



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

NEWS

www.chrs.org

February 2019

CHRS Approves Broadening Swampoodle Energy Grants

By Patrick Lally

In December, the CHRS Board approved broadening the energy grants available for Square 752 to applicants throughout the four-block area within the 2015 Swampoodle extension of the historic district. This section, comprised of Squares 752, 753, 777 and 778—from 2nd to 4th Streets, and from F to H Streets NE—was incorporated into CHRS’s boundaries in the aftermath of the western half of Square 752’s demolition and

subsequent construction of the 378-unit Station House apartment building on that site.

Two Swampoodle grant programs—one for home improvements and another for energy efficiency upgrades—were established for affected neighborhood residents as part of the developer’s mitigation for the demolition in Square 752. Because that square suffered the greatest adverse effect,

the energy grants, unlike the exterior improvement grant program, were exclusively available to 752 only.

Now, any qualified residents in the entire Swampoodle extension are eligible to apply. CHRS manages the program and approves applications.

“Most of the residents in Square 752 have already received energy grants and there remain sufficient funds in this program to extend its benefits to applicants in all Swampoodle’s four squares,” said

Continued on page 2

CHRS Seeks Nominations for Board

CHRS will hold elections for the 2019–2020 Board of Directors by postcard ballot in May. The Elections Committee, chaired by Nancy Metzger, includes Monte Edwards and Beth Purcell. The 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, each for one-year terms, and three At-Large Members for two-year terms. Nominations for the 2019–2020 CHRS Board of Directors will be announced at the end of April and ballots will be mailed to CHRS members in May.

If you wish to be considered, to recommend someone, or to find out more about the duties of each position, please contact the CHRS office at (202) 543-0425 or email info@chrs.org, and a member of the Elections Committee will respond. Each recommendation must cite the position for which the person wants to be considered and must include his or her resume. Recommendations must be submitted by the end of the day on Tuesday, April 2, 2019.

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Changes to the Board of Directors

By Elizabeth Nelson

Adam Apton has resigned from the Treasurer position. We're very sad to lose him—it's a big job and he made an enormous contribution—but we understand that his growing family has to take precedence at this time. Fingers-crossed that he rejoins us at some point in the future. Susan Oursler, who was serving as Secretary, will complete the remainder of his term. Jim Thackaberry, long time member of the Historic Preservation Committee, will complete the remainder of Susan's term.

Greg Holeyman has resigned as Chair of the Environment Committee. He will be sorely missed as well, not only for his insight, but also because he has organized the Preservation Café series in recent years. The Preservation Cafés are lectures, offered six times a year, on topics of interest to Capitol Hill residents. It's one of our most effective education and outreach programs. We will be looking for someone to take on this important responsibility.

Many, many thanks to all for their service to the Capitol Hill community! ★

The Preservation Café series will be suspended for the Spring season but we hope to resume in the Fall. If you are interested in potentially taking the lead on this activity, please contact Elizabeth Nelson. She will be happy to discuss the program—how it works and the support that she and other members can offer. Email Elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com with 'Preservation Café' in the subject line.

Photo Contest 2019: The Capitol Hill Home

In anticipation of the 62nd anniversary of the Mother's Day House and Garden Tour (May 12 & 13, 2019), the Society is sponsoring a photo contest: "The Capitol Hill Home."

You know it when you see it, the quintessential Capitol Hill home. It could be a bay-front Victorian with arched windows, perhaps, and maybe a tall double door front entry or iron steps. It may not be the house itself but some almost hidden feature that steals the show: a small, round window overlooking an alleyway; an old corbel architectural adornment has no structural function, brick detail over the front door, the stained glass transom window, or the rusted fountain in the yard. For each of us, it's a different answer.

We'd like to hear how you define "The Capitol Hill Home." Even better, show us—take a high-resolution (1MB+) exterior shot of what you think makes a home a Capitol Hill home and email it to HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name and address, email address, and the address of the property in the photo. Entries are due March 16, 2019.

The winning images will be awarded two complimentary passes to the 2019 CHRS Mother's Day House & Garden Tour and are displayed on the website.

For more details (and photos of past winners) visit: chrs.org/photo-contest-2019.

In submitting your photo to the CHRS House Tour photo contest, you agree that it will become the property of CHRS, which may reproduce, modify, digitize and adapt the photograph. You retain the right to continued use of the image.

Swampoodle, continued from cover

CHRS President Elizabeth Nelson. "As we discussed at last April's CHRS forum on energy efficiency in historic buildings, preservation and sustainability are intertwined ideologies. As our building stock ages and more structures become eligible for designation, we must encourage reducing energy consumption in our older buildings."

Applicants must reside in the four-square Swampoodle extension and may apply for only one grant in each category. Awards are for up to \$5,000 for: 1) the home improvement program—preserving the historic features of the neighborhood and, wherever possible, correcting historically inappropriate exterior alterations, and 2) the energy efficiency upgrade program—reducing energy consumption and creating greater efficiency. Grants have to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the applicant. For more information, consult the CHRS website: chrs.org/swampoodle-grants. ★

Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Elizabeth Nelson
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 At Large Patrick Lally
 At Large Michelle Carroll
 At Large Steve Kehoe
 At Large Joanna Kendig
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 At Large Maygene Daniels
 Immediate Past President Lisa Dale Jones

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 Budget & Administration* Susan Oursler
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 Community Development* Chuck Burger
 Community Relations Elizabeth Nelson
 Environment* vacant
 Grants Larry Pearl
 Historic Preservation* Beth Purcell
 House & Garden Tour Michelle Carroll
 Investments John Shages
 Membership* Susan Burgerman
 Public Safety* Undine Nash
 Public Space Steve Kehoe
 Zoning* Gary Peterson

* 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

During a meeting held on January 10, 2019, the CHRS Zoning Committee considered the following cases:

BZA 19892, 434 4th Street NE. This case involves the construction of a small penthouse to enclose circular stairs to a rooftop deck. Approximately 24 feet of the penthouse will be for storage and the penthouse is set close to the rear of the roof. The applicant wants the penthouse to allow access to a 275 square foot deck at the rear. The committee voted to support the special exception.

BZA 19898, 121 7th Street SE. This case was withdrawn by the applicant.

BZA 19899, 1322 D Street SE. The applicant needs a special exception to build an addition that extends 20 feet beyond the rear wall of both abutting houses. The applicant is allowed to extend 10 feet as a matter of right. One of the abutting neighbors attended the meeting and objects to the addition because of interference with his air and light. The applicant and the neighbor are working on a solution and the committee voted to delay a decision until the February 14 meeting. The case is set for a BZA hearing on February 27.

BZA 19913, 1511 A Street NE. This is a new case concerning an old problem. The nearly 6,000 square foot property was originally zoned commercial. In a previous case the applicant proposed the demolition of the residence and garages and to build an apartment building. The building permit application was dismissed as not complete and the property was rezoned residential RF-1. The applicant appealed the dismissal of the building permit and the appeal is still pending. In this application,

the applicant proposes to subdivide the property into three 16 foot wide lots and to build 3 two unit flats. The proposed structures will imitate the abutting front porch houses in appearance and two of them will have a setback third floor. There will be 7 parking spaces provided and one of the units will be a low to moderate income unit (inclusionary zoning or IZ). IZ allows for 16 feet wide units but the applicant needs a special exception for this. The committee liked the new proposal and voted to support the application provided the appeal is dismissed.

BZA 19917, 913 7th Street NE. The applicant proposes a rear two story with attic addition to an existing two story row house. As a matter of right the applicant can extend 10 feet beyond the rear walls of neighbors. In this case the extension will be 39 feet beyond one neighbor to the north (915 7th) and 18 feet beyond the neighbor to the south (911 7th). The applicant has letters of support from both neighbors but has not done a shadow study. For this reason the neighbor to the north, an absentee owner, did not have all the pertinent information to make an informed consent. The Committee believed that the addition was excessively damaging to the sunlight of of 915 7th and voted to oppose the application.

BZA 19933, 156 Duddington Place SE. Duddington Place is a street with many small houses on small lots. In this case the lot contains 891 square feet, is 14.75 feet wide, has a 12.4 foot rear yard, and the building occupies 73% of the lot. The applicant proposes a one story addition in the dogleg of 58 square feet. The addition

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Southeast Branch Library Nominated for Historic Landmark Designation

by Beth Purcell

The Southeast Branch Library, 403 7th Street SE, has been a valued institution since it opened in 1922, and in particular, has enhanced the lives of generations of Capitol Hill children. CHRS believes that the planned renovation is a good occasion to study and appreciate the library, which is one of only a handful of libraries in the city funded by Andrew Carnegie. The library has a direct connection to one of the most famous libraries in the country and is a great example of the Classical Revival style as designed by an eminent architect. The Capitol Hill Restoration Society has filed a nomination for it to have a Historic Landmark designation.

In 1887, the trustees of the Boston Public Library wanted their new library to be “a palace for the people.” The famous architecture firm McKim, Mead and White studied Classical and Renaissance palaces and created a true library palace. Renaissance Italian palaces had ample windows on the street level where rich merchants conducted business, and on the more important



IMAGE COURTESY DC PUBLIC LIBRARY

Southeast Branch Library under construction, east elevation (front) and side elevation (south), looking northwest (photographer unknown, 1922).

second floor where the family lived, much larger and rounded windows with taller ceilings (the piano nobile). The Boston Public Library’s piano nobile contains the reading rooms for the public, with large rounded windows and beautiful natural light, the best part of the “palace.” The Boston Public Library is one of the most famous libraries in the country.

Our Southeast Branch Library, built in 1922, has a direct connection to the Boston Public Library—Edward L. Tilton, who designed the Southeast Branch Library, worked at McKim, Mead

and White when the firm was designing the Boston Public Library. He mastered the Classical Revival style and became a noted expert on library design. Thanks to Tilton, our library is directly connected to the Boston Public Library. It too is a Renaissance Palace that has reading rooms with large rounded arch windows on the piano nobile. And the entrance echoes the entrance to a Roman temple.

In 1886, Andrew Carnegie began his charitable work of funding libraries across the county. He would pay to construct the building if the municipality provided the land and funding for operations. In 1921, Congress appropriated funds to buy the land for the Southeast Branch Library. Carnegie paid for 1,681 libraries, including four in DC: the original main library at Mt. Vernon Square (1903), and three branch libraries: Takoma Park (1911), Southeast (1922) and Mount Pleasant (1925).

IMAGE COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Boston Public Library (McKim, Mead & White, 1895).



Southeast Branch Library today.

From the beginning, children’s education was a key part of the design and operation of our library. The children’s reading room, a Boston Public Library innovation, was built as part of the library’s original plan, near a welcoming and homey fireplace to hold story hour. The library has always had children’s librarians and special programs for children.

The Southeast Branch Library has been slated for renovation, and the DC Public Library has begun the process by holding a community meeting. Adding the Southeast Branch Library to the list of historic landmarks does not alter, or add to, the review process for any changes to the exterior of the library. Because the library is a contributing building in the Capitol Hill Historic District, the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) will review any proposed changes to the library’s exterior, and because this is a DC government project, the DC Historic Preservation Office (HPO) will also review any proposed changes. HPRB and HPO reviewed the renovation of the Northeast Library in 2012 (HPA 12-303). The review of renovations to the

Southeast Branch Library will be done in the same way as the Northeast Library, which is not a landmark. This nomination adds to our knowledge and appreciation of the building.

For more information, see chrs.org/se-library-landmark-nomination. ★

Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

CONTRIBUTOR

Elizabeth Nelson &
Nick Alberti
Susan Burgerman
Barry & Sandra Harrelson
Estate of Frederick Peter Lemke
Bill & Carol Press
Muriel Wolf

SILVER

Matthew & Cherrie Chalifoux

GOLD

Christina & Peter May

Zoning Report, *continued from page 3*

will increase the lot occupancy to nearly 80%. The committee did not believe the applicant qualified for the required variance but voted to take no position and to not send a letter to the BZA. ★

Village Voices: Living Peacefully with Aging Parents

Love’s Way: Living Peacefully with Your Family As Your Parents Age, presented by Capitol Hill Village, Monday, March 4, 7–8 pm at the Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Sig Cohen will discuss the book he recently co-authored with retired Judge Carolyn Miller Parr.

The book offers aging parents and adult children “10 Tips to Diffuse Anger,” how to have difficult conversations with empathy and understanding, and guidance on the proper legal documents that all aging adults need. Free.

For more information, contact Capitol Hill Village at (202) 543-1778 or email info@capitolhillvillage.org.

Clean Energy DC Omnibus Act of 2018

By Joanna Kendig

On January 18, Mayor Bowser signed “The Clean Energy DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018.” The bill was unanimously passed by the DC Council on December 18, 2018. The bill sets the most ambitious renewable energy policy in the country. Using the District’s Clean Energy DC Plan as a guide, the Act is the result of over a year’s worth of working group meetings with local environmental organizations and the business community. The Clean Energy DC Act contains the following key provisions:

Transitioning to Renewable Energy Sources

The legislation requires that 100% of electricity sold in the District come from renewable sources by 2032. It doubles the required amount of solar energy deployed in the District.

Funding local sustainability initiatives

The bill increases the Sustainable Energy Trust Fund fees for electricity and natural gas consumption. This will result in modest increases to residents’ average monthly utility bills. Thirty percent of the generated funds will be used to provide low-income energy assistance (utility bills and weatherization). The funds will be also used to implement other programs under the Act.

Building Energy Performance Standards

The Building Energy Performance Standard Program for privately-owned and District government buildings mandates retrofitting, over time, the District’s larger existing buildings to become more energy efficient.

Transportation emissions

The Department of Motor Vehicles will revise the District’s vehicle excise tax based upon fuel efficiency, further incentivizing the purchase of fuel-efficient vehicles. The bill authorizes the Mayor to join in any forthcoming regional transportation-sector greenhouse gas reduction initiatives.

This bill generated a lot of excitement and satisfaction among environmental advocacy groups and DC government representatives. The internet is a great source on information and opinions on the subject; see the Mayor’s and Councilwoman Cheh’s websites. ★

Upcoming Capitol Hill Garden Club Programs

Garden Therapy on Tuesday, February 12 at 7:15 pm at the Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE with Jan Lane, Registered Horticultural Therapist. The presentation highlights programs serving children’s hospitals, adults with developmental disabilities and community garden programs focused on mental health.

The Eleventh Street Bridge Project on Tuesday, March 1 at 7:15 pm, at the Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Scott Kratz, Director, Building Bridges Across the River, will discuss this new project over the Anacostia River, the plan for the bridge and park, and how it’s coming together. Scott is working with the community to use the bridge to create a one-of-a-kind civic space supporting active recreation, environmental education and the arts.

For more information, please visit: capitolhillgardenclub.org.

DC Smart Street Lighting Project

By Joanna Kendig

The Smart Street Lighting Project is a comprehensive plan to improve the performance and energy efficiency of our street lighting. District agencies are currently in the process of identifying qualified teams and awarding a contract for the work. District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Office of Public-Private Partnership (OP3) have been holding public meetings to present this plan for converting ALL street lights under the District's jurisdiction to LEDs.

From the DOT website project summary:

“Project Background: The District has more than 75,000 lights installed on our streets, alleys and other public spaces. The lights use a variety of inefficient bulb technologies, including incandescent and high-pressure sodium. The District is seeking a private partner to retrofit the lights with more energy efficient light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs, install a remote monitoring

and control system, and repair and maintain the facilities under a long-term performance-based contract. An additional opportunity exists to incorporate smart city technologies in the light facilities that provide broadband WiFi and sensors, among other things. Such technologies could leverage the District's 100-gigabit fiber network, DC-Net, or utilize privately owned data facilities.”

As discussed at the December meeting, the work will involve replacing fixtures (cobra head, drop, globe) on existing poles with look-alike but technically improved new ones. These fixtures will have LED lamps (bulbs) of the right color, 3000 or 2700 Kelvin, and of appropriate wattage. All lights will be dimmable, so the lighting can be tweaked in response to local conditions and residents' needs.

The designers specified the type of replacement fixture based on light pole location, street type (arterial,

local) and land use (commercial, residential). For example, lights on major arteries in commercial downtown will be brighter and whiter than those on local, residential streets. The presentation included District maps of these street lights.

LED lighting will result in significant savings in energy and long term maintenance costs (LEDs are long lasting) as well as a reduced carbon footprint.

In June 2017, the District issued A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to 11 teams. It will invite three selected teams to submit proposals for the project. The chosen contractor will replace street light fixtures over approximately a two-year period (construction starting in 2020) and maintain the system for total of 10–15 years.

For more information visit: op3.dc.gov/streetlights. ★

March Overbeck Lecture: The Razzle-Dazzle— Mary Ann Shiner Almarolia

Capitol Hill History will present Mary Ann Shiner Almarolia at the Overbeck Lecture, Monday, March 11 at 7:30 pm at the Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE.

Dr. Mark Herlong will discuss the life and adventures of a little-known Capitol Hill resident, Mary Ann Shiner Almarolia (1833–1904). Mary was the daughter of Michael Shiner, the black Navy Yard worker and politician whose famous diary is housed at the Library of

Congress. As an infant, she was kidnapped by slave traders and freed by her father's heroic efforts. In an era when mixed marriages and opportunities for blacks were rare, Mary married an Italian and ran a string of successful businesses on Capitol Hill, including hotels, restaurants, a bawdy house, a nursery and a dance hall called the Razzle-Dazzle (a.k.a. The Burning Rag). In the late 19th century she was considered one of the most

influential women in Washington, a confidant of politicians and diplomats—and a possible murderer.

Admission is free, but a reservation is required due to limited seating. For reservations, call (202) 549-4172. For more information on the lecture series, visit: CapitolHillHistory.org. ★



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

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

Mark Your Calendar!

FEBRUARY

4 Monday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee.
Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first
floor. Details: Beth Purcell, (202) 544-0178.

4 Monday, 7 pm
Village Voices: "The BREXIT Affair: Why
Breaking Up is Hard to Do." Northeast
Library, 330 7th Street NE. Details:
info@capitolhillvillage.org.

12 Tuesday, 7:15pm
The Capitol Hill Garden Club:
"Garden Therapy." Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE. Details:
capitolhillgardenclub.org.

14 Thursday, 7:30 pm
CHRS Zoning Committee. Kirby House,
420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details:
info@chrs.org.

19 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill
Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, 2nd Floor
board room. Details: info@chrs.org.

MARCH

4 Monday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee.
Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first
floor. Details: Beth Purcell, (202) 544-0178.

4 Monday, 7 pm
Village Voices: "Love's Way: Living
Peacefully with Your Family As Your
Parents Age." Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE. Details:
info@capitolhillvillage.org.

11 Monday, 7:30 pm
Capitol Hill History presents the
Overbeck Lecture: "The Razzle-Dazzle—
Mary Ann Shiner Almarolia." Hill Center,
921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. Details:
CapitolHillHistory.org.

12 Tuesday, 7:15 pm
The Capitol Hill Garden Club:
"The Eleventh Street Bridge Project."
Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE.
Details: capitolhillgardenclub.org.

14 Thursday, 7:30 pm
CHRS Zoning Committee. Kirby House,
420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details:
info@chrs.org.

16 Saturday, 7 pm
Submission deadline for The Capitol Hill
Home photo contest. Email image files
(JPEGs, 1MB minimum) to
HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com. Details:
chrs.org/photo-contest-2019.

19 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill
Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, 2nd Floor
board room. Details: info@chrs.org.

29 Friday, 7 pm
Dick Wolf Lecture to be preceded by a
membership meeting at 6:45 pm, Hill
Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE.
Details: info@chrs.org.