner, review the proposal as approved by the ZBA. Any amendment that ultimately may be considered by the Conservancy must be consistent with the easements' objectives and the Conservancy's Easement Amendment Policy, which is available on our website.

The Conservancy is dedicated to finding a positive and sustainable result for Greylock that aligns with the conservation and preservation goals of the easements. I wish to thank the many community members concerned about the future of Greylock for their dedication, and to reiterate the Conservancy's commitment to protecting and celebrating the community and its built and natural environment. Together, we can continue to preserve Chestnut Hill's green, historic village character.

Sincerely,

Lori Salganicoff
Executive Director, Chestnut Hill Conservancy