



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

# NEWS

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December 2018/January 2019

## Swampoodle Grant Program Helps Residents Preserve Their Historic Homes

By Patrick Lally

Most preservationists agree that the number one hurdle facing the stewardship of historic buildings today is the high cost of restoration. This is particularly critical with homeowners of old houses where specialized restoration projects can break the bank. Pointing up brick, repairing cast iron stairs, fixing a slate roof... all come with significant expense.

In 2010, when developers had discreetly bought up the entire western half of Square 752 adjacent to the H Street bridge, residents learned that 26 structures would be demolished to make way for a 378-unit apartment building, now called Station House. Nineteen of those to be razed would have been protected as contributing buildings in the Capitol Hill Historic District, but Square 752 and the neighboring three squares were two blocks outside the boundary. Residents had little recourse other than to watch the nineteenth century rowhouses come down.

Proposals to extend the historic district to this area had come and gone for years, but the demolition galvanized the community to demand meaningful mitigation for the extensive loss of the area's historic fabric. The Capitol Hill Restoration Society and the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission assisted in negotiations that led the developer to pay for a building-by-building survey of all the blocks north of the existing historic district up to H Street. This was a key ingredient paving the way to extending the boundary north five years later.

An important component of the developer's mitigation for the

demolition was the creation of a residential grant program, managed by CHRS, that provides critical funding for some of the high-cost repairs facing many Capitol Hill residents. The Swampoodle Grant program, named for the four-square area added to the historic district in 2015, gives residential property owners in the Squares 752, 753, 777 and 778 bounded by Second to Fourth Streets, and F to H Streets NE, up to \$5,000 for home improvements that preserve the historic features of the neighborhood and, wherever possible, correct historically inappropriate

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IMAGE COURTESY PATRICK LALLY



Restoration of original cast iron entrance stairway at 238 G Street NE.

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# As the Year Ends . . . A Message from the President

It's the end of another year and a time to reflect on both my good fortune in living on Capitol Hill and the challenges we face. I'm grateful for the visionaries who established the Capitol Hill Restoration Society in 1955 and everyone who continues the work of preserving the community that means so much to all of us. And I'm cognizant that this work will never be completed.

When I moved to The Hill in 1985, it was unimaginable that housing prices would increase as they have. I did not expect to see multiple cranes hovering over Hill East. It never occurred to me that there would be electric scooters and bikes zooming down our sidewalks. Cell phones existed only in fantasy—and now there are plans for multiple cell phone towers on each block.

It's reassuring to know our home was a good investment. My husband and I enjoy the many new shops and eateries that accompany the increase in population and it's great to have additional transportation options and modern communication methods. But while we're enjoying the benefits these changes offer, we need to address any adverse effects on infrastructure, tree canopy, streetscapes, and pedestrian safety.

The past year has been busy and productive; we've continued our traditions and pursued new ways to demonstrate our value to the Capitol Hill community.

In March we held the fourth Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture at the Hill Center to a capacity crowd. The topic was "New Discoveries at the Shotgun House."

Mother's Day weekend saw the return of the annual House & Garden Tour. This year, we included an outdoor walking tour of historic Duddington Place SE in addition to nine private homes.

Our June and September Membership Meetings featured outstanding speakers on "Mapping Early Washington" (using GIS technology to show how Washington City developed) and "Creating Capitol Hill, Place, Proprietors, and People" (a discussion of the role played by artisans, architects and builders in Capitol Hill's early development), respectively. And we hosted six Preservation Cafés—three in an environmental series focused on sustainability—plus talks on restoration of doors and windows, and façade maintenance.

In October we held our third annual House Expo, highlighting service providers working on Capitol Hill.

Throughout the year our dedicated volunteers represent your interests at community meetings held by developers and government entities, as well as hearings before Congress, the Council, and regulatory agencies. They help you and your neighbors understand how to follow historic district and zoning guidelines when renovating your homes.

And they advocate for policies that enhance our quality of life.

And in the middle of all that, we've made time to address your concerns... Whether zoning and historic preservation cases, inappropriate signage, development of public property, or transportation planning, if it's important to you, it's important to all of us.

None of this would have been possible without your help—your time, your energy and your financial support.

Please consider a tax-deductible gift to the CHRS Annual Fund in addition to your membership dues; your gift really will make a difference in keeping Capitol Hill the vibrant, beautiful historic neighborhood we all love. Checks can be mailed to Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS), P.O. Box 15264, Washington, DC 20003-0264 or go to our website: [chrs.org/join-chrs](http://chrs.org/join-chrs).

Thank you for your membership and support of CHRS. I wish you a happy and healthy holiday season and a fabulous Capitol Hill 2019! ✨

— Elizabeth

## Changes to the Board of Directors

At-large member Steve Kehoe has resigned from this position effective December 18. We're all more than a little sad that we won't have the pleasure of his company at board meetings. But we're very grateful that he has agreed to stay on as the Chair of the Public Space Ad Hoc Committee. His expertise in this area is unrivaled and has been of great use to the Society many times since he first joined the board. He has also helped with the House Tour and other CHRS events.

Fortunately for us, Beth Hague has agreed to complete the remainder of his term. She will continue serving on the Zoning Committee, which will be particularly helpful on those occasions when the chair of that committee is unable attend a board meeting. Beth was instrumental in the creation of the Emerald Street Historic District, where she lives, and has also assisted with the House Tour. We look forward to seeing more of her in the coming year.

Many thanks to both Steve and Beth for their service to the Capitol Hill community!

# Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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\* Chair is an appointed Board Member

## NEWSLETTER

Angie Schmidt and Kelly Vielmo, Editors

## WEBMASTERS

Donna Breslin, Elizabeth Nelson

## OFFICE MANAGER

Jill Uvena Cullinane

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

## ABOUT CHRS

Capitol Hill is a special place. We promote, preserve, and enhance the character of our historic neighborhoods.

Since its founding in 1955, CHRS has worked continuously to make Capitol Hill the desirable location it has now become. Due to CHRS's efforts, Capitol Hill won designation as a historic district in 1976. Today, that legacy of standing up for the community continues with our work in planning, zoning, historic preservation, and public safety.

CHRS is a volunteer organization, made up of Hill residents who love their historic neighborhoods and want to ensure that the unique character of the Hill is around for future generations. Come join us!

To learn more or join, please visit:  
www.CHRS.org

# Zoning Report

By Gary Peterson

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society Zoning Committee considered the following cases on Thursday, November 8, 2018.

**BZA 19847**, 329 16th Street SE. From the October meeting: "The applicant needs a special exception to build a 3-story addition to a 2-story house that extends 10ft beyond the rear wall of an adjoining property. In this case the addition will extend 16 feet 2 inches beyond the rear wall of the property to the south, 331 16th Street SE. As part of the addition, the applicant will fill in a rear dogleg. The Committee found that the extremely large addition overwhelms the one neighbor and recommends that the special exception should be denied.

The applicant may want to consider a smaller addition and an accessory building with an apartment. Subsequent to the meeting the applicant advised that he

is going to redo the plans and make the addition smaller. These revised plans will be considered at the November 8 meeting." The applicant did make substantial changes in the plans, especially setting back both the front and rear of the 3rd floor addition. However, the addition still doubles the size of the house and overwhelms the neighbor to the south. The committee voted to oppose the application.

**BZA 19885**, 16 10th Street NE. This case involves the replacement of a rooftop deck and penthouse. In this case the new deck and staircase penthouse will be placed well back from the front of the house. Under the penthouse regulations the applicant needs a special exception for this penthouse. Neighbors have sent letters of approval. The committee voted to support the application. ☆

# October Preservation Café: Why Old Windows Matter

By Gregoire Holeyman, AIA

The October Preservation Café featured Neil Moser, owner of Moser Works, Inc., who shared his passion and expertise for restoring historic windows. Mr. Moser, a carpenter/builder for more than 30 years, explained why old windows are important and just what it takes to do a professional restoration.

Debunking the myth that new windows are better, Mr. Moser noted that recent studies have shown that properly-sealed older windows, working in tandem with a good storm

window, are just as or more efficient that modern, high-end replacement windows. Historic windows were made from slow-growth trees, rather than the fast-growth used in new windows. A restored 100-year old window can easily last another 100 years, so it's worth investing in maintenance and restoration. In addition, restored old windows preserve the architectural character of the building, look and work as they were intended, and improve energy efficiency.

Continued on page 7

# Historic Preservation Briefs

By Alison Ross, Joanna Kendig, and Beth Purcell

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board) considered the following cases on October 25 and November 15, 2018. HPRB is responsible for determining if proposed changes to a building are consistent with the DC Preservation Act. A “concept review” is a preliminary determination of a building owner’s plan to alter the building, and if the concept is approved, the owner will return to the HPRB for a final review.

**1225–1227 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, HPA 18-662**, concept/one-story rooftop addition. These contributing single-story commercial buildings in tapestry brick were designed in 1925 by Julius Wenig for Thomas A. Cantwell. Wenig designed the nearby Frager’s Hardware building at 1115 Pennsylvania Avenue, also in tapestry brick.<sup>1</sup> The applicant proposes to add a second story.

Storefronts are a character-defining feature of these commercial buildings. The original size, shape and proportion of display windows, transom

windows, and kickplates should be maintained, which the applicant will do (*Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Buildings*, 6-8).

HPRB values one-story commercial buildings: “This type is distinguished by its horizontality, derived from the buildings’ low height and wide street frontage” (*Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Buildings*, 4). These buildings incorporate that horizontality. The second story would be an appropriate design: glass, echoing the storefront’s transom, and framed in metal, making it recede, and differentiating it from the historic first story. The applicant proposes to set the second story back five feet. We suggested that to preserve the buildings’ horizontality, the second story be set back eight feet. The Board directed that the second story be setback between five and eight feet.

**302 South Carolina Avenue SE, HPA 18-675**, concept/rooftop addition, rear porches. This three-story brick dwelling was built in 1907

by owner/builder Bailey and Pumphrey and designed by architect Edward O. Volland. The building is one of seven; 300-312 South Carolina, Avenue SE were all built by the same builder in 1907.

The applicant plans to keep the street façade unchanged, and retain the dogleg, which is commendable. The applicant also plans to build a new third-story rear addition and add rear frame porches to the first and second story. An enclosed third-story rooftop addition would be set back 12 feet from the front of the building and visible in the rear. This proposed three-story rear addition would be a dramatic change from the existing rear elevation; it would be highly visible from 3rd Street SE because of the angle of the alley and because it is the second house in from the corner. The addition might even be visible from the intersection of South Carolina Avenue and 3rd Street SE.

HPRB guidelines state that any new rear additions that “can be seen from the public right of way should be compatible with the design of the rear elevation of the existing building.” In addition, the seven Bailey and Pumphrey rowhouses all retain their original two-story height and brick exterior. This would be the first three-story rear addition in this section of the block. The Board approved adding the open rear porches, but denied the rear addition in order to preserve the intact unified row of two-story houses with unaltered roof lines, and because the addition would be prominently visible from public space.

**710 E Street SE, HPA 18-612**, concept/three-story rear addition. This two-story brick building, built in 1886, is a contributing building.<sup>2</sup> Currently it consists of two-story brick front with

## CHRS Volunteers at Hilloween



### IT WAS A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT . . .

seriously, it was a very dark, very wet and downright chilly evening but Hill trick-or-treaters and their adult minders were undeterred and turned out in droves for this annual tradition. Our office manager and bookkeeper, Jill Uvena Cullinane, and her husband, Dan, manned our table with help from board members Maygene Daniels and

Elizabeth Nelson. Having Jill with us made the experience extra special because she remembers attending Hilloween as child.

We had an ample supply of trick-or-treat bags (and other goodies), thanks to the generosity of a faithful CHRS member. We handed out quite a few “vintage” house tour catalogs, getting everyone excited for this year’s event.

Many thanks to Hilloween organizer, Heather Schoell, for making this happen; it’s a lot of work but the community really appreciates it.

one story brick rear. A driveway on the west side leads to a parking lot, filling the remainder of the lot.

The applicant plans an addition consisting of new cellar level, an additional three stories plus penthouse and a hyphen between the original and new building, to be constructed immediately adjacent to the blank brick wall of the 712 E Street garage building. The addition's main volume, 50 feet 2.5 inches long, starts approximately 10 feet from the rear of the original two-story building.

There are two ways to look at this project:

1) **Rear addition to the original building.** HPRB's *Additions to Historic Buildings*, p. 8, states that "The design of an addition should respect the existing proportions of a building and those of neighboring buildings." The rear addition appears to be more than double the footprint of the retained original building; it is wider and significantly taller than the original building. The addition is not subordinate. As a separate new building.

2) **Separate new building.** Considered as a separate building and not an addition, this should clearly read like a new, separate building. Capitol Hill residential buildings have clearly defined entrances. But these plans show a barracks-like building with no entrance, attached to the rear of the original building. On the cellar and first story, the stair appears to be outside, leading to a room. On the second and third stories, the stair is windowless.

Eliminating the bedroom on the first story would open the possibility to design an attractive and functional entrance. Capitol Hill apartment buildings were sometimes built with

windowed staircases and recent additions feature glass-enclosed staircases, such as the Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE, or the MGM Grand building, 501 C Street NE (HPA 17-427).

The applicant's sightline drawing shows the addition as not visible from the sidewalk directly opposite and across E Street and the applicant's photographs show a view deep into the property through the two adjacent side yards. The proposed addition will be visible from public space. Two neighbors testified that the project's scale was incompatible.

To mitigate the visibility problems, we supported the staff's recommendation to eliminate the penthouse. We believed that the project as presented was not compatible with Capitol Hill Historic District. The Board directed adding an entrance off the driveway, that the penthouse be omitted, and that the project return on the consent calendar.

**712 5th Street SE, HPA 19-038**, permit/third floor and rear addition. This two-story two-bay brick rowhouse is a contributing building and one of 13 designed by George T. Santmyers and built by Preston E. Wire in 1939.<sup>3</sup>

In two past cases on this street, the Board acted to ensure that rooftop additions would not be visible from public space. Examples of this are 708 5th Street SE (HPA 04-310) and 718 5th Street SE (05-342). In this case, the applicant plans to build a rear and roof top addition, which, according to the lumber mockup, will be visible from public space from oblique angles, although not visible from across 5th Street.

Capitol Hill houses have a hierarchy in windows, with the tallest windows on the ground floor, and decreasing in size on the upper stories, unless they all are a uniform size from top to bottom. The design for the rear windows shows the tallest windows on the third story. One of

## Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

### CONTRIBUTOR

Estate of Frederick Peter Lemke  
Michael Halebian & Co., Inc.

the applicant's earlier projects, 407A 4th Street SE (HPA 17-176), had this same window hierarchy problem. At the March 30, 2017 hearing, the Board directed "(3) The applicant work with staff on the location and make up of windows and materials." We urged that the window hierarchy problem be addressed in this case as well.

We believed that if the staff's recommendations are adopted (setting back the addition and regularizing the fenestration in the rear), this project will be compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District. The Board agreed with these two recommendations.

The following cases, in which CHRS participated, appeared on the consent calendar:

- **210 9th Street, SE HPA 18-600**, concept/rear addition.
- **613 Lexington Place NE, HPA 18-670**, concept/modify roof-line to create third floor and rear porch, one of several Kennedy Bros. rowhouses in square 862 with tall attic spaces.
- **423 4th Street SE, HPA 18-671**, concept/three-story rear addition. ☆

<sup>1</sup> Building permit for 1225-1227 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE # 2796 (22 Sept. 1925). Frager's Hardware, Building permit # 5461 (26 Dec. 1925).

<sup>2</sup> A.J. Jaegle, DC building permit # 578 (29 Aug. 1886).

<sup>3</sup> DC Building permit # 22714 (22 Oct. 1939).

Interested in learning more about  
historic district designation?

Contact CHRS at [caphrs@aol.com](mailto:caphrs@aol.com).

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## Swampoodle, *continued from cover*

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exterior alterations. Grants have to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the applicant. There is also a second grant program reserved only for Square 752 for energy efficiency upgrades.

So far, grants have been used for the repair, restoration, and replacement of exterior features, such as walls and siding, windows, doors, cornices, porches, front steps, and stoops. Because eligible work has to be visible from public space, and retain or restore original historic features (except for the Square 752 energy efficiency grants), some compelling projects have received funding. Here are some highlights:

Monica in Square 777 lives in one of the finest intact Classical Revival rows on Capitol Hill. Designed in 1907 by Arthur Poynton, her original beveled plate-glass door is an integral part of Poynton's architectural language, but cracked glass, inoperable hardware, and sagging door jambs forced Monica

to consider discarding it for a new one. Her Swampoodle grant enabled her to secure Mozer Works in Takoma Park, specialists in historic window and door restoration, to restore this critical entrance feature completely.

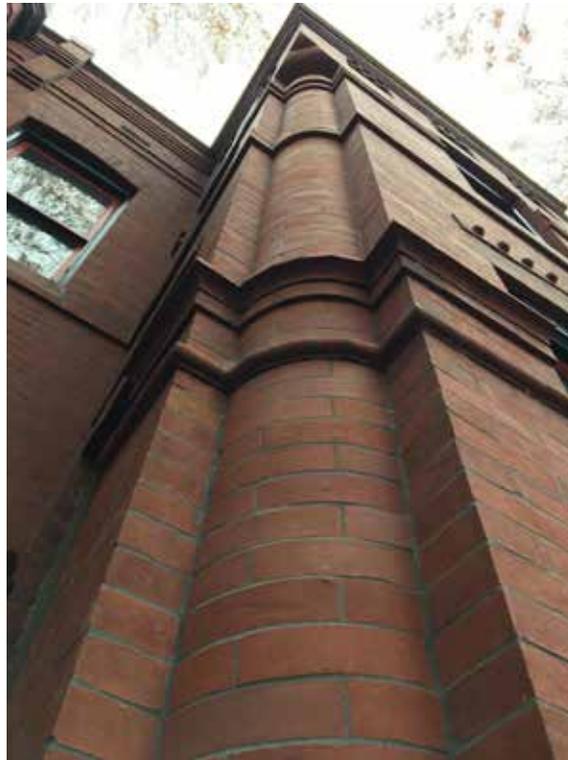
Tim in Square 752 lives in a beautiful row of Queen Anne style houses designed by Thomas Franklin Schneider in 1897. The enormous cast iron front entrance stairway had disintegrated beyond reasonable repair by the time he purchased the house and Tim was considering replacing the entire ensemble with brick. The Swampoodle Grant enabled him to secure the expertise of Fred Mashack Ironworks in Southwest Washington to recast the missing treads and risers, dismantle the entire staircase, clean it, and reassemble it with the new parts and fasteners. It is a remarkable restoration.

Rosemary in Square 777 lives in a dramatic Queen Anne home, part of

a row of five designed by Frederick Atkinson in 1891. The façade is composed of a variety of molded Victorian architectural details and pressed brick features. Years of neglect prior to her ownership, a leaky tower dome, and the 2011 earthquake all resulted in failed brickwork, cracked arches, and sagging masonry. The Swampoodle Grant enabled her to secure Edgar Masonry of Virginia to re-point the façade and rebuild the failed brickwork. The grant also allowed her to restore the decorative sheet metal tower dome and prevent future leaks with a new restoration product made by Acrymax Technologies.

These grants have made an enormous difference to many homeowners in this designated area and funds remain available to qualified applicants. If you would like an application or additional information, please visit the CHRS website at [chrs.org](http://chrs.org). ★

IMAGES COURTESY PATRICK LALLY



**LEFT:** Restoration of original 1907 door at 308 G Street NE. **RIGHT:** Facade restoration of decorative brickwork at 715 Third Street NE.

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# Flawed EIS for Union Station Expansion Nearing Completion

By Drury Tallant

For the past three years CHRS has participated in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) undertaken by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for the expansion of the Union Station Rail Terminal. In the Spring of 2019, CHRS and the public will be invited to review and comment on design alternatives for the Federal component of the station expansion. It is important to understand that the ongoing EIS is limited to only the Federal portion.

CHRS has criticized FRA's limited scope of the EIS from the very beginning. By limiting consideration to only the Federal element, the usefulness of the EIS is curtailed and perhaps even renders it a largely meaningless exercise. Even worse, the "preferred alternative" will likely hamper more creative design possibilities that could be evaluated if the Union Station/Burnham Place/H Street Bridge project was considered in its entirety.

As background, Akridge purchased 14 acres of air rights over the train tracks in a deal that closed in 2006 and has plans for a large project called Burnham Place. The

three principal elements—the FRA's Union Station Expansion Project, the District's H Street Bridge project, and Akridge's Burnham Place project—are linked together in myriad ways. FRA's EIS focus on only the Federal portion of the project assumes that the H Street Bridge and Burnham Place projects are irrelevant within the EIS process. This is despite the obvious fact that they must be designed and constructed in concert.

Both individually and collectively these projects entail significant impacts, especially during construction and for traffic congestion into the foreseeable future. While FRA anticipates more than doubling interstate rail, bus and other passengers in and out of an enlarged Union Station, they have not provided any traffic study for the three already highly congested commercial surface routes—H Street NE, Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street—nor for the surrounding residential streets.

Further, these intertwined projects cannot realistically be considered separately. As just one example, in order to accommodate the foundation and columns for Burnham Place, the

Station "expansion" actually reduces the number of train concourses. Nevertheless, we are asked to proceed as if these projects are un-related and our comments are constrained to the alternatives presented for only the Federal undertaking as described within the EIS.

There will be a 45-day review period after the publication of the Draft EIS in the Spring of 2019. It is important that the public become better informed, attend the open public meetings and comment on the Draft EIS. Although we consider this EIS fundamentally flawed, it remains necessary that we comment on the Draft EIS. The implications for Burnham Place will not be evident within the draft EIS, so we will need to visualize what each of FRA's alternatives might entail for the entire project.

Additional information is available on CHRS's website ([chrs.org/category/issues/union-station-redevelopment](http://chrs.org/category/issues/union-station-redevelopment)) including the full text of CHRS's May 8, 2018 comments and FRA's current summary of the EIS project. Detailed information is available at the project website: [www.WUSstationexpansion.com](http://www.WUSstationexpansion.com). ★

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## Preservation Café, *continued from page 3*

These improvements do not come easily, as demonstrated in a video that detailed the labor-intensive steps needed for a full restoration ([chrs.org/restoring-windows-preservation-cafe](http://chrs.org/restoring-windows-preservation-cafe)). The steps for restoring an existing window include: 1) disassembly in the field, including lead paint management, 2) disassembly in the shop including removal of paint via a steam box, 3)

stabilization and repairs, 4) sanding, 5) preparation of weather stripping, 6) priming and glazing, 7) painting and finishing, and 8) re-installation.

A restoration can take 6–8 weeks. Mr. Mozer uses high-end products and a method that slow-cures the treatments and paints needed. He also employs zinc or bronze weather-stripping which decreases drafts and makes the windows operate "with one finger." Salvaged historic glazing is sometimes used to replace cracked

glass panes. All this work is done out of his facility in Takoma Park.

Noting that 12 million window sashes go into landfills every year, Mr. Mozer encouraged CHRS members to call him whenever they find a discarded window. His salvage and recycling process re-uses the old glass and wood and reduces landfill.

For more information, contact Neil Mozer at [www.mozerworks.com](http://www.mozerworks.com) or (240) 398-7688. ★



**CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION**

Capitol Hill Restoration Society  
420 10th Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003

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## Mark Your Calendar!

### DECEMBER

**11** Tuesday, 7 pm

Village Voices: "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Then and Now." Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Details: [info@capitolhillvillage.org](mailto:info@capitolhillvillage.org).

**13** Thursday, 7:30 pm

CHRS Zoning Committee. Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

**18** Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, 2nd Floor board room. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

### JANUARY

**7** Monday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Historic Preservation Committee. Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details: Beth Purcell, (202) 544-0178.

**7** Monday, 7 pm

Village Voices: "The Capitol Hill Chorale: Its Next 25 Years." Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Details: [info@capitolhillvillage.org](mailto:info@capitolhillvillage.org).

**8** Tuesday, 7:15 pm

Capitol Hill Garden Club: "Tell Us About YOUR Garden." Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Club members will tell about their own gardens and share photos. Details: [capitolhillgardenclub.org](http://capitolhillgardenclub.org)

**10** Thursday, 7:30 pm

CHRS Zoning Committee. Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

**15** Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, 2nd Floor board room. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

If you received a complimentary copy of this newsletter, please consider joining CHRS!  
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