



Chestnut Hill Local

(/)

Monday, May 20, 2024

MAIN MENU



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Conservancy strikes compromise on historic Women's Center



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The Julia Hebard Marsden House, now owned by Temple Health-Chestnut Hill Hospital, has been altered and expanded over the years. In 1977, it became the Chestnut Hill Health Care Women's Center. Photo courtesy of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy Archives.

Posted Friday, May 17, 2024 11:30 am

Chrissy Clawson, programs and communications manager at the Chestnut Hill Conservancy

Amid the backdrop of Historic Preservation Month, Chestnut Hill celebrates a significant victory – an outcome of collaborative efforts between the Chestnut Hill Conservancy and Temple Health-Chestnut Hill Hospital. At its May 10 meeting, the Philadelphia Historical Commission unanimously voted to list the Chestnut Hill Hospital's Women's Center at 8835 Germantown Ave. in the Philadelphia Register.

Formerly known as the Julia Hebard Marsden House, the Chestnut Hill Hospital Women's Center is a testament to the community's resilience. It was crafted through the adaptation of a former historic home.

This victory marks a pivotal moment in the ongoing journey to preserve our community's architectural and cultural legacy. Congratulations to both organizations and the Chestnut Hill community for this preservation win. The conservancy expresses deep gratitude to Councilperson Cindy Bass's office and the Philadelphia Historical Commission for their ongoing involvement in the negotiations.

Designed in a Georgian-influenced Colonial Revival style by the accomplished and prolific architect Charles Barton Keen (1868-1931), the former Julia Hebard Marsden House is listed on the Chestnut Hill National Register Historic District as a significant architectural resource.

Built in 1903 for Julia Hebard Marsden and her husband, Dr. Biddle Reeves Marsden, the house is a distinctive and characteristic example of the Colonial Revival style. Reusing the former home and doctor's office into the Chestnut Hill Women's Center is an excellent example of an institution evolving to benefit itself and the greater community's needs. This transition from residential to institutional use is important for this building.

The Women's Center, the last intact historic building on the hospital's campus, enjoys a rich historical narrative. However, in 2021, discussions emerged about replacing this architectural landmark, prompting the conservancy to swiftly nominate it for preservation. A delicate negotiation ensued between hospital representatives and the conservancy, aiming to balance preservation concerns with the hospital's operational needs.

Ultimately, a compromise emerged to protect the main building's most visible parts while allowing for future growth by excluding the rear ell and carriage house from the designation.

Although the carriage house was excluded from the designation boundaries as part of the compromise, the commission encouraged collaboration between the conservancy and the hospital to document the Carriage House's legacy for posterity.

The agreed-upon boundary, coinciding with the southern section of a larger parcel known as 8811 Germantown Ave., encompassed the main block of the house along with its east and west wings. Notably, the rear wing lay outside the designated boundary, while the west wing, having undergone alterations, retained the potential for future modification or removal.

The Historical Commission will scrutinize future alterations or additions within the delineated boundary, ensuring the property's historical integrity for generations to come.

In navigating preservation challenges, the Chestnut Hill Hospital Women's Center emerges as a success, where compromise facilitates the harmonious coexistence of heritage and progress. The compromise by the Chestnut Hill Conservancy and Temple Health ensures that the legacy of the Julia Hebard Marsden House endures as a testament to the community's ability to grow and evolve and the preservation of its architectural heritage.

OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY INTEREST YOU

A trio of childhood friends brings development home (/stories/a-trio-of-childhood-friends-brings-development-home,32191)

NW Philadelphia: Unprotected and vulnerable (/stories/nw-philadelphia-unprotected-and-vulnerable,32170)

Agencies team up for zoning protection (/stories/agencies-team-up-for-zoning-protection,32093)

Hiram Lodge is listed at \$1.4 million (/stories/hiram-lodge-is-listed-at-14-million,31894)



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LOCAL CALENDAR

<p>Sat, Jun 01 @2:00pm Sponsored</p> <p>The Margarita Day Party!</p> <p>Level Up Bar & Lounge</p> <p>(https://chestnuthilllocal.com/events/#!/details/SENIOR-MONDAYS-AT-BRUNCH-EVERYDAY/13378858/2024-05-20T08)</p>	<p>Sat, Jun 01 @7:00pm Sponsored</p> <p>Enchantment Theatre Company: The Brave Little Tailor</p> <p>Allens Lane Art Center</p>
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Mon, May 20 @8:00am

Senior Mondays at Brunch Everyday

Mon, May 20 @9:00am

Color Fields

The National Apartments

Mon, May 20 @9:00am

Future Without Guns

Quorum at University City Science Center

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THE LATEST



William Gerard Noel (/stories/william-gerard-noel,32274)

William Gerard Noel, loving husband and father, librarian, scholar, curator, educator, careerlong innovator in the digital humanities, and Chestnut Hill resident since 2013, died April 29, 2024, ...

[\(/stories/william-gerard-noel,32274\)](/stories/william-gerard-noel,32274)



'The Warriors' come out to play at the Ambler Theater (/stories/the-warriors-come-out-to-play-at-the-ambler-theater,32273)

The opening shots of Walter Hill's "The Warriors," screening Thursday, May 23 at the Ambler Theater, set the stage for what's to come: a vision of New York City that's part funhouse, part real urban grime.

[\(/stories/the-warriors-come-out-](/stories/the-warriors-come-out-)

to-play-at-the-ambler-theater,32273)



When Lyme strikes your four-legged friend (/stories/when-lyme-strikes-your-four-legged-friend,32272)

In dogs, stiffness is the most common sign of Lyme disease, and it can develop fast enough to really surprise you.

(/stories/when-lyme-strikes-your-four-legged-friend,32272)



Emmy-winning comic returns for Sellersville performance (/stories/emmy-winning-comic-returns-for-sellersville-performance,32270)

I like to think that I discovered Chestnut Hill area native Craig Shoemaker, who will be performing his stand-up comedy act at Sellersville Theater in Bucks County, about a half-hour drive from ...

(/stories/emmy-winning-comic-returns-for-sellersville-performance,32270)



Former Chestnut Hill conductor to lead Cincinnati Symphony (/stories/former-chestnut-hill-conductor-to-lead-cincinnati-symphony,32269)

The Romanian-born conductor, Cristian Macelaru, who formerly lived in Chestnut Hill, has been named the incoming music director of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. He ...

(/stories/former-chestnut-hill-conductor-to-lead-cincinnati-symphony,32269)



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