



FHWA to Develop a Full Environmental Impact Statement for the Virginia Avenue Tunnel

By Shauna Holmes

On May 1, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced that it would develop a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Virginia Avenue Tunnel (VAT) project in order to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Last summer FHWA, which is the lead federal agency for the project, began an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the VAT, a less comprehensive environmental study. During the EA process, FHWA determined that the VAT project is likely to have a significant impact on the environment, and therefore preparing an EIS is warranted. This announcement was welcomed by CHRS, which first called for a full EIS in the scoping comments CHRS submitted to FHWA in October 2011. CHRS was also very happy to see in FHWA's announcement that FHWA is assuming responsibility to look at the project in its entirety, rather than only the narrower scope FHWA indicated it would be considering in a November 14, 2011 letter to CHRS.

On May 21 FHWA hosted two meetings about the VAT project as part of both its environmental review under NEPA and its historic

preservation review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Section 106 Meeting for Consulting Parties

The first meeting was for the Consulting Parties, including CHRS, who are actively participating in the Section 106 review process. Participants were shown the four project alternatives that have been selected for further study, and maps were distributed showing the Area of Potential Effects (APE) that was being proposed by the transportation agencies. The APE is the geographic area in which a project may directly or indirectly cause effects on historic properties. Considering that the VAT project would involve an open trench across the southern part of the Capitol Hill Historic District and have the potential to affect many historic properties through vibrations, construction-related traffic, and other activities, CHRS raised questions about the narrowness with which the proposed APE was drawn. When the agencies invited CHRS and other Consulting Parties to show on a large map where they believed the APE should be, the CHRS representative

recommended extending the boundaries farther north and east to encompass additional fragile historic buildings, and a Navy representative recommended extending it farther south to include historic structures in the Navy Yard Historic District. At the public meeting that followed, CHRS members were happy to see that the Area of Potential Effects that was shown included the areas recommended by CHRS and the Navy.

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President's Column: Looking Back

By Beth Purcell

CHRS members elected a new president in May, so this is my last president's column. I want to thank our hard-working board and volunteers for accomplishing a tremendous amount in the last three years:

- The Beyond the Boundaries project is almost complete (a survey of buildings outside the Capitol Hill Historic District, south of H Street, NE and east to 19th Street), with the context statement to be finished in 2012.
- CHRS litigated on the adverse environmental effects of the 11th Street Bridges and gained significant benefits for Capitol Hill. DC Dept. of Transportation (DDOT) and its contractor meet quarterly with the Community Communications Committee (ANCs and community organizations, including CHRS) about the bridge design and construction, providing detailed information, receiving feedback, and responding to the community's questions and concerns. These meetings provide critical and timely information on this \$300 million project. DDOT improved the design of the bridges as a result of community input.
- Streetcars will begin running on H Street on schedule. In addition, DDOT will develop a comprehensive plan for the rest of the streetcar system, including assessing non-overhead wire streetcar technology. If alternative technology becomes available, streetcars on H Street will also receive the new technology.
- CHRS held many community forums and Preservation Cafés.

- CHRS is now in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and undergoes an annual audit by an independent CPA firm.
However, existing challenges remain, and there are new challenges:
 - The Mayor's Agent case involving the third story addition to 227 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE is pending before the DC Court of Appeals.
 - The Virginia Avenue Tunnel presents significant environmental and historic preservation challenges for residents on Virginia Avenue, SE.

- CHRS is supporting neighbors to preserve the stained glass windows of a historic church at 700 A Street, NE.
- After ten years of effort by the community, there is still no real progress on developing Reservation 13.

It has been an absolute pleasure to serve as the president for these three years. Although I'm leaving this post, I look forward to continuing my engagement (albeit less!) with CHRS and you all. Please consider volunteering for this wonderful organization. ★

July 4th is coming soon!

By Elizabeth Nelson

As part of our "Beyond the Boundaries" program, CHRS volunteers are engaged in a variety of outreach activities, most recently distributing CHRS pencils at Bike to School Day in Lincoln Park. We're already looking forward to the Capitol Hill

4th of July Parade, when we will again field a contingent, tossing Mardi Gras beads into the crowd. True, the weather is a bit warm and sticky but the response from the crowd is most refreshing! If you would like to march with us, please call or email me (543-3512, elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com).

Not available on Independence Day? We plan to staff booths at both the H Street Festival and Barracks Row Day this fall. Our participation at these events is part of an on-going effort to introduce ourselves to newcomers to the Hill and to those living outside the boundaries of the Historic District. We'll offer children's activities to amuse our younger neighbors while we share information about our accomplishments and future plans with their parents. Leftover House Tour catalogs are particularly well received. Volunteers are always more than welcome—they are truly needed. Plus it's a lot of fun to meet friends, old and new. Watch the CHRS newsletter for announcements of these events, which are also posted on the website.



IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON

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www.CHRS.org

Celebrating more than 50 years helping to preserve and protect Capitol Hill's residential character, the Society is the largest civic association on Capitol Hill, and one of the largest in the 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.

To start or renew a CHRS membership:

- ★ On the web at www.CHRS.org
- ★ Call (202) 543-0425; 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.

Zoning Briefs—Frager's Hardware

By Gary Peterson

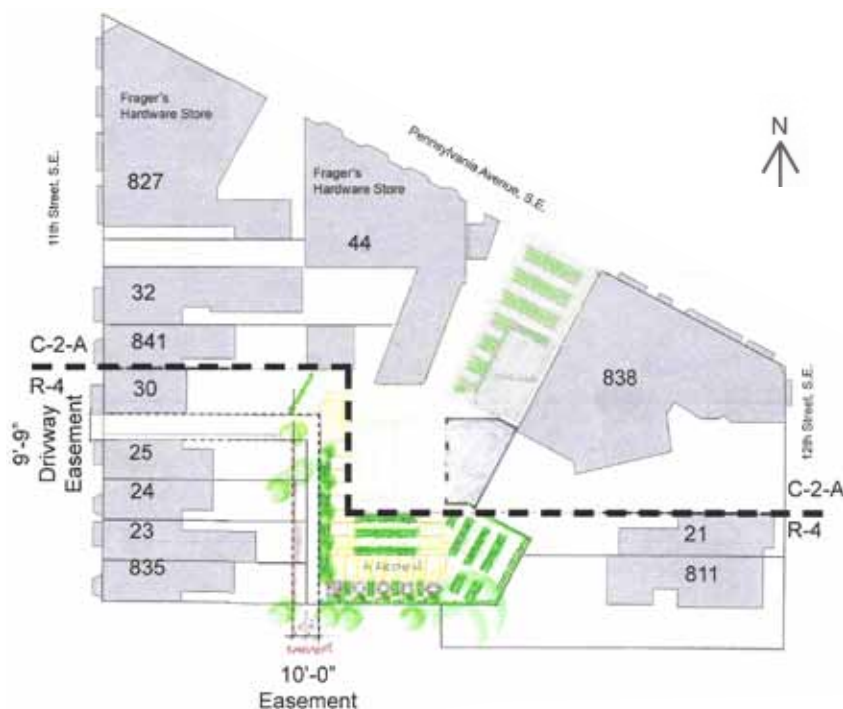


IMAGE SOURCE: FRAGER'S HARDWARE BZA APPLICATION

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society Zoning Committee on May 10, 2012 considered the Frager's Hardware case. The case involves the application of Frager's Hardware for a use variance to allow a small portion of R-4 zoned land to be used by Frager's for the outdoor display and sale of seasonal merchandise and for storage, accessory to a retail hardware store.

The property in question is at the rear (south) of the property and is zoned R-4 (see map, above). To qualify for a use variance, Frager's must satisfy a three-part test:

1. There must be something unique about the property
2. The applicant must incur undue hardship because of the uniqueness
3. There is no harm to the public good or the zone plan in granting the variance.

The CHRS Zoning Committee found that:

1. The property is unique because it does not have legal access, cannot be subdivided into a legal lot, and is split zoned between R-4 and C-2-A
2. There is undue hardship because there is no practical use for the property
3. The property had been used for the use proposed in the variance for 80 years, and there is no harm to the public good or impairment of the zone plan.

For these reasons, the Committee voted unanimously to support the application and we urged the Board to grant the application. ★

[Note: On May 22, the Board of Zoning Adjustment approved the variance for Frager's Hardware.]

Historic Preservation Briefs

By Shauna Holmes

The CHRS Historic Preservation Committee reviewed and commented on several projects in May. Committee Chair Shauna Holmes's testimony at a hearing held by the city's Mayor's Agent for Historic Preservation, along with a related story, are on pages 6–7.

1116 I Street, SE

Project architect Steve Lawlor presented his client's plans to demolish an existing 1-story rear addition and replace it with a 2-story addition with a somewhat larger footprint. Except for an imbalance between the second floor's window area in relation to the first floor's windows on the west elevation, the Committee considered the simple but elegant addition to be very nicely and appropriately designed. After discussions with the architect that led to the first floor's windows being somewhat heightened, the Committee agreed with having the project placed on the Historic Preservation Review Board's (HPRB) Consent Calendar.

309 7th Street, SE (Yarmouth Management Company)

The Committee opposed the permit application to install a large digital display sign in the public space in front of this property because it would not be consistent in multiple ways with the city's Standards for Signs, Awnings, Canopies, and Marquees at Title 10A DCMR, Historic Preservation. For instance, the Standards state in Section 2505.3 that "(a) Internally-illuminated, plastic-faced box or cabinet signs [and] (b) Electronic signs, flashing signs, and other signs with moving text or images..." are "typically not appropriate for historic buildings and districts". The Standards further

state in Section 2507.6(d) that "The large internally illuminated surface areas of box signs are generally not appropriate for signs on historic property." The Committee felt that approving this permit application would set a terrible precedent in the Capitol Hill Historic District, as well as for other historic districts in the city. This case was moved forward to HPRB's June 28 hearing.

330 7th Street, NE (Northeast Library)

Renovation of the Northeast Library has been undergoing review by the city's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) under Section 9b of DC's historic preservation law, because it is a city agency's project that will affect an historic property. The agency, DC Public Library (DCPL), is undertaking a major interior renovation of the Northeast Library, and because SHPO determined that much of the library's interior is historically significant, the interior renovations are being reviewed by SHPO along with the exterior rear addition, which was approved in concept by HPRB with certain conditions. The 9b review afforded the Committee an opportunity to look at the planned interior renovations and offer comments to supplement the Committee's comments on the exterior addition, which were sent to the project team and SHPO in April.

Overall, the Committee recognized that the interior renovations are being thoughtfully considered, and commended the very high priority preservation is being given in the project. The project team has delineated areas of the library according to the degree of historic integrity they retain:

- Restoration zones are primary public spaces that contain significant remaining historic features. They include the large north rooms on the first and second floors, as well as the main entry area on the first floor.
- Rehabilitation zones are secondary public spaces or those that contain less historic integrity. On the first floor, they include the large southeast room and the space below the mezzanine. The mezzanine itself and the east rooms and spaces on the second floor are also included, along with the front staircase area on all levels
- Renovation zones are tertiary spaces or areas with few significant historic features and include all other areas, including the entire lower level.

Using these zones as guides to the degree alterations will be made and the kind and level of historic treatment they would receive struck the Committee as a sound way to inform renovation decision-making. The project architect, David Bell, used the same approach in the beautiful restoration and rehabilitation of the Old Naval Hospital.

The zone designations also guide the trade-offs that are being made. For instance, the mezzanine itself will remain, but the historic wood stairs leading up to the mezzanine will be removed both to maximize first-floor program space and because the mezzanine will no longer be a public-use space. In addition, the main front stairs will be removed to allow the south front door to serve as the main east entrance. The Committee very much regrets the loss of these stairs, especially the ones to the mezzanine.

Only after considerable deliberation did the evenly split Committee decide that, instead of recommending keeping the mezzanine stairs in place, it would recommend adopting a mitigation measure suggested by the SHPO to remove these stairs with great care, label each piece carefully, and store them for possible use in future renovations. Also recommended was saving at least the beautiful ironwork in the front stairs

for possible use elsewhere in the library.

CHRS comments also noted a number of assurances made by the project team to take specific measures to ensure retaining and maintaining the historic interior features and spaces of the library. These included, but were not limited to:

- Maximizing program space in the lower level to reduce need to interfere with historic spaces
- Keeping historic windows in place and refurbishing them appropriately
- Refinishing all historic woodwork with an historically appropriate clear finish
- Retaining historic wood doors whenever possible and seeking ways to repurpose them during the renovation
- Feeding piping for new sprinklers above ceilings
- Retaining as much of the many original wood features as possible, including crown moldings, wainscoting, original shelving, door and window surrounds, the second floor display cabinets, fireplaces, etc.
- Minimizing alterations in the historic restoration zones to the fullest extent possible and thoughtfully undertaking alterations in rehabilitation zones to retain as many original and significant features as possible, as well as the historic feeling of the spaces. ★

Thank You CHRS Supporters

We thank the following new members, patrons and sponsors.

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New on the CHRS Website

The CHRS website (www.chrs.org) hosts copies of the newsletter and items of current interest that appear between issues of the newsletters. It also contains links to other Capitol Hill websites and links to CHRS activities such as the House Tour and membership information.

We plan to include new items on a continual basis, either adding completely new types of material or augmenting existing material. Look in the left-hand menu column. For example, not only are the minutes for the 2012 Board meetings posted (“Report”) but also the minutes from the very first meeting of CHRS on January 28, 1955. We have also added a financial section that links to the CHRS tax return for 2010 and the report of the annual audit issued on September 30, 2011.

There is a list of homes, businesses and other locations that have been on the House Tours, sorted by address (“House and Garden Tour”). By the time you read this, almost all of the 55 House Tour brochures should be available online. The brochure copies are not yet searchable by address, so when looking for particular street addresses, you need to look at the list, find the year(s) and then go to the applicable brochure(s).

We are off to a slow start on collecting house histories, but if you have one to place on the website please let us know.

Finally, if you have suggestions regarding additional material that might be included, or suggestions on how the site might be improved, please contact the webmasters: Paul Cromwell and Donna Breslin, chrs420@gmail.com.

Mayor's Agent May 18 Hearing Considered Application to Remove Stained Glass Windows

By Shauna Holmes

In March, the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) voted unanimously not to support the application by the World Mission Society Church of God (COG) to remove stained glass from the 1895 Epworth Church at 700 A Street NE and replace it with clear glass, because that would not be consistent with the purposes of the city's preservation law. Immediately after that hearing, the COG appealed its case to the city's Mayor's Agent for Historic Preservation. The Mayor's Agent hearing, which took most of the day, was held on May 18. Opposing organizations, which were all granted party status, were CHRS, the DC Preservation League (DCPL), and the Capitol Hill Coalition for Sensible Development (CHCSD). DCPL and CHCSD agreed that Jesse Carlson, Esq., of Williams & Connolly, DCPL's attorney, would be the lead attorney who would speak and ask questions on their behalf, and CHRS, which appeared without counsel, agreed to have Mr. Carlson be the primary voice of the opposing parties. The applicant, COG, was represented at the hearing by its attorney, Earle C. Horton, III, Esq. of Graves, Horton, Askew & Johns.

Church of God's Argument

The COG argued that preventing the COG from replacing the existing stained glass windows with clear glass windows would violate the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) because worshipping in a place with stained glass windows would violate the COG's core religious beliefs. They claimed the Epworth

Church is not a contributing building in the Capitol Hill Historic District because many of its exterior doors have been replaced; that replacing the stained glass windows with clear glass would constitute a case of "special merit" and preserve the goals of the city's window repair and replacement standards and guidelines; and that issuing the alteration permit would be in the public interest because replacing the windows is part of the COG's renovations and using the Epworth Church as a base for spreading the COG's religious beliefs would be a public benefit. The COG further asserted that denial of the permit would result in an unreasonable economic hardship to the COG and a taking of private property.

Opposing Parties' Argument

The opposing parties argued that the Epworth Church remains a contributing building in the Capitol Hill Historic District and that removing the stained glass windows and replacing them with clear glass would diminish the building by removing important character-defining features of the Romanesque revival building. In addition, removal would clearly violate the city's window standards and would be a major loss to the historic district and the surrounding community. The opposition held that granting the application would not benefit the public and thus the project would not be one of "special merit"; that the COG had not shown denial of the permit would result in unreasonable economic hardship or a taking; and that the permit should be denied under DC's Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act.

It further argued that the COG's claims regarding the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment and RLUIPA were beyond the scope of review by the Mayor's Agent, though if the Mayor's Agent could consider the free exercise arguments, they would not justify the COG's removal of the stained glass windows because the COG chose to purchase a church with stained glass windows that were subject to pre-existing restrictions on their removal.

Mayor's Agent Peter Byrne decided that, because the religious freedom issues are intertwined with other issues in the case, he would allow discussion of the religious issues at the hearing.

Those Who Testified on Both Sides

A number of COG members and representatives, along with the real estate agent who represented the seller of the Epworth Church in late 2011, testified on behalf of the applicant.

Bill Crews, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for SMD 6C07, testified on behalf of ANC 6C opposing granting the permit. Bobbi Krengel, representing CHCSD, and Shauna Holmes, representing CHRS, testified on behalf of those party organizations opposing issuance of the permit (see the CHRS testimony on page 7). Nancy Simpson, who lives a few doors north of the church on 7th Street, testified as an individual opposing the application. All three noted the historic character of the church, the importance of the stained glass windows as character-defining features of the church, and

Testimony of Shauna Holmes on Behalf of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society

Mayor's Agent for the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act, Public Hearing—May 18, 2012

My name is Shauna Holmes, and I'm testifying on behalf of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society. CHRS **strongly** opposes the request to remove the character-defining stained glass windows from this historic church, which is a contributing building in the Capitol Hill Historic District and a highly valued neighborhood presence.

The Epworth Church anchors its square and is an integral part of the historic fabric of its neighborhood. Those who live and pass nearby enjoy its strong historic substance and the features that contribute to its Romanesque Revival character, including its beautiful windows. The loss of *any* of these features—including the stained glass windows—would be a loss to the building, its neighbors, the historic district, and the city that values its historic resources enough to enact measures to protect them. As you have seen by reviewing the record, this proposal has stirred very strong feelings in the neighborhood, which has rallied to protect this treasured and prominently situated building.

CHRS does not understand why this congregation bought a contributing structure in the city's largest historic district with the expectation that they could then remove its character-defining stained glass windows. Their apparent failure to conduct due diligence *before* buying a historic building in a historic district that did not meet their needs should not be rewarded with approval of their application. Certainly their outrageous removal of some of the windows without permits required by the city should not be rewarded by approval of their application. We have serious concerns about the precedent that approval could set, both in the Capitol Hill Historic District and citywide.

As set forth in the excellent Staff Report—and according to the city's Window Standards—the stained glass windows at issue are *special windows on primary façades of a major building* in a historic district, and for these reasons they qualify for specific and conscientious protection per the city's preservation standards. We ask the Mayor's Agent to please determine that this application should not be approved.

the importance of the church to neighbors, the community, and the historic district. Amanda Molson also testified on behalf of the staff of the city's Historic Preservation Office, which took the position that "the permit application... is not consistent with the purposes of the preservation law or with the window standards included in the preservation regulations."

Emily Eig, a qualified architectural historian with many years of experience as a historic preservation consultant in DC, testified about the historic significance of the Epworth Church as a notable example of its period and kind of architecture. She noted its brick and brownstone material, which were commonly used in the late 1890s when the church was built and which are seen throughout the historic

district. Ms. Eig also noted the building's juxtaposition of its gable roof with its tower, its massing, and its stained glass windows as being characteristic of the Romanesque Revival style and asserted that the church continues to convey its historic significance and meets the relevant criteria as a contributing building. She further asserted that the mottled glass, geometric forms, and floral motifs in the stained glass windows are very typical of the period of construction and are found all over Capitol Hill and other areas of DC that are among its oldest.

What Happens Next?

The Mayor's Agent will study and assess the issues and facts raised at the hearing and then issue a final written order. At that time he will give notice to each party participating in the hearing by serving the party with a copy of the final order, which will become effective fifteen days after service. ★

How to Contribute

CHRS is assisting neighbors of the church at 700 A Street, NE in raising funds for legal fees. If you wish to contribute, please send a check payable to CHRS, Inc. and on the check's memo line write "Legal fees for 700 A Street, NE." Please mail your check to:

CHRS
P.O. Box 15264
Washington, DC 20003-0264

The 55th Annual House and Garden Tour

By Paul Cromwell and Ann Richards

This year's House and Garden Tour has come and gone. The weather was some of the best that we have seen and a lot of folks seemed to be having a good time enjoying both the weather and the Tour. We received a great deal of help from a variety of sources: the commercial outlets that sold tickets, the advertisers, the donors and the volunteers. We had house captains and docents and a dedicated staff before and during the Tour. Ann and I received a number of compliments about the house descriptions in the brochure. We therefore would like to particularly recognize our writers:

- Mike Canning (2 Sixth Street, NE)
- Wimberly Fair (317 A Street NE and 308 East Capitol Street, NE)
- Roberta Gutman (1020 East Capitol Street, NE and 653 A Street, NE)
- Lisa Dale Jones (9 and 11 Ninth Street, NE and 906 East Capitol Street, NE)
- Carly Phippen (100 Fifth Street, NE)
- Anne Runow (710 East Capitol and 514 Constitution Avenue, NE)
- Alie Sandin (905 and 621 Massachusetts Avenue, NE)

The writers are identified in the program, and if you misplaced your program you can find it online at www.chrs.org. We hope that you are looking forward to the Tour on May 11 and 12, 2013—the 56th Annual Tour! ☆



Tour-goers line up to enter a house during the House and Garden Tour.

CHRS Audit

By Sharon Weiss, Treasurer

CHRS recently completed its annual audit conducted by the CPA firm of Thomas Jenkins and Company and received an unqualified opinion regarding our financial statements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011. This unqualified opinion means that our financial statements present fairly the financial position of CHRS in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. You may view the entire audit document on our website.

Author Robert Pohl Featured at May Preservation Café

By Amanda Molson

Robert Pohl, Capitol resident and author of *Wicked Capitol Hill: An Unruly History of Behaving Badly*, shared excerpts from his new book at the May 16th Preservation Café. Published by The History Press, Robert's book joins others in the *Wicked* series, which have highlighted the salacious histories of dozens of cities.

Robert researches and writes about Capitol Hill history, including columns for the *Hill Rag* and *The Hill is Home* website. He is founding partner of Walking Shtick Tours of DC, author of *The History of 219 11th St SE Washington DC*, and co-author with John Wennersten of *Abraham Lincoln and the End of Slavery in the District of Columbia*.

Wicked Capitol Hill includes stories about Capitol Hill scandals in the House and Senate, at the Navy Yard and Marine Barracks, and at the city's correctional facilities. The book also delves into the sensational past of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and explores even the scandals of death, with Hoover himself interred at Congressional Cemetery in close proximity to aide and heir (and maybe more?) Clyde Tolson.

The highlight of Robert's talk was an overview of the spicy life of Rita Jenrette, former wife of Representative John Jenrette. Following the Congressman's conviction in the FBI's "Abscam" sting operation, Mrs. Jenrette provided an interview and pictorial for *Playboy* magazine in the 1980s (Robert located an original copy!). Robert also discussed the notoriety of former Hill resident and Senator Gary Hart, whose photo with model Donna Rice made national headlines during Hart's presidential campaign.

Wicked Capitol Hill: An Unruly History of Behaving Badly is available locally and can also be ordered online from Amazon and from The History Press (www.historypress.net). Get your copy today, and pick up an extra for a gossip-hungry friend or neighbor! ★

Historic House Toolbox—June 9 Give Your House Some Love!

Hill Center at the Old Naval Hospital
921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Saturday, June 9 · 10 am – 1 pm

Join the DC Preservation League and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society at the Hill Center for the opportunity to receive **FREE** individualized attention from contractors and seasoned professionals who know and understand historic houses. Contractors and preservation experts will answer your questions on a range of topics, including:

- working with architects and contractors
- green options
- historic masonry
- roofing and gutters
- windows and general contracting
- historic windows and general regulations
- historic house styles
- and more.

In addition to professionals who can talk with you about the topics listed above, the **Historic House Toolbox** will feature two learning sessions. *Making Your House Energy Efficient* with James Carroll of EcoHouse will focus on energy audits and greening your house without compromising its historic integrity. *How to Research Your House* with Peter Sefton of the DC Preservation League will provide information and pointers you need to find out about the history of your house.

FREE to the public! Walk-ins welcome!

To register, please visit: <http://bit.ly/HistoricHouseToolbox>

The next steps in the VAT's Section 106 review will involve further identification of historic properties that could be affected by the project, followed by assessments of likely effects on historic properties. These processes and assessments will be conducted on a parallel track with the environmental tests, studies, modeling, and assessments. If FHWA determines that the project could have adverse effects on historic resources, consultation among the Consulting Parties will be continued to identify ways to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate the adverse effects.

Environmental Review Meeting

The second May 21 meeting, held at Nationals Park, was a public meeting that focused on the VAT project's environmental review. Since presenting the public with 11 possible project concepts in November 2011, FHWA, DC Department of Transportation (DDOT), and CSX have worked together to winnow out concepts that would be unworkable for various reasons and to narrow the number of project alternatives. The four remaining alternatives that will be studied during the EIS process, identified by their November concept numbers, are:

- Alternative 1—No build (i.e., no enlargement of the tunnel; this is required to be an alternative in order to establish baselines);
- Alternative 2—Rebuild the tunnel with a temporary runaround track on the south side to maintain freight traffic;
- Alternative 5—Rebuild the VAT with one track and construct a new, parallel single-track tunnel on the south side (the new tunnel would be built first, and freight traffic would run through it while the existing tunnel is rebuilt); and
- Alternative 6—Rebuild the VAT “on-line”: with two tracks, while maintaining freight traffic through the VAT during construction.

All three rebuilding alternatives would involve open-trench construction, and Alternative 2 would involve running freight trains during construction in an open trench just south of the tunnel along the present Virginia Avenue. The EIS process requires a detailed analysis of all four alternatives and will include noise and vibration studies and modeling, traffic analysis, consideration of site security and lighting, assessment of effects on surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas, soil and groundwater sampling, stormwater management studies, and additional environmental and historic preservation studies. Members of the public can provide their views and concerns about the project and its impacts to FHWA, DDOT, and CSX at any time by visiting www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com/contact and sending an e-mail to the project team.

Vibration analysis will be performed in accordance with regulatory requirements. Measurements will be conducted with Geophones installed in 12" x 12" holes and will record both ambient background vibration levels without trains present, as well as vibration levels for at least three train pass-bys, for later review and analysis. Vibration and noise field studies were scheduled to begin May 21, weather permitting.

Participants at the public meeting were provided with some construction information and preliminary maintenance of traffic plans and principles. These include commitments to:

- Maintain north/south traffic on numbered streets via temporary bridges;
- Maintain operation of the SE Freeway on- and off-ramps at 6th and 8th Streets;
- Maintain driveway and emergency vehicle access to all properties by, in some cases, creating new driveways and access points; and
- Maintain east/west traffic via re-routing, including creating two-way traffic on some currently one-way streets.

In addition, project consultants presented principles that will guide decision-making for reconstruction of Virginia Avenue after project completion. These include providing:

- On-street parking, improved lane configuration, and intersection layouts;
- Enlarged green space along Virginia Avenue;
- Pedestrian/bicyclist-friendly facility from Garfield Park to 11th Street, SE;
- Improved pedestrian access to Garfield Park; and
- Improved street lighting, traffic signal systems, and crosswalks.

At the end of the presentation, the anticipated schedule for the project's EIS was presented:

- Scoping—Fall 2011
- Data Collection—Fall 2011 through Spring 2012
- Alternatives Development—Now
- Impact Assessment—Now through Fall 2012
- Public Meeting—Summer 2012
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)—Fall 2012

Thank You to Our Outgoing Board Members

By Elizabeth Nelson

The 2012 Nominating Committee (Beth Purcell, Gary Peterson, Paul Cromwell and Elizabeth Nelson) would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following board members for their past service.

First, grateful thanks are due Beth Purcell who served so ably as President for three terms. She was instrumental in getting CHRS included as a donee in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and kept us connected to other like-minded organizations through her work with Trees For Capitol Hill, Inc., and the Audubon Society's annual bird count. Her long residency in Hill East has provided a unique perspective. Fortunately, she is not leaving the Board; she will serve as Past President and continue her work on our Beyond the Boundaries project.

Second, we thank Janet Quigley for her service as Secretary, an often under-appreciated position. She will not run for a second term, having accepted the nomination to run for President. Our minutes are now posted online, a feature that began on her watch.

Third, thanks go to Shauna Holmes for her service as Second Vice-President. She will continue on the Board as the Chair of the Historic Preservation Committee, having

CHRS Donates Map Case to Eliot-Hine Middle School

By Elizabeth Nelson

Many moons ago, when Gary and Trudy Peterson purchased a large map case for CHRS, it was gratefully received and immediately pressed into service. But times have changed and we've since moved into tighter quarters at Kirby House. The map case had outlived its usefulness—to us—and was in need of a good home. Thankfully, just such an opportunity presented itself at Eliot-Hine Middle School, where the energetic new art teacher, Hannah Hakes, was wishing for appropriate storage for her students' portfolios. As soon as she learned the map case was available for adoption, she swooped in and whisked it away to begin its second career. Our office manager, Gloria Junge, is pleased to have the extra space and equally pleased that the map case will be put to good use.

assumed those responsibilities upon the resignation of former Chair, Nancy Metzger.

And finally, thanks go to Donna Hanousek, who served successive terms as an At-Large member while serving as Chair of the Beyond the Boundaries project. She is leaving the Board to pursue other interests and will be sorely missed. Donna has worked tirelessly on surveys of areas just beyond the limits of the current Capitol Hill Historic District, creating documentation of lasting historic significance. She organized walking

tours of these neighborhoods, not only educating the public but also reaching out to those not previously familiar with our mission. We wish her the best in her new endeavors and can't help being a bit envious of those who will benefit from her time and attention in the future. ★

(Note that publication of the DEIS will be followed by a 45-day public comment period.)

- Public Hearing—Winter 2012
- Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)—Spring 2012 (FHWA typically provides for a 30-day public comment period following publication of the FEIS.)

- Record of Decision (ROD)—Spring 2013

The agencies acknowledge that the schedule above is very ambitious, especially for such a large project.

There was an hour of questions from the floor, and many of the questions were asked by residents of and the Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Capitol Quarter,

the area that will be most directly affected by the tunnel construction.

To view the May 21 presentation slides, visit www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com/project-resources and click on the link for the Boards from the May 21, 2012, Environmental Impact Statement and Section 106 Evaluation Public Meeting. ★



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

Mark Your Calendar!

JUNE

4 Monday, 7:00 pm
Community Forum on Hine School Project, Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Details: caphrs@aol.com. Doors open at 6:45 pm.

5 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211

9 Saturday, 10:00 am–1:00 pm
Historic House Toolbox—Free opportunity to talk with contractors and seasoned professionals about maintaining and repairing your historic house. Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

14 Thursday, 7:30 pm
CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson, 547-7969.

19 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Beth Purcell, 622-4303.

JULY

2 Monday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

12 Thursday, 7:30 pm
CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson, 547-7969.

17 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor.

Saturdays, April 21–November 17
9 am–noon (rain or shine)
H Street NE Freshfarm Market, located at library kiosk, 13th and H Street, NE. Fresh fruits and vegetables, pasture-raised meats, local dairy, baked goods, and more. www.freshfarmmarkets.org