



# NEWS

www.chrs.org

July/August 2007 



*Councilmember Tommy Wells and CHRS President Dick Wolf address the June Membership Meeting.*

## June CHRS Membership Meeting Featured Wells and Groomes

*by Amanda Molson*

The June 13 CHRS membership meeting featuring Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells and First District Commander Diane Groomes from the Metropolitan Police Department brought strong attendance despite a rainy evening. The meeting opened with results from the recent CHRS election. New faces on the Board of Directors upon taking office this fall will be Secretary Eric Snellings and At-Large Member Shauna Holmes. CHRS members present at the meeting also voted unanimously to approve a proposed change to the CHRS by-laws, which will add

two at-large member seats to the Board of Directors upon appointment by the president. These at-large members will stand for election in future cycles.

Commander Groomes mingled with attendees during the refreshment period to answer questions and also announced her desire for a follow-up discussion specifically focused on the issue of crime on Capitol Hill. She acknowledged concerns over several brazen incidents that have affected our community in recent months and an apparent increase in general crime—of particular worry as the notorious hot months of summer

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## Results of CHRS Board Election

*by Jeff Fletcher*

The following members were elected to serve one-year terms commencing with the August board meeting:

*President . . . . Dick Wolf  
1st VP . . . . Beth Purcell  
2nd VP. . . . Monte Edwards  
Treasurer . . . . Mike Canning  
Secretary . . . . Eric Snellings*

Tom Grahame and Shauna Holmes were elected to two-year terms as at-large board members. Current at-large board members Elizabeth Nelson and Donna Hanousek will continue to serve on the board.

In accordance with the recently-approved bylaws change (see article on the membership meeting), two other at-large members will be appointed soon by CHRS President Dick Wolf. The Nominating Committee is in the process of reviewing possible candidates and will submit recommendations to the president. All elected and appointed board members, along with committee chairs appointed by the president with consent of the board, comprise the full CHRS board of directors. ✧

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# President's Column

by Dick Wolf

As we move into the heart of a DC summer there is some down time in CHRS activities, but not much. After another productive year, including the most financially successful house tour ever, we have laid the ground work for some substantial changes to Capitol Hill. These changes will enhance our neighborhoods and build on past successes. Some of that ground work includes a new comprehensive plan for the city which embraces all we could want for Capitol Hill. The Capitol Hill element speaks to the need to protect our row houses, expand and establish both existing and new historic districts, and provide for the improvement through streetscape, design controls, and development incentives of the H Street Corridor and the Hill portion of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE.

Implementation of that plan has already been initiated

by CHRS. We have started the "Beyond the Boundaries" project by offering information and assistance to neighborhoods in near NE, Hill East and Barney Circle so that they can either attach to the existing Capitol Hill Historic District or create their own. In this connection, there is interest in separate historic districts for the row house area north of H Street, NE, and Kingman Park. We are ready to help. We have a committee established for this purpose and funds, if needed.

As a result of the enactment of the new comprehensive plan there is an initiative by the city to re-write the patchwork, 1958 zoning code. CHRS and other citizen groups from around the city are prepared to play our role in this important undertaking.

Development projects under way or projected in which CHRS has played a major role include the further development of Reservation

13, Eastern Market Metro Plaza, the Hine School site; and a streetscape plan for the entire Hill.

Beginning in the fall we also will have a full schedule of membership programs which will include presentations by the new school administration, public safety, consideration of the developing proposals for the Anacostia River front from South Capitol Street to Benning Road, and finally, proposals for traffic containment and re-direction.

In the meantime, all our committees will continue to operate full bore in the areas of zoning, historic preservation, planning, the environment, and monitoring and supporting the restoration of Eastern Market. With your help we can make all these things happen. So thank you for your past service and in advance for your future help and thank you for allowing me to serve another year as your president. ✧

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## June CHRS Membership Meeting *continued from page 1*

are upon us. CHRS will work with Commander Groomes to find an avenue for further interaction with the membership.

Councilmember Wells highlighted several key topics that have been the central focus of his first few months in office. Wells and other city officials have devoted special consideration to plans for the speedy but thoughtful restoration of Eastern Market and financial assistance for displaced vendors, a focus of CHRS as well. Wells anticipates that contracts will be in place for the restoration by the end of this year, with major work concluding by the close of 2008. Construction of the temporary structure is underway, and Mayor Fenty recently announced that he expects vendors to enter the building by late July.

Councilmember Wells also spoke of his ongoing attention to the health of public schools in Ward 6, especially with the arrival of DC Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee and the increase in Capitol Hill families with young children and an interest in exploring the public school system. Rhee's appointment was a surprise to most everyone it seems, and we are eager to hear more about her plans for improvements.

Wells reported that transportation issues command much of his time, as was apparent by a Q&A session with the audience that focused almost entirely on concerns over commuter traffic and tour buses. With Constitution Avenue now two-way all day, attendees living on East Capitol Street, Independence Avenue and side

streets were apprehensive about spillover effects and pedestrian safety as commuters try to find alternate routes through the neighborhood. A new staff member for Wells will concentrate on urban smart growth initiatives, including traffic, and Wells encouraged residents to send comments via his website ([www.tommywells.org](http://www.tommywells.org)) so that he can respond. Attendees noted that tour buses have been cluttering Capitol Hill streets of late, bringing pollution and vibrations that our historic buildings were not designed to withstand. Wells will continue to meet with other city officials and police to find a solution that still welcomes Washington tourism but keeps Capitol Hill livable.

CHRS membership meetings and Preservation Cafés will resume in the fall after a summer hiatus. ✧

## Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President . . . . . Dick Wolf  
1st Vice President . . . . Beth Purcell  
2nd Vice President . . . . Monte Edwards  
Treasurer . . . . . Mike Canning  
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At Large . . . . . Donna Hanousek  
At Large . . . . . Elizabeth Nelson  
At Large . . . . . Shauna Holmes

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Paul Cromwell, *Budget*  
Dick Wolf, *City Planning*  
Amanda Molson, *Communications*  
Barbara Eck, *Community Development*  
Beth Purcell, *Environment*  
Larry Pearl, *Grants*  
Nancy Metzger, *Historic Preservation*  
Ann Richards, *House and Garden Tour*  
Elizabeth Nelson, *Membership*  
Tom Grahame, *Transportation*  
Gary Peterson, *Zoning*

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### WEBSITE:

Roxanne Walker, webmaster  
DC Access, web hosting

### 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 Takes Issue with Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Land Development Plan

## Memorandum:

**To:** DC Office of Planning  
**From:** Richard N. Wolf, President, Capitol Hill Restoration Society; Chair, City Planning Committee  
**Re:** Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Land Development Plan

You have asked for comments regarding the "Final Report," including the implementation section which was handed out at the May 29 meeting of the "advisory committee." These comments are derived from attendance by CHRS Board members at all the meetings of the advisory committee.

At the start, let me state that a great deal of time and money, including time of citizens has been spent on this project. But frankly until now it has not been clear what the objectives of this study have been. It has been confusing from the start that both the Capitol Hill side of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, and the Anacostia side have been linked together in the same study. The explanation has always been that it is important public policy to link both sides of the river—for what purpose is unclear. The two sides from a land use standpoint are completely different. Capitol Hill is an old part of the city—some of it developed two hundred years ago—consisting almost entirely of small commercial buildings and row houses. The study area is largely in an historic district and Pennsylvania Avenue is built to the standards of a ceremonial entrance to the US Capitol.

In Anacostia, the east portion of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, is virtually a suburban main street, carrying two lanes of traffic and traversing one of the newer parts of the city which here is an almost a 1940s and 50s suburban type development. There are very few row houses,

some small apartment houses and several shopping malls—very different from the Hill.

The OP staff indicated that this study started as an initiative from Anacostia residents seeking more retail/commercial development. No comparable study was ever initiated by Hill residents; our interests have been confined to planning and development issues from the end of the historic district to Barney Circle, approximately four to five blocks. Our further comments will focus on this part of the study.

Any study of this type must start with the DC portion of the newly enacted Comprehensive Plan for the National Capitol. All planning policy and actions regarding Capitol Hill are contained in the Capitol Hill Area Element of the plan. A number of sections of that element deal with the nature, character, and future development of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, from Second Street, SE, to Barney Circle. In particular, the plan stresses the importance of Pennsylvania Avenue as a major entry to the US Capitol, its historic character as part of the L'Enfant street plan, and that all development actions are to be guided by these characteristics. The adjacent historic neighborhoods are also an essential element to be considered in relation to the size and character of any new development.

The study is correct that the area between Thirteenth Street and Barney Circle is in need of some further development, but it must be carefully crafted and controlled in terms of design. It may be that some of the proposals for development at the four locations selected by the planning team could make sense in light of the plan policies, but nowhere is there any reference to these policies as explicitly governing the recommendations. The development of the new Comprehensive

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# From CHRS's "Beyond the Boundaries" Initiative

by Donna Hanousek

Every year since 1996, the DC Preservation League (DCPL) has announced a list of Most Endangered Places to draw attention to DC's historically, culturally, and architecturally significant places that may be threatened with ill-advised alteration or demolition through neglect or abandonment. This year, the Barney Circle Neighborhood Watch Association and ANC 6B06 Commissioner Will Hill partnered with CHRS to nominate the Hill East neighborhood to the Most Endangered List. On May 31, 2007, DCPL named "Undesignated Row House Neighborhoods," exemplified by Hill East, as well as two other neighborhoods, to the list. DCPL will work with the neighborhood as it considers the benefits of historic district designation.

Hill East, having no protection for its historic buildings or design



*Hill East, which is not protected by historic district designation, was added to the DCPL Most Endangered Places list. The 500 block of 14th Street, SE is shown above.*

review for new development, is at risk for tear-downs and incompatible building alterations/additions. A growing number of Hill East residents, while welcoming new development to their neighborhood, seek to exercise some

control over that development, which is what historic designation provides. If you have any questions about the CHRS Beyond the Boundaries Initiative, contact Donna Hanousek, hanousek@earthlink.net. ✧

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## Final Figures for 50th Annual House & Garden Tour

by Ann Richards

The Tour was a financial success with net income of slightly more than \$59,000, thanks in large part to the strong ticket sales on the weekend of the tour. Ticket sales looked strong in the weeks leading up to the event but skyrocketed on May 12 and 13 at the CHRS Eastern Market Kiosk. Total ticket sales were about 1850, several hundred more than 2006 and 100 plus more than the 2005 banner year.

In anticipation of increased costs for this year's tour, sponsors were solicited to underwrite tour expenses: Frager's Hardware, Stanton Development and Dick & Muriel Wolf. Other major contributors in the form of advertising included Phyllis Jane Young,

Riverby Books, Abdo Development, Coldwell Banker/Pardoe/Don Denton, Prudential Carruthers/Judi Seiden, Splash!, Hugh Kelly/Gary Jankowski, Bob Williams, The National Capital Bank and Wentworth Studio.

Barracks Row merchants and restaurants contributed to the tour as well in the form of in-kind donations. Finn MacCool's, Old Siam, Trattoria Alberto, Tunncliffs, Mr. Henry's, Hawk 'n' Dove and the Banana Café & Piano Bar contributed refreshments for the Saturday evening reception held at the Community Building of Townhomes on Capitol Hill, which was well attended by tour visitors. In addition, Alvear Studio lent several pieces of art to the 15 Seventh Street, NE, tour house. I hope that

CHRS members will show their appreciation to these restaurants and merchants who helped make the tour special.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered for this year's tour: team members Roxanne Walker, Paul Cromwell, Aileen Moffatt, Michael Eck, Amanda Molson, and Michelle Carroll; ticket sellers at Eastern Market Kiosk; docents at the houses; servers at the tea and reception; assistants with the jitney service. You all helped make this year's tour very special.

As for next year, the theme will be "Beyond the Boundaries." We hope to showcase some of the old and some of the new as our neighborhood as we know it expands further north, east and south. Stay tuned and save the dates for the 51st Tour: May 10-11, 2008. ✧

# Looking Back on Capitol Hill

by Nancy Metzger

One of the unexpected joys of community projects is making friends with people one might never have met otherwise. One such person is Frank Taylor, who died recently at the age of 104. I met him over eight years ago, after the late Peter Powers, a former president of CHRS, told me that Frank had grown up on Capitol Hill and had many stories to tell of the neighborhood.

When I began recording his oral history in 1999, I understood why he had risen to the top ranks of the Smithsonian Institution administration. He was a gentle man, soft spoken, with an appreciation of the absurdities and humor that fills life. His stories were quite often of his father's pharmacy and the neighborhood near Second and C, NE, and Ninth and Massachusetts. It was obvious that his observations, even as a child, were acute and the details were sharp. He delighted in remembering his old neighborhood—not only people and their activities but the sights, sounds, and even smells of the place he called home for twenty-some years.

His oral histories can be found on the website of the Ruth Ann

Overbeck Capitol Hill History Project ([capitolhillhistory.org](http://capitolhillhistory.org)). Take some time to read them and you will find that you have a far better understanding of Capitol Hill in the early 1900s—and of the special gift that Frank Taylor gave the Capitol Hill community with his recollections.

In an interview with John Franzen about the house at 908 Massachusetts Avenue, which was built by Frank Taylor's uncle, Ernest Kubel, the conversation veered to the great influenza epidemic of 1918 and the time when Frank was sent by his father to Baltimore to procure a supply of whisky. In those days, whisky was often prescribed for heart conditions that were a result of influenza. For Frank's father, the problem, as the epidemic continued, was that DC was under prohibition, which gave rise to "medicinal bootlegging."

**TAYLOR:** "... So my father gave me these two empty suitcases and a long list of medicines and told me where I'd find it, places in Baltimore. And I walked down Second Street to the inter-urban line, which was a very nice inter-urban line. It ran into the Treasury, along H Street and then you could

take it right at the foot of this long hill, and the drugstore there sold tickets. ... so I bought tickets and I walked out when the train came. I started to get on the car, and a conductor, holding onto two handrails, put his foot up in my face, and he says, 'There's a train out in the terminal for you.' I didn't know what he was talking about but he wasn't going to let me get on that. And so I finally got on a streetcar and I got out there, and when I walked into the station a big policeman said, 'There's a train over there for you.' And I didn't know what this was all about. I got over there and it was a bootlegger train. And there were two sections, you know, one going and one coming. And I got aboard this train and, boy, I was welcomed by the bootleggers. They were playing dice over on the floor. They invited me to play dice with them. They thought I was the most enterprising ... sixteen-year-old that they'd ever seen. So I went to Baltimore on a bootleg special.

But while we were waiting there, the other section of that bootleg train came in. And the bootleggers, you know, if you let them bring in one, they're going to bring in two, or they wouldn't be bootleggers. And so they were jumping off the train, and all of them in my car were hanging out the windows and getting a good view of this because they'd be coming back. And they were passing their suitcase-full over to a confederate on the outside, and the police had their patrol wagons all lined up along the fence. And they'd watch and when one of the bootleggers had gotten the second suitcase-full over the fence, they'd just go up to him and take it away from him. They'd just take away one and let him keep the other—take away one and throw it into the patrol wagon and it would crash and the liquor was running in the gutter and everything else. ..." ✧

## Welcome CHRS Supporters

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

### NEW MEMBERS

Tom Barnett &  
Maggie Maguire  
Lauren & Conrad Barski  
Barbara Charles &  
Robert Staples  
Matt & Raissa Downs  
Cathy Hampton &  
Kevin Creighan  
Carlos Pachon &  
Virginia Pinotti  
Pasquale Perrotta

### PATRONS

Gordon & Joan  
Cavanaugh  
George Didden, III  
Matt & Raissa Downs  
Monte Edwards  
Pasquale Perrotta  
Brodie Remington &  
Sapienza Barone  
Kris Swanson &  
Roy Mustelier  
Pat Taylor

### SPONSORS

Bill Manville  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert  
Moesker  
Pat & Virginia Quinn

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# Historic Preservation Briefs

by Nancy Metzger

## Historic Homeowner Grant

**Program (HIHO)** has finally been launched with a pilot program this summer targeting the Anacostia Historic District. The HIHO program is a new financial incentive to help qualified homeowners pay for house repairs that restore historic architecture. The grant program will be opened to other historic districts (including Capitol Hill) following an evaluation period. Two grant cycles are anticipated in 2008. CHRS was part of the historic preservation effort that lobbied the Council and former Mayor Williams to establish the program. Information about the program is available on the Office of Planning

web site (Historic Preservation Office, financial incentives) or by contacting the HP Office (202-442-8800; or [historic.preservation@dc.gov](mailto:historic.preservation@dc.gov)).

**Historic District Signs:** Circular signs identifying the Capitol Hill Historic District will soon be placed at each intersection throughout the historic district. CHRS applied for a DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) grant in August 2005 to have the signs made and mounted. For its part of the grant, CHRS agreed to identify and map each intersection throughout the historic district. (For those who like statistics, we asked for 250 signs.) Unfortunately for us, we needed to make the survey during one of the hottest weeks of

the summer. Judith Capen, Beth Hannold, Charles McMillion, Nancy Metzger, Stephen Morris, and Robert Weinstein were all part of the survey corps. Now the only thing we're waiting for is a special mounting bracket—available from only one supplier. As soon as these are received by the DDOT sign department, the DDOT installation crews will be able to start the installation. In the meantime, if you want to see a prototype, look down by the convention center. The Shaw signs have already been installed.

**Preservation Café:** The Café series will resume in September. The Historic Preservation Committee welcomes suggested topics. Please call the office (202-543-0425) or send an e-mail to [CapHRS@aol.com](mailto:CapHRS@aol.com). ✧

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## Issues with Pennsylvania Avenue Plan *continued from page 3*

Plan was in the works at the time this study started; but very similar policies and actions regarding Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, on the Hill were contained in the Ward 6 part of the 1999 Comprehensive Plan as amended in 1999.

CHRS is strongly committed to planning as the basis for any further zoning and development plans in the city. As a participant in the two comprehensive plan task forces which guided the development of the current comprehensive plan and a strong proponent of the policies and actions in the Capitol Hill Element, I cannot recommend support for this plan in light of the disparity between that element and the recommendations for various actions contained in the Final Report. The Office of Planning has an obligation to recognize and reconcile this. We believe that if the Capitol Hill Element were followed, the proposed developments would be smaller and more integrated with the surrounding neighborhood both in scale and in appearance.

The development proposals

depend heavily on various devices to aggregate land for development, including takings by the government. In our view this is a dubious and controversial action for the DC government. The guiding principle in stimulating development, as it has been for my 40 years of involvement in Hill development activities, is that the city should emphasize streetscape, façade improvements, strong design controls, and historic preservation: all called for in the Capitol Hill Element. The market will respond.

There are a series of 15 "implementation" steps set forth which are supposed to vary in importance, i.e. priority; and "time-frame" with various governmental agencies responsible for the implementation. We do not understand how these were derived or how the priorities were set. We do not agree with any of this because these 15 steps are not clearly related to the Capitol Hill portion of the study or the Capitol Hill Element of the comprehensive plan. In short, these implementation steps are not clearly related to any plan at all.

They appear to be, in some cases such as new bridges and traffic studies, priorities of DDOT that may or may not support appropriate development along Pennsylvania Avenue on the Hill.

In the "next steps" face page of the Final Report there appears to be—for the first time—some inkling of what OP proposes to do with this study, but not a clear end point or actions to follow. There is one further "meeting" and then a "Mayoral Public Hearing"—and we do not understand what that is—and finally "Report Adoption." Please explain these steps, particularly "Report Adoption" and its significance.

As stated earlier, CHRS is not prepared to support the recommendations of this study. It has numerous failings in its shape, content, and study area; it does not relate to fundamental planning policy and actions and is hazy about implementation. We would be pleased to further consult with you in making this study a true implementation of the Capitol Hill Element as it relates to Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. ✧

# Is There a Streetcar in Your Future?

## As Tracks and Plans Are Laid, Questions on Policy Arise

by Dick Wolf

According to the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) the answer is yes. The exact location of the tracks to carry the streetcars in the District is yet to be determined, at least publicly, but Capitol Hill is already in the installation stage along H Street, NE. According to Ken Layden, Associate Director for Planning, DDOT, four street cars are on order, and the streetcar initiative will encompass much more than just four miles of line.

Why streetcars and why now? For those of us old enough to remember streetcars, few lamented their loss. They were noisy, intrusive, dirty and dangerous. Some cities like San Francisco still have them because they have always had them. But let us not confuse them with the entertaining aspects of cable cars—which DC had at one time along with traditional street

cars. Streetcars have come back in a number of cities and an excellent review of the streetcar revival is found in a *Wall Street Journal* article of June 20, 2007: “A Streetcar Named Aspire: Lines Aim to Revive Cities.” The article points out that the streetcar is not simply a mode of transportation, because buses could do the job, but part of the new urban planner initiative calling for “smart growth”—a slogan we are already familiar with on Capitol Hill in connection with “mixed use,” condos, etc.

In particular, the neighborhoods adjacent to the H Street corridor, where the streetcar line is being installed, need to be concerned that the streetcar is not being used to increase the pressure for developers to break the recently installed H Street overlay. The “smart growth” notion has already been used successfully by the Dreyfus development group to dramatically increase height, bulk and density in the row house areas along the corridor.

Aside from the smart growth notions, there are substantial issues of economics and aesthetics which accompany the streetcar proposals.

Mr. Layden, in his address to the Committee of 100 regarding this issue, was at a loss to explain the economic trade-offs between buses and streetcars or the initial cost and life cycle costs of each, including track maintenance. He also had no answer as to why Barracks Row and Georgetown have prospered and revived after the removal of the streetcars, even with problems of ready bus access to these locations. Barracks Row, of course, has Eastern Market Metro stop but Georgetown has nothing like that.

An even more substantial issue is raised in Washington where Federal law prohibits overhead wires in the L’Enfant part of the city; which includes Capitol Hill. Mr. Layden says that DDOT is in discussions with the National Capitol Planning Commission regarding this issue. In the meantime, cars have been ordered and tracks are being laid. Is this putting the cart before the horse? All these issues require more public discussion throughout the city before the final decisions are made, although they appear to have been made already. ✧

## DDOT Reminds Residents to Be Kind to Their Trees in Public Space

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) lists the top ten things you can do to protect your city street tree:

1. Water newly planted street trees—ten gallons per week during hot, dry weather.
2. Don’t nail posters, signs or fliers to any tree.
3. Don’t lock your bicycle or scooter to a street tree.
4. Don’t chain your pet to a tree in or leave him/her tied up in the “tree box.”
5. Maintain your tree box space—pull weeds. Mulch if needed.
6. Don’t plant other flowers, grasses or bushes in the tree box. The tree needs room to grow without competition.
7. If you’re receiving trash pickup near your street tree, keep trash cans away from the tree box area. This reduces soil compaction around the tree and helps protect it.
8. Watch your street tree for any changes like alterations in leaf color or reduced leaf canopy. Call 202-727-1000 and tell the operator you’d like to request a tree inspection if you’re concerned.
9. Don’t prune your street tree yourself or cut any branches. Call 202-727-1000 for a pruning request if you think your tree needs to be trimmed.
10. Enjoy your tree! It provides shade during the hot summer and helps clean the air.

For more information on DDOT’s tree program please visit [www.trees.ddot.dc.gov](http://www.trees.ddot.dc.gov)

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# The Hill on Film

by Mike Canning

*(The following continues our series about how Hollywood movies have treated elements of Capitol Hill. The writer is the CHRS treasurer and writes movie reviews for the Hill Rag.)*

In my last piece, I highlighted how grossly Hollywood had used our venerated Capitol building as a plot point or a geographic shortcut. There was a time—a more innocent time—when access to the Capitol was more permissive. In *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), novice Senator Jimmy Stewart admires the Jefferson statue in the Capitol Rotunda. In *Born Yesterday* (1950), smoothie William Holden leads spunky Judy Holliday into the Capitol Rotunda as a tour guide intones about the Dome's details. Judy is duly impressed.

For *Washington Story* (1952), writer/director Robert Pirosh attained considerable access to the Capitol to tell his story of an honest Congressman played by Van Johnson. Pirosh received approval for shooting inside the Capitol from Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn and got ample cooperation from the Capitol architect of the time, David Lynn, who praised the script,

which he thought gave a genuine feel for congressional life. This production team was also permitted to set scenes within the Rotunda, something not allowed since (in a climatic moment, the congressman punches out an evil publisher right under the Dome!).

Although the filmmakers had to agree to leave the Capitol as they found it, a local reporter who observed the filming found the typical detritus of location shooting, right down to the half-empty soda bottles and crushed cigarettes. "The hallowed halls," he wrote, "have taken on a look not seen since August 21, 1814, when British troops under Admiral Sir George Cockburn put the torch to the seat of government." It was speculated at the time that both the mess the filmmakers left, along with their disruption of Congressional business, turned the legislators off from allowing future shooting in that space.

Ten years later, with *Advise and Consent* (1962), director Otto Preminger acquired substantial access to locations in-and-around the Capitol building, if not in the chambers or in the Rotunda. The film is a treat for Washington history buffs as it features on-

location Capitol scenes, including the tram running alongside the Russell Building on Constitution Avenue, the fabled Senate Caucus Room (site of a dramatic committee hearing), and the Senate's underground monorail, among others. It was the last time a Hollywood film team had significant access to the Capitol and Senate buildings.

In recent years, film companies have been able to convince Congressional authorities to at least allow them dramatic long shots of the East Front. In Robert Redford's *Quiz Show* (1994), the movie's last scene takes place on the steps of the House wing, and in *Random Hearts* (1999), a reprise of this shot takes place at the end of the picture when a congresswoman trips down the central steps. The Congress can still put its foot down if it wants to, however, as über-director Steven Spielberg found out when shooting his 1997 film *Amistad*. Wanting to recreate in situ the historic arguments made by John Quincy Adams in the famous "Amistad" case, the director asked to film in the Capitol's original Supreme Court chambers. But it was no dice, and Spielberg had to resort to a set reconstruction. ✧

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## Zoning News

by Gary Peterson

The DC Zoning Commission has announced that it is holding roundtables to obtain public comments on redrafting the existing Zoning Regulations. The City Council appropriated money to hire a consultant to assist in writing new regulations. The next roundtable will be on Thursday, July 12, at 6:30 pm, at 441 Fourth Street, NW. Although it was CHRS's belief that the Zoning Regulations were going to be completely rewritten, the Commission

states that it "...is interested in hearing views from the public on whether the regulations should be completely overhauled or whether the regulations should be updated; what specific sections are effective, ineffective, or in need of special study; and, best practices used in other jurisdictions." Gary M. Peterson, Chair of the CHRS Zoning Committee will testify at the July meeting. Direct comments to him at [pgarylaw@aol.com](mailto:pgarylaw@aol.com).

The Office of Planning (OP) has finally, after nearly a five-year wait, filed with the Zoning Commission the proposed zoning regulations for Reservation 13 (Reservation 13 was previously a Federal Reservation,

and un-zoned). The proposed regulations comply with the Master Plan that was approved by the City Council on October 15, 2002, and should be approved. The new regulations will establish the Hill East Waterfront as a mixed use, mixed income neighborhood that extends Capitol Hill to the Anacostia River. The Zoning Commission will hold a hearing on the proposed regulations in September or October. If you are interested in the proposed regulations or the pre-hearing statement, please contact Maxine Brown-Roberts, Development Review Specialist, DC Office of Planning,

*Continued next page*

# CHRS Community Grants Deadline is Labor Day

## Neighborhoods Eligible for Grants Expanded

by Larry Pearl

CHRS has established a Labor Day deadline for filing Community Grants Program proposals. 2007 marks the eighth year that CHRS has allocated a portion of the Annual House Tour proceeds for this purpose. Last year the Society awarded six grants totaling \$8000. The maximum grant is usually between \$2000 and \$2500. This year CHRS has a "Beyond the Boundaries" project which could result in the expansion of the Capitol Hill Historic District, both north and east, or in the creation of new historic districts. We encourage those engaged in this effort to apply for grants in support of the affected neighborhoods. Such proposals will be given priority status for this year's grants.

Applications must be for a specific project relating to Capitol Hill or adjacent areas. Incorporation or nonprofit status is not required so long as there is capacity to carry out the project and accountability for the grant. Past grants have included



The new Southeast Branch Library sign was built with a CHRS Community Grant.

plantings and fences around schools, libraries, trees and pocket parks, front yard sculptures and an exhibit honoring educators who are buried in Congressional Cemetery.

The CHRS Grants Committee focuses on the clarity and feasibility of the proposal, its innovative nature, benefits to the Capitol Hill community (the highest rated factor), measurability of results and reliance on CHRS funding (the Society

prefers projects that rely wholly or in large part on the CHRS grant). More detailed information on these criteria, and the priority outlined above, may be found at [www.CHRS.org/Pages/1\\_ProjectsCG1.html](http://www.CHRS.org/Pages/1_ProjectsCG1.html). Applications for grants (original and 6 copies) should reach the CHRS Office at P.O. Box 15624, Washington, DC 20003-0264 or at 420 Tenth Street, SE, by Labor Day, Monday, September 3. ✧

## Zoning News *continued from previous page*

at [Maxine.brown-roberts@dc.gov](mailto:Maxine.brown-roberts@dc.gov) and mention ZC Case 04-05.

The CHRS Zoning Committee met on June 14 and considered the following cases. The votes of the CHRS Zoning Committee are listed below.

**BZA # 17634, 620 East Capitol Street, NE.** The applicant wants to build a two-story accessory building (art studio) at the rear of the property. The committee voted to oppose the requested variance.

**BZA # 17635, 507 C Street, NE.** The applicant proposes building a third story addition to an existing office building. The committee voted to support the variance.

**BZA # 17641, 121 Sixth Street, NE.** The proposal is to build a three-story addition. The committee voted to support the required special exception.

**BZA # 17637, 320 South Carolina Avenue, SE.** The applicant needs an area variance to build a third story addition. There was no neighbor support from abutting neighbors and a neighbor at the rear. The committee voted to defer pending possible neighbor support.

**BZA # 17653, 635 E Street, NE.** The applicant needs a special exception to add a third story to the rear of a row dwelling. The committee voted to support the application.

**BZA # 17661, 531 Ninth Street, SE.** The applicant wants to build a garage at the rear property line. The committee voted to support as a special exception.

**BZA # 17582, 656-66 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE & 325-27 Seventh Street, SE.** The applicant requested several variances to build an addition to an existing retail and commercial building. The committee voted to support all of the requested variances except the variance for parking. The committee wants the owner to provide a combination of offsite parking and Metro passes to the 40 additional tenants. ✧

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# Count of Anacostia's Permanent Goose Population Scheduled for July 10

by Beth Purcell

**N**on-migratory Canada geese live near the Anacostia River. These geese (*Branta canadensis maxima*), the largest subspecies of Canada geese, were introduced here approximately 40 years ago from the Midwest. They live here and eat heartily year-round, consuming marsh plants essential to restoring the Anacostia tidal wetlands. The Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) conducts regular goose counts, to monitor their numbers longitudinally. The geese are counted at "Bladensburg" (mostly inside DC), Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, Kingman Island, Heritage Island and Anacostia Park East.

The next goose count is July 10, 2007. If you would like to participate, please see this month's Calendar. The Anacostia goose count data is as follows:

April 2004 . . . . .	566
July 2004 . . . . .	694
Sept. 2004 . . . . .	342
April 2005 . . . . .	543
July 2005 . . . . .	662
Sept. 2005 . . . . .	745

April 2006 . . . . .	534
July 2006 . . . . .	521
Sept. 2006 . . . . .	496

April 2007 . . . . .	423
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It is too soon to tell whether the Sept. 2006 and April 2007 counts represent a trend. AWS also counts geese in December; December numbers are consistently much higher (and are not used for statistical analysis). These higher numbers may represent other DC non-migratory geese flocking

to the Anacostia in December or migratory geese. However, some biologists believe that when migratory geese rest, they prefer to stop east of US Highway 301, avoiding urban/suburban areas in Maryland and DC. AWS does not count geese in March when migratory geese return to northern Ontario or Quebec. As a result, there are no goose count numbers during the spring migration to compare to the December numbers. The newsletter will report on the July 2007 goose count. ✧

## Mark Your Calendar!

### JULY

**10 Tuesday, 9:00 am**

Anacostia non-migratory goose count.  
Langston Golf Course parking lot.  
Contact: [steve@anacostiaws.org](mailto:steve@anacostiaws.org)

**10 Tuesday, 6:30 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.

**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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