



# Chestnut Hill Local

(/)  
Monday, April 22, 2024

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## Our work to advance conservation and preservation

Posted Thursday, April 4, 2024 12:00 am

by **Lori Salganicoff, Executive Director, Chestnut Hill Conservancy**

As most in the community are aware, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy and Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW) have remained relatively quiet about the zoning variances sought by the current owner of Greylock, and the related public Registered Community Organization (RCO) deliberations. Neither the Conservancy nor FOW participated in the recent variance process for Greylock, to avoid conflicts between our RCO and easement holder roles with this project.

The Conservancy and FOW maintain a joint program (CEC) to acquire and manage conservation (land protection) and preservation (historic building facade protection) easements in partnership with property owners, for the benefit of present and future generations, the community, and the Wissahickon. The Conservancy is the accredited land trust holding 52 such easements and overseeing the program, including on the Greylock property.

Enforcing as written the conservation and preservation easements we hold is always our first goal and priority. Amendments to easements are rare but as described by Pennsylvania's statewide land trust organization, "the world changes and so do understandings of how best to meet conservation objectives."

Land trusts recognize that it may be necessary or desirable on rare occasions to modify the terms of its easements, but the Conservancy will do so only in accordance with applicable laws and only for uses that have a beneficial effect on the conservation and preservation values they protect. The Conservancy approaches this with the overarching questions: "What action would best advance conservation and preservation in the public interest consistent with the land trust's mission?" Equally important: "What action would best support the objectives of the easements that are the subjects of the proposed change?"

When engaging informally with owners, potential owners, and developers about possible plans for an eased property (including Greylock), the discussion begins with the easement as written. Any formal proposal submitted to the Conservancy must provide sufficient details about project aspects that could require an amendment to the easement.

At the owner's request, the joint CEC informally reviewed an initial version of the current proposal, which presented concepts for the project that were similar to but not the same as the development plans currently being considered by ZBA. In late 2022, the joint committee voted to grant conceptual approval, an informal and preliminary analysis of an early-stage proposal's potential to meet easement goals *if* certain additional conditions are met.

The owner/developer has not presented the most recent plan to the joint committee for discussion and review, as they chose to pursue zoning variances first. No formal proposal with these details has yet been presented to us. Greylock's owner has publicly shared an intention to approach the Conservancy with a formal proposal and request to amend the easements now that the Greylock variance request has progressed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Discussions and negotiations between the property owner and the land trust are confidential as easements are private agreements between an owner and a land trust such as the Conservancy. Nevertheless, it is important to understand our rigorous approach to considering amendments to easements.



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Proposed easement amendments must align with the easements' objectives, our Easement Amendment Policy, Land Trust Alliance standards, and legal requirements, including perpetual duration, public benefit, compliance with federal law, and avoidance of impermissible private benefit (i.e. the private benefit of the amendment must not outweigh its public benefit).

Final approval of amendments rests with the Chestnut Hill Conservancy's board of directors, whose members include owners of eased properties, Greylock's close neighbors, and respected members of the Chestnut Hill community. Complex proposals undergo further review by the Attorney General and the Orphans' Court.

Working together with the owners of eased properties, our joint easement program upholds an easement's goals while emphasizing responsible stewardship. We maintain a collaborative and confidential approach with property owners to achieve each easement's conservation and preservation goals and share the responsibility of upholding the goals of easements with those owners.

As this project progresses, the Conservancy and FOW will do everything in our power to ensure and encourage a responsible and sustainable development that protects the property's natural resources and maintains the appearance and structures of a historic country estate.

OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY INTEREST YOU

**Moving to honor both Jewish and Muslim heritage (/stories/moving-to-honor-both-jewish-and-muslim-heritage,31543)**

**Our reluctant goodbye to a valued reporter (/stories/our-reluctant-goodbye-to-a-valued-reporter,31454)**

**Passover mandate: Let all who are hungry come and eat (/stories/passover-mandate-let-all-who-are-hungry-come-and-eat,31905)**

**Our work to advance conservation and preservation (/stories/our-work-to-advance-conservation-and-preservation,31735)**



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1658fa3a5ceab3f1aeeb7ad90471e817b53d13a90255689&oadest=https%3A%2F%2Fthestagecrafters.org%2Fsweat%2F)

LOCAL CALENDAR

<p>Sat, May 04 @3:00pm Sponsored</p> <p><b>CHEYNEY MAY WKND '24</b></p> <p>Mirage Lounge Philadelphia Mon, Apr 22 @9:00am</p> <p><b>Color Fields</b></p> <p>The National Apartments Mon, Apr 22 @8:00pm</p> <p><b>Special Event: Ahren Belisle</b></p> <p>Helium Comedy Club Philadelphia Tue, Apr 23 @10:30am</p> <p><b>Ambler Arboretum: Storytime for Little Listeners</b></p> <p>Temple University</p> <p>See All Events (<a href="https://chestnuthilllocal.com/events/">https://chestnuthilllocal.com/events/</a>)</p>	<p>Thu, Apr 25 @11:00am Sponsored</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing Workshop On Wills</b></p> <p>ECS St Barnabas Mission</p> <p>Add Your Event (<a href="https://hub.cityspark.com/event/submission/ChestnutHill?utm_medium=internal&amp;utm_source=widget&amp;utm_campaign=add-ev">https://hub.cityspark.com/event/submission/ChestnutHill?utm_medium=internal&amp;utm_source=widget&amp;utm_campaign=add-ev</a>)</p>	<p>Sun, Apr 28 @8:00am Sponsored</p> <p><b>I AM MAN WE STILL EXIST</b></p> <p>Philadelphia City Hall</p>
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THE LATEST



**Area crew: boys on the water, girls on the riverbank (/stories/area-crew-boys-on-the-water-girls-on-the-riverbank,31921)**

The regattas that come later in the annual Manny Flick crew series split the schedule between boys' and girls' events. Two weeks ago, all the girls' races were held first, and the boys followed.

(/stories/area-crew-boys-on-the-water-girls-on-the-riverbank,31921)

**Autism discussion on April 20 (/stories/autism-discussion-on-april-20,31920)**

A panel of experts will discuss the talents and challenges of nonspeaking children and adults with autism at Johnson House Historic Site in Germantown.

**Rescuing Labrador retrievers from breeder farms to loving families (/stories/rescuing-labrador-retrievers-from-breeder-farms-to-loving-families,31918)**

Imagine life as a breeder dog. If you're lucky, a Brookline Labrador Retriever Rescue volunteer comes along and rescues you.



(/stories/rescuing-labrador-retrievers-from-breeder-farms-to-loving-families,31918)



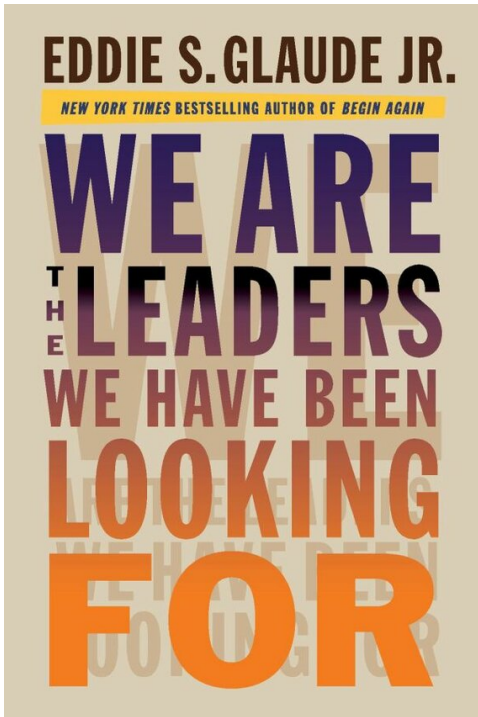
(/stories/hitchcocks-only-comedy-adapted-for-allens-lane-theater,31917)

**Hitchcock's only comedy, adapted for Allens Lane Theater (/stories/hitchcocks-only-comedy-adapted-for-allens-lane-theater,31917)**

Alfred Hitchcock was known as "the master of suspense," but "The Trouble with Harry" is quite different.

**Eddie Glaude Jr. to discuss new book (/stories/eddie-glaude-jr-to-discuss-new-book,31916)**

Princeton professor and MSNBC commentator Eddie Glaude Jr. will discuss his new book on April 22 at Greene Street Friends.



(/stories/eddie-glaude-jr-to-discuss-new-book,31916)

## Henry Bermudez



Woodmere ArtMuseum **On View February 17 through May 19, 2024**

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