



NEWS

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March 2002

Don't Miss the March 19 Forum!

Architect of the Capitol to Address Visitors Center Construction and Security Measures

by Brian Furness, Chair, Community Development Committee

On March 19, Architect of the Capitol Alan Hantman will lead a presentation on the construction of the 580,000 square-foot Visitors Center under the Capitol's East Plaza. The impact on the neighborhood is bound to be considerable. Such issues as construction parking and the routes to be used by trucks removing dirt and bringing in supplies take on new relevance in the wake of the anti-terrorism security measures that prohibit through truck traffic.



Alan Hantman, Architect of the Capitol

presentation will be preceded by a short CHRS business meeting beginning at 7:00.

What We Heard Last Year

Architect Hantman and his team introduced plans for the Capitol Visitors Center (CVC) at the Society's April 2001 meeting. At that time, he explained that it will

- be entirely below ground and entered primarily from First Street (at East Capitol).
- provide much improved security and a more gracious space for visitors waiting to tour the Capitol.
- offer enhanced educational opportunities in exhibition spaces, theaters, an auditorium, and other meeting areas.

- incorporate food service facilities, restrooms, and gift shops.
- relocate such necessary but unattractive services as deliveries and garbage removal from the East Plaza to a new underground loading dock, entered by means of a tunnel from New Jersey Ave. NW under Constitution Avenue.

Pressing Concerns

Architect Hantman will have an opportunity to address the Capitol Hill community's most pressing concerns, including:

- **Traffic.** Construction will inevitably cause disturbances to existing and already stressed traffic patterns. Minimizing the impact on the surrounding residential community will require careful planning, ample notice, and increased enforcement.
- **Construction vehicles.** A great deal of dirt and material will have to be moved by truck. It is imperative that routes avoid residential neighborhoods, where neither the streets nor the housing stock is designed to accommodate the passage of heavy trucks.
- **Worker parking.** Estimates that 400-500 workers will be on site at any one time raise concerns about employee parking, and, to a lesser extent, employee-related traffic. Failing to provide adequate parking for worker- and contractor-related vehicles could seriously burden the residential community, already stressed about parking.
- **Construction management.** Slurry wall construction will help address community concerns regarding dust, noise, and unsightly construction, but there will be continuing neighborhood interest in how the construction process is managed, and that ancillary impacts be minimized.
- **Enforcement.** The contractors will bear much responsibility for ensuring that their employees and

President's Column

by Robert Nevitt

It is tempting to open this column with comments on the unseasonable warmth of the weather and the promise of Spring (with appropriate analogies to hope for better things in our neighborhood). But by the time the *News* hits your mailbox, the weather is likely to be something quite different indeed. Perhaps that is the more appropriate analogy! It is certainly a time of uncertainty as far as Reservation 13 is concerned. (You'll remember that Reservation 13 is the land between Congressional Cemetery and the Stadium/Armory area. You can learn more about it at <http://www.publicspace.justice.sustainability.com/welcome.shtml>)

The Department of Planning's process of examining development possibilities includes a Steering Committee on which I sit. It has held two public meetings at the Armory, and has scheduled a charrette (brainstorming) on the weekend of March 2-3 that is open to the public as well. The Department of Planning and the consultants they have hired, Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhm (EEK), are supposed to assimilate the ideas that flow from this process into a plan for the sixty- seven acres in question.

I can attest that it is a learning experience.

First, with respect to public participation, this is not an aggregation of thoughtful and concerned neighbors engaging in dialogue with bureaucrats cut from the same cloth. Some of the people who attended the meetings might fit that description, but they were drowned out by a small group protesting the closing of a full-service DC General Hospital. Despite the fact that the people running the meetings were neither the ones who made the decision nor were in a position to change it, they were vilified and yelled at in a way that prevented any real discussion of the future of the site. And the hecklers

certainly attracted no support for their cause.

Second, while we were told at the outset that we were working with a clean slate (with the exception of the DC jail), it is now clear that there are limitations to any initiatives that public members of the Steering Committee or the public in general might come up with. Ironically, a medical facility of some sort (if not a full-service hospital) seems very much a possibility — something the screamers at the meeting missed.

Most of the members of the Steering Committee are full-time DC Government employees representing different departments, with axes already well ground in the political give-and-take common to doing city business anywhere.

At writing, this pot is still boiling, but here is how it looks to me.

The jail is still a given, though we are told a halfway house is OFF the table. Department of Corrections activity including CSOSA (Court Supervised Offender Services) would be limited to the south side of the axis created by Massachusetts Ave. The actual extension of the avenue is a strong possibility.

On the North side of Massachusetts Avenue would be space for municipal functions — not new ones, we are told, but new space for things like the Medical Examiner's facility and other public health activities.

The consultants have consistently presented the site divided by extended C Street, Bay, and Burke. C Street was visualized as a place for residential development. With the support of the Department of Parks and Recreation, the public members of the committee have called for facilities like a swimming pool, covered tennis courts, basketball courts, adult education, community meeting space, library, etc. These would logically locate where C Street meets the Anacostia greenway bordering the site's East end.

The Independence Avenue edge of



the site is seen as a place for "institutions." CHRS urged consideration of university/college-level institutions. We have been told that St. Coletta's School is a shoo-in for location here, and saw a plan that already shows it on the corner of 19th and Independence.

Nineteenth Street was also discussed as a zone for retail activity, although the St. Coletta's footprint would leave little space for that. (Some of us are visiting St. Coletta's to find out more about their expectations.)

PLEASE, don't think this is the final and real dope on what will happen. The process is still fluid, but I believe the mix of activity is about right, and that this is an accurate impression of what I have heard.

Consultants have laid other pieces of cityscape over the site to provide a sense of scale. Their choices have been interesting: Howard University, historic Alexandria, and GW Hospital! Just another shape to the tea leaves at this moment.

We will all have to draw our own conclusions about the final plans. Though they are evolving in the messy way these things usually do, they have promise of meeting both community and municipal needs.

And then again, who knows what the weather will do next? ✧

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To contact any of the above, please contact the Society offices by calling 202/543-0425 or sending email to CapHRS@aol.com.

www.chrs.org

Founded over 40 years ago to preserve and protect Capitol Hill's residential character, the Society is now the largest civic association on Capitol Hill, and one of the largest in the entire District of Columbia. From the beginning, the Society has played a key role in maintaining the diverse, residential character of our neighborhood.

March 19 Forum continued from page 1

subcontractors comply with the agreements, contracts, and the law. The Metropolitan Police Department is the community's first line of defense, but the Capitol Police could also provide assistance, especially to discipline trucks and buses idling, parking, and transiting residential streets where they are prohibited.

- **Dialogue.** There is a need to establish a regular dialogue among contractor representatives, the office of the Architect, and representatives of community organizations.

Funding is assured and the relocation of trees and site preparation are already underway. The CVC is to open by 2005. The March 19



In 1999, Congress authorized the United States Mint to issue a five-dollar gold coin, a silver dollar, and a clad half-dollar coin to commemorate the first meeting of Congress in the United States Capitol and to help fund a Visitor Center for the Capitol.

Forum is your opportunity to learn more about this major project, and how it will affect us all. ✧

Second Overbeck Lecture Highlights Extraordinary Masonic Temple in Our Midst

by John Franzén

The lucky people who attended the first Overbeck History Lecture in February by Edmund and Sylvia Morris were treated to a spectacle most had never seen before – the intact, ornately decorated interior of the 1895 Masonic temple on Pennsylvania Avenue SE. This extraordinary Egyptian Revival style-meeting hall is the home of Naval Lodge #4, which has generously made it available for all of the Overbeck lectures.

Because attendees expressed such great curiosity about the place and about the Lodge as an institution, the Overbeck Project will focus its next lecture on the important role of the Masons, and this Lodge, in the early life of Capitol Hill. The speaker will be Barbara Franco, Executive Director of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., whose expertise includes the history of the Masonic movement in America. She'll also provide an update on plans for the new City Museum.

The lecture will be held on Tuesday, April 9, at 8:00 p.m. in the fourth-floor meeting hall of the Naval Lodge at 330 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. Admission is free, but seating is limited and a reservation is required.

Please reserve by email, if possible, at info@CapitolHillHistory.org. You may also leave a message at 544-1845. Please provide your name, phone number, and email address, and the Overbeck Lectures coordinator, Kristen Miller, will get back to you. ✧

Capitol Hill's Historic District Marches Down to Navy Yard Gates

by Nancy Metzger,
Chair Historic District Committee

On February 7, the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) voted to extend the boundaries of the Capitol Hill Historic District: it now includes seven squares that abut 8th Street and the Navy Yard, along with two reservations. The nomination made a strong case not only for the importance of the resources involved, but also for the importance of the Navy Yard's connection to the entire historic district.

This action provides protection for the historic resources in the area, ten of which are Civil War-era buildings. The expansion also allows for development that will be sympathetic to the historic district.

Working Together

The HPRB noted substantial community support for the CHRS-sponsored nomination. Its backers included a wide range of Capitol Hill people and institutions, like Council Member Sharon Ambrose, ANC 6-B Commissioner Ken Jarboe, Barracks Row/Main Street, CHAMPS, and the D. C. Preservation League.

Commissioner Jarboe made a strong statement about the importance of the expansion in the face of development pressures from the nearby



1106 & 1108 8th Street: Many storeowners lived above their stores; this unusual store/house combination was built in 1887. It has been used as a store, Navy Yard sandwich shop, and a barbershop. 1112 & 1114 8th Street: These houses were built for George Marshall in 1833 as two dwellings—or possibly as dwellings with commercial space on their first floors. The third floor shows Greek Revival influence

Hope VI project and the return of workers to the Navy Yard. Jill Dowling, executive director of Barracks Row/Main Street, emphasized the importance of the historic resources to MainStreet's objectives.

For many years, CHRS has partnered with CHAMPS and Barracks Row/Main Street in efforts to spur revitalization and reconnect all of 8th Street into the historic district. About five years ago, the Society and CHAMPS began to work on a zoning

overlay to make commercial property more attractive on 8th Street (see article on page 6). One result of this effort was the realization that the historic resources near the Navy Yard badly needed protection.

The Research Effort

Barracks Row secured a grant to document the area but the lead researcher, Ruth Ann Overbeck, died before the work could be completed. With assistance from CHRS, Barracks Row/Main Street assembled a new team.

A \$25,000 grant from the Historic Preservation Office helped to fund a building-by-building survey of the area south of the freeway, as well as a historic context report of the entire 8th Street corridor below Pennsylvania Avenue. Approximately \$13,000 worth of donated time and in-kind contributions formed part of the grants project.

Beth Hannold, project director, and Donna Hanousek, senior researcher, completed the work in a timely fashion and performed many hours of *pro bono* work to see the project through. Both are members of the CHRS's Historic District committee.

As Chair of this Committee, I wrote the nomination for the DC Inventory of Historic Places and the National Register



817 & 819 L Street: These houses were built before 1855 and are an example of a once-common early-19th century house type—the double house. Joseph Padgett, a ship's carpenter and early owner of the property, lived in the area from the 1830s on. Another double house pair that faced 9th Street was demolished last year. Two similar pairs of frame houses on 10th Street were excluded from the nomination because of integrity problems.

Boys Town Challenge—It's Not Over Yet

by Brian Furness, Chair, Community Development Committee

The Southeast Citizens for Smart Development's (SCSD) challenge to the Zoning Administrator's controversial decision to issue building permits for Boys Town's group home facility at Potomac and Pennsylvania Avenues SE intensified at three February hearings before the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA).

Closing arguments are scheduled for February 26 (after this newsletter's deadline). When the BZA might issue a decision is not clear.

Because a community-based residential treatment facility (CBRF) with six or fewer residents is permitted as a matter of right, Boys Town's lawyers argue that the Zoning Administrator acted correctly. They contend that the four houses are on separate lots, and that each houses only six children (plus two "family teachers").

The SCSD argues that the four adjacent group homes constitute a single facility: they are under the same management and employ some common services. As such, they require a special exception, which can only be issued after a public hearing. The SCSD

also argues that the Zoning Administrator should have taken into account the Ward 6 Comprehensive Plan, which opposes concentration of CBRFs.

CHRS President Rob Nevitt testified on behalf of the SCSD on the definition of "facility." As Chair of the Community Development Committee, I testified on the applicability of the Comprehensive Plan. Acting Zoning Administrator Toye Bello stated that he could only follow a by-the-book interpretation of the regulations: he dismissed any reference to the Comprehensive Plan as a "fruitless exercise."

The BZA, for its part, has shown that it is prepared to ask some tough questions. Chair Goeff Griffis and member Ann Renshaw have pressed both sides on the applicability of the Comprehensive Plan. Other questions include whether four separate lots are simply a device to get around zoning regulations that require a special exception for a facility housing over six individuals.

Both questions are important, for Capitol Hill and for other Washington neighborhoods, and could set precedents for good ... or for evil. The Society has long supported the application of the Comprehensive Plan and believes that allowing the Boys

SCSD Fundraiser Planned!

Details on page 7.

Donations to the SCSD Legal Fund should be sent to Kathleen Donner, Director, 18 3rd St. NE, Washington, DC 20002. Call (202) 543-3063 for more information.

Town project as a matter of right could lead to similar artificial lot divisions to evade the intent of the regulations.

So far, over 1,700 neighbors—mostly Capitol Hill residents—have signed petitions opposing the Boys Town project. Over 260 have contributed funds to support SCSD. Michelle Taylor hosted a reception and art auction in January; Chris Alvear (Alvear Studio on 8th St., SE) has promised to host an event, tentatively scheduled for April. SCSD continues its efforts to raise funds to support its challenge to the Zoning Administrator's decision and to defend against Boys Town's lawsuit. SCSD expects at least \$20,000 in legal costs for the initial BZA hearings and legal issues.

As for Boys Town, it is continuing construction, though whether the properties can be used as planned will be determined by the BZA decision.

One way or another, the odds are that the issue will wind up in the courts. ✧

and presented it to the Historic Preservation Review Board.

Other Contributions

Barracks Row/MainStreet was responsible for public outreach and grant administration. Robert Hughes was responsible for professional-level black-and-white photographs of each building. In addition to its work on the zoning overlay, CHRS paid for application fees, photos, slides for presentations, and miscellaneous expenses that totaled another \$1000. CHRS also provided \$2500 from the Austin Beale Endowment Fund to support additional survey work by an intern in the blocks north of the freeway.

The Meaning of the Expansion

In the assessment of the proposed

nomination, the Historic Preservation Office noted that the expansion area is directly associated with and reinforces the significance of the existing historic district:

- By including the residential and commercial area immediately surrounding the main gate of the Navy Yard, the area reinforces an understanding of the enormous impact of the Navy Yard on the development of the historic district.
- By including an area of very early development and some very early structures, the area helps document the beginnings of the neighborhood.
- By including the full length of 8th Street and the streetcar terminal,

the area emphasizes the significance of 8th Street as a major commercial and transportation corridor for the neighborhood.

- By including the visual connection down 8th Street to the Navy Yard gate, the area protects an important symbolic view that has been integral to the neighborhood for nearly 200 years.
- By including important L'Enfant features such as Reservation 126 and the terminus of both 8th Street and Potomac Avenue at the Navy Yard gate, the expansion area reinforces the significance of the L'Enfant Plan as an underlying urban design framework for the neighborhood. ✧

CHRS and CHAMPS Sponsor Zoning Change for Hill Business Districts

by Dick Wolf, Chair, City Planning Committee

One hundred and fourteen notices recently posted in several Capitol Hill Historic District business areas have many residents confused. These announce the March 21 Zoning Commission hearing on a new overlay for the posted districts. The proposal, sponsored by CHRS and CHAMPS, would raise the floor area ratio (FAR) in the affected areas to 3.0 for residential and commercial uses. This increase implements a requirement of 1999 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan affecting Ward 6.

CHRS has long supported variances that encourage commercial uses in the upper floors of small buildings along business streets. Such increased commercial use supports existing businesses by increasing foot traffic. Secondly, the increases reduce the pressure from those who would otherwise attempt conversion of housing stock to commercial purposes. The proposed implementation is expected to be particularly useful for the MainStreet/Barracks Row project on 8th Street SE.

The following series of questions and answers may help Hill residents to understand the significance of the changes. Additional questions can be addressed to me at 543-4353 or Richwolf@prodigy.net.

Q What is FAR?

A FAR is an acronym for Floor Area Ratio. It's a zoning term that refers to the ratio of building's floor area to its lot size. (The bigger the building on the lot, the higher the FAR.)

Q Will an increase in FAR mean larger buildings?

A Highly unlikely, because we are dealing almost exclusively with already built structures located in an Historic District. Zoning controls the use of buildings rather than their size, and the historic district standards that are applicable preclude most changes to building size. The most likely practical implication of changing the FAR is that upper floors of commercial buildings will be available for business uses without the need to obtain a variance.

Q Will the increase in FAR for commercial uses mean the displacement of tenants?

A No. Our studies indicate that few, if any, of the upper floor spaces in the business districts are being used residentially. The increase in FAR does not mean that commercial use will drive out residential use. All uses will have the same FAR, and, in some locations, residential rents may be greater than commercial rents. There are a few condominium buildings in NE that already combine both residential and commercial uses.

Q What brought all this on?

A In the late 1970s, the Office of Planning decided that "living over the store" was a good public policy. The original 2.5 FAR for all uses was split to encourage this use:



Notices announcing the March 21 Zoning Commission hearing blanket the area surrounding the Old Naval Hospital and the CHRS office.

2.5 FAR as a matter of right for residential, and only 1.5 FAR for commercial. There is no evidence that this policy ever worked to reverse a trend away from such living arrangements.

Q What is an overlay and how will it affect the Capitol Interest Overlay zone?

A An overlay defines those sections within a particular zoning area to which different rules apply. The existing Capitol Interest Overlay (first six blocks east of the Hill from the Capitol to 6th Street), already has an overall FAR limit of 2.5 for all uses. This will not change. The proposed new overlay will only affect FAR. It will not change height limits, uses, or anything else.

Q Is the map designation shown in the Zoning Notice completely in line with the intent of CHAMPS and CHRS?

A No. CHAMPS and CHRS are in agreement that the portion of 7th SE, from Pennsylvania Avenue to the Freeway, and 2nd Street NE, from Massachusetts Ave. to F Street, should not be included; our testimony will so indicate. ✱

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CHRS Committee Spotlight: Communications

The vast bulk of CHRS work is accomplished by its committees and special task forces. This new monthly feature will highlight the work of one of these committees. We hope you'll want to join at least one whose activities coincide with your interests.

The Communications Committee:

Its name was recently changed from Newsletter Committee in order to reflect new responsibilities for the Society's website.

Who we are: Bernadette McMahon, *Chair and Newsletter Co-Editor*; Hilary Russell, *Newsletter Co-Editor*, Scott Morton, *Webmaster*, Roxanne Walker, *Newsletter Design and Layout*, and Katie Miller, *CHRS First Vice President*, who does all the things we couldn't otherwise handle.

What we do: You're reading it! Over the past year, we also went live with the

Society website (www.chrs.org). This provides a more public view of the Society and serves as a convenient publications venue for Society testimony, budget, actions, commendations, by-law changes, and some things we probably haven't thought of yet.

Our purpose is to keep members aware of the activities of their society, but we're eager to expand coverage to topics of general interest to residents of this historic neighborhood.

Who we need: Members interested in preparing newsletter articles on topics beyond those regularly provided by the other committees. Ideas for articles we'd like to run include: a follow-up on the progress of projects that have received CHRS grants; a comparison of how restrictions in the Historic District differ from those adopted by many suburban homeowner associations.

We are also looking for a volunteer who's willing to review old newsletters and prepare chronologies on some of the long-running issues that are reported here. Posting such background information on the website might make such articles more understandable to newcomers; for example, we can't explain the history of Eastern Market issues each time they're mentioned. Our status reports would make more sense if newsletter readers could peruse this history at www.chrs.org. ✧

Dick Wolfe Educates DC Council

Zoning, planning, historic preservation, economic development — all these basic tenets greatly affect life on Capitol Hill. Where do they intersect? When do they conflict with one another? If they do, what's to be done about it?

Dick Wolf, Chair of the CHRS City Planning Committee, offered the DC City Council an earful on these topics at their February 5 oversight hearing on the Offices of Planning, Historic Preservation, and Zoning.

Dick pointed out a basic disconnect: no effort has ever been made to translate the directions and policies of the City Council-designed Comprehensive Plan into zoning code. "Without the Plan translated into zoning, it's a worthless tool," Wolf told the Council, using recent decisions regarding the development of Station Place as an example: "...the Zoning Commission dismissed all references to the Plan as irrelevant because they had not been converted into the zoning code."

Wolf further stated his belief that "there is a terrible conflict of interest to

have both planning and preservation report to a Deputy Mayor for Economic Development." He added, "...it is well known in the city that the incumbent Deputy Mayor has no interest or understanding of either planning or historic preservation except as impediments to 'development'." The Office of Historic Preservation has a "crisis of leadership and organization" despite the valiant efforts of a few staffers to process \$200 million worth of building permits.

Dick offered the Committee a copy of his front page article from the February issue of the *News*, and stated that they need "be pro-active and imaginative to fix this shambles ... to establish a mechanism for developing new laws and processes in the areas of planning, historic preservation, and zoning." In closing, he indicated that he had some proposals to offer.

Dick's testimony is provided in full on the CHRS website, <http://www.chrs.org> (follow the links to Board/Committees, then to Society Business Documents). ✧

Silent Auction to Support SCSD Legal Fund

On Saturday, April 13 (Second Saturday), the Alvear Studio, at 705 8th St., SE, will host a silent auction to support the SCSD Legal Fund. The Alvear Studio features art, furniture, and handicrafts with Southwest and Mexican influences.

Local artist and long-time Hill resident Jan Kern (wife of CHRS Board member Tom Grahame) is donating three pieces of art. Karen Currie, also a Hill resident, is donating art. Washington potter Barbara Chowney, who sells at Eastern Market, is donating a large, colorful platter. Items donated by several neighborhood businesses will also be auctioned.

Chris Alvear will contribute 10% of all Alvear Studio sales during the auction.

The SCSD Legal Fund continues to raise money to defend local Hill activists Will Hill and Ellen Opper-Weiner against personal SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) lawsuits brought against them by Boy's Town, and to raise funds for the SCSD zoning appeal of the city's decision to issue construction permits for Boy's Town's proposed Pennsylvania Avenue project (see article on page 5).

Painting Tips from a Professional at Preservation Café

by Nancy Metzger

At the February Preservation Café at Trattoria Alberto, a full house took notes as veteran house painter David Mahoney explained how to get a good paint job. Mahoney has been painting houses on Capitol Hill for 25 years, and had very specific views on procedures and products.

“Always buy premium paint” was the first maxim of the evening, along with the corollary, “Never buy ceiling paint.” As he explained, labor is the major cost of a paint job. The chief investment will last longer with a little extra in paint cost. The trouble with ceiling paint is that its makers figure that it doesn’t have to look as good, since people will not be close to it.

Other advice from Mahoney:

- The condition of the previous coatings will determine how well the last coat adheres. Preparation is critical. It is also important to know whether the previous paint is acrylic or oil. Acrylic will not adhere well to oil.
- Find out from prospective painters what products they will use and how they will prepare the surfaces.
- Make sure the painter you employ carries Workman’s Compensation and public liability insurance. If a worker has an accident on your job, you may well be sued.
- A contract with a painter should specify how many coats of paint will be applied; what type of paint; preparation work to be performed; and the warranty. References should include not only jobs completed in the last year but those from five or more years ago. These will allow you to check how well the job has held up.
- Never put down more than 1/3 of the total cost for the deposit, and don’t pay the balance until the job is complete.
- Because all paints used before 1978 contained lead, all historic Capitol Hill houses have lead-based paint somewhere in them. Workers should use masks with HEPA filters, particularly if they are using heat guns to remove paint. Heat turns the paint into a gas that is more easily absorbed by the body.
- To avoid the danger of fire, a heat gun should not exceed 750 degrees.
- If you’re painting a metal fence or staircase and have stripped paint down to the metal, put the primer on the same day, as rust starts to form immediately. Do small sections at a time.



Labor is the major cost of a paint job, so make your investment last longer with premium quality paints.

- Don’t forget to neutralize chemical strippers such as Peel-Away. Paint will not adhere on areas that have not been neutralized.
- Don’t close up weep holes in storm windows as water damage can occur inside and out. Check to make sure they have not been inadvertently blocked. Keeping gutters clean can also make a paint job last longer.
- Use Tin-O-Lin on metal roofs — not allumination with asphalt that will crack due to heat/cold cycles.
- If you have wood siding be sure there are vents to allow moisture to escape.

Mahoney recommended the following products: Zinser 1-2-3 as primer; BIN as a stain blocker, particularly good for wood with knots; and Pittsburgh Paint’s Manor Hall line for latex paint. For a clear finish on wood doors, he recommends Sissons, a marine finish.

For more information, check out his website, www.mahoneypainting.com.

Upcoming Preservation Café Topics

On March 13, Linda Harper is presenting plans for the preservation of historic Congressional Cemetery, one of Capitol Hill’s endangered treasures, at Caffè Italiano (upstairs room, 1150 Pennsylvania Avenue SE).

The April 10 Café will feature Doug Delano’s tips on Practical Gardening in the Urban Landscape.

On May 8, Robert Sonderman, archaeologist with the National Park Service, will be offering another talk on Archaeology on the Hill, with a special look at what’s been going on behind the Navy Yard gate. *

Historic Congressional Cemetery In Focus

by Katie Miller

Community interest in historic Congressional Cemetery will no doubt rise this Spring: two upcoming events focus on our own neighborhood resting place for the mighty and the many — including John Philip Sousa, J. Edgar Hoover, and many residents of Capitol Hill.

March 13 Preservation Café

Linda Harper, chair of the Board of Directors of the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery, presents "Congressional Cemetery: Its Past, Present, and Future" at the popular Preservation Café series. Linda will relate some of the cemetery's colorful past, describe its current place in the community, and the Association's hopes for its future. She'll also provide details of ongoing activities related to the cemetery, including ambitious plans for the Cemetery's 2002 Spring Festival. The Preservation Café will be held Wednesday, March 13, at 6:30 pm at Caffe Italiano (see calendar, page 10).

Spring Festival at the Cemetery

The public is invited to this Open House event on Saturday, April 20, 10 am–3 pm. The Association's annual meeting will convene from 10:30 to 11:30 am. Guest speaker Professor Ron Kagawa of Virginia Polytech Institute and his students will present and discuss their drawings of landscape options for the cemetery grounds. A conservation team from Dean Ruedrich Conservators of North Carolina will demonstrate various methods of stone restoration.

The festival will include numerous other activities, including presentations by other Capitol Hill organizations. Adding special interest to the day will be a group of local actors portraying some of the famous people buried at the cemetery, who include Mathew Brady,

the famous Civil War photographer, and Mary Hall, the infamous Washington Madame.

The CHRS Board voted in February to support the April 20 event by contributing \$500 to the Association. Linda assures us there is still time to add your name to the list of sponsors; please contact the Cemetery Office at 543-0539 for further information.

At the eastern end of Capitol Hill, the Cemetery has a long history as a national landmark. In 1976, the Vestry of Christ Church leased the cemetery to the Association until 2019 with the charge to "operate, develop, maintain, preserve, and enhance the cemetery grounds." The organization currently has about 100 members. It has received grants from the Kiplinger Foundation, the FBI, and the Choctaw Indian Nation. The Association maintains a website, www.congressionalcemetery.org. ✧

Correction

Not Mr. Jefferson's Coin...

Oops! The February *News* (page 10) included a photo of a coin found December 15 during an archaeological "open house" at 6th and K Streets SE, the site of the original Eastern Market. The date on the coin, a two-cent piece, appeared to be 1804, leading us to suggest that Thomas Jefferson may have dropped it. Our resident numismatist, CHRS Secretary Tom Grahame, let us know that no such coin was produced in 1804. In fact, two-cent coins weren't produced until 1864, and only until 1873. What was thought to be a "0" was probably a "6;" the coin dates from 1864. Might Abraham Lincoln have dropped it instead?

Short Takes: Quick Updates to Continuing Sagas

- ✧ **Eastern Market** Venture, headed by President Stuart Smith, has taken over management of Eastern Market. Rents are being re-evaluated, with rates in the South Hall to be based on square footage rather than the current practice of a flat fee per stall. Four designs have been submitted for a replacement for the outdoor shed over the farmer's line.
- ✧ Many projects are under consideration for **eastern Capitol Hill**. Besides the brainstorming over Reservation 13 (see President's Column, page 2), other meetings were held in early February to discuss a scaled-down plan for the Millennium Arch project at Barney Circle and renovation of Potomac Gardens and Hopkins developments.
- ✧ Remediation work to remove pigeon droppings from the **Kentucky Courts** buildings has begun. Following that effort, IDS Developers will demolish two buildings and site work (infrastructure for water, electricity, etc.) will begin.
- ✧ DCRA regulations for the **Nuisance and Abandoned Properties Law** have still not been cleared by the Corporation Counsel. Regulations to implement the law were supposed to be issued by October 2001.

Mark your Calendar!

MARCH

13 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

Preservation Café, Linda Harper discusses plans for the preservation of historic Congressional Cemetery, Caffe Italiano (upstairs room, 1150 Pennsylvania Avenue SE).

19 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Forum and Business Meeting. Refreshments served. Alan Hantman, Architect of the Capitol, will talk about the of the new Visitor's Center and security issues. St. Peter's Church (basement), 2nd and C SE.

APRIL

6 Saturday, 9 am–2 pm

Annual Spring Cleanup at Congressional Cemetery, all volunteers welcome

10 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

Preservation Café, Doug Delano's tips on Practical Gardening in the Urban Landscape, Caffe Italiano, (upstairs room, 1150 Pennsylvania Avenue SE).

20 Saturday, 10 am–3 pm

Congressional Cemetery Spring Festival. See page 9 for details.

MAY

8 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

Preservation Café, Robert Sonderman, archaeologist with the National Park Service, on Archaeology on the Hill, with a special look at what's been going on behind the Navy Yard gate, Caffe Italiano. (upstairs room, 1150 Pennsylvania Avenue SE).

House Tour Good to Go!

CHRS members will soon receive advance notice of ticket sales for this year's House and Garden Tour, to be held, as always, on Mothers' Day weekend, May 11-12.

Tour chair Michelle Carroll reports that plans for this year's event are developing quickly. Wonderful houses have been selected, including the Jones House, 636 A Street SE, Weiner House, 19-21 Gessford Court SE, Mace & Vojtasko House, 1367 N. Carolina Avenue NE, Rhee House, 617 C Street NE, and Simvnek House, 517 East Capitol Street SE.

New and different—and some familiar—associated events form part of the schedule. A Saturday night reception and art show have been added. The Old Naval Hospital

will host that event, with re-enactors again on-site to conjure up the original use of the facility. Sunday afternoon's tea will be at Results The Gym on G Street SE.

Michelle invites members to participate as volunteers—many, many tasks need to be done to continue CHRS's tradition of successful tours.

The event is the major annual fundraiser for the Society. As in recent years, 20% of the net proceeds will be donated to local organizations for specific projects.

Contact Michelle (544-5057 or pilliodmp@aol.com) to volunteer; she promises you a rewarding experience that will have you asking yourself, "Why haven't I done this before?" *

Bulk Mail Rates: Tried, Failed!

CHRS obtained a USPS permit to send mail at a nonprofit bulk mail rate in Fall 2001. We used it for the December *News*, and found the speed of delivery to be satisfactory. Alas, our luck ran out when the February issue was mailed. Random checks suggest that no one received it in less than 10 days (after a Feb. 4 mailing); many copies took over two weeks to arrive. We have even had reports of no delivery at all.

We're back to first class mail this month. We assume that some of the delays and delivery failures are related to the crisis faced by the Postal Service in October, especially at our nearby Brentwood Station. For the time being, we'll continue using first class.

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

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