



# NEWS

[www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org)

April 2006

## Capitol Hill's Newest Landmark

by Nancy Metzger

The Historic Preservation Review Board voted at its March meeting to designate the Navy Yard Car Barn at 770 M Street, SE, as a DC landmark and to forward the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The Car Barn was originally constructed in 1891 by the Washington and Georgetown Railroad Company when that street car company was changing from horse-drawn street cars to the cable system.

In 1889, Congress had mandated that horse-drawn railway vehicles were to be phased out and prohibited the use of overhead electric wires within the L'Enfant city boundaries.

The Navy Yard Car Barn is the sole surviving W&G Railroad building from the cable car decade, which lasted only from 1890-1899. Following a disastrous fire in 1897 that destroyed the company's main powerhouse at Pennsylvania Avenue and 14th Street, NW, the W&G Railroad switched to an underground electrification system.

Designed in a Romanesque Revival style by Kansas City architect Walter C. Root, the original building at M and 8th Streets, SE, "mimics the medieval castles and fortresses of the Romanesque with angle towers, watch towers, blind arrow slits, conical broach roofs and corbelled parapets pierced



Photo: Beth Wadsworth

The Navy Yard Car Barn is the sole surviving Washington and Georgetown Railroad building from the cable car decade, which lasted only from 1890-1899.

by machicolations," according to the National Register nomination document prepared by Traceries in 2000. (Machicolations are openings from which defenders, in the times of true castles, poured boiling oil or propelled objects down on attackers without being exposed themselves.) The 1909 addition, although not as ornate as the original building, fills in the rest of the square from M Street along Seventh Street to L Street. For those who thought the base of the building was rough-hewn stone, it is actually a rusticated concrete block

foundation capped by a beveled concrete water table.

Since the building is now a part of the Capitol Hill Historic District (although it wasn't when the National Register nomination was prepared), it is already protected from demolition as a contributing structure of the historic district. The designation highlights the building's singular architectural nature within the historic district, as well as its importance in the street car system that had a profound influence on the development of both the city and the suburbs. \*

# President's Column: Why Have a Comprehensive Plan? Isn't It All Zoning?

by Dick Wolf

Yes may glaze over as we drone on about planning, but there is great energy focused on zoning cases: AppleTree and charter school siting standards, Boys Town, MedLINK down-zoning, and NoMa planning. What these all have at bottom is the Comprehensive Plan and its subset, the Ward 6 Ward Plan, which provide the basis for zoning decisions and rulemaking. Suddenly, and for reasons we can only guess at, even the Office of Planning is now referencing our Ward Plan. That may be due in no small part to our insistence that zoning decisions not be "inconsistent with planning", a direction from the Home Rule Act.

How this works and why the plan is so important is demonstrated by the MedLINK down-zoning case and NoMa planning. The down-zoning is another chapter in the tension that has existed for over 30 years between MedLINK, aka Capitol Hill Hospital, and the surrounding residential community. Both the Zoning Commission's 1973 decision allowing an aberrant

zoning category for the hospital in support of a public good (health care for the neighborhood) and the community's effort to go back to the previous zoning because the reasons for the earlier decision have disappeared are based on the relevant Plans for Capitol Hill. In the current case, more than 500 residents petitioned for the down-zoning in recognition of the Plans' intent for the area to be primarily residential.

would not support Planned Unit Developments or re-zonings in those areas. This would serve to discourage speculation in the H Street, NE residential row house neighborhoods not protected by historic designation. We applaud OP's recognition and application of those planning directives.

Now that we seem to be benefiting from our Ward Plan, the proposed elimination of Ward Plans from the new Comprehensive

The CHRS board voted at its last meeting to join with other citizen groups from across the city to ask for a delay in submission of the new Comprehensive Plan to the Council until a more extended review takes place.

Similarly, the Office of Planning conducted a special presentation for Capitol Hill residents on March 14th concerning new initiatives for the NoMa planning effort. Patricia Zingsheim, the chief planner for NoMa, announced that in recognition of the direction from the Ward 6 portion of the Comprehensive Plan to protect the row house neighborhoods, OP

Plan and substitution of sector plans, which may be less specific, could hurt our efforts to enhance and protect our neighborhoods. In recognition of that and other uncertain aspects of the proposed plan, the CHRS board voted at its last meeting to join with other citizen groups from across the city to ask for a delay in submission of the new Comprehensive Plan to the Council until a more extended review takes place. The Mayor now intends to submit it in June after one major hearing. That will not take care of all the loose ends, such as a yet unseen land use plan; an implementation plan that has no teeth (the same problem we have had for 25 years); as well as a housing element that treats only low- and moderate-income housing initiatives.

Planning matters. Will it work in the future under a new Comprehensive Plan? That's still in doubt. In this election season, we should ask those seeking our votes what they think about this issue. \*

## DC City Council Ward Six Candidate Forum

CHRS is co-sponsoring a forum for candidates for the Ward Six DC City Council seat. Current Councilmember Sharon Ambrose is retiring after serving Ward Six since 1997. Details:

**April 25, 2006 at 7:00 PM**

Hine Junior High School Auditorium  
35 8th Street, SE, Washington, DC

Confirmed candidates appearing: Curtis Ethridge,  
Keith Jarrell, Leo Pinson, and Tommy Wells.  
Mark Plotkin will serve as moderator.

## Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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[www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org)

Celebrating our fiftieth year helping to preserve and protect Capitol Hill's residential character, the Society is now the largest civic association on Capitol Hill, and one of the largest in the entire District of Columbia. From the beginning, the Society has played a key role in maintaining the diverse, residential character of our neighborhood. With your participation we will continue to do so for many years to come.

### Start or Renew a CHRS Membership

- \* On the Web at [www.CHRS.org](http://www.CHRS.org)
- \* Call 202-543-0425 and choose option 2
- \* Pick up a form at one of our meetings Starting at just \$25 per year for a single membership, it's a great deal.

# What's Going On at the Old Naval Hospital?

by Nancy Metzger

Behind the white tarps hanging over the scaffolding on the south side of the Old Naval Hospital at 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, workers are busy repointing the lower portion of the building, repairing and weatherstripping windows and doors, repairing or replacing downspouts, and clearing the blockages and repairing drains of the areaway and underground storm piping.



Work began in January, and the contractor, hired by the Office of Property Management, is now restoring the cast iron stair and wood portico on the E Street side of the building. Restoration of the stair (including handrails, posts and post-mounted light fixtures) and the portico (balustrades, columns, pilaster and roof edge balustrade) will be based on remaining physical evidence and historical photos (c. 1900, as shown above).

Photos and more information are available on the Friends of the Old Naval Hospital website at [www.oldnavalhospital.org](http://www.oldnavalhospital.org). \*

## Welcome CHRS Supporters

*We thank the following new members, sponsors and patrons.*

### NEW MEMBERS

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### PATRONS

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# 49th Annual CHRS Mother's Day House and Garden Tour

May 13-14, 2006

by Aileen Moffatt

**M**other's Day weekend—Saturday evening May 13 and Sunday afternoon May 14—the 49th Annual CHRS House and Garden Tour will draw architectural, gardening, and décor aficionados from across the city to view a selection of Capitol Hill's most interesting new and historically significant properties.

From the most modern and au courant styles to more traditional restorations, the homes featured in this year's tour cover the design spectrum. Older, well-established homes are joined with new construction and possibly even a "bare-bones" project in its earliest stages. Most certainly, this year's houses outline the design process from the conceptual through the finished project and clearly show how new construction can fit seamlessly into the historic fabric of our Capitol Hill community.

Many of the original design features found in this year's homes are simply amazing. One home with a contemporary motif gives expression to the owner's love of open space accented with sumptuous stone and marble imported from several European countries. Several of the homes have incredible gourmet kitchens with top end imported appliances and cabinetry; two have restored fireplaces/grills in the kitchen that owners use regularly when wining and dining. There are more working fireplaces and pocket doors than you can count, along with fabulous mantels and painstakingly restored wood-work. The outside entertaining spaces at most homes this year are truly luxurious. From the lap pool in one yard to the hot-tub/sauna combo in another, it is apparent that we now see our yards as extensions of our homes.



And because we all love to see how our neighbours really live, tour-goers will not be disappointed by the array of eclectic personal expressions found in each home. One couple has museum-quality photography from the 1800s on view with stunning contemporary art works. Another has a beautiful grand piano in their living room, which coincidentally leads straight out through the glass doors to the patio. What better place to entertain and share a tune? Presidential and other political memorabilia, along with a good deal of celebrity photos, are highlighted in other homes.

Beginning Saturday evening at 5:00 pm and continuing until 8:00 pm, the homes will be open for a candlelight tour. Also that evening, several establishments along Barracks Row, which happens to be highlighted in this year's tour image, will be offering drink specials to ticket holders. Sunday's

tour runs from noon through 5:00 pm, with a tea from 2:30 to 5:30. On Sunday a free shuttle bus service will run between all venues.

Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 on the tour weekend. They may be purchased at the CHRS kiosk at Eastern Market (weekends only beginning in mid-April) and at select venues around the city, including:

- Coldwell Banker/Pardoe, 605 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
- Riverby Books, 417 East Capitol Street SE
- Trover Books, 221 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
- Prudential Carruthers, 216 7th Street SE
- Appalachian Spring, Union Station, East Hall
- Cherry Antiques, 1526 Wisconsin Ave NW, Georgetown \*

# A Council Bill That Should Concern Members

by Richard Wolf

The Council Chairman, Mrs. Linda Cropp, has introduced a bill titled the "Public Facilities Modernization Through Air Rights Development Act of 2006" [Bill 16-567]. It proposes, in essence, to inventory all DC assets: schools, playgrounds, libraries, police stations, fire stations, office buildings, etc., for the purpose of determining their potential to be turned into public/private partnerships for development. The funds earned by such development would be put into a fund for rebuilding schools and libraries. Eight council members are co-sponsors.

Although CHRS has supported conversions of abandoned school buildings into housing—Bryan and Logan are just two Capitol Hill examples—these have been indi-

vidualized deals, whereas this bill seems to put a "For Sale" sign on everything.

The Oyster School in northwest DC is often cited as a good example of such partnerships. There, in return for a new school building, a developer took the playground and built a very large apartment house. Is that what we want?

We have learned through attending the Comprehensive Plan Task Force meetings that District schools have very small sites compared to those in the suburbs, and the playgrounds are often valued local parks. That is true on Capitol Hill, with some limited exceptions.

Unfortunately, DC seems to have lost sight of the fact that parks, libraries, and playgrounds are part of what a government—a very wealthy government—builds and maintains for its citizens. These are

basic components of governance, not real estate deals.

At the first hearing on this bill on March 14th, almost all witnesses took issue with the notion that basic public assets should be sold off to the highest bidder. This discussion takes place in an environment where soon up to 3 million square feet of school buildings will be declared surplus.

Many CHRS members are concerned about the location of charter schools; others are interested in the retention and expansion of playgrounds and parks; others see opportunities for commercial/residential uses. But first and foremost, the planning and disposition must be in the public interest, and not simply to create a fund for rebuilding schools and libraries. You can be part of this debate by letting the Council know your views. \*

## Looking Back on Capitol Hill

by Nancy Metzger

In honor of our newest landmark, this month we'll look back to the days of the cable cars. In several places in his memoir of growing up on Capitol Hill, *Simpler Times*, George Butler mentions the street cars and their part in his early years. He also includes a passage about the cable cars—before his time, but definitely part of his father's life, from whom he undoubtedly picked up the following scenes:

"[Cablecars] were very inexpensive to operate but they still had drawbacks. The motorman, or 'gripman' as he was called, had to stand on an open front platform in all kinds of weather. Occasionally, the grip refused to let go of the cable, which was buried in a slot between the rails. When this occurred, it was not uncommon to see five or six cars hurtling along,

bunched up in a row, gongs clangingly frantically, while the gripman in the rear car struggled to make the grip let go of the cable. ...

"These buried moving cables gave rise to a variety of youthful sport and mischief making. One prank enjoyed by 'kids' of all ages was to use a hooked wire to engage the cable and then, holding the other end, swoop down the street on roller skates until some killjoy policeman hove into sight. He put a quick end to the free rides, and often, if the rider couldn't skate faster than the policeman could run, he was hauled off to jail. A favorite variant of this escapade was to tie a piece of clothesline to the end of a wire hooked over the cable and whirl along the street in one's express wagon with a knife at the ready to cut the line and run. ...

"Perhaps the most outrageous misuse of the system, played over and



over again, was to take a board with nails in one end and engage the cable by shoving the end with the nails into the cable slot. The board would leap forward and cut a swath down the street like a shark's fin cutting water, scattering pedestrians and causing horses to rear. A favorite variation of this deviltry was to tie a string of tin cans to the board, causing the shark's fin to clatter along loudly as it scared everyone to death."

Cable cars lasted only a decade in Washington before street cars, with their buried electric lines, became the transportation mode of choice. (Butler's book is available from Vandermere Press at <http://vandamere.com/simpler.htm>.) \*

# Down-Zoning MedLink

*A summary of testimony given to the DC Zoning Commission regarding the community-supported proposed down-zoning of MedLINK, by Richard Wolf on behalf of CHRS:*

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard in this important matter. I am Richard N. Wolf, President of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS). CHRS is one of the largest civic associations in the District of Columbia with some one thousand members. It has been active for more than 50 years in planning, zoning, and historic preservation issues on Capitol Hill and throughout the city. We are here in support of the down-zoning of the MedLINK properties, which are the subject of this case. For many years, CHRS and I personally have been involved in the affairs of what is now called MedLINK, previously called Capitol Hill Hospital. I was the last chairman of the board of the hospital, having served on the board since 1980.

Capitol Hill Hospital was, until its closure in 1991, a vital but controversial part of the Capitol Hill community for many years. It was a remnant of the many small hospitals that were at one time woven into the fabric of many neighborhoods. It had started out as Eastern Dispensary, run by the Rogers family. It eventuated into Casualty Hospital, then Rogers Memorial, and finally Capitol Hill Hospital. It also changed from a proprietary hospital owned by the Rogers family into a typical, non-profit community hospital.

By the time I moved to Capitol Hill in 1964, the hospital was changing even more. What had been a hospital focused on trauma cases, with doctors riding in ambulances, was transitioning to a more general community hospital. At the same time, hospitals were merging and moving to campus-type facilities, using inexpensive Hill-Burton bond funding to modernize facilities. Capitol Hill Hospital tried the

same thing, without moving. The hospital purchased numerous properties around the facility, tearing down row houses, creating parking lots where there had been houses, all in anticipation of enlarging the facilities.

Capitol Hill Hospital's activities angered and provoked the neighbors. Capitol Hill was changing. New residents who were intent on restoring the neighborhood found the tear-downs changing the landscape drastically, creating barren parking lots in the midst of dense row-house development. In addition, there was no relationship between the hospital and its newer neighbors. The hospital was not considered a suitable health care option. There were frequent sto-

The focus was on creating a hospital everyone could feel comfortable using, and on coming to terms with neighborhood concerns over land banking. The record of that 1973 zoning case 72-1 is filled with letters of concern and support. The land-banking issues were resolved by an agreement between the hospital, CHRS, and the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association to stop such actions unless the neighborhood organizations were in support.

Subsequently, in the late 1970s community residents were invited to serve on the board of the hospital. I was asked and did serve from 1980 to 1991. During that time extensive efforts were taken by the board to strengthen ties to the community and improve the provision

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**Along with the cessation of community hospital services, there has come a cessation of the need for the aberrant zoning.**

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ries in the papers of someone who had died or been injured while in the care of hospital personnel. The hospital operations also burdened the neighborhood with ambulance sirens at all hours of the day and night, and there were three shifts a day of employees coming and going, along with numerous visitors. Many considered these as burdens without compensating benefits.

In the midst of this discordant situation, the hospital began to modernize its facilities and consolidate its site. The hospital sought to achieve its objectives through substantial re-building, including the development of what is now called the north tower, containing new patient rooms. This construction focused on building single-patient rooms; few, if any double rooms; and eliminating old fashioned wards. This necessitated the zoning change to R-5-C from R-4 and C-2-A.

of health care. By 1980, Capitol Hill Hospital was in the last stages of merging with the Washington Hospital Center to create one of the first health care holding companies in the area: Medlantic Healthcare, now called Medstar, currently the largest healthcare system in the DC/Maryland area. That merger and the closure of Doctor's Hospital in downtown Washington brought to Capitol Hill Hospital some well known practitioners in ophthalmology, orthopedics, and plastic surgery. The system supplied funding to physically upgrade the emergency room, and we contracted with a highly skilled emergency room medical group. We installed an intensive care unit and hired a well-respected surgeon from Howard as the director of medical staff.

In addition to improving the medical delivery side of the hospital, we opened the hospital to the

# Comments on the “Housing Element” of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force

by Richard Wolf

1. The element does not cover all the housing issues in DC; therefore it cannot be the housing element for a “Comprehensive Plan”. By its own terms, it covers only low- and moderate-income households and people with special needs.
2. The element was drafted by a group that contained no neighborhood representatives, but only housing providers, bankers, housing consultants, and a number of persons not resident in DC.
3. Marilyn Melkonian, co-chair of the Commission to Establish Comprehensive Housing Policy, states that there is actually quite a bit of low and moderate housing in DC—much of it provided over the last 6 years. This report only looks at “future” residents, not current residents and their needs.

4. DC contains 52% of assisted housing in the Washington Metro Area, and perhaps even more if rent control and the products of the many housing providers are included. The area needs to provide more such housing, not DC.
5. The report does not go into the effects of rent control in affording units for low- and moderate-income families. 60% of DC residents rent.
6. The emphasis on “inclusion” and “diversity” lacks content. From my perspective, DC is already an inclusive city with considerable diversity. But the report seems to focus on some imaginary number and weighting to judge such matters, and if they don’t measure up, then some kind of zoning change or other action has to take place. Who is the commissar that is going to determine that, and who is going to write the regulations for that purpose?
7. The implications of all the land use proposals and proposed zoning changes are too numerous to evaluate and properly put in perspective. Any zoning or land use change should be explained with BOTH its positive and negative results. The paper assumes that there are no negatives from bigger, denser buildings stuck into already built neighborhoods. No benefits are ascribed to quality-of-life issues.
8. The Housing Element paper moralizes about its subject, and any time one would disagree with a proposed action, then one is automatically immoral.

In short, we have been given little time to evaluate and no opportunity to shape this document, and the government appears uninterested in questioning the assumptions of this paper and broadening the scope of the “housing element”. \*

**Down-Zoning** *continued from page 6*  
community. More residents were added to the board; residents were asked to serve on advisory committees. To address the needs of a younger, more athletic population, we started a sports medicine clinic and had our head of sports medicine and rehabilitation offer assistance to local high school coaches. We started a teen pregnancy program that was staffed by one of our ob-gyn groups and run by our social work department. The hospital meeting room facilities were made readily available to many community groups, and AA held meetings three and four times a day.

Despite all the effort and money expended to make Capitol Hill Hospital a model community hospital, the increased tightening of Medicare and insurance reimburse-

ment and our patient mix—mainly the chronically sick and elderly—caused terrible financial strains. Finally, in late 1990 and early 1991, it became obvious that Capitol Hill Hospital’s financial needs could break the system; our monthly losses were draining all the cash reserves. So like many similarly situated inner city hospitals throughout the country, we closed in 1991 and sold the hospital to Dr. Shin and his associates.

Since then, MedLINK has not operated as a community hospital. It does not serve local community health needs in any meaningful sense. It offers area-wide services for skilled nursing and a nursing home. It is not the hospital that requested and got an up-zoning to serve community health needs in 1973. That up-zoning was recognized by all concerned as an aberration to the

existing patterns of planning and zoning for the area, but needed for important public policy reasons. Along with the cessation of community hospital services, there has come a cessation of the need for the aberrant zoning. The current situation has resulted in constant conflict between the owners of MedLINK and the surrounding community. Good-faith attempts to resolve the conflict through suitable residential development proposals have been frustrated by Dr. Shin’s actions. Now is the time for the Zoning Commission to restore to the community at least a zoning context that will ensure a more suitable development future for the site and discourage Dr. Shin from any further land speculation fueled by a now inappropriate zoning designation. \*

# April's Preservation Café to Provide a Close Look at New Plans for Eastern Market

by Nancy Metzger

If buildings could speak, Capitol Hill's Eastern Market would have lots of stories to tell and probably a word of advice as well—"take care of me." Restoration architect Quinn Evans has been working with the DC Office of Property Management and the Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee to develop plans for the restoration and rehabilitation of Eastern Market.

On Wednesday, April 19, from 6-7:30 pm in Eastern Market's North Hall, the Capitol Hill community will have an opportunity to view the plans, hear the architect, and ask questions. The presentations themselves, following typical Preservation Café format, will start at 6:30 and last until 7:15. Those who can come at 6:00 pm will have time for a closer look at the plans before the presentations start.

The proposed plans start with the sheer necessities, like upgrading

the electrical, domestic water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer systems. Handicap-accessible toilets would be added to the Center Hall. Doors and windows would be rehabilitated, replacing the plastic glazing with security glass and making the double-hung windows operable.

To meet building code requirements, a new exterior fire escape is proposed at the rear, as well as ADA ramps. Three HVAC options are being considered for the South Hall (main) Market. Skylights along the ridge vent have also been proposed. The North Hall would be rehabilitated as an improved community arts center and public meeting space with HVAC, and new doors would be installed to connect the North and Center Halls.

These plans have been submitted to the Historic Preservation Review Board and the Commission of Fine Arts for review, similar to concept review that is typical for other projects. The interior of Eastern Market,

unlike the interior of most buildings in the historic district, is part of its landmark designation, so any interior alterations are also subject to historic preservation review.

A representative from the District Department of Transportation will provide an update on the proposed Seventh Street streetscape from Pennsylvania Avenue north to North Carolina Avenue and will answer questions.

In addition, there will be an opportunity to learn about the new marketing program, including new signage and banners, that is being developed for Eastern Market by Edge Advertising.

Please note that although the presentation starts at 6:30 pm, as is usual for Preservation Cafés, you may come earlier to have a chance to examine the plans and talk with the architect and others about the proposals. Displays should be set up by 6:00 pm. \*

## Resources for House History Research

by Amanda Molson

In addition to utilizing the well-known Washingtoniana Division at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Library and the extensive records of the National Archives, amateur historians should also make use of two additional resources helpful in investigating the roots of Capitol Hill houses.

### Kiplinger Research Library

The Historical Society of Washington's Kiplinger Research Library is housed on the second floor of the now-defunct City Museum (Carnegie Building).

Open Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, the library holds books, maps,

photographs, and personal papers from both large and small collections. You may search the online catalog of materials to focus on your particular interest before stopping by. The library is located directly across the street from the DC Convention Center, near the Mount Vernon Square Metro stop and a Circulator Bus stop. Learn more at [www.citymuseumdc.org](http://www.citymuseumdc.org) or by calling 202-383-1850.

### Local History and Genealogy Reading Room

Also, the Library of Congress maintains the Local History and Genealogy Reading Room in the Thomas Jefferson Building. Available information (searchable online) includes family and local

histories, magazine and newspaper clippings, and manuscripts. Though geared towards genealogical research, the files offer tidbits for tracing the story of a home's past owners.

Open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8:30 am – 9:30 pm and Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm, the Reading Room recommends that visitors attend a research orientation session and requires them to obtain a Reader Identification Card from the station in the Madison Building. Dates for orientations fill up quickly, and a schedule can be found at [www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy](http://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy). Additional information can be requested by calling 202-707-5537. \*

# March Café Speaker Described How To Produce Better Living Conditions for Street Trees

by Nancy Metzger

It's a rough world out there for Capitol Hill's street trees. Margaret Missiaen of Trees for Capitol Hill told the March Preservation Café attendees how to make life easier for the trees. First there was a look at some champion survivors—the American Lindens (Basswood) in the 600 block of Massachusetts Avenue, NE, that were planted in the public space between the sidewalk and the property line. They are thought to have been planted during "Boss" Shepherd's public improvements campaign of the 1870s, and most recently were protected during the construction of the Union Square row houses.

Now, the basics for tree boxes:

- Building up the soil in the tree box smothers the roots and causes more stress.
- Don't use black plastic or perforated cloth to discourage weeds in the tree box. Dirt soon plugs the little holes and stops moisture from getting to the roots.
- A thin layer of mulch can discourage weeds and will decompose over time, after which new mulch (shredded hardwood) can be added. Resist the temptation to make the mulch in to a "volcano" shape around the trunk, and do pull the mulch away from the trunk.
- Don't plant woody shrubs around a tree. Sharing the limited tree box space with shrubs means the tree's roots are shortchanged in the moisture department.
- Leave the pruning to the city's contractors and those with pruning permits. Pruning improperly can cause more stress as the tree struggles to heal the wound.
- Supplying adequate water is probably the most important thing you

can do for a tree. A garden hose set to trickle for 20–30 minutes will provide moisture deep in the soil where the tree roots are. Newly planted trees require more water to get established, and during dry times all trees can use some water.

- Don't tie anything around the tree, and cut off (with wire clippers) the little hose collars that new trees come with after they're firmly established. But leave the stakes—the dogs will sprinkle those instead of the tree.

Beyond the basics, Mrs. Missiaen offered the following suggestions for attractive tree boxes:

- If you want to beautify beyond a layer of mulch, stick to small perennials (under 18" as required by regulations) that can tolerate dry conditions. Frequent, shallow watering given to annuals can be a problem for the tree, encouraging a shallow root system. Some recommended plants were sedums, dwarf mondo grass, sweet alyssum, creeping thyme and other herbs, small bulbs, and portulaca.

- If you want to border the tree box with short iron fencing and the like, do so on just three sides and leave the street-side space empty about a foot away from the curb. This will minimize people and car doors tangling with the fencing.

Some useful contact information:

- To report a tree that needs work, call the **Mayor's Call Center** at 727-1000 and explain the nature of the problem. Also call that number to request a tree planting in the tree box.
- **Trees for Capitol Hill, Inc.:** a nonprofit corporation founded in 1991 and dedicated to enhancing our neighborhood by planting and caring for trees in public spaces. For more information, contact Margaret Missiaen, 202-546-8681, or Beth Purcell, 202-544-0178.
- **The Urban Forestry Administration:** Michael Chuko and Robert "Duff" McCully, arborists for Wards 5 & 6, 202-671-5311, [www.ddot.dc.gov/ufa](http://www.ddot.dc.gov/ufa).
- **Casey Trees Endowment Fund:** 202-833-4010, [www.caseytrees.org](http://www.caseytrees.org).

## Anacostia River Cleanup on April 22

**S**aturday, April 22, 2006, from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm, there will be a cleanup of the Anacostia River. We urge members to help out. There are three cleanup sites on or near Capitol Hill:

- **Seafarers Yacht Club:** 1950 M Street, SE. Contact: Bill Cobb, 202-544-7333
- **Kingman Island:** RFK Stadium, Lot 6. Contact: Brian Van Wye, 202-373-4992
- **Canal Park:** 1100 New Jersey Avenue, SE (Anacostia Waterfront Corporation office building). Contact: Melissa

McKnight, 202-841-3173,  
[Melissa.McKnight@awcdc.com](mailto:Melissa.McKnight@awcdc.com)

For additional information on the Earth Day cleanup, see [www.anacostiaaws.org/earthday2006.htm](http://www.anacostiaaws.org/earthday2006.htm). This is an Earth Day event sponsored by the Anacostia Watershed Society and partners, including the DC Department of Environment and the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation.

Much progress has been made in reducing trash and floatable debris in the last 20 years, but much remains to be done; the April 22, 2006 cleanup is another step toward a trash-free Anacostia.

# Mark Your Calendar!

## APRIL

- 3 Monday, 6:30 pm**  
**CHRS Historic Preservation Committee**, Kirby House, 420 Tenth Street, SE, first floor. (Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034.)
- 11 Tuesday, 8:00 pm**  
**Overbeck Lecture: A History of the Navy Yard.** Author and historian Edward Marolda will present an illustrated lecture on the history of the Navy Yard and its impact on Capitol Hill. Naval Lodge Hall, 330 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Admission free, but reservation required. To reserve a place, call 202-544-1845 or e-mail OverbeckLecture@aol.com
- 13 Thursday, 7:30 pm**  
**CHRS Zoning Committee**, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Will consider cases involving applications for 309 K. Street, NE; 628 East Capitol Street, NE; 1124 E Street, NE; and 633 E Street, NE. The Carter Schools-Text Amendment will also be considered. The meetings are open to the public. (Details: Gary Peterson, 202-547-7969, pgarylaw@aol.com)
- 18 Tuesday, 6:30 pm**  
**CHRS Board Meeting**, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. (Details: Dick Wolf, 202-543-4353)

## 19 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

**Preservation Café: Plans for the Eastern Market.** Participants will be able to view the plans for the Eastern Market and hear presentations from restoration architect Quinn Evans, DDOT streetscape experts, and branding/signage consultants from Edge Advertising. Location: Eastern Market North Hall. Displays will be set up by 6:00 pm (Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034) See story on page 8.

## 22 Sat., 8:30 am-2:00 pm

**Earth Day Anacostia River Clean-Up** from 8:30 am-noon at various sites along the Anacostia River. Celebration Rally, featuring music and food, at 1:00 pm at Seafarers Yacht Club, 1950 M Street, SE. (Details: Robin at 301-699-6024 or [www.anacostiaws.org](http://www.anacostiaws.org))

## 25 Tuesday, 7:00 pm

**Ward 6 Democratic Council Candidates Forum.** Will feature all announced Democratic candidates for the Ward 6 council seat, including Curtis Ethridge, Keith Jarrell, Leo Pinson, and Tommy Wells. (Details: Jan Eichhorn, 202-547-8855 or [Ward6Dems@aol.com](mailto:Ward6Dems@aol.com))

## 27 Thursday, 10:00 am

**Historic Preservation Review Board meeting**, 441 4th Street, NW (#1 Judiciary Square), Room 220 South. (Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034)

## MAY

- 1 Monday, 6:30 pm**  
**CHRS Historic Preservation Committee**, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. (Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034)
- 11 Thursday, 7:30 pm**  
**CHRS Zoning Committee**, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. (Details: Gary Peterson, 202-547-7969)
- 13 Saturday, 5:00-8:00 pm &**  
**14 Sunday, Noon-5:00 pm**  
**Forty-Ninth Annual CHRS House and Garden Tour.** Tickets will be available weekends beginning in mid-April at the CHRS kiosk at Eastern Market and various ticket outlets around the city. (Details: CHRS Office, 202-543-0425) See story on page 4.
- 16 Tuesday, 6:30 pm**  
**CHRS Board Meeting**, Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first floor. (Details: Dick Wolf, 202-543-4353)
- 17 Wednesday, 6:30 pm**  
**Preservation Café: What Style Is It?** (Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034)
- 25 Thursday, 10:00 am**  
**Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting**, 441 4th Street NW (#1 Judiciary Square), Room 220 South. (Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034)



**Capitol Hill Restoration Society**  
420 Tenth Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003