



NEWS

www.chrs.org

March 2013

Why the “No More Coal” Signs?

By Lisa Dale Jones

You have probably noticed a lot of “No More Coal” signs lately, mostly in front of homes in the area of Capitol Hill near the Capitol Power Plant (CCP). The issue at stake is much more complicated than a short slogan can explain, so here’s an overview of some of what’s happening to cause those signs to appear.

The CCP, which provides steam heat and chilled air to the Capitol and 22 other buildings on the Hill, is about a hundred years old, and during much of that time has used coal as a primary fuel. In 2009, after a protest outside the CCP, then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Leader Harry Reid pledged to cease the use of coal at the plant. The Architect of the Capitol (AOC) said it would immediately use all natural gas, except in extreme circumstances. Since then, coal has been used only in extreme weather conditions or when the natural gas boilers were down for maintenance and this past year was burned approximately 8% of the time. Meanwhile, the electricity used at the US Capitol is purchased from Pepco, which still relies primarily on coal-burning plants.

This past summer the AOC filed permit applications with the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to build what is called a cogeneration facility

at the CCP. This new facility is designed to produce not only the steam heat of the existing plant, but also to produce electricity. The new plant will use natural gas, with oil as a backup. The AOC says the use of coal will be eliminated at the CPP once the new facility is completed, and that greenhouse gas emissions from the plant will go way down.

This is where it gets complicated. The DDOE, which extended the public comment deadline on the project from December to February after failing to notify the local ANC of the application, says on its website that the emissions from the plant may go up, but also says that this will be the first time there have been facility-wide emissions limits at all.

The issue is the baseline. In the permit application the AOC is asking for maximum allowable emissions to be set at the CCP’s 2007–2008 levels—years when the plant was burning nearly 40% coal—rather than the current emissions levels when the plant is burning 8% coal. This is allowed under the application



IMAGE COURTESY LISA DALE JONES

“No More Coal” signs are dotting Capitol Hill.

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President's Column: Power of Threes

By Janet Quigley

They say good things come in threes, such as the good news that follows:

Micro Grants

CHRS has been designated the administrator of a \$250,000 micro-grants program designed to improve homes in a four-block area just south of H Street, NE. The grants were required by a Zoning Order that allows the Fisher group to build Capitol Place, a planned unit development at Fourth and H. The grants apply to a 4-block area bounded by Second, Fourth, F and H, NE. The Order allocates \$150,000 for repairs to the publicly viewable exteriors of the homes in those squares, and \$80,000 for Square 752, closest to the development, to increase energy efficiency and make other improvements to those homes. The Order includes another \$20,000 to enable CHRS to administer the program. The grants have the potential to make many improvements to the designated blocks, and CHRS looks forward to working with the neighbors toward this goal.

Dick Wolf Lectures

The outpouring of donations last summer in memory of neighborhood activist and visionary Dick Wolf was truly gratifying. We have been discussing with his wife Mimi a variety of fitting ways to honor him and to promote actions that will benefit community preservation and city planning. The memorial is taking shape as an annual lecture that will highlight a student's research in planning or preservation. This will encourage a new generation while benefitting the entire community.

Oral History Success

Congratulations to Capitol Hill Village and the Ruth Ann Overbeck History Project on their fascinating program, "Were You There? Remembering the 1963 March on Washington," which was presented in late February to a packed house. In addition to a full program of music and student speeches, attendees were treated to the inside scoop from organizers, supporters and chance observers about the events leading up to that defining march. We heard about ordinary people who rose to extraordinary challenges that changed their lives forever. I was struck by how clearly the reminiscences recreated the atmosphere of those times: idealists campaigning for justice and equality against a backdrop of suspicion, danger and uncertainty. They planned, debated,

advocated and took chances in pursuit of the American Dream, and 50 years later we are a better society thanks to them.

Also, plans are well underway for our Mother's Day House and Garden Tour. Every year we welcome more than 1,000 visitors to Capitol Hill homes, and many Moms consider this annual event to be their favorite way to spend a few hours of quality time with their families. Make your plans today to join us! ★

Seeking Nominations for 2013–14 Board

CHRS will hold elections for the 2013–14 Board of Directors by postcard ballot in May. The Elections Committee is seeking recommendations of individuals who wish to be considered for positions on next year's CHRS Board of Directors. These positions include President, First Vice President; Second Vice President; Treasurer and Secretary for one year terms and three At Large Members for two year terms. Nominations for the 2013–14 CHRS Board will be announced at the end of April.

If you wish to be considered, to recommend someone, or to find out more about the duties of each position please contact the Chair of the Nomination Committee, Paul Cromwell (543-7530, paulcromwell@verizon.net), or another member of the committee: Gary Peterson (547-7969, pgarylaw@aol.com), Nicky Cymrot (547-3228, n.cymrot@verizon.net), or Cathi Smith (543-1743, cathi.smith@yahoo.com).

Recommendations for consideration by the committee must be submitted by the end of the day on April 9, 2013. Further information will be available on the CHRS website at www.chrs.org.

Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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To reach any of the above, please contact the Society offices at (202) 543-0425 or via e-mail: CapHRS@aol.com.

www.CHRS.org

Celebrating more than 55 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

By Gary Peterson

The CHRS Zoning Committee met on February 23, 2013, to consider seven zoning cases. One case, BZA #18514, involving building a new garage at 1120 Park Street, NE, was postponed at the request of the applicant. The applicant made numerous measurement errors on the application and these need to be corrected before proceeding to evaluate the project.

The Committee considered the following cases:

BZA #18510; 721 Tenth Street, NE.

The applicants seek a special exception for a detached garage addition at the rear of an existing one-family row dwelling not meeting the lot occupancy requirements in the R-4 zone. The current lot occupancy is 48% and they can cover 70% of the lot if they receive a special exception. The committee voted to support the application.

BZA #18515; 200 Fifth Street, SE.

The applicant seeks a variance from the lot area requirements under subsection 401.11, to convert a structure from four residential units and a dental office into a six residential unit apartment house in the R-4 zone. The building occupies the entire lot and was built with commercial on the first floor. The commercial use is a prior existing non-conforming use, and the committee voted to support the conversion to a conforming residential use.

BZA #18527; 1116 K Street, NE.

The applicants request a variance from the nonconforming structure provisions, a variance from the rear yard requirements, a variance from the off-street parking requirements, and a special exception to permit two principal buildings on a single

subdivided lot in the R-4 zone. The very unusual facts in this case are that this lot has two street frontages and addresses; 1116 K Street, NE, and 1109 Florida Avenue, NE. The house on K Street was built in 1910 by a grocer, Karman Bretler. At the same time he built a grocery store on Florida Avenue. The Bretler family lived in the house on K Street and Bretler ran his business, K. Bretler Groceries, Meats and Provisions, in the other building on Florida Avenue. At some time, both buildings became vacant and were subsequently bought by the applicants, who have restored the house and now want to build one residential unit in the grocery. The grocery is only 16 feet wide by 19 feet deep and is only big enough for one unit. The committee voted unanimously to support the application with the condition that the lot is limited to only these two units.

The committee considered three cases that needed special exceptions for additions to existing non-conforming structures. The three properties were at 608 Constitution Avenue, NE; 1329 F Street, NE; and 525 5th Street, SE. The committee voted to approve these routine requests.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 3, at 7:30 pm. ★

process, although the EPA and the DDOE have different guidelines. The EPA, which has already approved the application, allows the applicant to set any two consecutive years in the last ten as the baseline. The DDOE application requires applicants to use the past two years as a baseline but, with permission, they may use other recent years. According to the AOC's website, since the past two winters have been milder than usual, they are using years that encompassed a more normal DC winter, and that DDOE has tentatively agreed with them.

The Sierra Club, led by DC Chapter Conservation Chair Jim Dougherty, and neighbors of the CCP are asking DDOE to reject the current permit application, to require low emissions based on current usage, and to ensure there is no possibility of ever again using coal. (Hence the "No More Coal" signs they're distributing.)

Many want coal burning at the plant to be halted immediately, something DDOE says it has no jurisdiction over. To deal with that matter, Councilmember Tommy Wells has introduced legislation to ban coal burning by any power plant in the District—although there is a question about a federal facility having to follow District regulations. Mayor

Vincent Gray has recently announced his Sustainable DC Plan, which would also set stringent requirements to lower emissions.

In a written response to questions from CHRS, Eva Malecki, spokesperson for the AOC, explains that "in 2009, in response to the promise by Reid and Pelosi, the AOC developed a Strategic Long-Term Energy Plan for the [CPP] that was reviewed by a panel of experts convened by the National Academy of Sciences...Of the more than 20 technologies examined in the Strategic Energy Plan, including geothermal and solar options, it became clear that the construction of a cogeneration plant that would generate both steam and electricity was the most energy efficient, cost effective, and environmentally beneficial means to use natural gas 100 percent of the time (with fuel oil as an emergency back-up) to meet the current and future energy requirements of the Congress...

"Overall, based on statistics from the EPA, the net benefits of cogeneration versus importing electricity from a coal-fired power plant is the equivalent to reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the operation of 15,000 vehicles each year."

She goes on to say, "any delay in granting the permits for the new cogeneration facility will also delay their ability to burn cleaner fuel, and therefore it's in everyone's best interest for the facility to be built and working as soon as possible."

The DDOE has not said when its decision is expected. CHRS supports stringent emissions limits and monitoring, with the goal of clean air and stable energy for those who live and work on Capitol Hill and in the District.

For information on the plant issued by the AOC, please visit: <http://1.usa.gov/Z0OKzN>.

For DDOE information on the permit request, please visit: <http://1.usa.gov/YE7Yg4>. ★

March Preservation Café: Caring for Historic Iron Work

Fred Mashack, an expert on ironwork restoration, will talk about repair and replacement of front steps, fencing, and other ironwork elements that are central to the charm of Capitol Hill. Mashack's work is well known on The Hill, and includes the stoops at 100 Fifth Street, SE; 25 Fifth Street, SE; and 504 Independence Avenue, SE. The Café will be held on Wednesday, March 20, 6:30–7:15 p.m. at Ebenezers Coffee House (downstairs), 2nd and F Streets, NE.

The event is free and handicapped accessible, and the public is encouraged to attend. No reservations required. For more information, visit our website at: www.chrs.org or call 543-0425.

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2013 Capitol Hill House Tour Includes Historic Duddington Place

By Beth Purcell and Janet Quigley

This year's Mother's Day tour features homes between South Capitol Street, 6th Street, Pennsylvania Avenue and G Streets, SE. As the area closest to the Capitol, this area grew as the Capitol became established as the seat of government. It housed Congressmen and government workers first in boarding houses along New Jersey Avenue in the 1790s, and by 1810 in permanent homes farther east and south toward the Navy Yard.

A hidden gem on the tour is Duddington Place, a charming row of 120-year old brick houses between First, Second, E and F Streets, SE. In earlier days it was home to one of the grandest estates in Washington, Duddington Manor, whose property at one time reached from the Anacostia to what is now K Street, NE and onto what is now the Mall. The land was owned by Lord Baltimore in the 1600s. In the 1720s Daniel Carroll (1707–1734) married into the Calvert

family, acquiring the land. It was passed to his son Charles Carroll (1729–1773), and then to Charles' son Daniel Carroll (1764–1849).

The younger Daniel was a prominent landowner, developer and speculator. He had hopes of capitalizing on the land's proximity to the Capitol, and began by building a house for himself. As happens with many developers, things did not turn out as he expected.

In 1791, Daniel Carroll began building his house about halfway up Jenkins Hill, near First Street, SE. The city was in the process of being surveyed, into streets and squares. Carroll was unsure whether his house would encroach on a future public street. He questioned Pierre L'Enfant about this, but received no definitive answer, and so resumed building. By November 1791, four walls and the roof were complete. That month, L'Enfant wrote to Carroll explaining that because part of Carroll's house was in the street (New Jersey Avenue), it needed to come down. L'Enfant's workmen began to dismantle the house. Carroll obtained a court order in Annapolis to stop the demolition, but L'Enfant ignored it. So the city's commissioners promised Carroll compensation. (L'Enfant's treatment of Carroll was one of the causes leading to his eventual dismissal.)

Carroll also complained to George Washington. Washington wrote back



Duddington Manor, approximately 1880.

that although other houses also stood where streets were planned, they had already been completed. Carroll had a choice—he could demolish the house and the government would reimburse him, or, he could finish the house, occupy it for six years, and when it was demolished in the future, Carroll would receive the 1791 value. Carroll decided to cut his losses, and in 1792, the commissioners paid him \$4,466 for the damage to his house.

In 1793 Carroll began again, and with architect Benjamin Latrobe completed Duddington Manor in 1797. It was a large brick house in the Federal style on a tract bordering the Anacostia River, called Cerne Abbey Manor. He lived there with his family and their slaves.

Contemporary accounts indicate it was a pleasant spot. In April 1800, Abigail Adams, planning her family's move to Washington, worried that the President's House (the White House) might not be ready in time. She inquired about alternative places to live, and Duddington Manor was mentioned as a possibility. In addition to a comfortable house, the property had a springhouse, bath,

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IMAGE COURTESY LISA DALE JONES



Duddington Place today.

IMAGE COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

CHRS Offers House Tour Ticket Discounts for Members Through April 19

All CHRS members are invited to join us for the 56th Annual Mothers' Day House and Garden Tour. This year's tour, themed "Old Traditions/New Beginnings," will feature a dozen extraordinary and diverse homes in the shadow of the US Capitol. Stroll down leafy streets and see how one of the District's oldest residential areas embraces modern living together with a rich historic heritage.

This highly popular event is also CHRS's biggest annual fundraiser; proceeds support our preservation efforts on Capitol Hill throughout the year. Your support will help fund education programs, historic research, impact studies, and our award-winning newsletter, among other projects.

Your membership entitles you to purchase up to four (4) discounted tickets at a bargain price of \$20 each through Friday, April 19, 2013. The regular price is \$25 per ticket through May 10, and \$30 on Tour weekend. And if you can, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution by becoming an Individual Sponsor. The more unrestricted dollars we raise, the harder we can work for Capitol Hill.

The discount is only available using the order form printed opposite, and returning it by paper mail or scanning and sending it by email. The discount form must be received with full payment before April 19, but an earlier reply would be much appreciated and will guarantee that tickets will be available.

Protecting the historic fabric of our unique community is vital. With your tax-deductible contribution and purchase of discounted member tickets, we can continue this work and consider other preservation projects that are in need of attention.

Thank you again for your continued support. As an almost exclusively volunteer-run organization, member contributions make a great deal of difference, so please be as generous as you can. I look forward to seeing you on the Tour.

Janet Quigley
President

Duddington Place, *continued from page 5*

and smokehouse, plus an excellent well-stocked fishpond. Carroll offered to rent Duddington Manor for \$2,000, but John and Abigail Adams eventually moved directly into the White House.

Duddington Manor remained in the Carroll family until 1886, when the remaining daughters sold the land to a developer. The mansion was

demolished and replaced in the 1890s with the row houses we see today.

In 2013, Duddington Place is a wonderful one-block street with a friendly and active community spirit. Neighbors visit on the many park benches that grace its sidewalks. From its bucolic beginning to its urban present, Duddington continues to charm. ★

House Tour Volunteers Needed

Can you spare an hour or two in April or May to help a good cause? CHRS is currently seeking volunteers for:

- House Tour Docents
- Ticket booth at Eastern Market
- Cookie and cupcake bakers
- Bicycle deliveries
- Social media support
- And many others

To be a part of this year's house tour, please contact CHRS Office Manager Gloria Junge at 543-0425 or CapHRS@aol.com.



IMAGE COURTESY LISA DALE JONES

This home on E Street SE will be featured on this year's House and Garden Tour.



56th Annual
House and Garden Tour
Saturday and Sunday • May 11–12, 2013

Individual Donations and Ticket Order Form

Tax-Deductible Contributions

Benefactors, Patrons, and Sponsors will be listed in the Tour brochure if received by April 15.

- Benefactor** (\$1,000, 8 complimentary tickets, \$840 deductible)
- Patron** (\$500, 4 complimentary tickets, \$420 deductible)
- Sponsor** (\$250, 2 complimentary tickets, \$210 deductible)
- Contributor** (\$100, completely deductible)
- Funder** (\$50, completely deductible)

My/our name(s) should be listed as follows: _____

Member Tour Tickets

For tickets only, mail or scan and e-mail with full payment by April 19.

_____ Member Tour tickets @ \$20.00 each (limit 4 per household)

_____ Additional Tour tickets @ \$25.00 each

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Payment Information

Sum of contribution and tickets. *Your cancelled check or credit card statement will be your receipt.*

- Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ payable to CHRS, Inc.
- Please bill my credit card \$ _____ Mastercard Visa

Card Number: _____ Expiration: _____

Signature: _____ CVV Code: _____

Tickets will be mailed approximately two weeks before the Tour.

CHRS
P.O. Box 15264
Washington, DC 20003-0264
Phone: (202) 543-0425
CapHRS@aol.com



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

Mark Your Calendar!

MARCH

4 Monday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Historic Preservation
Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th
Street, SE, first floor. 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: Janet Quigley,
543-0425.

20 Wednesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Preservation Café: "Caring for
Historic Iron Work," Ebenezers
Coffee House, 2nd and F Streets, NE,
downstairs; 6:30–7:15 pm. The event
is free and handicapped accessible,

and the public is encouraged to
attend. No reservations required.
Details: Elizabeth Nelson, 543-3512.

APRIL

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

7 Saturday, 2:00–4:00 pm
Master Builders: A Documentary
Featuring African American
Architects in the Nation's Capital.
Film and panel discussion at the
Anacostia Community Museum, 1901
Fort Place, SE. Details: 633-4844.

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

16 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill
Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE,
second floor. Details: Janet Quigley,
543-0425.

17 Wednesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Preservation Café, Ebenezers
Coffee House, 2nd and F Streets, NE,
downstairs; topic to be announced.
Details: Elizabeth Nelson, 543-3512.