



NEWS

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March 2008

CHRS Endorses Guidelines for Use of Hine School Site

School Closure Announced

by Gary Peterson

CHRS has joined ANC6B in attempting to insure that the future use of the Hine School site is compatible with the neighborhood and that those responsible for making that decision take into account the concerns of the community.

On February 1, Mayor Adrian M. Fenty and Chancellor Michelle Rhee announced the final school closure recommendations. In Ward 6, three schools are on the final list of recommended closures; Hine Junior High School is the only Capitol Hill school slated to be closed. On the same day, Councilmember Tommy Wells announced his support for the school closures and asked community organizations to make recommendations as to the future use of the Hine site. ANC6B quickly passed a resolution stating that any future use of the site should match the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood and include community amenities.

At the February 19 board meeting, the CHRS Board passed the following resolution:

“CHRS supports the closing and then demolition of Hine School and development of the site in coordination with the Town Center development of the Eastern Market

Metro Plaza. Making Eastern Market Metro the town square connecting Seventh and Eighth Streets will link the Natatorium and the Eastern Market on the North with the Navy Yard on the South. Any development of the Hine site must be consistent with the character of

the Capitol Hill Historic District and must respect existing heights, density and uses. Any development proposal should:

- Comply with the recently enacted comprehensive plan,

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Councilmember Brown to Speak at March 13 CHRS Community Forum

by Barbara Eck

Kwame R. Brown, At-Large Member of the City Council, will be the featured speaker at the Restoration Society’s Community Forum on Wednesday, March 13, at St. Peter’s Church Hall, Second and C Streets, SE; the evening begins with a social gathering and short business meeting at 7:15 pm, followed by Mr. Brown at 7:45 pm.

Councilmember Brown was elected in 2004 and is completing his first term on the Council. He chairs the Committee on Economic Development. This Committee is responsible for matters related to economic, industrial and commercial development policy; the disposition of property for economic development purposes; tourism, cultural



affairs; international business, and local business development policy and programs. As Chair of this impor-

tant committee, we have asked him to focus his remarks on the many development projects that are under construction in and around our neighborhood, as well as the plans for future development and coordination of various projects all along the Anacostia River to our south and the NOMA development to our north.

Please mark your calendar, tell your neighbors, and bring your questions to what promises to be a lively discussion. ✧

President's Column

by Dick Wolf

CHRS has long been known as the guardian of the Hill's residential character. But we have also been a strong advocate of a vibrant business community: we were instrumental in saving Eastern Market and are helping to restore it; we produced 12 business directories starting in the late 1960s before there were any Hill business associations; we promoted businesses appropriate to our community by championing numerous adjustments to the zoning code. Now we are engaged in two more initiatives that will strengthen business opportunities and at the same time create a dynamic central business district for Capitol Hill.

As long ago as 1974, CHRS supported the Eastern Market Metro Plaza as a central feature of the Hill. We saw it as the link between Eastern Market locale and Barracks

Row. With the revitalization of Barracks Row as DC's "First Main Street," the need to redesign the plaza became imperative. Several years ago CHRS and CHAMPS commissioned a design concept for the Plaza using Capitol Hill's internationally famous landscape design firm, Oehme, van Sweden, & Associates, Inc. That effort produced a plan for a Capitol Hill Town Square. But until ownership of the Plaza parcels transferred to the District from the U.S. Park Service, there were severe constraints on the use of the property.

That transfer occurred last year and using Congressional funds specifically designated for the purpose of planning and building this important feature, Barracks Row has contracted with a team comprised of Amy Weinstein, architect-planner; the aforementioned design firm of Oehme, van Sweden, & Associates;

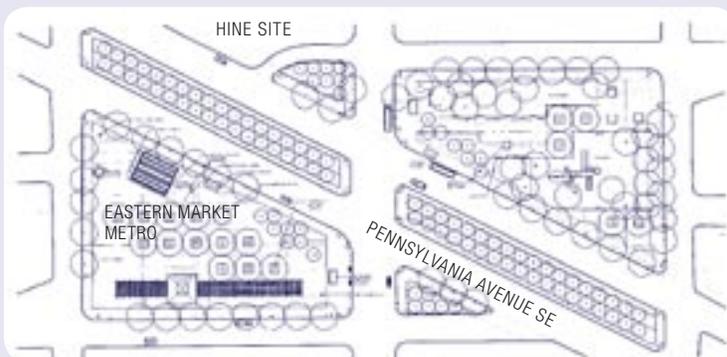
as well as a transportation consultant and an urban tree expert to engage in a comprehensive 15-month planning process for what we are now calling the Hill Town Square Project. Our plan has received the enthusiastic endorsement from a number of DC government agencies. An advisory committee of Hill community organization representatives and relevant Federal and local officials will be formed to assist in refining the plan. Members of the community will participate through community forums.

Equally important and — tied in some ways to the Town Square work — is planning for the re-use of the Hine Junior School site, now that the school will be closed. When the decision to close Hine was made some 18 months ago, CHRS called for a plan based on demolition of the current structure. CHRS subsequently employed Amy Weinstein to draw up a concept for use of the site. That plan has been shown to a number of community representatives who have expressed support for the concept. It has also been shown to various DC officials who see it as a starting point for a community planning process. As noted on page one of this newsletter, the CHRS board recently adopted a resolution calling for a set of principles to guide the planning process. They reflect the Weinstein concept.

These are complex undertakings. Getting the right shape and uses for the very center of the Hill's most important area is critical. As we move forward, we will keep our members informed of what is being proposed and what forums the community can use to air their ideas. This is another example of CHRS helping to make the Hill a "model urban community." Sound residential communities, good schools, and successful business areas are all part of continuing to enhance what one newspaper called a "jewel box" of a neighborhood. ✧

A Plan Emerges for The Hill Town Square

The Town Square Plan prepared by Oehme, van Sweden & Associates envisions the West Plaza as an open Town Square that features a covered pavilion and arbor, a fountain, and an oasis-like ribbon of canopy trees. The East Plaza becomes a "Garden in the City" with a potential memorial sculpture and recreational spaces. The two Plazas are tied together by the use of special paving, planting, and seating.



The proposed design anticipates: raised planters for seating under canopy trees, a covered pavilion and arbor visually referring to Eastern Market and providing shelter for periodic markets on the Plaza, specialty vendors and musicians, a fountain to add visual and auditory interest, directional kiosks, movable furniture, brick and concrete paving, segmented benches for alternative seating, an iron fence in the center of Pennsylvania Avenue to discourage pedestrians from crossing in mid-block, a relocated bus shelter and re-timing of traffic lights to encourage use of the crosswalks.

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To contact any of the above, please contact the Society offices by calling 202-543-0425 or sending email to CapHRS@aol.com.
www.chrs.org

Celebrating more than 50 years 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
* 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.

Use of Hine School Site *continued from page 1*

- Be the best example of smart growth *and sustainable development*,
- Reflect the importance of the location,
- Be compatible with the surrounding zoning and *existing building scale*,
- Restore the original L'Enfant Plan by reopening C Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets,
- Provide for commercial uses on Seventh Street compatible with the existing commercial uses,
- Set aside Pennsylvania Avenue for mixed use with retail on the first floor and office above,
- Design the Eighth Street frontage as residential and include a substantial percentage of workforce housing,
- Consider live/work studios on C Street,



Hine Junior High from Eighth Street, SE.

Photo: Larry Janezich

- Accommodate one to two underground levels of parking over 100 percent of the site, so there is parking for the residential, commercial, and weekend parking for the Eastern Market,
- Provide for green space as well as an outdoors area for craft vendors, food vendors and the flea market." ✧

February 19 CHRS Board resolution.

Beyond the Boundaries Walking Tour

What: Historic Walking Tour — North Lincoln Park

When: Saturday, March 15, 2008, 2:00 pm

Where: Meet at Maury School (the newer building, circa 1960s) Thirteenth Street & Tennessee Avenue, NE (on the Tennessee Avenue side)

Join tour leader Beth Purcell for a stimulating and entertaining 1 – 2 hour walk around parts of Thirteenth, Fourteenth, C, D, and Warren Streets, and Constitution and Corbin Avenues. Learn about architectural styles in the neighborhood and hear about some notable Washington, DC architects and builders who were responsible for our great buildings. Some of Washington's finest homes were built in North Lincoln Park.

This tour is one in a series of tours designed to highlight historic neighborhoods outside the boundaries of the Capitol Hill Historic District. The tour is FREE but space is limited. Please reserve space with Elizabeth Nelson at elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com, or Donna Hanousek at hanousek@earthlink.net, or call CHRS at 202-543-0425. ✧

Looking Back on Capitol Hill

by Nancy Metzger

Sidney Hoffman grew up on H Street, NE, where his father had a shoe store at #1021 and his mother, after her husband died in 1924, played the piano or organ in local theatres (including the Avenue Grand on the south side of the 600 block of Pennsylvania Avenue and at the Home Theatre at 1230 C Street, NE). Starting in the early 1930s, Mr. Hoffman worked for 27 years managing theaters. In a 2004 interview with Ev Barnes for the Ruth Ann Overbeck Capitol Hill History Project, Sidney Hoffman recounts some of his experiences:

"[In 1936] I went to the Home Theater, ...about a 600-seat theater. It was a good place to get acquainted. One of the ... things I hadn't had

before was serials on Saturday. ... The Home Theater had two stores, which were part of the property that belonged to the company. One of them was a little tailor shop, and the other was a little confectionary store. But they sold dill pickles, and the kids would all buy dill pickles and come in the store ... and go into the theater.

"And then [I] went to the Apollo. The strange thing that happened there ...of course I grew up attending the Apollo Theater, because it was our theater in those days. There were a couple of other theaters in Northeast. There was one called the Dixie that nobody knows about, but I have a book on it, and I know about it too. And there was one called the Princess Theater, where on Friday, if you got to the theater by 3:30, you

could get in for five cents. You'd rush home to get a nickel from your parent, and run over to the theater. ...

"The Apollo was the theater in that area. The thing that happened to me at the Apollo Theater was — we had a balcony, and we used to close it up because there was no reason to keep it open, but on Saturday we'd have a lot of people in there. And I wasn't thinking; I wasn't being smart. I'd go up there — we had a comedy, I don't know if it was the Three Stooges, or Laurel and Hardy, or Charlie Chaplin, or whatever — Buster Keaton. They weren't laughing. I'd go up there — they weren't laughing — they were smooching. They were all from Gallaudet."

A transcription of the entire interview can be found on the website www.capitolhillhistory.org. ✧

Lead Hazards for Hill Residents

by Dick Wilson

Recently WASA representatives appeared on the Hill to give an update on the lead pipe replacement program. The meeting at the Old Naval Hospital was filled with concerned residents, including many parents. It appears that the problem stems from city water supply pipes, and that the program of pipe replacement has been somewhat successful

in reducing exposure to lead. The entire length of pipe from the water main into the house must be replaced in order to completely solve the lead problem, although changes in treatment chemicals have succeeded in eliminating much of the hazard.

What is important to note is that lead hazards in Capitol Hill houses are pervasive. Lead from drinking water is a minor part of the problem because most hazards are buried in

our walls: old lead paint and sometimes lead in old plaster. These problems can be handled, as they have been over many years, by removal and containing the peeling paints and bad plaster.

Most important from a public health standpoint is that the District government still has not installed a lead czar who can cut through and across the many agency lines that have responsibility for handling lead problems. That is the way such cities as Baltimore and Philadelphia have successfully dealt with their lead problems. As the science of lead poisoning has advanced, it is clear that even very low levels of lead in the environment are dangerous to children's development. Accordingly, one has to ask, why WASA is treating only a small part of the problem: lead in drinking water? Why is lead in drinking water not handled as part of the whole issue of lead in our environment? Ask that question of your elected officials. ✧

Welcome CHRS Supporters

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

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Eastern Market Update: Progress Made on Renovation and New Management

by Barbara Eck

Renovation Status

The South Hall roof is more than 50 percent complete and right on schedule. The web cam (found under the heading "Eastern Market" on the left hand menu at www.opm.dc.gov) will be moved to show ongoing construction once the roof is substantially completed. The architect has been given the go-ahead to prepare

design drawings and details for the North Hall roof. Although it was not burned in the fire, it is the original roof and upon inspection, potential problems were revealed. Replacement at this time will provide for both continuity of structure and materials as well as life span of the entire Market roof.

Window work in the South Hall which began in January required the closing of the viewing area for security and safety reasons. The sashes will be

removed and taken to a repair site. The window frame repair/replacement will take place on site. After the window installation the windows will remain boarded for protection and security during the main renovation.

The North Hall has been cleared for window work as well. The goal of the Office of Property Management (OPM) is to allow the weekend and evening activities at the North Hall to continue for as long as possible. During the weeks when the window work is underway; the portions of the North Hall that are not being used for construction will be available for weekend vending and evening events. When the main renovation gets underway, the North Hall will be closed and all vending will be outside.

OPM Drafts RFP for a Market Manager

The Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee (EMCAC) has been working with OPM in drafting the RFP (request for proposal) for a new market manager. As this is being written, the EMCAC is reviewing the first draft which OPM has also made available to the public.

The final RFP is scheduled to be released on March 14. The proposal will be reviewed during the week of April 28 and qualifying submissions will be sent to the EMCAC for review and interviews will be scheduled. Recommendations, reviews, and interviews will be conducted during the first weeks in May with May 19 as a target date for selection of Management. The timeline for this process is being driven by the desire to have the new management transition completed by June 30 when the contract with Eastern Market Ventures expires. ✧

History Has No Boundaries

2008 Annual CHRS House & Garden Tour

Save the Date! Mother's Day Weekend

May 10 from 5-8 pm

May 11 from noon to 5 pm

This year's tour will offer a unique set of homes and venues in line with the *Beyond the Boundaries* theme to showcase the outer boundaries of the Capitol Hill Historic District. Discover the new restaurants, coffee houses, and entertainment venues along H Street, NE!

Volunteer opportunities:

- Selling tickets in two-hour shifts weekends from April 12th through tour weekend;
- Being a docent for two-hour shifts on tour days, May 10th and May 11th; and
- Accompanying the jitneys on tour days to provide information to drivers and riders.

Refer to www.chrs.org for ongoing information about the House Tour. Volunteer info available at CapHRS@aol.com. ✧

Tips for Improving Garden Walls, Walks, and Steps

by Eric Snellings

A late-arriving crowd of almost 40 came to the February Preservation Café and prepared for spring by learning about options to address problems that many owners of historic properties face: failing walkways, bulging retaining walls, broken concrete steps, and crumbling brick patios. Dr. Christina Wilson of Renaissance Development provided a PowerPoint presentation of before-and-after examples of possibilities for all these situations.

Walkways and Patios

Dr. Wilson told the audience that concrete was used extensively after 1890 and is one appropriate replacement material. Others are brick and stone, of course, but care should be taken to choose appropriate colors of all materials so that they will blend with the historic fabric of the house.

In older neighborhoods there is often a mixture of paving and yard treatments in older neighborhoods

as features have been added over time — concrete, brick, gravel, stepping stones, and mulch, often causing water collection areas that foster mosquito breeding. Wilson favors an approach that often involves removing all of these elements and starting over with a clean slate, re-grading the yard and allowing runoff to be directed into planting areas and yards.

She said that it is desirable to use new paving brick, which is fired at higher temperatures and is more durable than wall brick, for horizontal surface longevity. She also advocates flagstone and slate as paving material options (along with concrete) for these horizontal walking surfaces.

For patios, she indicated that there is no historical precedent. [See accompanying box.] The approach for this paved area should be treated in a similar manner as walkways. She provided a multiplicity of ideas of patterns for brick-paved areas, and sizes of stone pieces with different patterns for patios. She

believes that regular rather than irregular patterns are more appropriate for the period of Capitol Hill properties and their location in an urban environment.

Retaining Walls

With the differing heights of adjacent properties, public sidewalks, and house entrances that are a result of our city's design and house typology, there is a wealth of retaining walls and grade changes on Capitol Hill. Again, these configurations can result in water run-off issues, basement flooding, and other problems. Retaining wall problems can result from movement due to tree roots, soil and ground water pressure, and adjacent development.

In order to make repairs, Dr. Wilson often advocates a complete removal and replacement approach. When constructed, these walls typically did not include footings or reinforcement. In order to meet current codes, she noted that footings and back-up reinforced concrete block walls should be constructed and then faced with brick or stone to simulate the original appearance of a wall. In some areas, 18" high walls can be used for seating as part of a comprehensive design solution.

Decks and Stairs

Decks also have no historical precedent on Capitol Hill and often a deck was installed because it was the cheaper option or because it would hide a problem. When there are enclosed or semi-enclosed areas under these decks, a potential (and experience shows, likely) haven for rats is created. Sometimes these low-rising decks and wooden stairs can be replaced with masonry construction that can help eliminate these problems and provide a more long-term solution.

CAPITOL HILL'S FRONT GARDENS were established under the 1871 "Parking" Act, passed to establish a linear park along our streets and avenues (an early "green" endeavor). Think of designing the front garden of your house as making a little park, which will be joined with all your neighbors' little parks to produce the green space envisioned over one-hundred years ago. Keep the paving area in the front gardens to a minimum and consult your local garden centers or designers on plant selection to achieve a low-maintenance garden, if that is your preference. Ground covers, low shrubs and flowers, and trees are considered appropriate landscape materials under the "Parking" Act.

Changes and alterations to hardscape features (walks, stairs, walls, porches) and changes of grade in the front gardens require a public space permit as well as a building permit.

For more information about public space requirements and permits, consult the Capitol Hill Restoration Society Guidelines on those subjects, available at the NE and SE libraries as well as the CHRS office (202-543-0425; CapHRS@aol.com). Also check the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs website for more permit information.

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DC Dept. of Environment “River Smart Homes” Project

by Beth Purcell

DDOE’s “RiverSmart Homes” will offer residents ways to reduce stormwater runoff. Under the program, interested residents can call DDOE to perform a “stormwater audit” of the property and provide recommendations on what the homeowner can do to reduce the property’s impact on our local rivers and streams. Some of the recommendations may include installing rain barrels or cisterns, planting trees, replacing impervious surfaces with pervious ones, installing rain gardens, and planting native plants. Contact information for contractors familiar with installing different systems will be available.

The homeowner will decide what recommended items he/she wants. Some will be installed free-of-charge to the homeowner, such as trees and rain barrels, while others will be eligible for a \$200-\$400 rebate on work the homeowner does or has done, including native landscaping, rain gardens, and permeable pavement.

Once complete, the homeowner will contact DDOE for an inspection. If the work was done properly, the homeowner will be able to apply for the rebate.

DDOE is proceeding cautiously with this completely new program to ensure that the infrastructure will be in place to run this program to the satisfaction of city residents.

DDOE is installing 8 demonstration sites, one in each Ward of the city. DDOE will offer tours of the sites in mid-to-late spring 2008. About the same time DDOE will be testing and advertising the program in a District neighborhood east of the Anacostia River.

Assuming that all goes well, DDOE plans to offer the program city-wide to all residents in fall 2008. To get on DDOE’s list to participate in RiverSmart Homes email steve.saari@dc.gov (subject: RiverSmart Homes) or call Steve Saari at 202-535-2961, and provide the following information: name, home address, email address or telephone number, and Ward number (6 for Capitol Hill). ✧

March Café: “Finding Space Under Your House”

by Nancy Metzger

If you’ve been searching for more space in your Capitol Hill home, you may find some answers at the Preservation Café on Wednesday, March 19, when architect Judith Capen will be speaking on “Making the Most of Your Basement.” Held in the downstairs meeting room of Ebenezer’s Coffee House at 201 F Street, NE, from 6:30 – 7:15 pm, this will be an opportunity to assess the potential

of a basement for another living space or perhaps simply for better storage space.

This Preservation Café, sponsored by the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, will highlight general basement information such as moisture sources; wall, floor and ceiling finishes; and utility issues, whether the basement is to be used for storage, expanded family space or a second unit. Not only is Ms. Capen an architect with experience in residential

projects but she is also a Capitol Hill homeowner who once tackled a similar project.

In May, during Part II of the basement series, she will be looking at the correct procedures for “Digging Out Your Basement,” an important topic necessary to avoid house collapse or damage to neighboring properties. Preservation Cafe is a free forum, open to all members of the Capitol Hill community. ✧

Garden Walls, Walks, and Steps *continued from page 6*

Where the existing stairs are already concrete, but in disrepair, they can be capped with stone or brick or they can be coated with concrete (parged) to improve their appearance and extend their usefulness.

Design and Installation

One design tip offered was to mark the area with paint or use cardboard patterns of the stone

sizes and patterns to help visualize the area and design choices available. The use of stone dust rather than sand for the base of the paving area may be more cost effective and still provide drainage. Grouted areas are required at and around steps and stairs to reduce the possibility of movement. Mortar colors are varied and darker grey or red can be used to match historic materials.

Q and A

Several questions were posed after the presentation and covered such issues as: paving over existing concrete, radial paving patterns at round building elements (turrets), yards that slope towards the house, and the protection of existing plant material. For answers to these questions or others, contact Renaissance Development at 202-547-2345. ✧

Report Raises Critical Questions on Bridge Project

CHRS Asks Tommy Wells to Raise Concerns with DDOT

by Thomas Grahame

Dick Wolf, Barbara Eck, and Tom Grahame of the CHRS Board met with Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells on Friday, February 22, to discuss the findings of the Smart Mobility, Inc., study of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Eleventh Street Bridges proposal. Smart Mobility, Inc. is a consulting firm providing services in computer modeling and analysis of land use and transportation systems. The study was commissioned by CHRS and is available at www.CHRS.org. In light of the unknown effect on Capitol Hill of the new traffic patterns and because our concerns have gone unanswered for months, CHRS asked Councilmember Wells to submit questions to the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT). Here are the main points of the Smart Mobility, Inc., study findings:

- Almost 50,000 more vehicles per day would cross into DC at the Eleventh Street Bridges, if the capacity expansion proposal goes forward.
- There would be a net increase of 44,000 vehicles over the Anacostia on the expanded Eleventh Street and Sousa Bridges combined, after subtracting the slight reduction in traffic estimated for the Sousa Bridge.
- A large increase in bridge capacity for vehicles takes people off mass transit.
- Increased pollution near busier roadways results in more asthma, respiratory problems, even cardiovascular death.
- The project will increase global warming emissions, at a time when the Mayor has pledged to reduce them to 1990 levels in five years.
- All proposed alternatives are very similar, all have 12 lanes instead

of today's eight, and all increase capacity to use freeways.

- The EIS is misleading because it states several times that "The project does not include adding capacity to the freeway system." Yet it does add such capacity — two added lanes on the connection between the Eleventh Street Bridges and the Southeast Expressway.
- Adding this large amount of vehicular capacity is inconsistent with the planning goals of the District, and of the National Capitol Planning Commission.
- The main beneficiaries are Maryland commuters.

Issues Raised by Unexplained Estimated Drop in Future Sousa Bridge Traffic

- The EIS shows a projected decrease in Sousa traffic from 93,000 average daily trips (from DDOT website) in 2002 to 77,000 in 2030, under a proposal that provides no changes to Eleventh Street Bridges. Yet estimated traffic on the Eleventh Street Bridges increases in the same time period by almost 40,000 vehicles per day under the same proposal.
- Why this big reduction in Sousa traffic over next 22 years? Traffic doesn't spontaneously decrease over time.
- What unspecified new projects cause this reduction? How much will they cost?
- Smart Mobility, Inc. suggests that a new boulevard may have something to do with the decrease, but it is probably responsible only for a small portion.
- Without the decrease caused by unidentified projects, Smart Mobility, Inc. finds that traffic would be higher than the EIS projects, especially over the Sousa Bridge.

We need on-the-record answers from DDOT, to know how they came up with the reduction, the costs involved to account for it, how much extra traffic will occur, and where it will go if the unidentified projects don't go forward.

Questions for DC Department of Transportation (DDOT)

At the end of this positive meeting, CHRS asked Wells if he would submit the following questions to DDOT for on-the-record answers:

- What will be the 2030 impact on traffic in parts of Capitol Hill not previously studied, e.g., Fourth, Sixth, Eighth, and Eleventh Streets north of Pennsylvania Avenue, under the proposal to build the new bridge vs. the proposal to not build the new bridge?
- What specific projects are included in the EIS which cause traffic volumes over the Sousa bridge to decline from 93,000 per day in 2002, to 77,000 per day in 2030, in the proposal which anticipates no changes to the Eleventh Street Bridges? How much would such projects cost?
- What would be the additional traffic volumes in 2030, in both the build and no-build alternatives, if these unspecified projects were not included in the base forecast?
- Ask DDOT to provide street level, three dimensional renderings of the Eleventh Street Bridges as they would look when completed, including the context of buildings on either side of the river.
- How is the Mayor going to meet his goal of reducing DC greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels in five years, if we have an added 44,000 cars crossing the Anacostia on the expanded Eleventh Street and Sousa Bridges? ✧

Historic Preservation Briefs

by Nancy Metzger

The Historic Homeowners Grant Program

Created to help qualified low-and moderate-income homeowners in specified historic districts pay for certified rehabilitation work, the Grant program has now been extended to qualified residents of the Capitol Hill Historic District. The grants are available for exterior repairs, rehabilitation, and structural work on historic properties. Work affecting public elevations of a building that makes an appreciable difference in the appearance of a property is encouraged.

The grant application is a two-part process. In Part 1 of the application, homeowners provide photographs of their houses and a general description of work being proposed for funding. In response, applicants are provided confirmation by the Historic Preservation Office that a house is a protected property that contributes to the character of an eligible historic district, a determination on whether the proposed scope of work meets basic preservation guidelines, and recommendations on how an application might be improved. The next deadline for the program is March 1; in addition there will be other deadlines, including one this summer, perhaps in July. A Part 1 application form will be posted on the Historic Preservation Office website shortly and other information is available there as well, including a general summary, a sheet of frequently asked questions, and a table showing income eligibility and match requirements. [After accessing the Historic Preservation Office website (www.planning.dc.gov/hpo), select "Financial Incentives and Resources" and then "Homeowners Grant Program."]

For more information on the program, please contact the CHRS office (202-543-0425; CapHRS@aol.com).

Volunteers Needed for PEPCO Meter Boxes Task Force

A PEPCO Meter Boxes Task Force is being formed but still needs one or two more volunteers to be truly functional. In particular, a volunteer is needed to be the contact person for the group and to provide organizational cohesion. Also, someone with electrical installation experience is needed to serve as a technical resource person. As many Capitol Hill and other historic district residents have discovered, present-day electrical demands and code requirements have resulted in huge meter boxes being affixed in conspicuous places on house facades or in public spaces. Often homeowners are caught between the procedural limits of PEPCO, electrical installers, and other regulatory bodies.

This "task force" is an effort to bring together all the stakeholders (PEPCO, electrical installers, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Historic Preservation Office, DC Department of Transportation, Office of the People's Counsel, and neighborhood organizations) to deal with all aspects of the problem and fashion city-wide solutions rather than dealing with problems on a case-by-case basis. Councilmember Tommy Wells's office is helping to convene the first meeting. Please contact the CHRS Office (202-543-0425; CapHRS@aol.com) to volunteer or talk with a representative about this effort.

Download PDFs of Historic District Maps

Historic District maps are available in a PDF file on the Historic Preservation Office/Office of

Planning website (www.planning.dc.gov/hpo). Maps of all 45 historic districts in the city will be posted. They may be accessed through two sections of the website: Historic Sites Index or Brochures and Publications. (CHRS has posted a Capitol Hill Historic District map on its website as well.)

Deadline for Historic Preservation Nominations is May 30

Nomination forms for the 2008 Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Historic Preservation are now available on the Office of Planning/Historic Preservation Office website (www.planning.dc.gov/hp). The deadline for submission is May 30, 2008 at 5:00 pm. The Mayor's Awards ceremony will take place this coming fall. Nominations may be submitted for seven categories: Archaeology, Community Involvement, Historic Preservation-restoration/rehabilitation and new construction; Advocacy, Public Education, Stewardship, and Lifetime Achievement. The category of Advocacy is new for the 2008 program. To be eligible projects must have been completed within the past three years, or after January 1, 2005.

HPO Fact Sheets on Window and Door Replacement on the Web

Historic Preservation Office fact sheets about replacing windows and doors will be posted on the CHRS website (www.chrs.org) under the Capitol Hill History and Historic District section. Following the advice provided in these fact sheets should make applying for necessary permits much simpler. (A reminder: the CHRS website has a link to the DCRA Homeowner's Center website, another source of information for Capitol Hill residents.) ✧

Mark Your Calendar!

MARCH

3 Monday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034.

4 Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 pm

DDOT/FHWA Public Hearing on the draft EIS for the South Capitol Street (Frederick Douglass Memorial) Bridge. Birney Elementary School, 2501 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE (near Anacostia Metro). Draft EIS includes two Build Alternatives that would reconstruct South Capitol Street and Suitland Parkway and replace the bridge. The draft EIS is available at www.southcapitoleis.com. Details: Bart Clark, barton.clark@dc.gov.

5 Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 pm

Public Hearing on draft EIS (see above.) Amidon Elementary School, 401 I Street, SW. (near Waterfront-SEU Metro).

13 Thursday, 7:30 pm

CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor, to consider cases involving 326 D Street, SE and 663 K Street, NE. Details: Gary Peterson, 202-547-7969.

13 Thursday, 7:00 pm

CHRS Community Forum, featuring At-Large City Council Member Kwame

Brown, chairman of the council's Economic Development Committee. Brown will discuss the various developments and proposals for development in and around Capitol Hill, including the Anacostia River and NOMA initiatives. St. Peter's Church basement hall, 2nd & C Streets, SE, lower level. Meeting is free and open to the public, no reservations required. Refreshments at 7:00 pm, CHRS business at 7:30 pm, and speaker at 7:45 pm. Details: Barbara Eck, eckbarbara@yahoo.com. (See page 1.)

15 Saturday, 10:30 am

Pedestrian Safety Forum, sponsored by Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells. Forum will identify solutions to problems identified in a February 27 meeting. DDOT officials and other experts will be on hand to discuss pedestrian safety and traffic engineering strategies with residents in break-out groups. Hine Jr. High School, 335 8th Street, SE. Details: Charles Allen, callen@dccouncil.us.

15 Saturday, 2:00 pm

Neighborhood walking tour, sponsored by CHRS. Focus of this tour is the 200 and 300 blocks of Tennessee Avenue, Corbin Place, and Warren Street. Participants learn about the architectural styles and building materials of homes, including information about who built the homes and when. Tour is free and will be led by Hill East resident Beth Purcell. Tour starting point is at the cor-

ner of 13th and Constitution Avenue, NE near the front entrance to Maury School. Details: Elizabeth Nelson, 202-543-3512 or elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com.

18 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Dick Wolf, 202-543-4353.

19 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Preservation Café: Hill Architect Judith Capen will discuss "Making the Most of Your Basement." Ebenezer's Coffee House, 201 F Street, NE, lower level community room. Event is free and open to the public, no reservations required. Details: Shauna Holmes, 202-546-5211. (See page 7.)

27 Thursday, 10:00 am

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

APRIL

5 Saturday, 7:00 pm

Peabody School 11th annual Jazz Gala and Auction. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 3rd & A Streets, SE. All proceeds benefit student development programs. Purchase tickets at Peabody School, 425 C Street, NE (third floor), by phone at 698-3283, or online at www.swsauction.com.



Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 Tenth Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003
