



# NEWS

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March 2007

## Great Streets Study Meets Eastern Market Metro Plaza Project

### Changes Forecast for Plaza

by Dick Wolf

During the past several months, two events have unfolded which not only shape each other but also could change the appearance of Southeast Capitol Hill in dramatic ways.

First, the DC Office of Planning (OP) has finished a “planning study” for Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, from Second Street to the Maryland state line. According to Ward Six planner Jeff Davis, the study shows a need for development on the Hill side of the Avenue. Possible development sites include the Hine School property (once the students have been moved to another location); the site across from the JPI condo development at Fourteenth and Pennsylvania Avenue, SE; and the McDonalds and the used car lot on either side of Barney Circle. There is talk within OP about using Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) for these locations. Using PUDs would allow developers greater flexibility in site planning and building design. The Zoning Commission hears and decides requests for these special multi-purpose projects.

Second, OP now recognizes the need for a Pennsylvania Avenue “public realm” or public space study—which CHRS has urged for years. This public space study already has a jump start with the concept plan for Eastern Market Metro Plaza



which is underway, and now ready for more detailed planning. The concept plan envisions taking the barren plaza and redesigning it so that it is a welcoming entry way to Barracks Row and Eastern Market.

The concept plan has received the impetus of the completion of transfer of jurisdiction over the four parcels making up the plaza from the Park Service to the DC government. Fee ownership of the plaza, however, like the median strip along the entire Avenue, remains with the Park Service. This may mean coordinating planning with the Park Service and the National Capitol Planning Commission. There are complex negotiations still remaining between the Federal and local governments

*Changes are coming for the Eastern Market Metro Plaza. Photo: Larry Janezich.*

and between Hill entities and the DC government. CHRS will participate when the negotiations begin, which is expected to be soon.

All this forecasts something good happening at Eastern Market Metro Plaza. Washington does not have a plaza where the community, commerce, culture—and transportation—intersect. It could have. And it could be the catalyst for a streetscape study for all of the Hill side of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, and the integration of a streetscape plan throughout important parts of the Hill. Imagine finally giving this great Avenue—our main street—the kind of attention it has deserved from the day it was built. ✧

# President's Column: The Ghost of Robert Moses

by Dick Wolf

American city planning and development took a hit when first Jane Jacobs and then Robert Caro attacked Robert Moses and his wrecking ball approach to changing the face of New York City. At present there are four retrospective shows in New York to "re-balance" the view of Moses as an increasingly maniacal "power broker," by demonstrating the good that he did, largely in his earliest works involving parks, swimming pools, housing projects and parkways. What relevance does this have for Washington, DC? In more subtle ways we are

edging back toward this thinking: sacrificing neighborhoods for the greater good.

This approach is exemplified by the presentations put forth at a recent Building Museum symposium titled "Designing for Density in DC." It was put together months ago by our then-and-now-former planning director Ellen McCarthy. It featured an architect from Boston; our new planning director, Harriet Tregoning; and Christopher Leinberger, a fellow at the Brookings Metro Studies Group, a professor at the University of Michigan Business School, a developer, a "land use expert," and a resident of DuPont

Circle. Mr. Leinberger presented the most full-blown argument for changing DC in drastic form and incorporated all the various elements that have been advanced through the new Comprehensive Plan and various zoning proposals and development initiatives throughout the city, including Capitol Hill.

The scheme presented for future "growth and development" in DC revolves around the themes of "smart growth," transit oriented development, diversity, and growing the city by "100,000" new residents. The alliance of groups backing this scheme include developers, who want it applied throughout the city; the "greens" who see urban density as an antidote to sprawl; and the promoters of assisted housing who see it as creating "more diversity" and "work force" housing. These latter themes are the subject of numerous conferences, symposia, and commissions from which neighborhood groups are often excluded.

The Leinberger approach is to set up a series of scenarios in which there is a great demand to move back to the city by singles and empty nesters and then to supply the "entertainment" for these people. To satisfy a greater demand for more office space and to compete with the suburbs, the city has to supply more space—in the neighborhoods. And to avoid creating the faceless city like Rosslyn or Tysons, the buildings are "mixed use"—condos and lower income units—inclusionary zoning at the ratio of 1 to 5. "It's our moral duty," according to Leinberger.

He concludes his vision of the future of DC by advocating abolition of the building height limit and letting families fade away, which will make the schools and social services costs less of a burden. Does anyone see the ghost of Robert Moses in all this? ✧

## CHRS Appoints Nominating Committee, Seeks Candidates

CHRS President Dick Wolf has appointed a three-member Nominating Committee to recommend candidates for CHRS Board positions for the 2008 fiscal year beginning on October 1, 2007. Members of the Nominating Committee are CHRS Board members Paul Cromwell (Chair), Amanda Molson, and Robert Nevitt.

Positions to be filled for one-year terms include the offices of President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. In addition, two At-Large members of the Board will be elected this year for two-year terms.

Any CHRS member who wishes to nominate himself or herself for an office or an At-Large position, or who wishes to nominate another member for a position, should communicate that intention to Paul Cromwell by April 1, 2007. Nominations

should include background information on the nominee, the office the nominee is seeking, and a signed acceptance of the nomination if involving someone other than the member submitting the nomination. To make a nomination, e-mail Paul Cromwell at "paulcromwell@verizon.net" or call him at 202-543-5730.

Signed acceptances should be delivered to Paul in person or by mail to 25 Fifth Street, SE, Washington, DC, 20003.

The Nominating Committee will announce its slate of proposed candidates in the May *News* and all members will receive written ballots with the names of all nominees. Results of balloting will be announced at the June membership meeting and in the July *News*. For more information on the elections process, contact CHRS at 202-543-0425. ✧

## Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President . . . . . Dick Wolf  
1st Vice President . . . . Barbara Eck  
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Dick Wolf, City Planning  
Amanda Molson, Communications  
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Beth Purcell, Environment  
Larry Pearl, Grants  
Nancy Metzger, Historic Preservation  
Ann Richards, House and Garden Tour  
Elizabeth Nelson, Membership  
Tom Grahame, Transportation  
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Roxanne Walker, design and layout

### WEBSITE:

Martha Huizenga, DC Access,  
Webmaster

### OFFICE MANAGER:

Jeff Fletcher

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](http://www.chrs.org)

Celebrating more than 50 years helping 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. With your participation we will continue to do so for many years to come.

Start or Renew a CHRS Membership

\* On the Web at [www.CHRS.org](http://www.CHRS.org)

\* Call 202-543-0425 and choose option 2

\* Pick up a form at one of our meetings

Starting at just \$25 per year for a single membership, it's a great deal.

# CHRS Supports Tregoning to Direct Office of Planning

*Confirmation Hearing on the Nomination of Harriet Tregoning to the Directorship of the DC Office of Planning: Testimony of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society Before The Committee of the Whole, February 22, 2007, Council of the District of Columbia*

I am Richard N. Wolf, President of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS). On February 20, 2006, the Board of CHRS authorized me to give testimony in support of the nomination of Harriett Tregoning to be the director of the DC Office of Planning. Some of us have already met with Ms. Tregoning to discuss planning issues. She will be attending a membership meeting of CHRS on March 6. We find her to be intelligent and astute. We may have some differences on policy issues, but, I am sure, we will be able to have full and robust discussions about these matters.

Our one concern about Ms. Tregoning's background is that she has never had any experience in city planning in a built city. Her experience is that of a "smart growth" advocate. We believe "smart growth," especially in Washington, DC, is only a part of planning for this city. On this score, we wish to remind Ms. Tregoning of the words of Professor Witold Rybczynski of the Design Department, University of Pennsylvania, and a member of the Commission of Fine Arts, in reviewing a recent book about Pierre L'Enfant:

"City planning in the U.S. has generally been the creature of expediency rather than artistry, the ubiquitous gridiron providing a quick and easy way to promote real estate development. The chief exception—and what an exception!—is Washington, D.C. The plan of the national capital is comparable in ambition and scope to Pope Sixtus V's replanning of Rome in the 16th Century, Peter the Great's Creation of St. Petersburg in the early 18th Century and Napoleon III's reconfiguration of Paris in the 1850s. The credit for this belongs chiefly to George Washington and to the Frenchman he commissioned to design the new city: Pierre Charles L'Enfant...."

There is a plan for Washington, DC. It is magnificent; it works for developers and neighborhoods; it has withstood the test of time. Ms. Tregoning and this administration have been given stewardship of this great legacy. Let us hope it is treated with the respect it and we deserve. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard. \*

## Welcome CHRS Supporters

We thank the following new members, patrons, and sponsors.

### NEW MEMBERS

Casey Carter  
Leslie Hulse  
David & Marcia Morgan  
Paula & William Welch

### PATRONS

Diane Brockett  
Casey Carter  
John & Marcia Duncan  
Barbara & Mike Eck  
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# Members' Forum: Historic Preservation Requirements for Rear Facades Too Stringent

by *Andre Houston*

Capitol Hill. It is an historic district because of the street facades—not because of the rear facades of the houses. If the rear facades were the only historic ones on Capitol Hill, no one would consider nominating Capitol Hill as an historic district. They are not an integral part of the historic fabric for several reasons.

First, for the most part, they are not visible from the streets. Nor are they particularly or fully visible from the alleys.

Second, they are mean and grim looking. If a street facade is compromised, the neighborhood suffers. If a rear facade is changed to another kind of urban facade, few even notice.

Third, the present function of the rear yards and their facades is wholly different from their historic function. Historically, the rear facade was a wall closing off the house from the rear, utilitarian kitchen yard. Now, the rear yards are gardens; the rear facade should reflect this changed function. It should form a gracious urban facade for the garden rear yard; it should intermediate in an open and friendly manner between the interior and the garden exterior. The original facades did not do this; they were never meant to.

Up until several years ago, the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) and its predecessors reflected this attitude towards rear facades consistently. People were permitted to demolish all or parts of the rear wall, replacing them with gracious urban additions or newly designed rear walls which opened the houses generously onto their gardens. The houses and the alleys were improved.

Many of the rear yard additions and modifications approved over

the last 25 years would be rejected now by the present HPRB. The removal of original rear walls in order to extend the house is now questioned on the basis that the rear wall is part of history, to be preserved, even if it is to be encapsulated by a new addition and invisible to the public. New openings in an existing original wall are discouraged if the openings do not match the narrow original alley facade openings. Rear facade proposals of some grace and originality are required to be dumbed down by the present board so that they mimic the meanness of the original facades.

There are two flavors of Historic Preservation; the "Williamsburg tradition," where everything of a certain age must be preserved as it was, and the "living tradition," where those elements of an historic tradition which we admire are preserved, while those elements which are seen separately from and give no visual support to the admired elements may be modified to accommodate changed functions for the benefit of those still inhabiting the structures. HPRB is creeping from the living tradition to the Williamsburg tradition (except for the "modern" loophole—but that is another story).

What is to be done? We can work to rescind the law. But for me, this is not a solution. I want, and I believe most people on Capitol Hill want, our wonderful Victorian street facades protected. This is part of why we moved here. (We did not move here for the rear facades.) I don't want the law rescinded.

I would suggest another idea - architectural guidelines, developed by the community. Neighborhood organizations, such as the CHRS, along with the ANC's and interested Capitol Hill citizens should develop these guidelines. Of course

there are problems. Can people on Capitol Hill possibly agree on a set of guidelines? And if we do promulgate guidelines; will HPRB pay any attention? All we can do is try.

(The *News* will publish articles or letters from members on a space available basis.)

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## CHRS Historic Preservation Committee Responds

by *Nancy Metzger*

Capitol Hill is a historic district whose history celebrates life in this neighborhood from 1790 until 1945. All the buildings, as well as street patterns, alley systems, front gardens and green spaces, are a part of that story. The story would not be complete without the reserved, historic rear facades (please, not "mean and grim") and while they are plain, many people treasure them because of the relative sense of seclusion they afford neighbors (when compared to large expanses of glass, decks, etc. of many recent additions).

The Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act (DC Law 2-144) protects the exterior of the entire building. In practice the Historic Preservation Review Board has always allowed rear additions of many sizes and designs, recognizing that people's needs and customs change (such as the use of rear gardens cited by Mr. Houston) and that the city wants to encourage the continued use of the historic buildings. While some rear additions have closely followed the traditional pattern of the historic rear facades (owner's choice), many others feature the expansive use

*Continued next page*

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# Preservation Easements Get a Close Look at February's Preservation Café

by Nancy Metzger

Thanks to the December 2004 *Washington Post* series on conservation or preservation easements, many people in the city know the general outlines of the program—a building's owner gives up the right to alter a historic building's facade and air space without permission from a trust-holding organization. (In the case of buildings in historic districts, that permission is in addition to permission from the Historic Preservation Review Board.) In exchange for the preservation donation, the owner receives a charitable donation for tax purposes.

Carol Goldman, president of the L'Enfant Trust, one of the nation's largest easement-holding organizations in the nation, provided the update on the revised regulations that were passed by Congress in August 2006. Goldman also answered many questions, including costs for easement donation and whether homes that have had renovations such as vinyl windows are eligible (yes).

About 40 people attended the February Preservation Café held

in the very comfortable and attractive downstairs room at Ebenezer's Coffee House at Second and F streets, NE.

Those who couldn't make the café may contact the L'Enfant Trust at 202-483-4880; [info@lenfant.org](mailto:info@lenfant.org); 1526 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20036 for more information.

## Preservation Café Topics for March and April

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"House History—How to Start and Where to Find Information" will be the topic of the March Preservation Café to be held on Wednesday, March 21, 6:30–7:15 pm at Ebenezer's Coffee House. Matthew Gilmore, co-editor of H-DC, a listserve devoted to the history of the District of Columbia, will provide an introduction to this fascinating subject. Mr. Gilmore, previously a most knowledgeable resource at the Washingtonian Division of the DC Public Library, has been teaching an evening-long course in historic building and neighborhood research for several years. Maps, building permits, tax records, census data

files and city directories can provide a wealth of information about your house and the buildings in your neighborhood. Mr. Gilmore will arm you with the basics, so you can learn what is involved in building research and how to start gathering information. (The H-DC listserve can be accessed through H-DC@H-Net.msu.edu.)

Those of you who have been confused about the zoning process and the players will have an opportunity to sort out the differences between the Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals at the Preservation Café on April 18, starting at 6:30 pm, also at Ebenezer's Coffee House. Richard Nero, Deputy Director, and Sara Bardin, Special Assistant to the Director for the Office of Zoning, will give a special presentation. Zoning decisions affect all neighborhoods, so it is good to understand how those decisions are made, who makes them, and what part citizens can play in the process.

NOTE—Ebenezer's Coffee House, Second and F Streets, NE, is wheelchair accessible. ✧

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## CHRS Historic Preservation Committee Responds *continued from previous page*

of glass, allowing the rear garden and the house's interior to meld. (For a look at the variety of rear additions approved by the HPRB, both recently and in years past, buy a ticket to this year's House and Garden Tour.) Probably the Board's chief concern with rear additions is the proposed size—that it not be larger than the historic building—but materials, proportions, compatibility, etc. are also considered.

In some cases, the Board's concern about the removal of original rear walls in order to extend the house may be a function of the

total amount of demolition being contemplated in the project. A substantial amount of structural demolition requires Board review (as compared with a project that the staff can sign off on) and perhaps review by the Mayor's Agent as well (such as the demolition of the 1945 wing of Anne Archbold Hall). Each case is unique so it is difficult to generalize about demolition and new openings in original walls, but many homeowners have asked for (and received) permission to install French doors instead of the original single door in the rear facade.

If you are interested in expanding your house, our best advice is to find an architect to work with you who has designed projects you admire and who has worked successfully in historic districts. The litany of supposed HPRB rejections is long, while the evidence of the Board's flexibility is all around us. And yes, the idea of developing guidelines on new construction and rear additions is a good one—it's already listed in the Comprehensive Plan. ✧

# CHRS Opposes Griffis Nomination to Zoning Commission

*Confirmation Hearing on the Nomination of Geoffrey H. Griffis to the Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia: Testimony of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society before the Committee of the Whole, February 22, 2007, Council of the District of Columbia.*

I am Richard N. Wolf, President of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS). On January 16, its Board voted unanimously to oppose the nomination of Geoffrey Griffis to the Zoning Commission. A letter to this effect was delivered to each Councilmember's office. It is attached to this testimony. CHRS is one of the largest civic organizations in the District of Columbia. In its over 50 years of involvement with the zoning and planning processes of the District, this is the first time it has opposed a nominee to either the Zoning Commission or the BZA. And, as a personal

matter, I regret having to take this position, since I was an early and strong supporter of the new administration.

However, their nominee has demonstrated such a blatant disregard for law and code, and acted so injudiciously while a member of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, his appointment to an even more powerful adjudicatory body in land use, the Zoning Commission, must be opposed in order to preserve the integrity of that body. His conduct on the BZA has demonstrated the following problems:

1. His granting of special exceptions without reference to meeting the special exception standards;
2. His obvious and extreme efforts in numerous cases to search for reasons to grant relief to applicants, giving the appearance of bias;

3. His obvious bias in limiting standing to citizens and citizen groups;
4. His obvious disdain of citizen arguments in sitting on cases;
5. His inability to separate his personal views in judging cases and otherwise acting in a judicial manner;
6. His lack of sensitivity to clear conflicts of interests.

The Council must reject this nominee in order to protect the integrity of the government's decision-making authority in the area of land use and to otherwise insure the confidence of the public in the Government's ability to act in the public interest.

Thank you for this opportunity to be heard on this important matter. ✧

*(See related letter, page 7.)*

## Historic Preservation Briefs

by Nancy Metzger

### Old Naval Hospital Proposals Sought

DC's Office of Property Management (OPM) will be considering proposals for the "restoration, renovation, and reuse" of the Old Naval Hospital. OPM is looking for



"creative, self-sustaining uses" that will be "sympathetic to the historic integrity" of the building. The deadline for submission is March 12.

As noted in the February CHRS News, BELL Architects has started preliminary design work on the restoration of the iron fence surrounding the property at 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Restoration of the south façade (windows, door, porch) was last year's project.

### Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Sends Letter in Mount Pleasant Porch Case

The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) has issued a letter concerning the Mount Pleasant ADA/porch alteration case. (See February CHRS News, page 6, for more details.)

Lennox Douglas, Division Chief, Permit Operations, sent a letter to the Office of Planning in February, stating: "However, the proposed ramp does not comply with section R313.1 of the 2000 International Residential Code where it clearly states, 'Ramps shall have a maximum slope of one unit vertical and eight units horizontal.' The slope of the ramp on your submitted plan indicates the max rise is three feet, ten inches (3'-10"). To satisfy the code requirement, the max rise can only be one foot, two inches (1'-2") or increase the run of the ramp from ten feet, 8 inches (10'-8") to thirty feet (30'). Also the stairway identified in the middle of the ramp is not in compliance with the stairway width as specified . . . that requires the minimum stairway shall not be less than 36 inches in width at all points." ✧

February 7, 2007

The Honorable Vincent C. Gray  
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia  
John A. Wilson Building, Room 506  
1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20004

**Re: Nomination of Geoffrey Griffis to Zoning Commission, PR17-0056**

Dear Chairman Gray:

At its meeting on January 16, 2007, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) Board of Directors authorized me to oppose the nomination of Geoffrey Griffis to the Zoning Commission.

CHRS is one of the oldest and largest civic associations in the District of Columbia. Since 1955 its mission has been to preserve and improve Capitol Hill as a model urban residential area. It has done that largely through planning, zoning, and historic preservation. The Society has a 52-year history of such activities, including extensive involvement in nearly every zoning and BZA case on the Hill and the establishment of the Capitol Hill Historic District, one of the largest in the country. We are most proud of having established, both through litigation and legislation, the rights of citizen groups to participate in zoning cases.

Mr. Griffis has a long record of granting special exceptions and making other rulings which are eroding the residential and historic character of Capitol Hill and undercutting the legal requirements giving citizens the right to participate in BZA cases.

We bring to your attention two cases which illustrate the special exception erosion of the historic district. Both instances involve corner properties and existing structures which occupied much more than the 60 percent lot occupancy permitted in R-4 residential districts. In both cases, actions by the BZA (led by Mr. Griffis) allowed the properties to expand to occupy nearly 100 percent of the lot; to block the light and air of neighboring houses; and to destroy some of the open space which is part of the look and feel of the historic district. These cases involved properties at Tenth and G Streets, SE, and Tenth Street and North Carolina Avenue, SE.

Throughout the Ward 6 Ward Plan of the current Comprehensive Plan there is policy language supporting the protection of the Capitol Hill Historic District by the zoning authorities. In fact, there is virtually no instance in which Mr. Griffis has voted to deny a special exception in appeals involving Capitol Hill properties.

CHRS often joins with and supports other Hill community organizations and ANCs in connection with zoning appeals. In those coordinate actions Mr. Griffis has taken a cramped view of the rights of all parties to have party status and fully participate in the proceedings. The most blatant case of such limited views of community participation as well as consideration of community views involves the recent decision by the BZA, with Mr. Griffis taking the most active leadership role, to reverse the decision of the Zoning Administrator rejecting the Apple Tree charter school application for a building permit in a residential neighborhood.

In addition to limiting community participation in the proceedings, Mr. Griffis simply ignored new zoning regulations intended to deal with the siting of public schools, including charter schools. His bias and lack of judiciousness in the conduct of the proceedings have become notorious not only in Capitol Hill cases but in cases from other parts of the city.

On the basis of his rulings and conduct, we believe Mr. Griffis is unsuitable for appointment to the Zoning Commission, where his performance would have an even greater impact on major land use issues in the city, and we reiterate our strong opposition to his nomination.

Sincerely,

Richard N. Wolf, President

cc: Members of the city council  
Selected ANC representatives

# Direction of Transportation Projects Affecting Capitol Hill Now Less Clear

by Tom Grahame

There are now more new transportation projects than ever, but how they work together, and what their impact will be on Capitol Hill neighborhoods, is uncertain. What is clear is that more traffic wants to get into DC, and transportation officials are trying to find ways for that to happen, rather than finding ways to reduce traffic demand.

On February 27, a public meeting with transportation officials was held at Amidon Elementary in SW, about ways to reduce congestion on the Fourteenth Street Bridge corridor and in areas adjacent to I-395, in

DC and in Virginia. No plans were produced—it's early in the process. The three stated goals of the project are to: 1) reduce congestion, 2) enhance safety, and 3) improve traffic operations.

Other goals could have been voiced by Federal Highway Administration officials, such as reducing ozone and carbon dioxide pollution produced mainly from vehicular emissions, reducing dependence on foreign oil for national security purposes, and reducing the number of cars that would have to cross the Fourteenth Street Bridge in an emergency.

Among the issues raised by

members of the audience in a too-short public comment period were two significant concerns. First, that the study area is too small, and is missing important traffic generators and destinations which will affect the study area, such as the new developments in SW and SE, including the new stadium. Readers of the *CHRS News* won't be surprised that highway officials are defining small study areas and not taking into account important developments in adjacent areas. A second concern is that not enough consideration is being given to non-concrete alternatives that could not

*Continued next page*

## Looking Back on Capitol Hill: Linda Barnes Passes On

by Nancy Metzger

Capitol Hill lost another active community member in February when Linda Barnes died. Linda moved to the Hill with her husband Bart in 1965, after being introduced to the Hill through CHRS's House and Garden Tour. Over the years, Linda became a real estate agent, was active in raising funds for Friendship House, and filled leadership positions at St. Marks Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill Association of Merchants and Professionals, and the Capitol Hill Community Foundation (to name just a few).

In 2002, when she received the Capitol Hill Community Foundation Award, Linda was interviewed by Stephanie Deutsch. Following are some of Linda's remembrances of Capitol Hill in the 1960s and 1970s, taken from that interview:

**Barnes:** "Well, Tenth and D (Southeast where Bart and Linda

bought their first house in 1965) was pretty fringy. We had a house of ill repute on the block. We had an after-hours bar on the block, in somebody's basement. But we also had wonderful block parties, so all these people were our best buddies. And we would close off the street and just have parties all night long. It was fabulous. We didn't have bars on the windows. ... so that was our first house on the Hill.

But it was quite small ... and we bought a house at Ninth and G Streets [Southeast]. ... I remember buffing the floors, practically every day, with one kid on each hip. We sold that house and bought the house we're currently in, 640 East Capitol, in 1969 and moved in when the boys were about six months old. This house was a rooming house when we bought it.

**Deutsch:** The house came with its own roomer?

**Barnes:** Yes. The owner at the time had not wanted to let her roomers know ahead of time that she had sold the house because she didn't want them to leave too soon. And this one fellow went off on vacation to Florida and so she never did tell him. He came back to discover that there were no people living here. I mean she hadn't told him anything. This was back in the pre-rent control days. So we had this very elderly man who was a printer at the *Washington Star*, the *Evening Star*, who did not want to move. ... so I would get the kids and put them into the stroller and take him around, or put them in the car and take him around and show him other places that he might live. He was here for probably close to a month, but we finally did find him another place across the street actually, as it happens." ✧

*The entire interview can be read at [www.capitolhillhistory.org](http://www.capitolhillhistory.org).*



# The 50th Annual CHRS House & Garden Tour Is Just Around the Corner!

by Ann Richards

And what a weekend it's going to be. There will be at least ten homes and special venues lined up for tour weekend, Saturday, May 12, from 5:00–8:00 pm and Sunday, May 13, from 12:00–5:00 pm.

As in years past there will be a Saturday night reception from 5:00–7:00 pm. We are waiting confirmation of a site near Barracks Row, so plan to spend the evening meeting with friends and neighbors at the Tour, the reception and at restaurants and businesses participating in Barracks Row Second Saturday events. On Sunday there will be a tea at Christ Church Parish Hall, 620 G Street, SE, from 2:30–5:30 pm. Historic Congressional Cemetery, owned by Christ Church and located at Eighteenth and E Streets, SE, is commemorating its 200th anniversary in May. We plan to provide jitney service to the Cemetery for special tours on Sunday. Watch next month's *News* for final details.

Houses committed so far are some of the "Grande Dames" on or near East Capitol Street that we always wish we could see, many with gardens we can only dream of replicating! Three homes have never been on the tour and others haven't been on the Tour for 20–25 years. It will be a special weekend.

A letter to CHRS members will be sent soon that will give members an opportunity to purchase tickets in advance at a reduced price. We are working on offering online public ticket purchases and contributions through PayPal. Check [www.CHRS.org](http://www.CHRS.org) or watch the *News* for further details.

As always, the Tour doesn't happen through the efforts of a few. We need many volunteers from now through tour weekend to make the Tour a success. Please contact Amanda Molson at [amandamolson@yahoo.com](mailto:amandamolson@yahoo.com) if you



are able to help with any of these activities:

- Selling tickets in two hour shifts weekends from April 13 through tour weekend
- Being a docent for two hour shifts on Tour days, May 12 and 13
- Accompanying the jitneys on May 13 to provide information to drivers/riders. ✧

## Direction of Transportation Projects Less Clear *continued from previous page*

only reduce congestion, but also reduce pollution and reduce the number of people and cars who have to travel over the Fourteenth Street Bridge. Such alternatives could include a "congestion charge," similar to the highly successful congestion charge implemented by the Mayor of London which has sharply reduced both traffic and pollution in the area of implementation. (Monies gained could flow to Metro to buy new cars as Metro rider-ship increases). A higher gasoline tax and more incentives for telecommuting could also be considered.

Closer to Capitol Hill, there is

greater uncertainty about projects such as the Eleventh Street Bridges upgrade (part of the Middle Anacostia Crossings study); various Kennilworth Avenue improvements; and projects directly under the control of the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation (AWC), such as a new Massachusetts Avenue Bridge and a Park Road. CHRS Board members have been told or the last two years that although these areas were all relatively small, and the Environment Impact Studies only considered each small area; everything would "come together" in the AWC plans.

But the new DC Council

will soon consider dissolving the AWC. Should this happen, it would remove the central planning function the AWC provides, which likely would mean less coordination regarding adjoining areas. The fate of the proposed Massachusetts Avenue Bridge and Park Road would be uncertain as well. Without the AWC, there would be less of a bulwark against giveaways to developers, adverse zoning results in Hill East by the Anacostia, and (perhaps?) unwanted roadways. On balance, losing the AWC would likely be harmful for Capitol Hill. ✧

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# Mark Your Calendar!

## MARCH

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### 6 Tuesday, 7:30 pm

CHRS Community Forum. Harriet Tregoning, nominated to be director of the D.C. Office of Planning, will speak to Hill residents about her vision for the future of planning in the city. Basement hall of St. Peter's Church, 2nd & C Streets, SE. Reception at 7:00, presentation starts at 7:30. Details: Dick Wolf, 202-543-4353.

### 8 Thursday, 7:30 pm

CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson, 202-547-7969.

### 20 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes (new location), 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Dick Wolf, 202-543-4353.

### 21 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Preservation Café on "House History: How to Start and Where to Find Information." Local historian Matthew Gilmore will provide basic tips and introductory guidelines on how to conduct building research and key sources for information. Ebenezer's Coffee House, 201 F Street, NE. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-543-1034.

### 22 Thursday, 10:00 am

Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 4th Street, NW (#1 Judiciary Square),

Room 220 South. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034.

## APRIL

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### 6 Friday, 9:00 am

Anacostia River Canada goose count. Langston Golf course parking lot. Contact: steve@anacostiaws.org.

### 7 Saturday, all day

#### Public tickets for the 50th Annual House and Garden Tour go on sale!

Outstanding homes have been selected this year's very special tour, May 12-13. Advance sale tickets are \$25 and provide admission to all Saturday and Sunday events. They will be on sale at the CHRS kiosk weekends at Eastern Market, through the CHRS office, and at retail locations on Capitol Hill and throughout the city. Don't miss this annual celebration of our historic neighborhood!

### 10 Tuesday, 6:00 pm

CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034.

### 17 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street, SE, second floor. Details: Dick Wolf, 202-543-4353.

### 18 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Preservation Café, "Understanding the Zoning Process." Powerpoint presen-

## Future of the Boys and Girls Club

A community meeting to discuss the future of the Eastern Branch of the Boys and Girls Club, at 261 Seventeenth Street, SE, scheduled for February 25, was cancelled owing to the snow and ice storm. The meeting will be rescheduled and the *News* will cover the proceedings. ✧

tation by Richard Nero, Deputy Director, Office of Zoning, and Sara Bardin, Special Assistant to the Zoning Director. Talk will focus on the basics of zoning, including how zoning decisions are made, who makes them, and how citizens can play a role in the process. Ebenezer's Coffee House, 201 F Street NE. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034.

### 21 Saturday, 8:30 am-noon

Earth Day Anacostia River Cleanup, Kingman Island. Contact: Kamweti Mutu 301-699-6204, [www.anacostiaws.org](http://www.anacostiaws.org).

### 26 Thursday, 10:00 am

Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 4th Street, NW (#1 Judiciary Square), Room 220 south. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034.



### Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 Tenth Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

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