

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Chestnut Hill Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Not applicable

not for publication

city, town

vicinity of

state

code

county

code

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

Ownership

- public
- private
- both

Public Acquisition

- n/a in process
- n/a being considered

Status

- occupied
- unoccupied
- work in progress

Accessible

- yes: restricted
- yes: unrestricted
- no

Present Use

- agriculture
- commercial
- educational
- entertainment
- government
- industrial
- military

- museum
- park
- private residence
- religious
- scientific
- transportation
- other:

4. Owner of Property

name See Continuation Sheets. Part 4.

street & number

city, town

vicinity of

state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Room 153, City Hall

city, town

Philadelphia

state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title See Continuation Sheets. Part 6 has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Chestnut Hill comprises a geographically, politically, and socially distinct neighborhood in the northwest corner of Philadelphia. The proposed historic district's boundaries include not only the main portion of the present community but also the historically significant areas of the Cresheim and Wissahickon creeks bordering Chestnut Hill which provided much of its economic vitality prior to 1880. The district excludes Chestnut Hill Village, a 1960s and 1970s housing development, apartment complex, and shopping center located at the community's southeastern border.

The Cresheim and Wissahickon Valleys of Fairmount Park to the south and west, the steep slopes on its northern border, and general elevation above the rest of Philadelphia to this day give Chestnut Hill the sense of remoteness coveted by those who built summer villas there one hundred thirty years ago. Chestnut Hill's varied topography, much of it preserved in its natural state through park and institutional ownership, has set the tone of the community's development. Architectural and landscape design -- reinforced through the recurring choice of rough-cut schist stone as a building material -- seems an extension of these land preserves. Lush, naturalistic border and foundation plantings combine with tree-lined streets laid to follow the contours of the land, giving the impression of an English walking garden, carefully planned, yet appearing as an effortless outgrowth of its natural setting. In the most densely developed sections of Chestnut Hill, abundant street trees, countless small gardens, and the continued use of schist stone in even the most modest neighborhoods maintain the naturalistic setting.

The respect shown the natural character of the land is further underscored by the form and scale of most of Chestnut Hill's early suburban development. The retention of numerous dwellings and farm and commercial buildings dating to the community's early 18th century settlement preserve the village atmosphere. This sense of Chestnut Hill as a village was furthered in the new construction after 1850 and particularly in the numerous projects of the Houston and Woodward families between 1884 and 1935. With few exceptions the great houses of Chestnut Hill are impressive for much the same reasons as many of their more modest counterparts in that a sense of comfortable, human proportion, the quality of detailed design, and the choice of indigenous materials are more important than merely being large. The result is something quite unusual: a community tied architecturally to its natural surroundings, scaled to the human form, and exquisitely planned and detailed with an eye not simply toward grandeur but a rustic, comfortable elegance.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1935	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

Specific dates 1700-1935

Builder/Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Chestnut Hill is a distinct residential neighborhood that has evolved over more than two-and-a-half centuries. As early as 1711 the name "Chestnut Hill" was applied to this area in recorded land transfers. The tiny settlement grew around two roads, Germantown Pike (opened 1687) and Bethlehem Pike (opened 1703), linking Chestnut Hill with Philadelphia and with farms in the back country. The arrival of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad in 1854 transformed the village into a beguiling summer retreat. Developers such as Charles Taylor and Samuel H. Austin and the summer residents they attracted hired noted Philadelphia architects for their ample dwellings. At the same time Samuel Austin accommodated workers within the community by building homes for them on Devon Street and Germantown Avenue. In the early 1880s the astute planning of Henry Howard Houston capitalized on the extension of the Pennsylvania Railroad to Chestnut Hill and created in the community's western portions a planned residential and social community of extraordinary quality. Concurrently, this building activity drew stone masons and other workers to Chestnut Hill, where they and their families remained, forming their own bonds to the community. Houston's son-in-law, Dr. George Woodward, enhanced Houston's work by designing innovative modest housing and attractive landscaping and courtyards, creating Pastorius Park, and constructing substantial mansions. Because of Houston and Woodward, and developers like Taylor and Austin before them, the architects these men chose, and the fine dwellings added to the community by other residents, Chestnut Hill is an uncommon assemblage of most residential styles found in the Philadelphia region. Within this rich display are excellent representations of the work of nearly every major Philadelphia architect or architectural firm from Thomas Ustick Walter to George Howe. For the most part architects, developers, and residents did not superimpose their roads and structures on the remarkable natural setting of Chestnut Hill's portion of the Wissahickon Valley, but allowed its features to shape the community's form.

## D. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheets. Part 9.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property approximately 3 square miles

Quadrangle name Germantown

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

### UTM References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

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F 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheets. Part 10.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jefferson M. Moak

organization Chestnut Hill Historical Society

date 1.31.1985

street & number 33 Benezet Street

telephone 215.242.5264

city or town Philadelphia

state Pennsylvania

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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As a complete entity, the Chestnut Hill Historic District does not appear on any existing federal, state or local survey of historic properties. However, these surveys do include many individual structures and districts which fall within the proposed Chestnut Hill District. These surveys, and the buildings and districts listed upon them, appear below:

1. National Register of Historic Places (Federal)

Anglecot, The, 401 E. Evergreen Avenue  
Gravers Lane Railroad Station, 300 block E. Gravers Lane  
Thomas Mill Road Covered Bridge (Also appears as part of Fairmount Park Historic District and Covered Bridges Thematic Historic District)  
Wissahickon Inn, 500 W. Willow Grove Avenue  
Compton Historic District (Morris Arboretum: part of Compton & Bloomfield Historic District)  
Druim Moir Historic District (complete)  
Fairmount Park Historic District (the Wissahickon and Cresheim valleys form the west and south borders of the Chestnut Hill District respectively)

2. Historic American Buildings Survey (Federal)

Detwiler House, 8226 Germantown Avenue  
Houston-Sauveur House, 8205 Seminole Avenue  
Wigard Jacoby House, 8327 Germantown Avenue  
Wissahickon Inn, 500 W. Willow Grove Avenue

3. Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places (State)

7632-7634 Ardleigh Street: James Monahan House  
2 Bethlehem Pike: Chestnut Hill Baptist Church  
5 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue: Samuel Austin House  
9120 Crefeld Street: Mrs. Benjamin Franklin Pepper House  
7801 Cresheim Road: Peter Hinkle House  
7806 Cresheim Road: Jesse Hinkle House  
401 E. Evergreen Avenue: The Anglecot  
7900 Germantown Avenue: Parvin House  
7921 Germantown Avenue: Melchior Newman House  
8031 Germantown Avenue: Abraham Rex Store  
8132-8134 Germantown Avenue: Peters House  
8121 Germantown Avenue: Rex-Austin House  
8220 Germantown Avenue: Detwiler House  
8217 Germantown Avenue: Hiram Lodge  
8314-8316 Germantown Avenue: Kerper Houses  
8327 Germantown Avenue: Wigard Jacoby House  
8428 Germantown Avenue: Heebner-Cress House  
8226 Germantown Avenue: Detwiler House

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- 8419 Germantown Avenue: Redheffer House (Chestnut Hill Community Center)
  - 8433 Germantown Avenue: Sign of the Swan
  - 8501 Germantown Avenue: Cress Hotel
  - 8608 Germantown Avenue: Chestnut Hill Railroad Station (Pennsylvania Railroad, aka 9 W. Evergreen Avenue)
  - 8607-8609 Germantown Avenue: Artman-Miller House
  - 8617 Germantown Avenue: Hill House
  - 8840 Germantown Avenue: Rex House
  - 8701 Germantown Avenue: Mt. St. Joseph Convent (on Chestnut Hill College campus)
  - 300 block E. Gravers Lane: Gravers Lane Railroad Station
  - 21-23 W. Gravers Lane: Elizabeth Millman House
  - 37 W. Gravers Lane: William Fisher House
  - 108 W. Gravers Lane: William Bickings House
  - 123 W. Highland Avenue: John Stallman House
  - 43 E. Mermaid Lane: John Peberdy House
  - 103 W. Moreland Avenue: Mrs. Fitz Eugene Newbold House
  - 8871 Norwood Avenue: Richard E. McMurtrie House (formerly 100 E. Bells Mill Road)
  - 7922, 7927-7931 Roanoke Street: Josephus C. Gilbert Houses
  - 9198 Stenton Avenue: William Streeper House
  - 9200 Stenton Avenue: John Huston House
  - 9300 Stenton Avenue: Alexander Huston House
  - 18 Summit Street: Thomas W. Evans House
  - 22 Summit Street: Charles MacAlester House
  - 32 Summit Street: Brock-Naglee Residence
  - 8870 Towanda Street: Robert Glendenning Residence
- Mrs. Frazer Harris Residence, address unknown  
Thomas Mill Road Covered Bridge  
Valley Green Inn

4. Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey (State)

7627 Germantown Avenue

5. Philadelphia Historical Commission Register of Historic Places (Local)

- Ardleigh Street at Southampton Avenue: Chestnut Hill Water Tower
- 2 Bethlehem Pike: Chestnut Hill Baptist Church
- 7940 Cherokee Street: Druim Moir Gatehouse
- 8100 Cherokee Street: Druim Moir Carriage House
- 8100 Cherokee Street: Druim Moir Caretaker's House

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- 7-25 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue: Our Mother of Consolation Roman Catholic Church
- 18 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue: St. Paul's Rectory
- 20-30 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue: St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- 401 E. Evergreen Avenue: The Anglecot (presently 401-409 E. Evergreen Avenue and 8601-8607 Prospect Ave.)
- 7921 Germantown Avenue: Melchior Newman House
- 8031 Germantown Avenue: Abraham Rex Store
- 8132-8134 Germantown Avenue: Peters House
- 8217 Germantown Avenue: Hiram Lodge
- 8220 Germantown Avenue: Detwiler House
- 8226 Germantown Avenue: Detwiler House
- 8300-8312 Germantown Avenue: Christ Lutheran Church and Parish House
- 8314-8316 Germantown Avenue: Kerper Houses
- 8327 Germantown Avenue: Wigard Jacoby House
- 8419 Germantown Avenue: Chestnut Hill Community Center
- 8433 Germantown Avenue: Sign of the Swan
- 8501-8507 Germantown Avenue: Cress Hotel
- 8605-8609 Germantown Avenue: Artman-Miller House
- 8617 Germantown Avenue: Hill House
- 8700 Germantown Avenue: Seventh Day Adventist Church (formerly building of Chestnut Hill Presbyterian Church)
- 8708 Germantown Avenue
- 8840 Germantown Avenue: Rex House
- 9501 Germantown Avenue
- 300 block E. Gravers Lane: Gravers Lane Railroad Station
- 123 W. Highland Avenue
- 127 W. Highland Avenue
- 138 W. Highland Avenue
- 7900-7906 Lincoln Drive: The Icehouse
- 7654 McCallum Street: Krisheim
- 100 Newton Street
- 8000 St. Martins Lane: St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church (aka 401 W. Willow Grove Avenue)
- 8205 Seminole Avenue: Houston-Sauveur House
- 9198 Stenton Avenue: William Streeper House
- 9200 Stenton Avenue: John Huston House
- 8-12 Summit Street
- 14 Summit Street
- 18 Summit Street
- 22 Summit Street
- 26 Summit Street
- 30 Summit Street
- 32 Summit Street
- 38 Summit Street
- 42 Summit Street

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46 Summit Street  
52 Summit Street  
54 Summit Street  
1 Summit Street  
17 Summit Street  
21 Summit Street  
25 Summit Street  
31 Summit Street  
37 Summit Street  
39-41 Summit Street  
57 Summit Street  
100 Summit Street  
Thomas Mill Road Covered Bridge  
777 Valley Green Road: Druim Moir  
801 Valley Green Road: Brinkwood  
500 W. Willow Grove Avenue: Wissahickon Inn

Valley Green Inn (in Fairmount Park, along Forbidden Drive)



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Chestnut Hill consists of over 2,600 buildings, the majority of these single-family residences, either detached, semi-detached, in rows, or in court arrangements. Few exceed a two- or three-story height reinforcing the village atmosphere and the sense of human scale. Several apartment buildings stand along West Evergreen Avenue and West Highland Avenue, but with the exception of the Hill House (201 W. Evergreen Avenue), these all are within the scale of the residential areas in which they appear.

No one architectural style characterizes the district today as the architects working in Chestnut Hill during the 19th and early 20th centuries and their clients had many personal preferences, producing a wonderful menagerie of buildings, each unique but bonded by their scale and use of similar building materials. Spacious grounds, judiciously designed and planted, provide a setting in which varying architectural styles coexist easily. An Italianate, a Queen Anne, a Colonial Revival, and a Cotswold situated near or next to one another meld as a unified whole. The common use of stone accounts for much of this homogeneity. Chestnut Hill stone, an architectural term for Wissahickon schist, became a favorite building material, not only because of its availability (often excavation of the basement provided enough stone to begin construction) but also because it allowed many of the architectural ideas of Downing, Sloan and others to find a clear expression. Few blocks of Chestnut Hill do not contain at least one Wissahickon schist or fieldstone structure. Stone was also used for many landscaping details including retaining, boundary, and ornamental walls, gate posts, and fountains. Only in the middle and later stages of the 20th century, owing to the absence of skilled masons and available stone quarries, have buildings constructed of materials other than stone appeared within the district. Most of the existing frame buildings in Chestnut Hill date to the post-Civil War period when the demolition of the John McArthur-designed Mower Hospital, the largest Civil War hospital in the Philadelphia area, resulted in an excess of used lumber which community residents put to good use.

Chestnut Hill has been known as an upper-class suburb, with spacious houses situated on large properties. However, upon closer examination of the community's history, as well as its current composition, a different picture emerges. Of the 2,600+ buildings within the proposed district, the large detached housing, giving the Hill much of its fame and character, accounts for only a minority of the total, while comparatively modest single-family detached and semi-detached houses often of unique architectural distinction predominate throughout the district.

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1700-1854

Although the upper classes socially and the large houses architecturally have dominated the popular perception of Chestnut Hill since 1850, historically Chestnut Hill's merchants and laborers have held equal claim in the development of the Hill. Evidence of its colonial and early-19th century heritage may be found in virtually every block of Germantown Avenue from Moreland Avenue to Norman Lane. The oldest house in Chestnut Hill, a rude two-and-a-half story stone dwelling known as the Detwiler House (HABS), was built in 1744 at 8220 Germantown Avenue. Other plain stone structures such as the Artman-Miller House (ca. 1759) at 8609 Germantown Avenue, the Abraham Rex store (1762) at 8031 Germantown Avenue, and the Sign of the Swan (ca. 1750) at 8433 Germantown Avenue are witnesses of Chestnut Hill's beginnings.

During the 1840s and 1850s residential development began on many of the side roads off Germantown Avenue that were originally opened to service the mills along the Wissahickon and Cresheim Creeks as well as outlying farms. John Stallman constructed a number of houses along Highland Avenue (known variously as Spruce or Thomas Mill Road and Cottage Lane) in vernacular styles, parroting many of the upper-class styles recently in vogue including the Italianate and Gothic Revival. Examples of this mid-19th century vernacular architecture exist also on Gravers Lane, Southampton Avenue, Springfield Avenue, Mermaid Lane, and lower Germantown Avenue.

1854-1884

The earliest examples of the substantial, architecturally important housing exist along Summit Street, Prospect Avenue, Bethlehem Pike, Chestnut Hill Avenue, and Norwood Avenue surrounding the depot of the Reading Railroad Line, which opened in 1854. Houses of the Italianate, Italian Villa, Gothic Revival, and other styles espoused by Andrew Jackson Downing, Samuel Sloan, and James C. Sidney dominate the landscape along these streets. Indeed, known residential works of Sloan, Sidney, and Thomas U. Walter and the ecclesiastical projects of John Notman and John Carver appear within Chestnut Hill. Three streets opened between 1860 and 1880 also contain numerous examples of vernacular architecture of this period: Willow Grove Avenue, Devon Street (8100 block), and East Evergreen Avenue. Samuel Austin, who opened Summit Street and Chestnut Hill Avenue for the affluent, also opened the 8100 block of Devon Street for modest housing.

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1884-1904

The arrival of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1884 spurred the development of the Hill bordering this line. Largely commissioned by Henry Howard Houston, substantial Queen Anne style single houses, exemplified by 8205, 8525, and 8635 Seminole Avenue, began rising along Seminole Avenue and St. Martins Lane. Houston, who exclusively used the architectural firm of G. W. & W. D. Hewitt throughout the 1880s, built his own house, Druim Moir, west of the railroad at the foot of Willow Grove Avenue in 1885 and gave Brinkwood, a Shingle Style residence, to his son, Samuel F. Houston, in 1887 as a wedding present (Druim Moir National Register District). Between Druim Moir and the railroad, along a relatively flat stretch of Willow Grove Avenue, Houston added the Wissahickon Inn (now Chestnut Hill Academy, a National Register listing), the Philadelphia Cricket Club, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church. Such institutional uses in western Chestnut Hill provide the open land that gives the area its 19th century flavor. Houston also built a large number of Second Empire and Queen Anne twin or double houses along Springfield Avenue, Shawnee Street, Highland Avenue, and Meade Street.

The late-19th century also saw a growing need for smaller houses on the Hill to accommodate the workmen engaged in building the dwellings of the affluent described above. The Germantown Independent of the 1880s repeatedly reported on the scarcity of such housing and encouraged budding developers to cater to this market. Such development took place along East Willow Grove Avenue, Benezet Street, Ardleigh Street, East Gravers Lane, West Abington Avenue, Roanoke Street, and Shawnee Street. Mostly detached or semi-detached, these vernacular houses measured only 2-2½ stories. With building materials and designs similar to those used on the larger houses west of Germantown Avenue, these modest houses meshed into the architectural fabric of Chestnut Hill providing both visual and social cohesion. Occasionally, a developer would add embellishments to his houses, such as the diamond-shaped windows and the fanciful columns on the John McCrea houses (1895) along the 7700 and 7800 blocks of Ardleigh Street.

1904-1935

Dr. George Woodward, Houston's son-in-law, continued development of western Chestnut Hill during the early-20th century, using his favorite architects H. Louis Duhring, Jr., Robert B. McGoodwin, and Edmund B. Gilchrist. Woodward began lining the streets in the same manner as the

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Houston developments with single-family detached and semi-detached houses (113-123 West Springfield Avenue, 7800-7818 Lincoln Drive), but by the 1910s he developed motifs for each group of houses, using landscaping, court patterns, and different styles of architecture to contribute to Chestnut Hill's eclectic appearance. (See the houses along Lincoln Drive, 42-52 West Willow Grove Avenue, 103-112 West Willow Grove Avenue, 131-135 West Willow Grove Avenue, the 8000 blocks of Navajo and Crefeld Streets, and Roanoke Court.)

While the Houston and Woodward families had a major impact on western Chestnut Hill's development, both families sold land to others. The different, yet equally prominent architects employed by these residents helped create the showcase of great late-19th and early-20th century residential architecture the neighborhood is today. In addition to the aforementioned architects, works by George T. Pearson (501 West Moreland Avenue, 7709 Cherokee Street, 7708 Navajo Street), Amos Boyden (8306 Crittenden Street, 402 and 408 West Moreland Avenue), Cope & Stewardson (41 East Chestnut Hill Avenue, 455 West Chestnut Hill Avenue), Horace Trumbauer (7811 Huron Street, 109 West Mermaid Lane, 8301 St. Martins Lane), Lawrence V. Boyd (103 West Mermaid Lane, 8515 Seminole Avenue), Wilson Eyre (401 East Evergreen Avenue, 444 West Chestnut Hill Avenue, 100 and 102 West Mermaid Lane), Mantle Fielding (8703 Seminole Avenue), Charles Barton Keen (8811 Germantown Avenue, 415 W. Moreland Avenue), Savery, Scheetz & Savery (111 and 115 W. Mermaid Lane, 7703 Lincoln Drive, 8031 and 8033 Seminole Avenue), Zantzinger, Borie & Medary (8500 Seminole Avenue, 310 West Chestnut Hill Avenue), and many others line St. Martins Lane, Seminole Avenue, Chestnut Hill Avenue, Springfield Avenue, Moreland Avenue, and Mermaid Lane. Chestnut Hill also served as a setting for works by the Boston firm of Peabody & Sterns (Krisheim, 7600 McCallum Street, 500 W. Moreland Avenue), the New York firm of McKim, Mead & White (Stonehurst at McCallum Street and Springfield Avenue, burned 1941), and the Pittsburgh firm of Carpenter & Crocker (Greylock, 209 West Chestnut Hill Avenue).

Continuing development in the early 20th century created a need for housing on the Hill among both laborers and an emerging merchant middle class. Examples of this housing, often handsomely designed, are located in the eastern part of Chestnut Hill. Architectural works by noted architects, including H. Louis Duhring and Horace Trumbauer, are found along Ardleigh Street and in the Woodward developments of Benezet Street and Winston Court. However, local builder/developers including the four Schock Brothers, John McCrea, James McCrea, John B. Joslin, Felix & Roman, George S. Roth & Sons, John Conti, the Marcolina Brothers, and the Lorenzon Brothers account for the vast majority of the houses in this section. This portion of Chestnut Hill contains the community's only industrial area, along Winston Road and East Moreland Avenue, where a number of handsome early-20th century warehouse buildings are home to several of the Hill's artisans including Willets Stained Glass

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(1923), Filipi Brothers Iron Workers (1925) and Marcolina Tile and Marble Company. These companies were among those responsible for many of the architectural embellishments as well as for the maintenance of the Hill's finest housing.

Along Bells Mill Road, Hillcrest Avenue, Meadowbrook Lane, and Hampton Road on the northern slopes of Chestnut Hill stand notable examples of single-family, detached residential architecture of the Colonial Revival and Norman farmhouse styles, highlighted by George Howe's own home, High Hollow, at 101 West Hampton Road. The advent of the automobile encouraged a number of dwellings in this section of the community by McGoodwin; Duhring; John Graham; Willing, Sims & Talbutt; Samuel Marshall; and Karcher & Smith.

The Present

Both northern and western Chestnut Hill have seen the mid- and late-20th century development of some of their large estates, notably those of Sunset Hill, Wolverton, and Stonehurst. Fortunately, these developments uphold the community's rich architectural tradition. Mitchell/Giurgola's house for Mrs. Thomas R. White at 717 Glengarry Road, Louis I. Kahn's Margaret Esherick House at 204 Sunrise Lane, and Robert Venturi's design for his mother at 8336 Millman Street are among the numerous significant mid-20th century architect-designed houses represented. For the most part, the individual houses within these developments, by employing many of the same materials traditionally used for residential construction in Chestnut Hill and by their size, scale, and the use and retention of earlier estate features, harmonize with the remainder of the district. The Stonehurst site, for example, now contains garden apartments as well as individual houses designed by Oskar Stonorov for members of the Dodge branch of the Houston family. This development is artfully punctuated by the preserved garden walls and established plantings of the original Stonehurst grounds.

Today, northern Chestnut Hill, like the area surrounding the Philadelphia Cricket Club, contains much open space owing to the numerous institutional uses found there. The Chestnut Hill Hospital, Temple University's Eleanor W. Dixon and Sugarloaf conference centers, the Woodmere Art Museum, Chestnut Hill College, the Morris Arboretum, the Norwood-Fontbonne Academy, Fairview Nursing Home, St. Michael's Hall, the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Our Mother of Consolation Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church of Chestnut Hill, the Home of Divine Providence, the Cascade Aphasia Center, and Fairmount Park,

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which forms Chestnut Hill's western boundary, maintain enough open space to retain much of the area's mid-19th century rural character.

Germantown Avenue is characterized by a mixture of commercial, institutional, and residential uses. It also serves as a common meeting ground for all social and economic levels. Five churches border the avenue as well as numerous shops, Chestnut Hill College, the Chestnut Hill Community Center, and Town Hall, housing the community association and the merchants' development group. The oldest dwelling as well as very recent structures coexist along Germantown Avenue, from 8220 Germantown Avenue (constructed 1744) to 7945 Germantown Avenue (1982-1983). More than thirty years ago merchants and residents began working together to accomplish the renewal of the shopping area. This thriving, engaging heart of the community acknowledges the efforts of the individuals who have shaped one of our nation's most successful urban revitalizations.

Included on the following pages are:

- 7 A. Explanation of evaluation categories for the Chestnut Hill Historic District.
- 7 B. Style categories and representative examples for the Chestnut Hill Historic District.

APPENDIX

Inventory of Buildings in the Chestnut Hill Historic District

Research for the inventory of each of the more than 2600 buildings in the Chestnut Hill Historic District included both primary and secondary sources. Among these were over 5000 building permits, property deeds, the George Woodward, Inc., records, the Henry H. Houston Estate records, The Athenaeum Biographical Dictionary, the Philadelphia Real Estate Record & Builders' Guide, and the T-Square Club Exhibition Catalogs. This study uncovered information such as the names of architects, first owners, builders, dates of construction, and the dates and types of alterations for virtually all of Chestnut Hill's buildings.

## CHESTNUT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL STYLES FOUND IN THE COMMUNITY

STYLE	CHARACTERISTICS	REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES
18th Century Vernacular	Built primarily of "Chestnut Hill Stone" (an easily worked limestone with varying amounts of black or gray mica, transparent quartz, or white limestone) in coursed rubble construction/ shingle roof/2-2½ stories/ simple/ utilitarian	8220 Germantown Avenue (1744) 8433 Germantown Avenue (c.1750)
Georgian	Rectangular/ 2½ stories/ symmetrical facade/ steep roof/ 2-3 bays/ single dormer/ "Chestnut Hill Stone"/ plain and functional with few classical details	8617 Germantown Avenue (c.1798)
Federal	Symmetrical/ 3-5 bays/ plain cornice and trim/ often radiating tracery in a fanlight above the front door/ arched dormer windows with triangular, broken, or segmental pediments/ end chimneys/ 2½ stories/ stones are sometimes dressed	8327 Germantown Avenue (c.1794) 8840 Germantown Avenue (1801) 7921 Germantown Avenue (c.1817)
Vernacular Classical Revivals (1850s-1870s)	2½ story vertical box/ flattened roof or projecting cornice/ square or horizontally rectangular attic windows/ 3-5 bays/ horizontal cornices, lintels and sills of windows emphasized/ restrained classical details	108 West Gravers Lane (c.1858-1860) 37 West Gravers Lane (c.1856-1861) 43 East Mermaid Lane (c.1860)

## CHESTNUT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL STYLES FOUND IN THE COMMUNITY

STYLE	CHARACTERISTICS	REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES
Italianate- Italian Villa	Rectangular form/ square attic windows/ elongated lower windows/ sometimes heavy window moldings, pronounced quoins or arched windows/ flattened roof with widely projecting eaves usually supported by brackets or modillions/ occasionally cupolas on roof/ "Chestnut Hill Stone" sometimes stuccoed	17 Summit Street (c.1861) 18 Summit Street (1856) 22 Summit Street (1856) 32 Summit Street (c.1859-1860) 7900 Germantown Avenue (c.1840-1854) 5 East Chestnut Hill Avenue (c.1858-1861) 129 Bethlehem Pike (1854) (with bell tower)
Gothic Revival	Irregular silhouette/ pointed gables/ sometimes vergeboards and other decora- tive trim/ "Chestnut Hill Stone"/ peaked dormers/ steeply pitched gable roof/ elongated windows	9230 Germantown Avenue (c.1875) 54 Summit Street (c.1874-1876) Christ Lutheran Church 8300 Germantown Avenue (1869-1870) 150 Bethlehem Pike (1850)
Mansard or Second Empire	Mansard roof/ square or rectangular form/ symmetrical facade/ dormer windows/ "Chestnut Hill Stone"	8413 Germantown Avenue (c.1885) 138 West Highland Avenue (c.1875) 8427 Prospect Avenue (c.1876)
Queen Anne	Asymmetrical/ spacious ornamented porches/ "Chestnut Hill Stone", wood, half-timbering/decorative shingle siding/ numerous steep gables/ bay windows	8205 Seminole Avenue (1885) Chestnut Hill Academy (formerly The Wissahickon Inn) 500 W. Willow Grove Avenue (1884)



## CHESTNUT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL STYLES FOUND IN THE COMMUNITY

STYLE	CHARACTERISTICS	REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES
Shingle Style	Horizontal emphasis/ weathered wooden shingle facing (rare for Chestnut Hill) wide, often interlocking, gables/ broad, sweeping roofs/ usually asymmetrical	The Anglecot 401 East Evergreen Avenue (1883) 402 West Moreland Avenue (1895) Brinkwood 801 Valley Green Road (1887)
Georgian Revival	"Chestnut Hill Stone" and brick/ symmetrical and formal/ rectangular/ central porticoes/ porches, often on the side/ end chimneys/ embellished with classical details	105 West Mermaid Lane (1909-1910) 124 West Chestnut Hill Avenue (1895) 501 West Moreland Avenue (1894) Philadelphia Cricket Club 415 West Willow Grove Avenue (1909)
Colonial Revival	"Chestnut Hill Stone"/ often symmetrical/ generally 5 bays/ sometimes porticoes/ central doorway/ occasional pent eaves	5 East Hampton Road (1925) 104 West Mermaid Lane (1908) 115 West Moreland Avenue (1911) 427 West Mermaid Lane (1931)
Dutch Colonial Revival	Gambrel roof/ "Chestnut Hill Stone", stucco/ 2½ stories/	200 block of East Gravers Lane (1905-1919) 8318 Seminole Avenue (1891) 7709 Cherokee Street (1889)

## CHESTNUT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

## MAJOR ARCHITECTURAL STYLES FOUND IN THE COMMUNITY

Philadelphia Country House Architecture	STYLE	CHARACTERISTICS	REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES
	English Cotswolds Revival	"Chestnut Hill Stone"/ English inspired/ small paned windows sometimes in bands/ understated/ rectangular/ picturesque	8008-8012 Crefeld Street (1921) 7919-7925 Lincoln Drive (1917) Roanoke Court 8014-8028 Roanoke Street (1931)
	French Normandy Revival	Tall, steeply pitched roof/ sometimes a round tower with conical roof/ inspired by Norman farmhouses/ "Chestnut Hill Stone"/ courtyards	High Hollow 101 West Hampton Road (1913-1914) 9120 Crefeld Street (1919) 9159 Green Tree Road (1926) 500 Telner Street (1957)
	Tudor Revival	Half-timbering, usually on the second floor/steeply pitched roof/prominent gables/ tall, narrow windows with small panes/massive chimneys	1 Summit Street (1897) 201 West Chestnut Hill Avenue (1902) 109 West Mermaid Lane (1911)
	Philadelphia Row-House Vernacular	Colonial Revival details/ usually brick with stone trim/ front porches/ 2 story/ bay window on second floor/ metal cornice/ flat roof	8100-8122 Ardleigh Street (1906-1917) 7700-7722 Ardleigh Street (1925)
	Contemporary Styles	Includes International Style, The Contemporary, The Neocolonial and The Shed Styles as defined in A FIELD GUIDE TO AMERICAN HOUSES, by Virginia & Lee McAlester (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1984)	204 Sunrise Lane (1960) 8330 Millman Street (1963) 717 West Glengarry Road (1957) 8400 Prospect Street (1975) 709 Davidson Road (1956)

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ORIGINS (COMMERCE)

Chestnut Hill's development, until the mid-19th century, was tied to the growth of Germantown Township although its topography, early land divisions, and its name created for the community a separate identity. The area's economic livelihood depended upon the mills on the Wissahickon and Cresheim Creeks, the community's farms, and trade with outlying communities and the city as Chestnut Hill expanded around the important fork of Germantown Avenue and Bethlehem Pike, connecting the city with towns north and east. Two important trading centers, or country stores, served farmers and acted as a wholesale market for Philadelphia merchants until improved roads to Philadelphia in the early 1800s caused their decline. The best-known of these country stores was owned by Abraham Rex (8031 Germantown Avenue).

Travellers and teamsters spurred Chestnut Hill's growth. By 1763 regular stage runs operated through the community connecting Philadelphia and Bethlehem; in 1820 six stage lines ran through the community. A leading Philadelphia stage-company owner, Jacob Peters, initiated hourly commuter service between Chestnut Hill and Philadelphia in the 1850s. He also operated the Eagle Hotel (8501 Germantown Avenue).

Although Chestnut Hill's physical development concentrated around its two major roads, small and medium-sized houses began lining the mill and farm roads leading away from Germantown Avenue. Growth was by no means rapid, however, for an 1854 city directory lists only 255 residents in the community. The majority of them were farmers, millers, laborers, merchants, craftsmen, and artisans, occupations reflecting commerce in the village and the needs of the villagers.

The year 1854 was notable for Chestnut Hill. Then the Act of Consolidation incorporated all of Philadelphia County, including Chestnut Hill, into the city, tightening the links between the community and the city. In the same year the extension of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad (later the Reading Railroad, now the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's - SEPTA's - Chestnut Hill East commuter line) from Germantown to Chestnut Hill dramatically changed the social and physical character of the community. Convenient transportation and brisk land promotion stimulated development around the line, largely for summer homes.

Thirty years later a second commuter line from Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Railroad (now SEPTA's Chestnut Hill West) induced growth in Chestnut Hill's western portions. By 1890 Henry Howard Houston, a member of the railroad's Board of Directors, had constructed an

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extensive social and residential community in that area. Between 1904 and 1935 his son-in-law, Dr. George Woodward, added houses and the nationally recognized Pastorius Park - Lincoln Drive development (by 1925) and introduced many imaginative architectural and landscaping concepts. Little changed today, the Houston-Woodward creations testify to the triumph of the vision of their planners. In recent years residents through community organizations have renewed the shopping area and are acting as planners for and caretakers of Chestnut Hill.

ARCHITECTURE

Chestnut Hill retains most of its original buildings, exhibiting a diversity of structures designed by virtually every major Philadelphia architect or architectural firm. Many of these works are masterpieces of design and textbook examples of the leading styles of their day. They coalesce to form a single harmonious entity -- joined by their human scale, similar heights and proportions, the rhythm of their setbacks, the fine quality of their designs and craftsmanship, and especially by the pervasive use of Chestnut Hill stone in buildings as well as in retaining and ornamental walls, gate posts, and fountains. They are united, too, by carefully conceived landscaping interwoven with the rocks, forest, and streams of the Wissahickon Valley.

No log cabins survive, but simple stone dwellings such as the Detwiler House at 8220 Germantown Avenue, the Artman-Miller House at 8609 Germantown Avenue, the Hinkle House at 7801 Cresheim Road, and the Streeper and Huston Houses at the corners of Bells Mill Road and Stenton Avenue attest to the colonial heritage of the community. Chestnut Hill's commercial architecture followed closely the forms of the residential buildings, and such structures as the Sign of the Swan at 8433 Germantown Avenue (ca. 1750), the Abraham Rex Store at 8031 Germantown Avenue (1762), and the Cress, or Eagle, Hotel at 8501-8507 Germantown Avenue (late 18th century) have the same simplicity of form and plan as the early dwellings.

After the Revolution a few residents constructed houses exhibiting an awareness of the latest architectural styles and tastes. The Wigard Jacoby House at 8327 Germantown Avenue (HABS) stands as an excellent example of the Federal style. Philadelphia townhouse patterns appear throughout the community, executed in stone rather than the brick used inside the city. The Melchior Newman House at 7921 Germantown Avenue is a townhouse of this type.

Thomas Ustick Walter's Gothic Revival cottage for Cephas G. Childs in 1850 at 150 Bethlehem Pike initiated a new era of architect-designed residences. The extension of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad in 1854 opened Chestnut Hill for development. Within ten years

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houses of the Italian Villa, Italianate, Gothic Revival, and other mid-Victorian styles lined not only the existing roads in the community but also newly opened residential streets such as Norwood Avenue, Chestnut Hill Avenue, and Summit Street. Charles Taylor, Samuel H. Austin, and other developers along with the new summer residents employed the talents of such influential Philadelphia architects as Walter, Samuel Sloan, James C. Sidney, John Riddell, and others.

During these years of expansion the architectural development was not limited solely to architect-designed houses for the affluent. Builders and carpenters erected modest housing for the laborers, craftsmen, and house servants moving into Chestnut Hill. Assuming the vernacular forms of accepted styles from the Federal to the Italianate, these dwellings exhibited bracketed eaves, bargeboards, Gothic Revival rooflines, and other embellishments. In their construction builders employed stone, wood, and stucco.

The new residents of the Hill joined with older families to found four churches between 1852 and 1860. The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill called upon John Notman, a noted architect who designed St. Mark's Episcopal Church (National Register) and the Church of the Holy Trinity (National Register) in the Rittenhouse Square area of the city, to supply plans for its church building at 8700 Germantown Avenue in 1852. Joseph Middleton, a gentleman, designed and built the church buildings of Our Mother of Consolation Roman Catholic Church on Chestnut Hill Avenue in 1855. Founded in 1856, St. Paul's Episcopal Church built its chapel across from the Catholic church from plans by John E. Carver, architect of St. James the Less Episcopal Church (National Register). The community's Lutherans organized Christ Lutheran Church in 1860 but did not erect the present building at 8300 Germantown Avenue until 1869-70. The congregation commissioned Charles M. Burns, Jr., for the designs of its simple Gothic Revival building. Burns later became famous for the Church of the Advocate and the Church of the Savior (both listed on the National Register).

The opening of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the upgrading of the Reading Railroad in the early 1880s renewed Chestnut Hill's growth. The Reading Railroad employed Frank Furness to design its various stations: The Gravers Lane Station (National Register) remains as the only Chestnut Hill station on the Reading line from this period. As its architect, the Pennsylvania Railroad hired W. Bleddyn Powell, who later became the third and last architect of Philadelphia's City Hall. A new

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wave of developers and a number of Philadelphia's leading citizens hired architects such as Wilson Eyre, George W. and William D. Hewitt, Theophilus Parsons Chandler, George T. Pearson, Hazlehurst & Huckel, and Amos J. Boyden to design homes in the Shingle, Queen Anne, Tudor Revival, Second Empire, and other late-Victorian styles. Significant examples of these styles include The Anglecot at 401 East Evergreen Avenue (National Register), both Druim Moir and Brinkwood (National Register), The Berkins at 142 Bethlehem Pike, Menwaarden at 493 East Gravers Lane, and the numerous Houston-commissioned houses in western Chestnut Hill, especially the Houston-Sauveur House at 8205 Seminole Avenue (HABS).

This increase in building attracted many workers to Chestnut Hill. William C. Mackie, a Chestnut Hill contractor who constructed many of the Houston houses, employed over 200 individuals in the late 1880s. Between 1890 and 1905 the population of 2200 in one village in northern Italy, Poffabria, dropped to 1000 when stone workers emigrated to Chestnut Hill. The large number of laborers in Chestnut Hill created a housing shortage of small and medium-sized dwellings. Consequently, modest stone and brick houses began to arise on newly opened streets bordering Germantown Avenue and in the eastern valley around the present Winston Road. Like their earlier counterparts these houses represented the simple vernacular forms of styles just falling out of favor, including the Italianate, Gothic Revival, and Second Empire.

Myriad forms of the Colonial and Georgian Revivals found acceptance in Chestnut Hill. George T. Pearson discovered a ready market when he designed Keewayden at 7709 Cherokee Street in 1889 in a Dutch Colonial style. He later contributed Homecroft at 501 West Moreland Avenue in 1894, the Kingston House at 8011 St. Martins Lane in 1904, and the present Philadelphia Cricket Club building in 1909, all in the Georgian Revival style. Architects such as Mantle Fielding, Hazlehurst & Huckel, and Horace Trumbauer quickly followed Pearson's lead.

In 1904 Dr. George Woodward and his wife, Gertrude Houston Woodward, began thirty years of Chestnut Hill development. First calling upon the noted architects Wilson Eyre and Frank Miles Day & Brother, Dr. Woodward soon relied upon three architects, H. Louis Duhring, Robert R. McGoodwin, and Edmund B. Gilchrist, to carry out his ideas. Following generally the precepts of the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Garden City Movement, but carefully modified to Chestnut Hill's Wissahickon environment, the four men developed a large valley west of Germantown Avenue, designing houses in the Georgian, Colonial Revival, and Cotswold motifs,

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among others, and integrating court arrangements and landscape architecture into their designs. In association with Duhring, Woodward developed the concept of the "quadruple house", two twin houses placed back to back, to eliminate the backyard and provide ample space on the remaining two sides (24-26, 30-32 Benezet Street and 25-27, 31-33 East Springfield Avenue). Woodward's actions stimulated the construction of high quality residences by others. Architectural journals of the early 20th century teem with references to Chestnut Hill works by Cope & Stewardson; Duhring, Okie & Ziegler; George Howe; Charles Barton Keen; Savery, Scheetz & Savery; Horace Trumbauer; Zantzinger, Borie & Medary; and many others.

Even northern Chestnut Hill, where the steep slopes often prohibited intense development, began growing during the 1910s and 1920s. The rugged terrain above Chestnut Hill Avenue provided a perfect setting for some of the architectural styles of the early 20th century, especially those derived from Norman France. George Howe's High Hollow at 101 West Hampton Road (1913-1914) set a trend for country houses that would last for 20 years. Other excellent examples of the combined use of architecture and landscape architecture appear along Hampton Road, Crefeld Street, Bells Mill Road, and Hillcrest Avenue by architectural firms including Mellor, Meigs & Howe; Willing, Sims & Talbutt; Carl A. Ziegler; Karcher & Smith; H. Louis Durhing; and Robert R. McGoodwin. Two small builder-developer areas of exceptional quality exist in northern Chestnut Hill: Judson M. Zane's groups of houses along Green Tree Road and East Hampton Road and George A. Carson's development of Whitemarsh and Wheelpump Streets. Much of the present open space in northern Chestnut Hill was created during the beginning of the century by the actions of John T. and Lydia Morris, whose estate became the Morris Arboretum (Compton National Register District), Charles K. Smith, founder of the Woodmere Art Museum, and the Sisters of St. Joseph, who received a charter for Chestnut Hill College.

Builder-developers, such as the Roths, Schocks, Lorenzons, Marcolinas, McCreas, Romans, Felixes, and Borthwicks, filled in much of the open space in the eastern valley of Chestnut Hill with vernacular rowhouses and semi-detached housing, primarily for the workers and artisans imported from Europe to build the Woodward developments and the large, architect-designed houses throughout Chestnut Hill. This modest housing, however, was often occupied by the community's impecuniously genteel.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries new structures were added to the commercial area of Germantown Avenue. The Richardsonian Romanesque Knights of Pythias Hall at 8425 Germantown Avenue (1889), the

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Second Empire Jacob Fisher Funeral Parlor at 8413 Germantown Avenue (1884), and the Colonial Revival banks at 8340 Germantown Avenue and 8527 Germantown Avenue (1921 and 1927 respectively) stand as significant examples of stylish commercial buildings.

Changes occurring to the physical environment beginning in the Depression until the present have been, on balance, beneficent. Both the Depression of the 1930s and World War II forced owners of a few estates either to demolish the large houses or donate the properties to non-profit organizations, the latter course causing the great institutional uses of land throughout Chestnut Hill. New housing on vacant land continued the tradition begun by Thomas Ustick Walter's Gothic Revival cottage for Cephas G. Childs: Oscar Stonorov, Mitchell/Giurgola, Louis I. Kahn, Venturi & Rauch, and others designed exceptional residences throughout Chestnut Hill. Residents also converted carriage houses, stables, pool pavilions, gate houses, and gardeners' cottages into single-family houses demonstrating their appreciation of the quality of what had been built. The recent adaptive reuse of Drum Moir and The Anglecot reveals their developers' recognition that Chestnut Hill's natural and architectural legacy is a key to its future.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Unlike such planned communities as Mariemont, Ohio, Tuxedo Park, New York, and Overbrook Farms, Wayne-St. Davids, and the Queen Lane - Midvale Avenue development in the Philadelphia area, Chestnut Hill did not arise from a master plan for a large parcel of land. Rather, many developers, good luck, and the advantage of what Edgar Allen Poe called the "remarkable loveliness" of the natural setting shaped the community. Chestnut Hill's first planners were the men who responded to the extension of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad from Germantown in 1854. Samuel H. Austin, Charles Taylor, and others opened large tracts of land bordering the railroad for development, laid out streets that often followed the natural contours of the land, and hired prominent architects to design ample residences in the latest villa styles. These developers met more than the desires of affluent Philadelphians for stylish summer retreats, for they participated in the founding of churches and community organizations and provided utilities. In addition, they welcomed artisans, laborers, and servants into the community by opening a few areas for lower-cost dwellings.

The victory by the group of Philadelphians who in 1868 persuaded the Pennsylvania legislature to make the Wissahickon Valley a park had a significant impact on the way Chestnut Hill grew. The Fairmount Park Commission halted industry and building within the park and attempted to restore its serene natural beauty. This preservation of the Wissahickon Valley assured its influence on the community's future. Fortunately,



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the conservation of natural resources was a compelling concern of Henry Howard Houston and his heirs. They donated most of the Cresheim Valley to the park allowing this corridor of the Wissahickon Valley to flow into the community and be accessible to its residents. The natural landscape shaped the pattern of Chestnut Hill's streets, the density of its development, and even the way each house sits on its lot. Today the community's density patterns still reflect the natural landscape with the highest density on the plateau and the least densely used land nearest the Wissahickon Valley. The community and the park have become one.

Henry Howard Houston is the individual closest to being Chestnut Hill's master planner. His designs for the western reaches of the community encompassed a shrewdly conceived residential area within a fashionable social framework, always recognizing the magnetism of the Wissahickon Valley. As a member of the Pennsylvania Railroad's Board of Directors, he persuaded the railroad to open a line to Chestnut Hill through land that he had acquired. He constructed the Wissahickon Inn in 1883-1884 (National Register) on Willow Grove Avenue to entice Philadelphians and other prospective residents to experience picturesque Chestnut Hill and persuaded the Philadelphia Cricket Club, the oldest cricket club in America, to relocate in Chestnut Hill by donating land across Willow Grove Avenue from the inn and assisting the club in the erection of a clubhouse. He established the Philadelphia Horse Show next to the cricket club and constructed some 100 houses around the railroad, including his residence, Druim Moir (National Register), and houses for two of his children, Brinkwood (National Register) and Stonehurst (demolished). To complete the social setting he founded St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church. One architectural firm, G. W. and W. D. Hewitt, with two exceptions, became the exclusive designer of his venture. By renting rather than selling most of his holdings and upgrading and renovating older buildings such as Temperance Hall on Highland Avenue, Houston and then his heirs continually oversaw and refined his work.

The planning of Houston's son-in-law, Dr. George Woodward, by his experimental housing for middle and upper-income families, his appreciation of sensitively landscaped areas within his development, and his respect for structures surviving from the past enhanced the St. Martins area. His special contributions were the appealing landscaped courtyard configurations for architect-designed detached and semi-detached dwellings. Woodward's "Another Aspect of the Quadruple House" for The Architectural Record (July, 1913) describes a particular housing form he devised. Affording privacy by their designs and surrounding plantings, Woodward's attached

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housing developments gained favor across income and class lines in the community. With the architectural talents of H. Louis Duhring and later of John Lane Evans, Woodward saved and reused several aging dwellings, barns, icehouses, and other structures -- many of which appear in the Lincoln Drive - Pastorius Park area. The Icehouse at 7900-7906 Lincoln Drive is the most prominent example of his adaptive reuse projects. Three early buildings along Germantown Avenue survive because of Woodward's acceptance of the tenets of adaptive reuse: the Melchior Newman House at 7921, the Abraham Rex store at 8031, and the Chestnut Hill Community Center at 8419.

Houston's and Woodward's descendants are present participants in Chestnut Hill's evolution through their land holdings and their public spiritedness. In the early 1950s, however, it was a newcomer, Lloyd P. Wells, who created for the community a detailed plan for the renewal of the shopping area which by this time displayed a 30 percent vacancy rate in its stores and omnipresent neon signs. Wells's accomplishments have become a model across the country for the regeneration of older Main Streets and commercial areas, predating the National Trust's Main Street program by thirty years. Even more essential to the community's vitality is the organizational structure as well as the weekly local newspaper Wells created to channel countless volunteers to protect Chestnut Hill's architectural legacy and to meet the needs of their neighbors.

SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN

Diverse social, ethnic, and economic groups comprise Chestnut Hill. In the years between 1850 and 1875 residents of the community, both the summer residents and laborers and artisans worked together to found four churches of various faiths, incorporate both the Congress Fire Company and the Chestnut Hill Waterworks, build Temperance Hall, Masonic Hall, and a new fire station, lobby for a larger public school building, and support the founding of a community library. Joseph Middleton can be singled out for his philanthropy. Deciding that a Catholic Church should exist for the Irish immigrants entering the community to work as house servants and gardeners, he designed and built for them Our Mother of Consolation Roman Catholic Church on Chestnut Hill Avenue in 1855, giving the properties to the Augustinian Order. Later he donated Monticello, his estate, to the Sisters of St. Joseph, who first established upon it St. Joseph's Academy and later Chestnut Hill College.

Dr. George Woodward and his wife, Gertrude, are noted for their charitable concerns within and outside Chestnut Hill, including working for the Octavia Hill Association, Philadelphia's version of Chicago's Hull House. Their actions touched the lives of affluent residents as

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well as those who provided the needed support services. Gertrude Woodward joined other area women to form the National League for Women's Service during World War I, a group that evolved into the present Chestnut Hill Community Center. Gertrude Woodward purchased this group's building (8419 Germantown Avenue) as a "center of all those betterments of living and opportunities for interchange of service that Chestnut Hill stands for." Besides gifts of land to Fairmount Park and the creation of Pastorius Park, the Woodwards have contributed another landmark to Chestnut Hill, the Water Tower Recreation Center, built in 1919.

The community's humanitarian tradition lives today. The Chestnut Hill Community Association, the community center, and numerous other organizations support activities like the community orchestra, summer concerts in Pastorius Park, crime prevention, youth activities at the Water Tower Recreation Center, youth employment and services for senior citizens.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

During the past ninety years, a distinct method of landscape design has developed in Chestnut Hill that is significant both as a feature that visually unifies the community and as a design form that is emulated nationwide. Referred to today as "The Wissahickon Style" paying homage to the valley land preserve that interweaves Chestnut Hill, giving context to virtually all of its gardens - this genre of landscape architecture stresses less formalistic planning and the strong use of native plants and materials. Not attributable to one individual or school, the Wissahickon Style developed as an amalgam of natural circumstance, the effect of various designers acting as custodians of the Wissahickon environment rather than contriving fashionably incompatible gardens and perhaps most importantly the thoughtful nurturing of the landscape by a community that's consciousness was raised in favor of horticulture.

Chestnut Hill's native forests and rural atmosphere, partially under Fairmount Park protection as early as 1868, was vitally important in luring summer and eventually suburban residents to the area. However, this natural landscape vocabulary was largely ignored on the immediate grounds of most stylish mid- to late-19th century Chestnut Hill residences in favor of formal garden arrangements often filled with specimen plantings imported from the Far East. By the turn of the century, however, the maturity of these gardens had softened their rigid formality just as a variation of the comparatively naturalistic English walking garden - in combination with a growing appreciation of the native flora of the Wissahickon Valley - became the vogue in Chestnut Hill. By 1910, with the John and Lydia Morris estate (Compton National Register District)

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almost fully developed as an English walking garden, vogue was clearly becoming tradition and the Wissahickon Style became - and has remained - accepted landscape practice in Chestnut Hill. The result is neither a typical English garden - which is more formal having greater emphasis upon exotic specimens - nor is it a wilderness tangle with its sense of Darwinism allowing the proliferation of hearty yet often displeasing specimens. Instead, Chestnut Hill's gardens, parks, even its streets, median strips and traffic islands exhibit a unified sense of nature tamed that is definitely landscape by selection and careful design but not at the expense of the area's natural identity. This native context in Chestnut Hill's landscape is principally related to the establishment of the Wissahickon as a public land preserve. Rhododendrons, laurels and hemlock reach out of the Wissahickon, appearing as the border and foundation plantings of countless residences. Mature specimens - such as Japanese Maples - from the earlier exotic Victorian gardens often remain as accents or focal points among a profusion of native shrubs and wildflowers. Boundary lines between park and village are in a sense blurred and the Wissahickon seems to appear everywhere.

The unusual relationship between Chestnut Hill and the Wissahickon is echoed in much of the country house architecture constructed there during the Edwardian period through 1930. The boundaries between house and landscape become as blurred as that between park and town bonding topography, landscape and architecture in a manner unique in this country. This is best exemplified in the numerous Chestnut Hill residences designed by Robert Rodes McGoodwin and Mellor, Meigs and Howe. These firms developed a concept of "outdoor rooms" created from the wings of the houses, schist stone walls of varying heights, and barriers of native plants. Gardens are created for each room to flow into and in turn the gardens are brought into the houses allowing the final vital link between the resident, landscape, park, and village. This unity is underlined because so often in Chestnut Hill - particularly in the eastern sector of the community (Winston Road and Benezet Street) - these garden spaces are shared events: the wall of one house partially defines a courtyard on a neighbors property and a single belvedere can be seen from several gardens. The result is a happy marriage of architecture and the park-inspired landscape with each enhancing the other.

The reason for the duration and acceptance of the Wissahickon Style beyond Chestnut Hill is generally attributable to the nurturing of the community's landscape by numerous residents unusually sensitive toward horticulture and the Wissahickon environment. The founding of the Garden Club of Philadelphia - the oldest organization of its type in the nation - at 142 Bethlehem Pike, Chestnut Hill, in 1903 and the subsequent

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founding there of the Garden Club of America in 1913 exemplifies this heightened awareness. Founders Mrs. J. Willis Martin, Mrs. Stuart Patterson, Miss Ernestine Goodman and Mrs. Arthur Meigs (wife of the noted architect) spread throughout the eastern seaboard in meetings, pamphlets and books the elements of what has come to be known as the Wissahickon Style. One element of the style became a stated objective of the club: "...to aid in the preservation of native plants..." Thus, the preservation of localized flora and ecologies was begun in Chestnut Hill nearly sixty years before the environmental movement became a national cause.

No American communities to which the Wissahickon Style has been exported are as exquisitely executed or maintained with such consistent integrity with respect to original design and horticultural quality as is Chestnut Hill. Similarly, in no other American community is a marriage between architecture, landscape and a natural land preserve quite as elegantly consummated or so carefully repeated in subsequent development. Noted preservationist, Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr., in a 1975 report to the Chestnut Hill Historical Society points to Chestnut Hill's unique quality and historical importance as a repository of some of America's finest landscape designs:

...without question Chestnut Hill remains one of the most beautiful residential areas in the United States. When one considers some of its counterparts, one realizes how precious it is. And it is important to save not only the buildings but the landscaping. Rarely does one see such a fine collection of great trees and shrubs. Any preservation effort should be for its total landscape... (as) Chestnut Hill is an endangered species...

CONCLUSION

As it has evolved, Chestnut Hill has maintained a distinct identity beginning with its formation from two of the four land divisions of Germantown Township -- Sommerhausen and Crefeld. Today its definition arises from many sources not the least of which is the perception by its residents of sharing an uncommon environment that has been over the years nurtured rather than exploited. Its special character emerges from its enduring village atmosphere found in its colonial structures, the small scale of its buildings, the extraordinary longevity of its center of commerce along Germantown Avenue, the generations of the same families

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residing in Chestnut Hill, and neighbors meeting neighbors' needs through thriving community organizations. Its definition rests in its legacy of uncommonly fine architect-designed buildings extending throughout the community. In general the manmade contributions have harmonized with what Edgar Allen Poe saw as the "remarkable loveliness" of its site, the Wissahickon Valley. The rock outcroppings above the Wissahickon Creek have their counterparts in the omnipresent Chestnut Hill stone of the buildings and their gateposts, walkways, and garden walls. The varied plants and the forest in the valley have their echoes in the street trees and lush landscaped lots. Little blight occurs in Chestnut Hill because planners, builders, and architects have designed well, and, in turn, the community's residents have respected and attended to their heritage. Chestnut Hill is rare in this country as an old neighborhood experiencing constant evolution and continued vigor, arising from the singular beauty of its site, its significant architecture, the tradition of imaginative, sensitive community planning, and neighbors' concerns for each other and for their environment -- both natural and manmade.

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The proposed boundaries of the Chestnut Hill Historic District run as follows:

Starting at the intersection of the Reading Railroad (now SEPTA's Chestnut Hill East commuter line) right-of-way and the Philadelphia Electric Company's right of way (formerly the Fort Washington branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad), thence proceeding southwestward to the west side of Germantown Avenue, thence north along the west side of Germantown Avenue to the middle of Cresheim Creek, thence southwestward down the various courses of the Cresheim Creek to its confluence with the Wissahickon Creek, thence across the Wissahickon Creek to the west side of Wissahickon Drive (Forbidden Drive) paralleling the west bank of the Wissahickon Creek, thence proceeding northward along Wissahickon Drive to Northwestern Avenue (city limit), thence proceeding northeastward along Northwestern Avenue to Stenton Avenue (city limit), thence southeastward along the middle of Stenton Avenue to Willow Grove Avenue, thence southwestward along the middle of Willow Grove Avenue to the aforementioned Reading Railroad right-of-way, thence southeastward along the northern boundary of the Reading Railroad right-of-way to Mermaid Lane, thence northeastward along the middle of Mermaid Lane to the intersection of Ardleigh Street, thence southeastward down the middle of Ardleigh Street to the west property line of 7641 Ardleigh Street, thence northeastward along the west property line of 7641 Ardleigh Street to the north property line of the same property, thence southeastward along the north property lines of 7641 and 7639 Ardleigh Street to the east property line of the latter property, thence southwestward along the east property line of 7639 Ardleigh Street to the middle of Ardleigh Street, thence southeastward along the middle of Ardleigh Street to the east property line of 7632 Ardleigh Street, thence southwestward down the east property line of 7632 Ardleigh Street to the aforementioned Reading Railroad right-of-way, thence along the northern boundary of the Reading Railroad right-of-way to the point of beginning.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

From its beginnings Chestnut Hill has maintained a distinct identity. The natural boundaries of the Wissahickon and Cresheim Creeks and the city lines at Stenton and Northwestern Avenues define it. The community is further demarcated by its elevation, the hill rising to the highest point in Philadelphia at Summit Street. Formed of Sommerhausen and Crefeld, two of the four land divisions of Germantown Township, this area was referred to as "Chestnut Hill" in recorded land transfers as early as 1711.

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A psychological unity exists within Chestnut Hill among residents of all income and social levels arising, in part, from their perception of sharing an outstanding physical environment that is well defined. The generations of the same families who have remained in Chestnut Hill and the shopping center at its heart enhance the inhabitants' emotional bonds to the community.

