



# NEWS

www.chrs.org

September 2007

## Community Coalition Formed

by Barbara Eck

On behalf of CHRS, Tom Grahame and Barbara Eck spearheaded a meeting in July among community organizations and activists from both sides of the Anacostia River to discuss development and traffic issues facing our various neighborhoods. The initial meeting was intended as a get-acquainted session to identify issues and common concerns. Insofar as common ground could be identified, we hoped to have further meetings to determine how our collective weight might most effectively influence the city government.

There was ready agreement that communities on both sides of the Anacostia River face major impacts from large-scale transportation proposals. These proposals alone involve reconfiguration of three major bridges and the addition of multiple new linkages that will hugely affect neighborhood and commuter traffic flows. The variety of development proposals, as well as projects already underway, will greatly intensify land use, bringing many additional people through and into the Anacostia River communities for work and recreation. Their addition will have large impacts on existing traffic corridors and open space.

All of our affected communities have significant questions and

uncertainties about (1) what exactly is planned, (2) how all the plans in combination will affect our communities, and (3) what the cost to local taxpayers of the transportation infrastructure will be.

The goal of the group was to seek full disclosure from the city. The same information must be provided to all residents and affected communities. There was agreement that the multiplicity of community meetings had resulted in different, and often contradictory, information being given to different groups. Information from District government employees and government consultants has varied from meeting to meeting. Citizens who attend a meeting in one neighborhood receive different and conflicting information from that received by citizens in another neighborhood. Information given to the same residents changes from meeting to meeting without explanation.

To secure answers to our questions and clarification of contradictory information, we decided to organize as the Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Eastern Washington and to send a letter to the Mayor and Council requesting the following action:

- Preparation of a single document that accurately describes all Anacostia Waterfront Initiative,

*Continued on page 5*

## Getting to Know Us—Membership Outreach

by Elizabeth Nelson

Capitol Hill is obviously in the middle of a baby boom, the natural consequence of an influx of young adults. We won't have confirmation until the results of the 2010 Census are published, but it doesn't take a team of statisticians to convince any of us that our population is increasing and our average age is decreasing. These demographic changes, however, have not yet been reflected in our membership.

Many of our new neighbors have been attracted by the quality of life in our urban village, but may not understand its history or the role that the CHRS has played in preserving it. They may be unaware of past struggles or future challenges, and they may be preoccupied with their careers and young families. But CHRS needs them as members every bit as much as they need our vigilance. Therefore, we need to share with them who we are and why our organization is important.

We're increasing our efforts to appeal to young families by raising our profile at community events. We marched in the Capitol Hill Fourth of July Parade, with

*Continued on page 2*

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# President's Column

by Dick Wolf

To begin another active year for CHRS, our first membership meeting will feature Michelle Rhee, the new chancellor of the DC school system. While CHRS has had membership meetings on schools for years, this one is special in several regards. First, of course, is the new system of mayoral control, with an emphasis on school improvement in every respect. Second, and perhaps even more important, is the great number of new families that have appeared on the Hill. They are testimony to the Hill's success in creating a livable, attractive community. The challenge is to keep those families here, and school improvement is the key. We are mindful that improvements to the schools must be led from the top, but ultimately, lasting improvements will come from the everyday pres-

sure from community members and parents in each school to help make the improvements happen and last.

Among the Hill attributes that have attracted so many families has been our enormous heritage of row houses of nearly every variety and size. Only through the most intense vigilance and effort has this row house neighborhood been protected from various forms of destruction: demolition, highways, speculative accumulation, huge additions, and inappropriate uses. Those pressures have become even more intense with the spectacular development in the city, especially now along the edges of the Capitol Hill Historic District.

As a consequence of these pressures on our residential areas, CHRS has committed both effort and money to assist neighborhoods on the borders of the historic district to either become part of

the existing district or to create their own historic district. This effort has already started with the support of several ANCs and a number of concerned residents: near Northeast which includes the two-square-wide strip stretching between E and H Streets, NE, and going east as far as 14th Street, NE; Hill East; Barney Circle; and the area north of H Street to Florida Avenue. Our next house tour will feature houses and buildings "beyond the boundaries" in order to give everyone a sense of how wonderful and special these areas are.

As we embark on these efforts, we will need support and assistance from many of you who live adjacent to and in these areas. Once they are gone, they cannot be replaced. We must protect them not only for those of us who are here now, but also for those who will be future residents. ✧

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## Membership Outreach *continued from page 1*

the best swag and the coolest truck (Karl Schwengel's Model T). We'll help celebrate the dedication of the Community Building at the Ellen Wilson Townhomes on September 16. We're sponsoring a meeting with Chancellor Rhee at Maury Elementary September 25. We'll be adding children's activities to our traditional participation in Barracks Row Day, September 29, and passing out pencils in Lincoln Park for Walk to School Day October 3. All of these occasions give us an opportunity to share information and our personal stories.

If you can help with any of these activities—or another community event that's not yet on our radar—please contact Elizabeth Nelson at 543-3512 or [elizabeth\\_knits@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com). It won't take a lot of your time, and it will be a whole lot of fun. ✧

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## CHRS Preservation Cafés Resume September 19 with "Zoning Matters"

After a summer hiatus, CHRS will resume its monthly Preservation Café series on Wednesday, September 19, with a session called "Zoning Matters". Gary Peterson, chair of CHRS's Zoning Committee, will describe the most common types of zoning on Capitol Hill—R-4 and C-2-A—and explain what the designations mean for residents, homeowners, and commercial enterprises.

"Zoning Matters" is a follow-up to the April 2007 Preservation Café, "The What, Why, Where, When and How of Zoning in DC", which was presented by officials from the DC Office of Zoning. (If you missed the Café or need to refresh your memory, a summary of the discussion is available at [www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org).) Whereas the

April session presented a broad overview of DC's zoning processes and the city agencies and boards involved in zoning review and decisionmaking, Gary will focus on how zoning issues affect Capitol Hill neighborhoods and how Advisory Neighborhood Commissions and local organizations like CHRS participate in zoning review. In short, he will speak to how zoning matters for you and your neighbors and how it affects the nature of the Capitol Hill community where we live and do business.

The "Zoning Matters" Preservation Café will be held Wednesday, September 19, in the Community Room at Ebenezer's Coffee House at Second and F Streets, NE, from 6:30-7:15 pm. ✧

## Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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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](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.

# New Traffic Mobility Study for Eastern Washington, DC Requested

## MEMORANDUM (Abbreviated version):

FROM: Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Eastern Washington

DATE: August 1, 2007

TO: Hon. Adrian Fenty  
*Mayor, District of Columbia*

Hon. Vincent Gray  
*Chair, DC City Council*

Ms. Harriet Tregoning  
*Director, DC Office of Planning*

RE: Request for a New Traffic Mobility Study for Eastern Washington, DC

Gentlemen and Ms. Tregoning:

Communities on both sides of the Anacostia River face major impacts from large-scale transportation proposals. The transportation proposals alone involve reconfiguration of three major bridges and the addition of multiple new linkages that will hugely affect neighborhood and commuter traffic flows. The development proposals will greatly intensify land use bringing many additional people through and into the Anacostia River communities for work and recreation. Their addition will have large impacts on existing traffic corridors and open space.

All our affected communities have significant questions and uncertainties about (1) what exactly is planned, (2) how all the plans in combination will affect our communities and (3) what the cost to local taxpayers of the transportation infrastructure will be.

Acknowledging only the second of these three concerns, the District of Columbia government undertook a study of "future land use and transportation demand in the Anacostia corridor". This was issued in March/April of 2006 and was entitled "The Anacostia Waterfront Transportation Mobility Study". The

other two concerns, i.e. the totality of what is planned and the cost of the transportation "package," have gone largely unaddressed.

We seek the following actions:

- Preparation of a new Mobility study in light of the fundamental deficiencies (summarized below) of the first mobility study. This new study should be prepared by consultants who are expert in the integration of urban land use and multi-modal transportation system planning and who are not involved with particular AWI and other initiatives in the affected communities.
- Preparation of a single document that accurately describes *all* AWI, Great Streets and other significant development projects planned for implementation in the Anacostia River communities.
- Full disclosure of how much parkland is proposed to be taken for development purposes and how much private property is proposed to be taken by eminent domain.
- Realistic estimates of the total cost of these transportation infrastructure projects including a breakdown of how much will be paid by the federal government, how much by District taxpayers and how much by other jurisdictions.
- Estimated costs of alternatives to particular plans which were identified by our communities in District-sponsored, planning meetings.

## Deficiencies of the First Mobility Study

The existing mobility study falls far short of providing the comprehensive look that is needed, given the potential for the AWI and other projects to affect the integrity and

*Continued on page 4*



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# New Traffic Mobility Study Requested *continued from page 3*

viability of our District neighborhoods and the flow of commuter and other regional travel. While the study disclaims any goal of simply "moving cars," regional drivers and commuters appear to be the major beneficiaries of the "rationalized" (but uncoded) system it evaluates. It does not show how AWI and other transportation projects and related economic development will affect our communities.

Major shortcomings of the mobility study (attached) include:

- Failure to examine how freeway and arterial conditions will affect neighborhood traffic conditions
- Failure to examine conditions on the freeways and arterials including the SE/SW freeway and Pennsylvania Avenue. This issue is key to understanding commuter movement across and through our neighborhoods.
- Failure to integrate redevelopment of the 14th Street Bridge into transportation planning for the Anacostia River communities. This issue is important in the understanding of how the proposed system will affect the use of the freeway by regional and interstate car and truck drivers as a beltway alternative.
- No assessment of conditions on the expanded 12 lane, 11th Street Bridge comprised of freeway and non-freeway lanes. For example: this expansion is proposed, in part, in order to shift a large amount of commuter and other regional traffic from the South Capitol Street Bridge. This shift would increase 11th Street Bridge traffic by 64% to 209,000 vehicles daily. A significant portion of this traffic would be carried by the four non-freeway lanes of the 11th Street Bridge and the community streets on both sides of the river. Yet this major impact

on the communities is not even mentioned in the mobility study.

- Failure, conceded in the mobility study (p.A3-21), to examine the impact on the transportation network of the intensified land uses resulting from AWI-sponsored projects and other development initiatives on the east side of the river. For example: the Office of Planning's Great Streets proposal for Pennsylvania Avenue SE calls for unbroken high-rise mixed-use development from the Sousa Bridge to the Maryland state line at Southern Avenue
- Failure to address conditions resulting from Stadium events.
- Failure to describe or assess the benefits of comprehensive community traffic mitigation

## **In Sum**

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1) We believe it is important to do this new mobility study as quickly as reasonably possible. It is important for the future of these communities that residents be provided with this information in time to inform discussion of and decisions about AWI, Great Streets and other major development initiatives. We have heard that some contracts may already have been signed, or signing is imminent, for the 11th Street Bridges Project despite the fact that the final Environmental Impact Statement has not yet been released. We fear that any such contracts might "lock in" particular designs before resident, the Mayor and the Council have had an opportunity to fully digest costs and neighborhood impacts.

2) The same information must be provided to all residents and affected communities. To date, information from District government employees and government consultants varies from meeting to meeting. Citizens who attend a meeting in one neighborhood

receive different and conflicting information from that received by citizens in another neighborhood. Information given to the same residents changes from meeting to meeting without explanation. For instance, residents have been told affirmatively that an east of the river trolley will/will not be built; the contracts have/have not been let and that the trolley will run on Martin Luther King Avenue/Good Hope Road. It is apparent that planners and their advisers are talking past each other and that no one is speaking candidly to the communities. We request an open process with full disclosure for all neighborhoods and wards bordering the Anacostia.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss these concerns. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

**Lisa Alfred**, President  
Barney Circle Association  
Friends of Garfield Park

**Christopher Jerry**  
Fairlawn Citizens Association

**Patrick Crowley**, President  
Association for the Preservation of  
Historic Congressional Cemetery

**William Phillips**, Chair  
Friends of Garfield Park

**Dianne Dale**  
Poplar Point Garden

**Vanessa Ruffin**  
SW Neighborhood Association

**Frazer Walton**, President  
Kingman Park Neighborhood  
Association

**Richard Wolf**, President  
Capitol Hill Restoration Society

*(See related story "Community Coalition Formed" starting on page 1 of this issue.)*

# Community Coalition Formed *continued from page 1*

Great Streets, and other significant development projects planned for implementation in the Anacostia River communities.

- Full disclosure of how much parkland is proposed to be taken for development purposes and how much private property is proposed to be taken by eminent domain.
- Realistic estimates of the total cost of the transportation infrastructure projects, including a breakdown of how much will be paid by the federal government, how much by District taxpayers, and how much by other jurisdictions.
- Preparation of a comprehensive Mobility Study prepared by consultants who are expert in the integration of urban land use and multi-modal transportation system planning and who are not involved with particular AWI or

other initiatives in the affected communities.

We will follow up with meetings with individual Councilmembers and Mayor Fenty's designees in the Department of Transportation and the Office of Planning. ✧

*(See related story "Traffic Mobility Study Requested" starting on page 3 of this issue.)*

## Looking Back on Capitol Hill

by Nancy Metzger

Claire and Laurence Davis came to Capitol Hill in 1968, as part of what might be described as the first wave of the restoration movement. At least it was the first time their house near Seventh and A Streets, NE, had been renovated, because they found that their "livable" house had the furnace in the *middle* of the kitchen. That got moved in short order. For Laurence, a lawyer with a specialty in Indian affairs, the important part of the house was the garden. His interest in gardening led to a watershed moment in the his-

tory of the Capitol Hill Garden Club, recounted below. Laurence died not long after he and Claire talked with Elizabeth Stein for the Ruth Ann Overbeck Oral History Project. In the interview, Claire talks about her husband's garden and its part in their life here on Capitol Hill:

*"Larry said, 'I'm going to join a garden club. I've got to find out about one.' So he went over to the garden club meeting one night, and there were all women, and he said, 'I want to be a member.' And they said, 'Oh, but we don't take men.' [laugh] He said, 'Well, I'd like to be a member.' So they had a*

*little meeting, and they said, 'Well, all right. I guess it's OK.' He ended up being the president later on.*

*"...Then my husband had beautiful flowers. He grew mums, and they were just spectacular, they just filled the whole yard. And every year we would have, on I think it was Teddy Roosevelt's birthday, we had a party. ... Someone had a truck that took him down to Maryland and he brought 10 bushels of oysters back, and we had about 150 people coming in and out, neighbors and friends. All the neighbors came. And they had oysters on—you know—the shell. We had two shuckers, and of course the idea was to come to see the plants. And the place was just covered with mums. Different colored mums, it was just really, in fact we had a person from the Post [Phil Casey of the Washington Post newspaper, November 4, 1974 article] and a person from the Washington Star [newspaper]. I forget her name now but she had the one page—she was a neighbor of ours [Ann Crutcher, the food editor, lived at 700 East Capitol Street]. And I remember she had headlines, 'Mums the Word.'"*

This entire interview and many others can be read at [www.capitol-hillhistory.org](http://www.capitol-hillhistory.org). ✧

## Welcome CHRS Supporters

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

### NEW MEMBERS

Lisa Alfred  
Barbara & Marvin  
Bordelon  
Bernadette Brennan  
Michael & Lori Cabbage  
Carol Fugita  
Bryan George  
Bruce & Susan Gwilliam  
Anne & Andy Mead  
Amanda Murphy  
Anne Northup  
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Dr. Mehmet Yalcin

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Carol Shannon  
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Lyle Schauer

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# Proposed 2008 CHRS Operating Budget

by Paul Cromwell

The proposed CHRS 2008 operating budget proposes to continue line item expenditures based on previous years, with several notable exceptions.

One category—the Endowment Fund—has been removed from the operating budget because funds historically have not been transferred to the operating budget.

A new line item—Beyond the Boundaries—has been added to recognize the Society's interest in the historic neighborhoods outside the boundaries of the Capitol Hill

Historic District, but within the Capitol Hill Planning Area. CHRS is prepared to offer assistance, from sponsoring activities designed to promote appreciation of neighborhood history to assisting with surveys of the neighborhoods' historic resources. The Capitol Hill Area Element of DC's Comprehensive Plan defines the boundaries of this planning area as, very roughly, Florida Avenue and Benning Road to the north, Second Street to the west, the freeway to the south, and the Anacostia Waterfront to the east. A total of \$36,000 has been identified for this effort.

The line items concerning Historic Preservation and Membership have been increased to support two separate contracts, the first to complete the Photo Project and the second to identify new membership initiatives. To support these new activities, funding is proposed to be transferred from the Endowment Fund account (Transfer in from Other Accounts), which was augmented by this year's very successful house tour.

The proposed budget envisions a return to the typical net gain for the 2008 house tour.

*Continued next page*

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## “WETA Neighborhoods” to Feature Capitol Hill

Capitol Hill will be the subject for the next installment of “WETA Neighborhoods,” a mini-documentary series produced by the station and broadcast on Channel 26. WETA is producing four two-minute stories on Capitol Hill, highlighting the community's traditions, history, and landmarks. The premiere will be Saturday, September 1, at 8:00 am, and will air throughout the month.

The program includes the following stories:

**Marine Barracks Washington:** The oldest active post of the United States Marine Corps has been a

fixture of Capitol Hill since 1801. Witness the military traditions proudly continued day in and day out by Marines at the barracks at 8th and I Streets.

**Tom Kelly's Capitol Hill:** The Capitol Hill neighborhood is often identified by its great structures: the U.S. Capitol, the Library of Congress, and Union Station. But to a boy growing up there in the 1920s and 1930s, those were the places your neighbors worked or built. WETA visits with Tom Kelly as he shares his memories of the neighborhood where he's lived all of his life.

**National Capital Bank:** On

Pennsylvania Avenue, sandwiched between two modern banking giants, stands National Capital Bank. The program explores how this seemingly small, family-run business has survived since 1889, weathering stock market crashes, great depressions, recessions, and more.

**Congressional Cemetery:** Most people think of cemeteries only as final resting places for the dead, but Congressional Cemetery has become something of a place for the living. Discover how an immense community effort has led to the preservation and transformation of the historic cemetery. ✧

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## Zoning Committee Report

**Dreyfus Mediation.** At the behest of the Office of Planning (OP), members of five community groups have entered into mediation with Louis Dreyfus Company over the development of the property fronting on H Street, NE, between Second and Third Streets. OP hired Lee Quill, AIA, as mediator. The community groups are

CHRS, Stanton Park Neighborhood Association, ANC6A, ANC6C, and one resident from Third Street, NE. We have had three meetings with the mediator, and Dreyfus' architect and the group also met with and briefed the Third Street residents.

The mediation has progressed very well, and the height and density of the building has been reduced. It is possible that an agreement can be reached before the October 1, 2007, Zoning Commission meeting

Based on BZA cases that have been set down, there will be two CHRS

Zoning Committee hearings during the remainder of the year. The first hearing will be on September 6, when the committee will consider BZA #17665—654 Independence Avenue, SE. The second hearing will be on November 8, and the committee will consider : BZA #17620 – 1383-85 H Street, NE; BZA #17683 – 109 15th Street, NE; BZA #17692 – 914 11th Street, SE; BZA #17694 – 516 A Street, NE.

See Mark Your Calendar for meeting details. ✧

**Proposed 2008 CHRS  
Operating Budget**

	Budget Expended 2004	Budget Expended 2005	Budget Expended 2006	Budget Adopted 2007	Dollars thru 7/31/2007	Dollars remaining year end	Budget Proposed 2008
<b>I. SOCIETY ACTIVITIES</b>							
<b>A. Total Income</b>	<b>19808</b>	<b>23488</b>	<b>25548</b>	<b>20700</b>	<b>28995</b>	<b>8295</b>	<b>63500</b>
Membership	18878	19626	21331	20000	18995	-1005	20000
Interest	195	415	734	300	0	-300	300
Contributions	46	20	1000	200	0	-200	200
Transfer in from other accounts	0	0	0	0	10000	10000	43000
Miscellaneous (e.g., DC Gov Photo project)	689	3427	2483	200	0	-200	0
<b>B. Total Expenses</b>	<b>48896</b>	<b>58765</b>	<b>56996</b>	<b>57100</b>	<b>55925</b>	<b>1175</b>	<b>108500</b>
Administrative Expenses	5799	4682	4032	4500	4590	-90	5000
Accounting Service Expenses	3500	3500	4000	4000	2500	1500	2500
Computer support/purchase	0	0	0	1500	0	1500	7000
Insurance	0	1087	1087	1100	374	726	800
Salaries	5575	7799	7590	0	407	-407	0
Personal Services Contract-Admin.	0	0	0	9600	8501	1099	10000
Employment Expenses	807	945	1670	0	430	-430	0
Rent (office and storage)	8526	8304	10067	9600	8346	1254	10560
Grants paid	6700	8425	9000	5000	10300	-5300	12000
President's Party	1500	482	273	1000	483	517	300
CHRS Elections	699	610	570	500	200	300	600
City Planning Committee-Wolf	1994	2000	0	1200	0	1200	500
Community Development Committee-Eck	150	1462	475	500	0	500	500
Communications Committee-Molson	0	469	864	0	0	0	1000
Environment Committee-Purcell	0	0	0	100	15	85	100
Historic Preservation Committee-Metzger	2613	3602	1487	4000	2011	1989	3000
Beyond the Boundaries				0	1300	-1300	36000
Membership Committee	413	1581	540	700	4626	-3926	4800
Zoning Committee-Peterson	0	90	0	100	254	-154	240
Newsletter Expenses	9076	9085	9942	11000	8868	2132	11000
Forums	766	950	88	700	70	630	300
Web Site (DC Access)	780	875	1450	1500	2650	-1150	2000
Miscellaneous (including 50th in '05)	0	2818	3861	500	0	500	300
<b>C. Net Gain &lt;Loss&gt; from Society Activities</b>	<b>-29088</b>	<b>-35277</b>	<b>-31448</b>	<b>-36400</b>	<b>-26930</b>	<b>9470</b>	<b>-45000</b>
<b>II. SALE OF GOODS</b>							
<b>A. Total Income from Goods</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>1283</b>	<b>2963</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>1820</b>	<b>1270</b>	<b>550</b>
Promotional Items Sales	6	1231	740	500	151	-349	500
HD Guidelines Sales	193	52	33	50	53	3	50
Workshops Inc	2190	0	1616	1616	0		
<b>B. Total Expenses for Goods</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>1769</b>	<b>4265</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>550</b>
Promotional Items Purchase (Nelson)	522	1769	115	500	0	500	500
Sales Tax	0	74	82	50	37	13	50
Workshop Exp.	0	0	4068	0	0	0	0
<b>C. Net Gain &lt;Loss&gt; from Sales of Goods</b>	<b>-323</b>	<b>-486</b>	<b>-1302</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1783</b>	<b>1783</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>III. ENDOWMENT FUND (SEPARATE REPORT)</b>							
				1400			
<b>IV. HOUSE TOURS</b>							
<b>A. Tour Income 2007</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>76708</b>	<b>26708</b>	<b>62860</b>
Prior Year (e.g., 2005)	0	62263	0	0	0	0	0
Prior Year (2006)	0	0	57000	0	650	650	
Current Year (2007)	0	0	0	50000	76058	26058	
Budget Year (2008)	0	0	0	0	0	0	62860
<b>B. Tour Expenses (Current and Prior)</b>	<b>16243</b>	<b>12631</b>	<b>14500</b>	<b>15000</b>	<b>18251</b>	<b>-3251</b>	<b>15000</b>
<b>C. Net Gain &lt;Loss&gt; from House Tours</b>		<b>49632</b>	<b>42500</b>	<b>35000</b>	<b>58457</b>	<b>23457</b>	<b>45000</b>
<b>V. CHRS OPERATING NET GAIN &lt;LOSS&gt;</b>	<b>-29411</b>	<b>13869</b>	<b>9750</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33310</b>	<b>34710</b>	<b>0</b>



# New Life for Groff Court

by Amanda Molson

Located just inside the boundaries of the Capitol Hill Historic District between Third and Fourth and E and F Streets, NE, Groff Court has become the third inhabited Capitol Hill alley to undergo rebricking by the city. Following in the footsteps of Brown's Court and Gessford Court, Groff Court is currently receiving new bricks across the eastern pass parallel to Fourth Street and the northern pass parallel to F Street. Portions of the remainder of the alley were rebricked during recent construction of alley townhouses, and the tan pavers covering the western pass are still in usable condition.

The eastern pass was the most in need of attention, and the only dwellings original to the alley also occupy this historically important stretch of Groff Court. On September 25, 1890, a single permit for the construction of nine brick alley dwellings at a cost of approximately \$4,500 was issued to builder Diller B. Groff. These nine dwellings appear on the 1893 plat. Although Groff achieved great success as a prolific builder across the city after moving to Washington in 1870, his career ended following two years in prison (beginning in 1904) for defrauding the United States Post Office in a contract to provide "Groff's Patent Mailbox Fastener." Groff died in 1910 of "apoplexy" and maintained his innocence through his final days while living at 1107 I Street, NW. Apparently, Groff's reputation was not sullied beyond forgiveness, as the alley was named in his honor.

Of Groff's original 1890s houses, only six remained by the time of the 1968 plat. Today, only five remain, with the sixth likely taken for widening of the alley sometime between the 1968 plat and a 1970s photo showing only five houses in James Borchert's book, *Alley Life in Washington: Family, Community,*



*Groff Court, located between Third and Fourth and E and F Streets, NE*

*Religion, and Folklife in the City, 1850-1970.*

The surface of Groff Court began to deteriorate, and even a jumble of concrete and asphalt patch jobs crumbled in recent years. The eastern pass in particular was so sunken that storm water rushing to a drain on the northeast corner of the alley regularly flooded. Utilized daily for neighbors of all ages to congregate, parts of the alley had become a choppy network of deteriorating surfaces that made walking, biking, and children's activities precarious.

Residents signed a petition

when it was learned that Groff Court was not listed on the city's long-range schedule for rebricking, and they successfully presented their case—and a letter of support from CHRS—to their local ANC. Alley inhabitants were thrilled when work began this summer, and the quality of work has thus far been impressive. Positive offshoots of the overhaul are already evident as weeds are being pulled, houses are being painted, and the youngest residents of Groff Court and the surrounding block safely race down the new brick thoroughway on tricycles most afternoons. ✧



# Historic Preservation Briefs

## Searching for an Unknown Member

In the immediate aftermath of the Eastern Market fire, a CHRS member mentioned to a Board member that one of his specialties was historic lighting. However, we haven't been able to trace him through our records. Would the unknown member please identify himself to the office at 543-0425 or CapHRS@aol.com so that we can follow up?

## Eastern Market Plans

The architectural firm, Quinn Evans, has been delivering a steady stream of plans for the restoration and renovation of the historic Eastern Market. In June, the Historic Preservation Review Board gave approval to the 90% plans for interior and exterior work (with certain details still to be agreed upon). Shortly thereafter came the 100% plans for the roof. The most recent was a draft submission of drawings and specifications for the window rehabilitation package—a stand-alone early package of work at the South and North Halls. This submission covers planned repair, rehabilitation, and replacement work for most windows in the two main halls and means that these can be bid separately if that is the most efficient way to go. Some selected South Hall windows and the Center Hall need to be handled differently and will be included in the larger rehabilitation project.

The lighting plan has been one of the most complex issues to address, as light will be contributed from the skylights, window and door glazing, and light fixtures.

## Logan School Alumni Needed

Do you know someone who attended the "new" Logan School at Third and G Streets, NE? A neighbor or a relative? (If you know someone who attended the old Logan School, we'd like to know about him or her as

well.) A landmark application has been prepared for the building, and it would be great to augment that with photographs and oral histories. We'd like to talk with some people who grew up in the neighborhood who could tell us about their days at the school and who might just happen to have a photograph of the Halloween parade or the principal at graduation exercises. Please contact the CHRS office at 543-0425 or CapHRS@verizon.net.

## Hard Times for Historic Alleys Program?

While change occurs frequently at city agencies, the departure of John Deatruck from the DC Department of Transportation as Chief Engineer could be a worrisome sign for the city's Historic Alleys Program. Mr. Deatruck, a Capitol Hill resident, understood the value of using historic paving material in the city's historic alleys, and he understood the integral and unique contribution of these alleys to the city's historic districts that are fortunate to still have these resources. The program won a Herrema Award in 2006 for its contributions to the built environment of Capitol Hill. However, in the last budget round the program lost funding, and now a chief supporter of the program is gone.

## New City Archaeologist

Ruth Troccoli, the new archaeologist for the DC Historic Preservation Office (replacing Nancy Kassner, who retired), will be responsible for reviewing federal and local projects, maintaining the archaeological site files, and providing public outreach. She has a B.A. in Classical Archaeology from Douglass College, Rutgers University, and a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Florida. Her contact information is 442-8836; ruth.troccoli@dc.gov. ✧

## Preservation Grant Program Begins

The Targeted Historic Preservation Assistance Amendment Act of 2006 creates a new financial incentive to help qualified homeowners in 12 historic districts pay for certified rehabilitation work. The grants are available to cover exterior or structural work.

The grants are income-limited. Applicants must have maximum annual household income of less than \$68,268 for a one-person household to \$151,705 for an eight-person household.

The program is currently being made available as a demonstration project in the Anacostia Historic District, with an allocation of \$300,000. An additional \$900,000 will be available for projects in all 12 historic districts sometime after September 30, 2007. An additional \$1.25 million has been proposed for the following year. Additional details will be made available at the CHRS website as they become known. ✧

## CHRS Community Forum, Sept. 25

Featured speaker Michelle Rhee, Chancellor of DC Public Schools. Forum will focus on lessons learned from this year's school opening and the first month of school. Maury Elementary School, 1250 Constitution Avenue, NE.

Event is free and open to the public, no reservations required. ✧

# The Hill on Film

by Mike Canning

The rebuilding of Eastern Market is on everybody's mind these days, and the new East Hall will be functional by the time of this newsletter's appearance. The news, recently imparted by CHRS's own Gary Peterson, that the Market will be the site this month of a shoot for a major Hollywood movie directed by Ridley Scott made me muse on how this venerable Capitol Hill landmark has been used in motion pictures. The answer is: not much.

One recent, and not very heartening example, was in the 1998 Bruce Willis suspense film *Mercury Rising*. The film does not particularly highlight Washington locations, but one plot point—which involves finding a device with an important code—shows a sequence with a subsidiary character at

Eastern Market's flea market, looking for such a device among the objects on display. The sequence is perfunctory, however, and Eastern Market is not even identified. It was one of those shoots—so common in Hollywood pictures—that took all day to set up and shoot, yet ultimately produced probably less than a minute of actual screen time.

Coincidentally, also released in 1998, was another, far more obscure film, though one which made excellent use of Eastern Market, as well as the rest of DC. It was *Slam*, directed and co-written by Marc Levin, which told the story of a ex-con from Southeast DC who is redeemed by a good woman and "slam" poetry. Though shot on the cheap with a rough, documentary feel, the film is like no other in picturing the non-tourist, "other"

side of Washington. Starring Saul Williams as the redeemed Ray Joshua and Sonja Sohn (best known from HBO's *The Wire*) as Lauren Bell, his redeemer, the film is unique in featuring scenes shot at the DC Jail and in utterly non-scenic Southeast neighborhoods—as well as some familiar city landmarks. But it is Eastern Market that serves as the key romantic landscape where the two principals bond. In a nice, lengthy montage, Ray and Lauren are seen—on a bright, colorful day—cruising the stalls, getting a bite to eat, and lolling in the driveway across from the Market, enjoying the mood and each other.

*Slam* may be hard to find at local video outlets, but it is worth looking for to get a most positive image of our neighborhood's gathering place. ✧

## Vacant Property Taskforce, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions 6A & 6C

The Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANC) on the north side of Capitol Hill, ANCs 6A and 6C, have developed a website with information on vacant and incorrectly taxed properties. The ANCs have formed a task force to catalog the properties and then bring them to the attention of the Office of Tax Revenue and the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs.

David Holmes, Vice Chair of ANC 6A, said, "This is a tool to improve our neighborhoods, help the city find tax cheats, and eliminate nuisance conditions." Your input is invited.

The map may be found by using the link on the home page of ANC6A at [www.anc6a.org](http://www.anc6a.org). ✧

## New Eastern Market Coordinator

Stacy Norris has been named as the new acting coordinator of issues related to Eastern Market by the DC Office of Property Management. She will be responsible for oversight of the new East Hall, the rebuilding of the damaged South Hall, and managing the continuing activities in and around the historic Eastern Market building.

Norris replaces Aimee Occhetti as coordinator. Norris received a BA cum laude in economics from Ramapo College in Mahwah, NJ, and an MA in political science from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ. Prior to joining OPM, Norris was part of the management team at Broadway House for Continuing Care, New Jersey's only specialized care facility for people living with HIV/AIDS. She is part of DC's management



intern program, a two-year training program. She will spend six months in each of four different positions with DC government. Her first position is with OPM. In this new position, she will certainly get her baptism by fire. ✧

# Reserve Now for Sept. 11 Overbeck Lecture: Our Neighborhood's River, and the Nation's

With a new baseball stadium and various waterfront development proposals focusing new attention on the river that partially bounds our neighborhood, Capitol Hill historian John R. Wennersten leads off the Overbeck History Lecture season on Tuesday, September 11, with a look at the significance of the Anacostia to the city and the nation.



Based on a forthcoming book, Wennersten's presentation will explore, for example, the early days of capital-building, when the Anacostia figured largely in Pierre L'Enfant's vision of Washington as a political and commercial center, and the Civil War-era transformation of the waterway into an urban river and sewage conduit whose problems continued into the modern era. The river, he notes, became a metaphor for regional racial divisions that extended from slavery days through the public housing controversies and urban discontent of the twentieth century.

A retired professor of history and government, Wennersten taught for 32 years on three campuses of the University of Maryland system, as well as in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Japan. His earlier books include *The Oyster Wars of Chesapeake Bay*; *Maryland's Eastern Shore, A Journey in Time and Place*; and *Chesapeake Bay, An Environmental Biography*. The lecture will be held on Tuesday, September 11, at 8:00 pm at the Naval Lodge Hall at 330 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. As usual, admission is free, but a reservation is required due to limited seating. Please email [OverbeckLecture@aol.com](mailto:OverbeckLecture@aol.com), leaving your name and email address so you can receive a confirmation and any updates. Email is our preferred reservation method, but you may leave a message at 202-544-1845. ✧

you can receive a confirmation and any updates. Email is our preferred reservation method, but you may leave a message at 202-544-1845. ✧

## Bringing Eastern Market Back: Sounds, Pictures, and Historic Preservation

Thursday, September 6,  
6:30 – 8:30 pm

The Goethe-Institut will host a panel discussion about the role played by historic preservationists in the restoration of Eastern Market, which was built in 1872-73. There will be archival photos and audio recorded at Eastern Market for the Adolf Cluss project, along with sounds from the public market in the architect's German hometown, Heilbronn.

### PANELISTS:

**Tanya Beauchamp**, Historian and Historic Preservationist, specialist on Cluss buildings

**Baird Smith**, AIA, FAPT, Quinn Evans Architects, overseeing the restoration of Eastern Market

**Alex van Oss**, audio producer

**Monte Edwards**, Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee

**Joseph Browne**, director, Adolf Cluss Exhibition Project

**Bill Gilcher**, moderator

NO CHARGE. RSVP to 202-289-1200, ext. 163.

LOCATION: 812 7th Street, NW

MORE INFORMATION:

[www.goethe.de/cluss](http://www.goethe.de/cluss), and [www.adolf-cluss.org](http://www.adolf-cluss.org)

CONTACT: Norma F. Broadwater, Goethe-Institut, 202-289-1200, ext. 106, [nbroadwater@washington.goethe.org](mailto:nbroadwater@washington.goethe.org) ✧

## Fall "E-cycling" and Hazardous Waste Disposal Set for October 27

The fall household hazardous waste disposal and e-cycling collection will be held on Saturday, October 27, 2007, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Benning Road Trash Transfer Station, 3200 Benning Road, NE.

### Hazardous waste

Some household products contain strong chemicals that can be flammable, corrosive, or toxic. Used properly, these products pose little threat to the environment or human health. It's when you try to dispose of them that you may contribute to water pollution or endanger people and pets. These household hazards should not be discarded in the regular trash or

poured down the drain or onto the ground.

### "E-cycling"

Many people are unaware that some electronics, especially computers, contain significant amounts of potentially dangerous materials, including lead and mercury.

Residents can drop off end-of-life consumer electronics, including audiovisual equipment, televisions, cell phones, and home office equipment such as computers, computer parts, photocopiers, and fax machines. These machines will be broken down into their component parts (plastic, glass, toxic metals) and recycled or disposed of safely. ✧



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# Mark Your Calendar!

## SEPTEMBER

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**6 Thursday, 6:30 – 8:30 pm**  
Goethe-Institut, 812 Seventh Street, NW. Panel discussion on the role played by historic preservationists in the restoration of Eastern Market. Monte Edwards will be a panel member. Details: Norma Broadwater, 289-1200, ext. 106. See page 11.

**10 Monday, 6:30 pm**  
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 Tenth Street, SE, first floor. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.

**11 Tuesday, 8:00 pm**  
Overbeck Lecture: Capitol Hill historian John Wennersten lectures on the significance of the Anacostia River to the city and the nation, from the early days of capital-building to the present. Naval Lodge Hall, 330 Pennsylvania Ave., SE. Admission is free, but a reservation is required: email [OverbeckLecture@aol.com](mailto:OverbeckLecture@aol.com) or call 544-1845. See page 11.

**13 Thursday, 7:30 pm**  
CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 Tenth Street, SE, first floor. The committee will consider BZA# 17665 – 654 Independence Avenue, SE. Details: Gary Peterson, 547-7969.

**15 Saturday, 12 – 7 pm**  
H Street Music Festival & Bazaar. Focus will be on visual and performing arts, neighborhood history, and music. Multiple stages featuring music, theatre, and poetry. 1200-1400 blocks of H Street, NE. Details: [festivalonh.org](http://festivalonh.org) or Anwar Saleem, 543-0161; 439-0470; Anwar.Saleem@hstreet.org

**16 Sunday, 2 – 4 pm**  
Dedication of the Community Building at Townhomes on Capitol Hill, 750 Sixth Street, SE. Community leaders will speak at this ceremony honoring the late Fran Taylor, one of the visionaries who helped create this attractive, mixed-income development out of the ruins of the old Ellen Wilson dwellings. Details: 547-0603.

**18 Tuesday, 6:30 pm**  
CHRS Board of Directors, Townhomes on Capitol Hill, 750 Sixth Street, SE, second floor. Details: Dick Wolf, 543-4353.

**19 Wednesday, 6:30 pm**  
CHRS Preservation Café on “Zoning Matters.” CHRS zoning committee chair Gary Peterson will lead this seminar. Using specific case examples, the meeting will focus on the technical aspects of zoning regulations, including variances, special uses, rear and side yard requirements, parking, PUDs, and overlay districts. Ebenezer’s Coffee House, 201 F Street, NE, basement level (wheelchair accessible). Event is free and open to the public, no reservations required. Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211. See page 2.

**25 Tuesday, 6:30 pm**  
CHRS Community Forum with featured speaker Michelle Rhee, Chancellor of DC Public Schools. Meeting preceded by a tour of the newly renovated school library from 6-6:30. Forum will focus on lessons learned from this year’s school opening and the first month of school. Maury Elementary School, 1250 Constitution Avenue, NE. Event is free and open to the public, no reservations required. Details: Elizabeth Nelson, 543-3512.

**27 Thursday, 10:00 am**  
Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 Fourth Street, NW (#1 Judiciary Square, Room 220 south). Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.

**29 Saturday 11 am – 5 pm**  
4th Annual Barracks Row Fest, 500-700 block of Eighth Street, SE. Annual community family fair sponsored by Barracks Row Main Street. CHRS table will feature face painting and literature. Details: 544-3188.

## OCTOBER

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**1 Monday, 6:30 pm**  
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 Tenth Street, SE, first floor. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.

**3 Wednesday, 7:30 – 8:30 am**  
Walk to School Day. CHRS will pass out pencils to children in Lincoln Park. Details: Elizabeth Nelson, 543-3512.

**16 Tuesday, 6:30 pm**  
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 Sixth Street, SE, second floor. Details: Dick Wolf, 543-4353.

**17 Wednesday, 6:30 pm**  
CHRS Preservation Café. Topic to be announced. Ebenezer’s Coffee House, 201 F Street, NE, basement level (wheelchair accessible). Details: Shauna Holmes, 546-5211.

**25 Thursday, 10:00 am**  
Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 Fourth Street, NW (#1 Judiciary Square), Room 220 south. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.



### Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 Tenth Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

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