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December 2013 / January 2014

NCPC, Office of Planning Send Separate Height Visions to Congress

By Janet Quigley

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and the DC Office of Planning (OP) made a valiant effort in November to reach a compromise position on how height limits might be raised in the District so that a joint response could be issued to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, but in the end the city and federal agencies went their separate ways.

On November 19, NCPC voted out a final report to Congress recommending minimal changes to the Height of Buildings Act of 1910. This reflected voluminous public input by more than 30 historic preservation and community groups, including CHRS, over several months of hearings and meetings. The Commissioners approved recommendations to eliminate some antiquated fire rules and to allow penthouses to be occupied, but rejected a recommendation favored by OP to entertain targeted exceptions outside the L'Enfant City (north of Florida Avenue and west of Rock Creek) using the comprehensive planning process.

On November 20, Mayor Gray sent a separate final report to Congress reiterating OP's

recommendations to increase limits within the L'Enfant City by approximately 25% and to eliminate limits outside the core. For example, North Capitol Street is 130 feet wide; the current zoning limit is 90 feet and current Height Act limit 130 feet; the new Height Act limit would be 162.5 feet. In areas outside the core, the current Height Act limit is 130 feet (90 feet residential). OP did not specify a new height but its study considered heights up to 250 feet, or more than twenty stories. That could apply to a property such as the Intelsat campus on Connecticut Avenue, NW.

Approximately 40 witnesses testified at the final NCPC meeting on the subject, which ran more than four hours. The majority, including CHRS, were in favor of retaining the Height Act unchanged. Tersh Boasberg, former Chair of the Historic Preservation Review Board, stated that NCPC has a federal interest in historic preservation (for example national landmarks) and urged the body not to abdicate its control to a comprehensive planning process. Sue Hemberger said they should wait until the City is "built out before building up." The Historic Districts Coalition represented 13 organizations

throughout the city and emphasized the city's rich historic heritage. The exhaustive testimony prompted one Commissioner to comment that the Height Act issue had attracted the largest public response he had seen in his five years with NCPC.

Much of the discussion focused on the effectiveness of comprehensive planning, which is the zoning tool for increasing height up to the Congressional limit. Despite the checks and balances provided by NCPC and Congressional reviews

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President's Column: My Capitol Hill Utopia

By Janet Quigley

Avid readers of this column will remember that last December we had a little fun imagining what "It's a Wonderful Life" would be like on Capitol Hill. (If you'd like to re-read last year's column, visit: www.chrs.org/newsletter). For this year's holiday entertainment we spend a week in my Capitol Hill Utopia, a little offbeat but always fun:

A Perfect Week in Capitoopia

Monday

8 am Breakfast with eggs from the neighbor's hen—which is famously quiet—and veggies from the Virginia Avenue community garden, which was not torn up by CSX to make a wider tunnel.

10 am Visit the rebuilt Fragers to rent a buffing machine. No need to worry about parking; DC removed all the meters and speed cameras after the fifth record budget surplus.

6 pm Meet friends at Mr. Henry's for half price burgers; some things never change.

Tuesday

4 pm Take kids to Little League practice on the diamonds on the Air Rights Park behind Union Station. They love taking the wire-free streetcars on H Street to get there; I like the clear view to the park and all the period lamp posts that did not need to be removed.

7 pm Attend volunteers meeting for the Mother's Day House Tour. Thanks to the Capitol Hill Community Foundation's extensive volunteer network, the room is full and every shift will be overstaffed.

Wednesday

1 pm Tennis date at the Hine Sports Complex and Community Center that has free underground parking for 300. Thank goodness the Office of Planning decided to keep the property and use it for recreation.

4 pm Tea at Mary's Blue Room, a boutique hotel.

6 pm Give the dogs a good run at Tyler Dog Park.

Thursday

10 am Attend public meeting of the DC Design Review Board, which has been deluged with proposals for penthouse expansions ever since Mayor-for-Life Williams appointed them. Greater Greater Washington and CHRS agree on everything. Of course pop-ups outside historic districts are a thing of the past.

7 pm Hill Center's 20th anniversary, celebrated with a Capitol Hill Film Fest and art opening by alumni of Jan's Tutoring House.

Friday

1 pm Bike ride along the Virginia Avenue Rails-to-Trails path, a seamless and traffic-free trip along the pristine Anacostia to Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. Photographing their amazing four-foot-high water lilies is an annual highlight.

9 pm Check out the Chuck Brown-Ron Holloway Big Band at the Imani Theater—a DC supergroup not to be missed!

Saturday

10 am Shop for tomatoes and plants at the Eastern Market farmers line.

7 pm Join the crowd at Fragers Stadium on East Capitol Street to watch DC United win the Eastern Championship—again.

10 pm Watch the celebration fireworks from the nearby Ferry Landing Café in RFK Park.

Sunday

10 am Breakfast at Eastern Market's Market Lunch, with only a 5-minute line.

11 am Scour the expanded Flea Market for early bargains.

1 pm Visit realtors' open houses, which are selling fast. Five affordable 3-bedroom condos to see this weekend!

OK, so we can't always get what we want and my perfect world may not be yours. But here's wishing you and your loved ones, wherever you are, ideal holidays and happy memories! ☆

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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.

2014 House and Garden Tour

This year our annual House and Garden Tour will invite everyone to "Explore Capitol Hill: Our Homes, Our Gardens, Our History," and will be held on our traditional Mother's Day weekend, May 10–11, 2014.

Our volunteer-driven organization helps protect Capitol Hill's residential character, and the House and Garden Tour is the largest fundraiser for CHRS. Earning from the National Trust for Historic Preservation the nickname "the guardians of Capitol Hill," CHRS works actively to keep Capitol Hill a community of choice.

Please join us to make this the most successful Tour yet. You can do this by becoming a House Tour

Sponsor, advertising in our brochure (which reaches approximately 2,000 residents), or becoming a volunteer and helping to plan and execute the 2014 House and Garden Tour. By becoming a volunteer you'll be supporting your neighborhood, your community, and working to protect the integrity of the largest Victorian historic district in the country! Plus, you'll receive the benefit of meeting all the interesting people who live and work on Capitol Hill.

To help, please contact Susan Young at SYounghome@comcast.net, or e-mail CapHRS@aol.com

Thanks, and we look forward to meeting you! ★

Give the Gift of House Tour Tickets!

A Special Price for Holiday Gift Giving This December

CHRS is offering its members a special pre-sale price on 2014 House Tour tickets, just in time for gifting. *This holiday special offers 6 tickets for \$100—more than 20% off the members in-season price!* To take advantage of this special "gifting price," just e-mail CapHRS@aol.com to receive all details on purchasing this package.

New Editor Needed

Do you have a solid background in writing and editing? Do you love the work that CHRS does on Capitol Hill? If so, and if you're looking for a way to get more involved with CHRS, then editing this monthly newsletter may be just what you're looking for!

Responsibilities include assigning and editing articles for ten issues per year. You should be able to attend monthly Board meetings (the third Tuesday evening of the month, except August and December) and other CHRS events as necessary in

order to either write about them or edit what someone else writes. Once a month, you'll need to devote the better part of two weekdays to preparing the next edition on a tight deadline. You will have a backup editor to help with final copyediting. The new editor will work alongside the current editor for several months to learn the job.

To find out more about this rewarding volunteer position, please contact Lisa Dale Jones at: lisadalejones@gmail.com. ★

Proposed Virginia Avenue Tunnel: Opposition, Concerns, and Surprises

By Monte Edwards

On Saturday, November 23, there was a rousing public meeting about the Virginia Avenue Tunnel, organized by Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, at the Capper Senior Center, 900 5th Street SE. The senior citizens' housing is immediately adjacent to the tunnel and will be impacted by traffic disruptions, noise, vibration and airborne emissions from the reconstruction of the tunnel.

The meeting was designed to let the residents of the Arthur Capper Senior Building (a HOPE VI project, along with Ellen Wilson and Capitol Quarter, that was initiated by Dick Wolf and David Perry) and the neighbors get some answers to some of their concerns.

In addition to Representative Norton, the meeting was attended by Tommy Wells, ANC 6D Commissioner David Garber, the Federal Highway Administration, DC Department of Transportation (DDOT), Parsons Brinckerhoff (the consultant who prepared the Draft Environmental Impact Statement), and a sizable contingent from CSX, including some who arrived from Florida. The room was packed with seniors and neighbors—even standing room was 2–3 people deep along the walls.

Representative Norton began with a skeptical view of neighborhood concerns, but heard the seniors and neighbors and said that because of the interest and concern that had been raised, a Congressional hearing is needed and the EPA needs to be involved. She urged attendees, and anyone else in the neighborhood, to write/email Rep Tom Petri, Chair of the House Highways and Transit Subcommittee. "I'm not going to sit



Senior Center resident Barbara Prioleau, Capitol Quarter resident Maureen Cohen Harrington, Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, Senior Center resident A.V. Jones.

around and watch the community get torn up now that it's been built up," she said.

It was suggested that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement be prepared to address new information and concerns in a congressional hearing. Representative Norton agreed. Tommy Wells said to loud cheers: "I want the trains rerouted permanently. If that's not going to happen, we have to do this in a way that's best for the health and welfare of the community."

Maureen Cohen Harrington, a resident of Capitol Quarter, asked how CSX would obtain authority for the rebuilt tunnel to occupy a larger footprint, as CSX wants to shift the tunnel location by up to 25 feet. DDOT answered in terms of permits needed for construction, and was unable to respond to the question about permanent occupancy. The neighbors in Capitol Quarters have been asking

CSX, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and DDOT for years about the Right of Way that CSX would need to expand the Virginia Avenue Tunnel for permanent use, as distinct from actual construction activities.

Maureen told CSX that at least two of CSX's three proposals will require Congressional approval, and she knew they'd been lobbying Congress specifically about the Virginia Avenue Tunnel. The CSX lobbyist denied it. CSX said that Rep. Norton would know if lobbying had been undertaken. Norton agreed that she hadn't been lobbied. Maureen then produced the lobbying disclosure reports for the last two quarters. Both reported lobbying expenses for "Issues related to the Virginia Avenue Project." The CSX representatives were shaken and Norton was surprised. Norton was provided with copies of the lobbying reports. Stay tuned! ★

Preservation Café: Urban Legends and Historic Lore of Washington, DC

By Elizabeth Nelson

On November 20, Robert Pohl regaled a crowd with readings from his latest book, *Urban Legends & Historic Lore of Washington, DC*. In contrast to his previous book, which focused on the scandals of Capitol Hill, Pohl cast a wider net to find all those stories that are told as true (often by tour guides such as himself) but that have little or no actual connection to the truth.

After a brief introduction to urban legends and why they get so frequently told, Pohl read the following stories from his book, each of which had some connection to Capitol Hill:

- In contrast to the story told, no Metro stop was ever planned for Georgetown; thus none was ever canceled through the efforts of the citizens living there. Instead, there was a stop planned for eastern Capitol Hill that was done in by neighborhood protests.
- The statue on Marion Kahlert's grave in Congressional Cemetery does not mark the spot where the first victim of a car accident is buried. Ms. Kahlert died tragically young, but of kidney disease, not the speeding car that lore has as the reason of her demise.
- In spite of tale retold in such works as Dan Brown's *Lost Symbol*, no eternal flame ever flickered over the empty tomb in the basement of the Capitol that was to hold George Washington's mortal remains. Nor did the government pay an individual for well over 60 years to guard this flame.
- The strangest story of the evening was also the one that turned out to be true: In spite of there being no references to any original sources, the story has circulated for years that the Lincoln Memorial was struck

by antiaircraft fire during the second World War. After much searching, Pohl actually found an article in the *Washington Post* that confirmed that this story was, in fact, almost completely true.

Pohl then took questions, and was particularly interested in stories that members of the audience had to tell him. If the number of stories proffered that evening are any indication, a second volume containing more stories is almost certainly in the offing.

Learn more about Urban Legends and find other opportunities to hear the author speak at facebook.com/RobertPohlAuthor or follow him on Twitter at [@RSP_DC](https://twitter.com/RSP_DC). ★

Help Wanted: CHRS Office Manager

CHRS is looking for a mature, personable, well-organized person with general office skills, including computers. Members of the Society and residents of Capitol Hill preferred.

Work includes maintaining membership records of the Society; responding to telephone and email inquiries by supplying routine information and publications or by referring inquiries to the proper Board member; helping prepare for and attending all Board and Membership meetings; maintaining stocks of literature and promotional materials; and assisting in preparations for the annual House and Garden Tour and other events.

Work 12–15 hours per week at the CHRS office at 420 10th Street, SE. Schedule can be flexible. This is a paid position.

If interested, call the CHRS office, (202) 543-0425 and speak with Gloria Junge, the current office manager.

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The Development History of Rosedale

by Donna Hanousek

Rosedale is a neighborhood located in northeast DC, approximately bounded by Benning Road (north), C Street, NE (south), 15th Street (west) and 19th Street (east). It is characterized by several narrow one- and two-block streets that are slightly diagonal to the existing L'Enfant Plan street grid, as well as by an eclectic housing stock ranging from nineteenth century twin frame dwellings to 1920s and 1930s bungalow-style row houses, also known as the "daylight" form or "daylighters." This article traces Rosedale's development history from its earliest land ownership through its peak development years (1880s–1930s).

Early History: The Land¹

The Rosedale neighborhood is on land that was originally part of a 414-acre tract known as Chance, patented by Thomas Evans in 1734. Later, it was part of the Long Meadows tract and located in what was then Washington County, Maryland. Prior to its inclusion within the District of Columbia, the tract was owned, for a time, by one of the branches of the Young family (who owned a large part of the land that eventually became Capitol Hill).

Benjamin Stoddert, a prominent Georgetown merchant, eventually bought the tract, which came to be known as Rosedale and Isherwood, and was considered valuable in the late nineteenth century because of the abundant spring feeding the creek that ran through it into the Eastern Branch (now known as the Anacostia River). Stoddert requested that this parcel be exempted from the federal city plan and that request was granted by President George Washington, so it was not platted in

the 1791 L'Enfant plan along with the rest of the land within the federal city.

The tract, which by 1813 was owned by Dr. Thomas Ewell, was at that time agricultural and wooded, with scattered wood-frame buildings and agricultural outbuildings. During the Civil War, the southernmost parcel of the Long Meadows tract was owned by Martha Isherwood and used by the federal government as an army depot. It continued to be occupied as late as 1869 by the federal government, with General Montgomery Meigs using it for the Eastern Branch Corrals.

Long Meadows was sold to private investors and on December 8, 1876, was platted in part as Rosedale and Isherwood. The investor group included W.H. Clagett, President of the Columbia Railway Company, the company that built the streetcar line that ran the length of H Street. The resulting subdivision, which included this tract as well as some additional land, was comprised of 30 blocks bounded by Benning Road (north), C Street (south), 15th Street, (west), and 21st Street (east).

Since the streets in Rosedale had been platted before 1893, they were not subject to the Highway Commission's development of a citywide system for extending the original street plan to areas that had once been part of Washington County. These streets were instead laid just slightly to the east and south of the existing route in the somewhat diagonal alignment that is characteristic of the Rosedale neighborhood today.



IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON

1525 Gales (built as a twin to 1523 in 1887) features wood construction with half mansard roofs, cornice with pediment-like peak and decorative wood brackets, and continuous eyebrow over paired windows.

Development History: Nineteenth Century

The development of Rosedale began in the late nineteenth century, and many of the early buildings were of wood frame construction. A charming example of the earliest Rosedale housing can be seen in the row at 1511–1537 Gales Street. Most of the row of Classical Revival style twin dwellings was built in 1887.² This type of building, with a false or half mansard roof (the vertical area at the top of the building) was more common in other parts of the greater Washington area (such as in Alexandria, Virginia’s Parker Gray neighborhood—a working class African-American neighborhood) and was prevalent from 1870 to the 1900s. The row is cohesive, yet the buildings contain small differences that give them individuality, such as some variety in the design of the cornice or in the wood brackets at the

edges of the roof line, and some of the houses having paired windows with a continuous eyebrow.

These twin frame dwellings of the late 1880s were much more common in Capitol Hill East than in the Capitol Hill neighborhood to the west, because the fire laws that prohibited wood frame structures from being built in the L’Enfant city were relaxed in Capitol Hill East, east of 11th Street and south of I Street, as a means to encourage development in those areas where development slow and sparse.

In addition to having a relatively long period of wood frame construction, Rosedale did not generally implement the 1871 Projection Law until the late 1890s. (The Projection Law allowed projections of buildings four feet beyond the front edge of the lot line into the public space.) This means that most of Rosedale’s nineteenth century brick rowhouses feature flat

fronts, in contrast to the Capitol Hill neighborhood to the west, where much of the 1880s and 1890s building stock features various projecting bays both to gain space and to add visual interest.

Development History: Twentieth Century

The twentieth century introduced the refined Classical Revival style, which is often characterized by prominent cornices with a decoration of classical motifs and plain or rock-faced concrete lintels above doors and windows.

By the mid-1920s the “daylight” form, which was essentially a bungalow version of the rowhouse, had become popular in the neighborhood as elsewhere. Middle-class homeowners liked bungalows, which were detached houses with deep front porches, over-hanging roofs, and projecting eaves, but land prices were too high in the District

IMAGE COURTESY GARY PETERSON



1633 Gales is a typical flat-front late-nineteenth century brick rowhouse with modest Queen Anne style elements of decorative string courses above the second-story window, and brick segmental arch with pearl molding above the windows.

IMAGE COURTESY DAVID HOLMES



1641 Kramer Street is a modest Classical Revival style with simple molded metal cornice and the characteristic plain concrete sills and lintels.

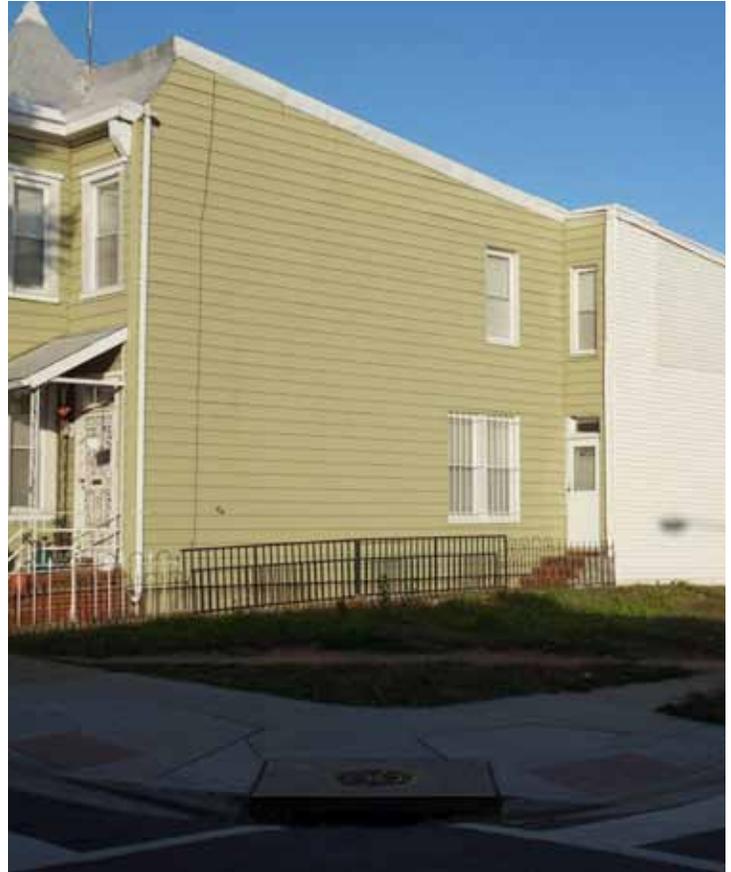
IMAGE COURTESY DONNA HANOUSEK



1671 Rosedale. This 1925 bungalow-inspired “daylight” rowhouse exhibits Colonial Revival influences, such as a full porch and double-hung paired windows.

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IMAGES COURTESY DAVID SMALL



Contrasting photos of the northeast corner of 16th and Gales: in 2008 (left), with a substantial nineteenth century free-standing wood frame dwelling; and today (right), a vacant lot.

to build them. Unlike the narrower, three-room deep Victorian home, the “daylight” form was typically wider and only two rooms deep, bringing more daylight into the homes. Developers began to incorporate bungalow design elements into their rowhouses.

Rosedale Today

The Rosedale neighborhood, like other neighborhoods in greater Capitol Hill, has seen an influx of new residents and an increase in development activity in recent years. Situated just steps away from the burgeoning H Street Commercial Corridor with its upcoming streetcar line, Rosedale is becoming a much sought after neighborhood. Besides its enviable location, there has long been an active citizenry working to make Rosedale a better place to live.

Since 2005, the Rosedale Citizens Alliance (RCA) has led successful neighborhood improvement efforts. For example, after years of lobbying by RCA and individual residents, the community now boasts one of the best libraries and recreation centers in the city. Rosedale’s popularity, while positive in many respects, also presents some challenges. While Rosedale still retains much of its charm—like its unique street grid and narrow streets, as well as much of its original building stock—a number of its buildings are either being razed for future and larger developments or added onto in a manner that is incompatible with the original buildings. As more and more of the original building stock is razed or ‘re-muddled,’ a large part of the neighborhood’s charm will diminish. This is what inevitably happens

when nineteenth and early twentieth century building stock meets twenty-first century development pressure without having historic district protection to intervene. ★

¹ This article draws substantially from EHT Tracerics.

² Except for 1523, which was built under its own building permit in 1886.

Donna Hanousek is a former CHRS Board member and Chair of the Beyond the Boundaries Program (2006–2012).

Capitol Hill Profiles: Nell Lyons, Budding Interior Designer

By Lisa Dale Jones

When did you know what you wanted to do with your life? At age 20? At age 35? Maybe you're still not sure!

Meet Nell Lyons, age 10, who already knows exactly what she wants to be: an interior designer. Nell, a life-long resident of Capitol Hill, loves the old homes here, and spends as many weekends as she can with her mom, Agnieszka Paczynska, visiting open houses to see the different architecture and interior design. They also are regular attendees of CHR's annual House & Garden Tours, and Nell takes mental notes of details she likes from the homes. Not surprisingly, her favorite television channel is HGTV.

Nell attends fifth grade at the Basis Charter School in DC, and is already planning the portfolio she'll need in order to apply to the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD).

A couple of weeks ago, Nell's dad, Terrence Lyons, brought her over so we could chat and she could give me her suggestions for updating our décor—which she had already had a chance to see on this past Spring's house tour.

What got you interested in interior design?

When I was six years old I wanted to be realtor. I went to a lot of open houses every weekend with my mom and liked it. Then when I was eight I decided I liked interior design better. I get most of my ideas from going on open houses. Like I'll see something and think, Oh my gosh, I really really like that!

Has anyone asked your opinion of what to do on their house?

Yes, first of all my parents, they're going to have renovations done soon, and then my parents' friends, they just bought a big house and they want me to talk about it and see what I like and what to change and stuff like that. And then my other parents' friends also bought a big house and they want my opinion on that as well.

Did you get to design your own room?

I've designed it like a million times! So first it was a yellow room when I was a baby, and then I wanted it pink. Then I got really sick of pink, and then I made it like a really light blue, and then the most recent one that happened, about a year ago, I also decided I wanted more space, since my room was small, so I decided to get a loft bed. And now I really, really like the color purple, so I decided to paint part of my wall purple—it's called Mystical Grape. So it's kind of like an accent wall, but it's not really a whole wall, so like two thirds of one wall and one third of another wall, where the bed is. And instead of straight lines, at the ends I have little curves.

Do you want to be an interior decorator or designer?

Definitely a designer—I want to knock out walls! Me and my mom are addicted to watching Property Brothers, Househunters, and Love it or List it.



IMAGE COURTESY LISA DALE JONES

Nell Lyons during her assessment at the author's home.

Let's say I hired you to do my house. What would you do to this wall color?

It isn't so dark that it's overwhelming, where you don't feel comfortable, and I like how the ceilings are a lighter color. I think if they were a darker color it wouldn't feel as good. But then I really like the choice of brown, actually, because there are a lot of shades of brown in the room. But it's a nice brown that makes the room cozier.

What if I wanted to liven the room up a bit?

So I notice that there is a little bit of blue, so I would try to tie in the blue. I don't think it should be a color that doesn't match anything so it just doesn't fit. So, maybe something really pretty and blue like right here, like near this plant. Like a nice vase or something.

Continued on page 11

of changes to the Comprehensive Plan, some witnesses were skeptical that the public could successfully stop undesired height increases from getting into the Comprehensive Plan.

Some Commissioners stated they were not ready to support changes due either to insufficient evidence, a need for further study, or lack of demonstrated need. One Commissioner noted that this was not the first time NCPC has considered changes to the Height Act and it is unlikely to be the last. Others voiced clear support for the Act. "It is so much more than a fire law," said Peter May of the National Park Service, quoting 1902 establishing language indicating the original motive was aesthetic rather than safety. In the end, the majority sentiment was that this is not the right time to make a change.

Additional Height Forums

The November 19 NCPC vote was the latest in a series of public and institutional expressions of support for the Height Act. City Council Chairman Phil Mendelson held a 5-hour Committee of the Whole hearing on the Office of Planning proposals on October 28; 33 of 35 speakers opposed the OP changes. At NCPC's October 30 public meeting, a majority of the 30+ witnesses supported retention of the Height Act. On November 18, 12 of 13 City Councilmembers introduced a Sense of the Council resolution to retain the Height Act. And on November 21, the US Commission on Fine Arts held a hearing and voiced its support for maintaining the Height Act in its present form. For a variety of reasons, the Height of Buildings Act of 1910 has many friends.

Summary

Who are the winners from this exhaustive year of marathon hearings, endless filings and detailed studies?

- DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer's Citywide GIS 3D Database: Received updated 3D building data for the entire city, the first major upgrade since 2005, as a result of the OP study.
- DC Office of Planning: Now has an extensive photographic database of aerial, skyline and street-level views, and a battery of (suspect) economic data to support future development.
- NCPC and City Council: Recognized for their responsiveness to public input.
- Historic Districts Coalition: Demonstrated that small community organizations across the city can make their voices heard.
- The Vocal Public: Saw the impact of their participation in NCPC and City Council's actions.
- The Comprehensive Plan: Identified as the "ruby slippers" that can affect most land use changes now, without needing any modifications to federal law.

Representative Darrell Issa (R-CA) first raised the question that launched the height studies in October of 2012, and is expected to hold a hearing to review the two sets of recommendations in early December. As dialog progressed through the year, it was clear that the height question has many dimensions: What is appropriate, in which locations, when, and who should make the decision? Congressman Issa will find that there is no one simple answer, but that the issue brings out passionate opinions from District residents. ★

Final Height Act Positions

NCPC

- 1) Retain Height Act throughout the city.
- 2) Outside L'Enfant City: Conduct further study.
- 3) Study and implement additional viewshed protections.
- 4) Allow penthouse occupancy to support communal recreation space; one story, maximum height 20'; retain setbacks; protect sightlines for federal buildings such as the U.S. Capitol and White House.
- 5) Delete antiquated fire safety provisions.

Office of Planning

- 1) Inside L'Enfant City:
 - a. Change residential ratio of street width to height from 1:1 to 1:1.25, to a maximum of 90 feet (example: 40' limit becomes 50').
 - b. Change commercial ratio from 1:1 + 20 feet to 1:1.25 to a maximum of 200 feet (example: 120' becomes 150')
- 2) Outside L'Enfant City:
 - a. For targeted, justified sites, allow increases to exceed Height Act limit via the Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Protect viewsheds.
 - c. Design reviews of targeted sites.
 - d. Projects with increased heights provide affordable housing or infrastructure.

Source: www.ncpc.gov/heightstudy, 11/20/2013.

Swampoodle Grant Program Progress Report

By Susan Burgerman

The Swampoodle Home Improvement Grants Committee met on Wednesday, November 13, 2013 to examine the completed grant applications that had been received by the CHRS office as of October 31.

The Committee approved six applications, assisting owners with the following projects:

- Pointing, façade repair, replace concrete steps with iron steps;
- Replace front steps and repair wrought iron fence, including back entry gate which is visible from the street;
- Pointing, restore existing door and transom frame, replace front door with replica of original, replace deteriorated window frames, add interior door to

vestibule, install new high-efficiency boiler, convert inside lighting to LEDs;

- Replace HVAC units;
- Replace historically inaccurate bay window sash units with single unit two-over-two window;
- Replace existing interior bulbs with LED bulbs.

If you live in Squares 752, 753, 777, or 778 (roughly between 2nd and 4th, F and H Streets NE) and have been wanting to give your house a facelift or decrease its carbon footprint, then please contact CHRS Office Manager Gloria Junge at (202) 543-0425 for information and to request an application. ★

Overbeck Lecture: Who Was Michael Shiner?

Genealogist and author Leslie Anderson will deliver the February 4 Overbeck History Lecture on the remarkable life of Michael Shiner, a freed slave who worked at the Washington Navy Yard, rose to prominence in the Capitol Hill community, and kept a wide-ranging diary of neighborhood events from 1813 to 1869. Shiner was an eyewitness to the burning of the Navy Yard by the British in 1814 and many other notable events over more than half a century.

The event is set for Tuesday, February 4 at 7:30 pm at the Naval Lodge Hall at 330 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Admission is free but a reservation is required. Please contact OverbeckLecture@CapitolHillHistory.org and indicate how many seats you will need.

Nell Lyons, *continued from page 6*

Is the carpet dark enough?

I'm also wondering if it's dark enough. I think it will work actually; I think it works because I feel like if this was also darker it would make the room feel smaller, not necessarily cozy.

What do you like besides interior decorating?

Soccer, karate, horse riding, art. At my school I have two science classes that I like a lot. I like dissecting stuff. I've never done it but it seems really cool! At the school dance they actually had a dissection. You could dissect a frog brain.

At the school dance??

We had a school dance about two weeks ago. [Dad: "A monster mash Halloween dance."] It was upstairs in the cafeteria. It was like, "dissect a frog brain."

Besides open houses, what do you like about living on Capitol Hill?

I used to play in Lincoln Park when I was younger, but now I have a lot of homework so it's a little harder to do. I go to Eastern Market almost every weekend. Or at least every other weekend. And sometimes I go there to buy presents: Mother's Day presents, Father's Day presents, birthday presents...

Where do you play soccer?

I play with Soccer on the Hill [SOTH], and we usually practice at the Marine Barracks. We had a huge tournament yesterday in the finals. We were in the finals and we won, so we got these awesome trophies! ★

If you would like Nell to help you with decorating ideas, she'd love to start building up her portfolio so she can eventually apply to RISD. Contact Nell's parents at: designingnell@gmail.com.



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

Mark Your Calendar!

DECEMBER

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. Details: Janet Quigley, 543-0425.

JANUARY

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

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

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

25 Saturday (time TBD)
Capitol Hill Village Annual Gala. Hill
Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE.

FEBRUARY

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

4 Tuesday, 7:30 pm
Overbeck Lecture: "Who was Michael
Shiner?" Genealogist and author Leslie
Anderson will talk about Michael Shiner,
a freed slave who worked at the
Washington Navy Yard and kept a diary
from 1813 to 1869. Naval Lodge, 330
Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Free,
reservations required. E-mail
OverbeckLecture@CapitolHillHistory.org.

57th Annual Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour

May 10–11, 2014

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