HISTORIC PROPERTY FOR SALE
GREENBANK FARM

Seller and Current Owner: Delaware County Historical Society
Property Location: 991 Palmers Mill Road, Media, PA 19063
State: Pennsylvania
County: Delaware County
Municipality: Marple Township
School District: Marple Newtown
Phone: 610 359-0832 or 610 359-0826
Sale Price: $680,000

Property Description

Greenbank Farm is situated on a 4 acre parcel located in Marple Township, PA that is primarily surrounded by open space and pasture with the exception of an area to the south of the property that currently contains very large upscale suburban residences. The farm is comprised of three major buildings and includes a large farmhouse that was constructed in three historic phases; a circa 1750 house, a circa 1820 house and a circa 1920 hyphen that connects the two houses. There is also an extra large 18th century barn and icehouse, a milk house and three two-bedroom apartments included with this property. These buildings have public water and sewer and are located on an attractive setting with large mature trees, winding, flower-lined drives, expansive lawns and remnants of a formal garden. The barn is still used for boarding horses and split rail fencing encloses pastures for the animals. Property can be either historically preserved or if permitted by Marple Township for the construction of two upscale homes, Easy access to Rt. 252, Rt. 320, Rt. 1, Rt. 3, Rt.76 & 476. 15 Minutes from King of Prussia! Close to schools, restaurants and shopping.

Property Details

The c. 1750 house is a 3-story, 2-bay, 2-pile English Colonial Vernacular style farmhouse constructed of randomly coursed fieldstone. The first and second story windows are 6/6 double hung sashes with the third story having been replaced with 1/1’s. This 5 bedroom, 2 full bath home with an updated kitchen is currently utilized as a rental property.
The c. 1820 farmhouse is a 2.5 story 5-bay, 3-pile Federal style mansion constructed of randomly coursed fieldstone. It has a side gable roof with 2 front gabled dormers with 6/6 double hung sash windows. The gable ends have quarter-round lights. The front façade is balanced with a centered entrance and the recessed front door is graced with a classical frontispiece with gabled pediment with prominent return eaves and fluted pilasters at each side. The roof is less than 4 years old. The rear of the structure offers a unique architectural tower and metal fire escape. The 3 full bath 2 half bath house, currently utilized as office space, is easily converted back into a 4 plus bedroom dwelling.

The Barn was constructed c. 1830 of wood and stone. It is a multiple bay and pile bank barn with an expansive gable roof. The Milk house is situated directly east of the barn and consists of a studio “apartment” with a full bath, studio kitchen and a loft. The icehouse is situated in the south yard and constructed of coursed fieldstone with board and batten construction on the upper half.

Located on the north side of the barn are three two bedroom one full bath apartments that are currently used as income property. Current tenants pay a monthly rent and are responsible for paying their own utilities. All buildings and apartments are currently wired for cable, burglary and fire protection.

Historic Narrative

The parcel of land where Greenbank Farm in located was part of a William Penn land grant of 300 acres to Peter and Joshua Worrall in 1681. In 1699 150 acres of land was transferred to John Worrell and subsequently to Joshua Worrall in 1716. Worrall became the most familiar name in Marple Township during this time period.

In 1720, the now 145-acre parcel was sold to Peter Thomson. In 1754 it was passed down to Peter’s brother Moses and then to Moses’ children, Martha, Mary, Grace and Moses, Jr. The c. 1750 house was constructed during the time the Thomson family had ownership of the property. The property remained in the Thomson family until 1794 when it was then sold to Samuel Black who purchased “…145 acres with messuage in Marple.”

Samuel Black owned the property for 45 years until his death in 1838 when it passed to his son John. It is during Samuel Black’s ownership of the property that the c. 1820 Federal Style “Mansion House” that still stands today was constructed. A public sale notice from the Delaware County Republican on December 7, 1838 lists an improvement
consisting of a “…comfortable new stone mansion house, 33 by 38 feet, with four rooms on the first floor, with folding doors, four on the second with ceiled garrets.” This same advertisement refers to “…a spring and wash house, a double floored stone barn 40 by 60 feet, wagon house, potato cellar attached, a stone work shop, tow and a half stories high, 24 by 28 feet, corn crib.” It was also stated that the property is “well calculated for a dairy or grazing farm.”

In 1867, 133 acres, including the buildings, was sold to Samuel Sharpless who owned the property until 1903. This same parcel appears on the Mueller Atlas of 1909 as Greenbank Farm, a 165-acre farm owned by Henry and Jacob Beiswanger. After changing ownership a few times over the next decade, the property was sold to S. Laurence Bodine in 1919. Mr. Bodine owned the 165-acre property until 1955. In 1961, James Q. Mackey purchased 39 acres including the buildings. In 2001 the Delaware County Historical Society purchased a four-acre parcel containing the standing structures. Marple Township and the Natural Lands Trust purchased the surrounding lands to preserve open space.