



Friday, January 17, 2025

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Conservancy members convene for 2025 annual meeting

Posted Thursday, January 16, 2025 12:00 am

by Maggie Dougherty (/browse.html?byline=Maggie Dougherty)

Frigid temperatures did not dissuade members of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy from gathering at Springside Chestnut Hill Academy's Wissahickon Inn on the evening of Jan. 9 to usher in the new year with an annual meeting. Leaders of the organization took to the podium to discuss a review of the past year along with a look ahead to 2025. The meeting comes at a time of much change for the Conservancy, faced with an outgoing board president and executive director.

Opening remarks were made by Eileen Javers, the outgoing president of the board, who shared some words about members of the Conservancy's community who had died this past year. Among them was Charlie Dilks, a former board member who was honored for his contributions to environmental protection at the Conservancy's gala last spring. A moment of silence was held for all the deceased, including President Jimmy Carter on his national day of mourning.

A brief review of the Conservancy's finances revealed that revenue and expenses were essentially equal, around \$650,000 each. "As a nonprofit, we're not here to have money sit," said Bill Webster, the first vice president of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy board. "We were very good about making sure that we were spending in line with the development that came in."

After nominees for the board of directors were elected and re-elected, four Conservancy staff members shared updates. Alex Bartlett, the curator and archivist, spoke about the photographs, documents, and more in their collection and how the public is encouraged to use these archives as a resource. With more than 5,000 pieces added in 2024, the archives are constantly expanding.

Programs manager Chrissy Clawson summarized the 18 diverse events hosted in 2024, such as Night of Lights and a Preservation Party, with over 625 volunteer hours contributed. Krista Gebbia, conservation manager, spoke about the 52 easements created with Friends of the Wissahickon. Ashley Maass discussed plans to diversify funding and seek partnership opportunities in 2025.

David Gest, the new executive director, then took the stage. "It is, in fact, my fourth day on the job today," Gest joked. "So please forgive me if I don't quite appreciate all the nuances of the Conservancy." His address, "Building on a Strong Foundation and Growing Sustainably," focused on the Conservancy's achievements and outlined his goals to think more about the organization's geographic footprint.

"What does it mean to be a conservancy?" Gest asked. "What does it mean to be a land trust? What are those standards? Who are we preserving for?" He also mentioned his goals to get more space for the archives and diversify fundraising.

"My attitude is always 'collaboration with everyone,'" Gest said. "I like to bring people together. My secret is that one of the reasons I decided to stop practicing law was the whole negotiation with opposing parties kind of got to me after a while. I'd like to be more on the city planning side and bringing people together."

After remarks from insurance company CHUBB, the Conservancy's lead sponsor, the meeting was adjourned.

OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY INTEREST YOU

Mt. Airy group tackles commercial zoning changes (/stories/mt-airy-group-tackles-commercial-zoning-changes,35219)

Moments of joy and connection make our community ... (/stories/moments-of-joy-and-connection-make-our-community-stronger,35234)

Dumpers hit local circus (/stories/dumpers-hit-local-circus,35214)

Northwest neighborhoods unite for King day of action (/stories/northwest-neighborhoods-unite-for-king-day-of-action,35213)



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LOCAL CALENDAR

Wed, Jan 22 Sponsored (**Baby Bop Story and Activity Time - Torresdale Library**

Fri, Jan 31 @6:00pm Sponsored (**Let's Sing Taylor**

Sun, Jan 19 @9:00pm **Billy Price Band**

Torresdale Library

The Keswick Theatre

118 NORTH

Fri, Jan 17

Cracker

World Cafe Live

Fri, Jan 17

Jay Pharoah

Punch Line Philly

Fri, Jan 17

Jake Mattera & Friends

Punch Line Philly

See All Events

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THE LATEST

Jan 16, 2025 issue (/stories/jan-16-2025-issue,35175)



(</stories/jan-16-2025-issue,35175>)



Roberto Clemente Jr. headlines at MCCC (/stories/roberto-clemente-jr-headlines-at-mccc,35245)

Roberto Clemente Jr., son of baseball legend Roberto Clemente Sr., will deliver a keynote address at Montgomery County Community College.

(</stories/roberto-clemente-jr-headlines-at-mccc,35245>)



Morris Arboretum offers winter discounts through February (/stories/morris-arboretum-offers-winter-discounts-through-february,35244)

The Morris Arboretum & Gardens is offering reduced admission prices through Feb. 28.

(/stories/morris-arboretum-offers-winter-discounts-through-february,35244)



At Woodmere: A Cockney fairytale with a 'Sexy Beast' (/stories/at-woodmere-a-cockney-fairytale-with-a-sexy-beast,35243)

One of the enduring popular genres in modern cinema is the heist film.

(/stories/at-woodmere-a-cockney-fairytale-with-a-sexy-beast,35243)



Chamber music trio opens this weekend at Woodmere (/stories/chamber-music-trio-opens-this-weekend-at-woodmere,35242)

Chestnut Hill's Woodmere art museum will present a chamber music recital featuring pianist Marja Kaisla, violinist Yevgeniy Dyo and cellist Elina Snellman-Lang.


(/stories/chamber-music-trio-opens-this-weekend-at-woodmere,35242)

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If you're looking for a commemorative event or service project to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., check out the Local's list of upcoming opportunities in Northwest Philadelphia.



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Northwest neighborhoods ...
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