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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR THE CHESTNUT HILL CONSERVANCY

Philadelphia, PA – The Chestnut Hill Conservancy (CH Conservancy), formerly known as the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, is **the nation’s first accredited urban land trust**, a recognition that was re-affirmed last month with the renewal of this accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC), an independent commission of the national Land Trust Alliance.

This recognition furthers the mission of the CH Conservancy to conserve and protect the natural and cultural landscapes of Chestnut Hill and its environs. **The CH Conservancy has facilitated the permanent preservation of more than 130 acres of significant open space in the Chestnut Hill area since 1990, all of it in the Wissahickon watershed.** This accreditation demonstrates that, as part of an elite network of 372 accredited land trusts across the country, CH Conservancy meets the highest standards of professional excellence.

Renewed accreditation bolsters the CH Conservancy’s growing Conservation and Easements Program, which offers a fundamentally important tool to preserve the watershed by reducing development pressures and fostering best practices in land conservation. The program is run in partnership with neighboring organization Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW). Since the CH Conservancy’s first accreditation by the LTAC in 2011, the organization has fully integrated land and watershed conservation into its already strong work in architectural preservation advocacy and historical archives.

By awarding the renewal, the LTAC signifies its confidence that lands under stewardship of the CH Conservancy will be protected *forever*. Accredited land trusts must renew every five years, confirming their compliance with national quality standards and providing continued assurance to donors and landowners of a commitment to forever steward their land and easements.

“Our national LTAC accreditation is a catalyst for the Chestnut Hill Conservancy becoming a center for ideas on balancing growth and preservation to sustain the vibrant, historic urban village character of Chestnut Hill,” said **CH Conservancy Executive Director Lori Salganicoff**. “The LTAC accreditation renewal confirms that we are fulfilling our mission to advance integrated preservation and conservation efforts, collaboratively protecting and educating about the open space, watershed, and built environment.”

“The risks to open space change from year to year and decade to decade. A conservation easement is one of the best instruments to protect land in perpetuity, but to be effective, the organization holding the easement must also exist in perpetuity,” **FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy** said.

“Accreditation by LTAC is a key indicator of a land trust's health, and the long-term health of the lands they protect.”

“It is exciting to recognize the Chestnut Hill Conservancy with this distinction,” **Tammara Van Ryn, Executive Director of the LTAC** stated. “Accredited land trusts are united behind strong ethical standards ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever. Accreditation recognizes the Conservancy has demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.”

Please visit CHConservancy.org for more information about our LTAC accreditation and our ongoing efforts to protect the Wissahickon watershed and the built environment of Chestnut Hill through our Conservation and Easements Program.

About the Chestnut Hill Conservancy:

The Chestnut Hill Conservancy, formerly the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, founded in 1967, is an educational center and advocate for the architecture, open space and social history of Chestnut Hill and surrounding communities. www.chconservancy.org

Attachment: 2 Photos

File: [2013_easementproperty_credit-wendyconcannon.jpg]

Credit: Wendy Concannon

Caption: The Chestnut Hill Conservancy works with property owners to conserve privately-owned land in the face of increasing development pressure, protecting water quality and native flora and fauna.

File: [2016_easementproperty_credit-EmilyTCooperman.jpg]

Credit: Emily T. Cooperman

Caption: The Chestnut Hill Conservancy is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the Chestnut Hill area's heritage through an innovative easement program that preserves open space and historic facades in partnership with the Friends of the Wissahickon.

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