

## **Chestnut Hill Conservancy Celebrates Preservation and Architectural Excellence at Inaugural Preservation Party**

The Chestnut Hill Conservancy hosted its inaugural Preservation Party on December 3, 2024, at the historic Venetian Social Club, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary. The sold-out event, emceed by architectural historian and writer George McNeely, showcased the community's dedication to preserving its architectural and cultural heritage. The highlights of the evening included honoring the 2024 Preservation Recognition Award winners, unveiling five new inductees to the Architectural Hall of Fame, and a heartfelt tribute to outgoing Executive Director Lori Salganicoff, celebrating her transformative decade of leadership.

### **Honoring Preservation Excellence**

The **Preservation Recognition Awards** celebrate outstanding projects that exemplify best practices in historic preservation, stewardship, and sustainability. This year's winners include:

- **Hirst-Duhring House Preservation and Redevelopment (208-210 Rex Avenue)**  
*Community Action Award:* Led by the Rex Avenue Neighbors Association, this project preserved the historic Italianate structure and protected significant heritage trees while balancing thoughtful redevelopment.  
*The team included the Rex Avenue Neighbors Association, Millan Architects, Cassie Myers, and the HOW Group LLC*
- **Chestnut Hill House**  
*Sustainable Stewardship Award:* This project incorporated geothermal HVAC systems, stormwater management, and habitat restoration while preserving the property's architectural integrity.  
*The team includes Peter Zimmerman Architects, Inc., Corso Brothers Construction Corp., Hess Landscape Architects, and JP Interiors*
- **Light Up the Tower (209 East Hartwell Lane)**  
*Exemplary Stewardship of Important Sites – Early-Stage Organization Award:* This community-driven project revitalized the Water Tower Recreation Center and WWII Memorial, transforming it into a vibrant public space.  
*The team included the Water Tower Advisory Council, Grenald Waldron Lighting Associates, and Manero & Sons*
- **Historic RittenhouseTown Homestead and Bake House Restoration (207 Lincoln Drive)**  
*Exemplary Stewardship of Important Sites – Established Organization Award:* This

restoration preserved a National Historic Landmark and revived its beehive oven for public programming.

*The team includes Historic RittenhouseTown Inc., Kurtz Construction Company, Frisco Painting, Mara Restoration, and the Fairmount Park Conservancy*

- **Seminole Street Roof Replacement (8000 Block of Seminole Street)**

*Historic Substantial Feature Work – Roof Award:* Expert craftsmanship restored this Victorian-era slate roof with historically compatible materials.

*The team included Kurtz Construction Company, Joe Hughes, Joe Sikorski, and Erbol Jantaev*

- **Wissahickon Park Trail Arch Restoration (Rex Avenue)**

*Historic Structure Restoration Award:* The Depression-era stone arch was restored using pH-neutral cleaning methods and historically compatible lime-based mortar.

*The team included Premier Building Restoration*

- **Enclosed Porch Project (319 East Gravers Lane)**

*Historic Substantial Feature Work – Porch Infill Award:* This project modernized the Victorian home with energy-efficient upgrades while respecting its historic charm.

*The team included Jean McCoubrey and Harth Builders*

## **Celebrating Architectural Icons**

The **Chestnut Hill Architectural Hall of Fame** recognizes the area's most cherished buildings, structures, and landscapes, based on a popular vote. The Chestnut Hill Conservancy revealed five new inductees during the event:

1. **Rex House (8840 Germantown Avenue)**

Built in 1750 with subsequent additions, this Federal-style home is one of the earliest surviving buildings on Germantown Avenue.

2. **St. Martins Station (311 W Springfield Avenue)**

Designed by Washington Bleddyn Powell, this historic train station has served the community since 1884.

3. **Streeper's Pharmacy (8532 Germantown Avenue)**

This Tudor-style building, attributed to George T. Pearson, housed pharmacies for over a century and now serves as a custom framing and interior design business.

4. **John Story Jenks School (8301 Germantown Avenue)**

Designed by Irwin T. Catharine, this 1924 school is a landmark of public education in Chestnut Hill.

## 5. **8003 Navajo Street**

This 1924 property, a Cotswold-style home designed by Robert Rodes McGoodwin, reflects the influence of English architecture and thoughtful urban planning.

### **A Tribute to Lori Salganicoff**

State Representative Tarik Khan delivered a surprise tribute to Lori Salganicoff, honoring her decade of leadership at the Conservancy.

“Lori, your work has not only preserved the structures and spaces that make Chestnut Hill special but also created a sense of pride and stewardship in this community,” said Khan.

During her tenure, the Conservancy preserved 22 significant buildings—two of which were saved from active demolition—and protected over 20 acres of open space through 14 easements under its nationally accredited conservation easement program.

### **Introducing a New Era of Leadership**

Guests at the Preservation Party had the opportunity to meet incoming Executive Director David Gest, who will officially begin his role on January 6, 2025. Gest engaged with many attendees, sharing his enthusiasm for continuing the Conservancy’s 55-year legacy of preservation and stewardship. With a background in law, city planning, historic preservation, and community engagement, Gest looks forward to building on the Conservancy’s achievements and guiding the organization into a new chapter of growth.

### **Looking Ahead**

The Conservancy invites the community to its hybrid 2025 Annual Meeting on Thursday, January 9. The hybrid event will recap highlights from 2024, feature a presentation by Gest, include membership votes on new directors and committee members, and highlight plans for 2025.

For more information about the Preservation Party, the Architectural Hall of Fame, or the Annual Meeting, visit [chconservancy.org](http://chconservancy.org).