



NEWS

www.chrs.org

November 2007

More Commuter Traffic Likely Headed for Hill Neighborhoods

DDOT Releases Eleventh Street Bridges EIS: Comments Due November 20

by Tom Grahame and Barbara Eck

The DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the new Eleventh Street bridges. Adoption of this report will allow work to begin on the rebuild and redesign of the bridges. Comments must be received by November 20. Anyone who wishes to look at the FEIS can do so at: www.11thstreetbridgeseis.com/whatsnew.asp. Comments can be emailed to EleventhSt@ch2m.com.

CHRS is currently reviewing this voluminous document, and will have specific comments on the FEIS before the deadline. We have been involved in community meetings dealing with Anacostia River Crossings (bridges at various locations) since 2003. CHRS has kept members apprised of DDOT plans and reported our involvement and our assessment of these plans in the newsletter and in other local newspapers. We will reserve our comments on this FEIS pending completion of our review, but will briefly describe the bridges

project that the FEIS purports to have studied.

The FEIS presents several alternatives. Each alternative would replace the eight lane bridge span and provide freeway connections on both sides of the river. Each alternative would also build a four lane "local" bridge between

Capitol Hill and Anacostia. The increased bridge capacity because of the added local lanes is more likely to facilitate commuter traffic through our neighborhoods rather than reduce traffic and congestion, which is a stated objective of the Eleventh Street Bridges project.

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October Preservation Café: Progress Report on Eastern Market Restoration

by Nancy Metzger

Restoring a landmark and bringing it up to code is always an interesting proposition, but at the October Preservation Café, Tony Esse and Tina Roach pointed out that the Eastern Market fire presented some unusual historic preservation opportunities.

Tony Esse, P.E., supervisory project manager for DC's Office of Property Management, started off the session with a look at the restoration schedule for Eastern Market:

- Work to replace the roof is now underway (see details below). What is not visible from the street is the temporary roof, a

flat plywood and rubber membrane that will protect the market interior until the main roof is finished.

- Window restoration will begin in a matter of weeks.
- Major restoration work of the interior and the installation of upgraded systems (new heat, air conditioning, electrical, toilet facilities, and sprinkler system) are scheduled to start in January or February.

Tina Roach, AIA, architect with Quinn Evans architectural firm that is in charge of the project, gave the audience a close-up look at some of the conditions uncovered by the fire, the restoration

Continued on page 4

President's Column

by Dick Wolf

Eastern Market has been selected as one of the "Ten Great Neighborhoods in America" by the American Planning Association. The news release announcing this award noted that "Civic Activism [is] an Enduring Staple in This DC Neighborhood." That is a compli-

ment to CHRS and was so recognized when Sharon Ambrose, our retired DC Council member, called to congratulate us for our contributions to the retention and development of the Eastern Market and the entire Hill. I reminded her that she had supported good government in many ways—both as a Council member and Council staffer—including our initiatives regarding the Hill and the preservation of neighborhoods.

Sharon's efforts and the work of many others, individually and through organizations, have made Capitol Hill a monument to civic activism. Unfortunately, the term "civic activism" has been used in a derogatory sense to paint many of us as "nimby's," "no-growth advocates," "against change," etc. Much of this name-calling comes

from the organized developer community and sometimes from government officials. Maybe the award will make some of our opponents think twice and focus the city and others on one of the most critical elements in making this a better city: building good neighborhoods.

Capitol Hill Historic District, we have secured sufficient funding to perform surveys of much of greater Capitol Hill. This Beyond the Boundaries initiative was the subject of our lead article in the last newsletter.

Capitol Hill is much more than Eastern Market. The Market is really a symbol of what civic activism can accomplish. There are many other examples: the schools library project; Barracks Row/Main Street; Barney Circle Historic District; the H Street, NE Overlay; the Overbeck lectures; CHAW—the list could go on. The underlying benefit of this award is not just for us as residents of the Hill. The entire city benefits enormously, not only economically but socially—a "public good" that is not accounted for in most cost/benefit analyses.

Thanks to the APA for this award. It's nice to be recognized, but we cannot and will not rest on our laurels. ✧

[More about the APA award on page 5.]

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CHRS will not rest in its efforts to secure for the rest of Capitol Hill the benefits of both good planning and historic preservation. In support of efforts to expand the

CHRS Remembers Robert Reed and Barbara Held Reich

by Amanda Molson

CHRS lost two special friends in October, both of whom were committed to Capitol Hill and active in our neighborhood's preservation. They will be missed, and we are grateful for their contributions.

Robert Reed died suddenly and is survived by four boys and his wife, Karen Reed. The Reeds have been significant providers of time and support to numerous Capitol Hill organizations. Together they painstakingly restored 800 East Capitol Street, NE, to its former glory with guidance from historic photographs and also brought the house into modern times with creative spaces to accommodate a young family.

CHRS was privileged to feature their joint masterpiece on the 2007 House and Garden Tour, and this treasure of a residence was a highlight of the event. Robert was a successful businessman, a thoughtful steward of a special home, and a valued member of our community. We send our condolences to the Reed family.

Barbara Held Reich, legendary real estate broker, has passed away after an illness. She began buying, selling, and restoring Capitol Hill properties in the 1950's, serving as an important early pioneer in the revitalization of our neighborhood. Barbara won CHRS awards with her late husband, Robert Reich, for best residential restoration and best commercial restoration, developed the alley dwellings of

Archibald Walk, and ran a well-respected real estate office on Capitol Hill for many years. She received a Capitol Hill Community Foundation award for her work in 1984 and was active in numerous organizations ranging from CHRS to CHAMPS to Market Row to Congressional Cemetery.

In 2002, Barbara reflected back on her life in an interview with the Capitol Hill History Project, which can be viewed online at www.capitolhillhistory.org/interviews/2002/reich_barbara_held.html. Barbara lived in Georgetown in recent years, where she had also resided before coming to Capitol Hill. We offer our sympathy to Barbara's daughter, Catherine, who remains a resident of Capitol Hill. ✧

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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

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

* 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.

More Commuter Traffic Likely

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There has been some incorrect information given out as to whether the proposed bridges will have increased lanes. A piece in the Washington Post District Weekly incorrectly stated that "the two bridges still would have 12 lanes total." We contacted the writer to point out that there are currently only eight traffic lanes on the bridge. She checked it out and explained that she had misunderstood the FEIS lane description and will post a correction.

Community groups have suggested that one of the alternatives which should have been analyzed was the original proposal that DDOT brought before the community in 2003: a simple freeway connection via the Eleventh Street Bridge to I-295 northbound (Kenilworth Avenue), retaining the eight lanes of traffic, but allowing flows with freeway connections both northbound and southbound. CHRS and other community groups supported this concept four years ago, when DDOT presented this option as a potential way to reduce traffic on the Sousa Bridge and on Pennsylvania Avenue. Development along M Street, SE, is a reality which has created new traffic flows. It makes sense to provide a traffic connection north on I-295 at M Street rather than

forcing traffic across the already heavily congested Sousa Bridge to make the I-295 connection. DDOT presented this sensible, reasonable alternative and community groups agreed.

The Restoration Society believes that if DDOT thinks that this simple, northbound connection (which would cost an estimated \$500 million—far less than the alternatives studied) is inferior to the alternatives presented in the FEIS, it should have presented an analysis in the FEIS demonstrating this inferiority. DDOT should have studied the differences in traffic densities and flows in this simple connection alternative to convince the community that this DDOT proposal which they previously embraced was insufficient to improve traffic flow and decrease congestion and commuter traffic through residential neighborhoods. This option was not studied. Therefore, we will review and assess the FEIS as it stands.

We will also continue to press DDOT to conduct a new, comprehensive mobility study that integrates urban land use and multi-modal transportation system planning. Members who wish to file comments should do so by November 20 at the email address given above. ✧

Welcome CHRS Supporters

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

NEW MEMBERS

Michael Cushman
Jon & Lori Genderson
Larry Morse
Thomas Oleksiak &
Melissa Rhoads
Sharon & Scott Weiss

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SPONSORS

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Larry Pearl &
Anne Womeldorf

October Preservation Café *continued from page 1*



Tina Roach, AIA, architect with Quinn Evans (right), responds to questions from attendees following the October Preservation Café. Photo: Larry Janeczich

challenges, and solutions that will be used.

Eastern Market's signature iron trusses not only were twisted by the fire's heat at the top of the roof but many were damaged where they rested on the brick walls. After two trusses were lifted from the building, disassembled, and each part carefully numbered, the architectural team was able to understand the original system better and use them as patterns. Since the historic iron truss system would be unable to meet modern code requirements, the new system will have both historic iron trusses and look-alike, load-bearing steel trusses. The iron trusses that will remain in place have been cleaned and painted. Those that will be removed will be "archived." This solution combines the "archaeology" of historic trusses with the strength of modern steel trusses. Ms. Roach felt that Eastern Market visitors would not be able to discern the difference between the two.

One of the discoveries was the existence of an iron framework along the roof ridge that seemed to indicate at least the design intent by the original architect, Adolph Cluss, to have a skylight in the building. A modern skylight, warranted by the manufacturer, will be installed. The double insulated glass will moderate both the heat gain and the UV ray

problems with food safety and display.

- A continuous vent along the roof ridge will be installed, providing ventilation and duplicating the appearance of an 1886 photograph.
- Historic photos will also be used to design other elements of the roof—non-functioning chimneys and acroteria (decorative element near the central entrance).
- * All windows were analyzed for historic elements. (Many date to the 1977 renovation.) Only two windows were found to be com-

pletely original and salvageable. Other windows will be assembled using salvageable and new parts (of the highest quality wood). Since an energy analysis showed little difference between single- and double-paned windows, given the market use, the decision was made to use single-pane glass because of the large size of the entire assembly. The glass will be tinted to reduce glare and heat.

- * The floor system will be replaced but retain some historic fabric—the texture, pattern, and color will match the pre-1977 renovation floor. The reconstruction will provide more head room in the basement for equipment and storage as well as the Pottery Studio.
- The fire also uncovered the original colored plaster. The bottom portion of the walls was gray-pigmented plaster and upper portion was colored with a salmon pigment. This color scheme will be duplicated.

The completion of the restoration and move-in date for the vendors is scheduled for early 2009. ✧



Capitol Hill Village, the new local non-profit organization that helps people stay in their homes as they grow older, officially opened last month. To mark that event, the organization held an outdoor launch party at Friendship House on Saturday, October 6, to both welcome members and celebrate the formal inauguration of this important new Capitol Hill enterprise. In the photo, Village volunteers welcome visitors to the event.

Photo: Mike Canning

Eastern Market Named One of the Ten Great Neighborhoods in America

by Dick Wolf

On October 2, 2007, officials of the American Planning Association (APA) presented Mayor Fenty with an award designating the Eastern Market Neighborhood as one of Ten Great Neighborhoods in the US. This is the first year of awards for the APA's Great Places in America, celebrating places of exemplary character, quality and planning. This program recognizes neighborhoods and great streets. Next year it will include great public spaces.

In presenting the award, Paul Farmer, Executive Director of the APA, said: "The Eastern Market neighborhood stands out [...] as an example of the good that happens when residents care about where they live and take time to be involved." Further, the press release states that "Eastern Market was selected because it is a thriving testament to the spirit and commitment of its residents. Their civic pride and dedication, combined with the centuries-old vision for their neighborhood, sustain the community's unique characteristics." These include the streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces, as well as a variety of transportation modes.

CHRS has long been an advocate for the Market and the rest of the Hill. We will continue providing that support as long as we exist. We thank the APA for its recognition of our efforts and those of many others. In addition, we thank our Ward 6 planner, Jeff Davis, for championing Eastern Market for this award. ✧

CHRS Announces Additional Community Grants

by Larry Pearl

The CHRS Board has approved the following grants from the proceeds of the spring house tour in addition to those announced last month:

1. Cultural Tourism DC

A grant of \$2500 to develop a public tour showcasing the restoration of the historic Eastern Market facility and the importance of the market to the Capitol Hill community. The tour will take place twice on a weekend in April 2008 and on an ongoing basis as part of the annual event: WalkingTown, DC spring edition. CHRS will assist in supplying information and vetting the final product.

2. Friends of Turtle Park

A grant of \$2000 to the Friends of Turtle Park to fabricate three new

cement turtles for Turtle Park, the pocket park wedged between the 600 blocks of Independence and North Carolina Avenues, SE. Two of the four turtles in the park have been broken for many years and the three new turtles would be added to the two remaining unbroken ones. The turtles will be donated to the city, which will be responsible for installation.

3. Trees for Capitol Hill

A grant of \$300 to Trees for Capitol Hill to plant a sycamore tree in honor of Peter Powers at 325 A Street, SE. Peter, who died last year, was a former president of CHRS and played a key role in helping to shape the Capitol Hill community.

More information about the CHRS Community Grant program is available at www.chrs.org/. ✧

CHRS November Preservation Café Spotlights Historic Wood Floors

by Shauna Holmes

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society's November 14 Preservation Café will feature *What You Need to Know About Your Historic Wood Floors*. Mr. Sprigg Lynn of Universal Floors will draw on his extensive experience to tell you what you need to know to appreciate and care for your historic wood floors. Universal Floors, a family-owned and -operated company located in DC's Tenleytown neighborhood, specializes in wood flooring installation, restoration, repairs, and finishing and has served the floor needs of the government, architects, builders, contractors, and homeowners in the DC area since 1953.

In addition to being recognized as a master craftsman, Mr. Lynn sits on the Board of the National Wood Flooring Association. Universal Floors' experience with historic floor restorations includes work at the White House, Blair House, the Library of Congress, the Octagon House, Decatur House, the State Department's Treaty Room and Diplomatic Reception Room, the Heurich Mansion, and over 20 embassies, as well as many private residences.

What You Need to Know About Your Historic Wood Floors will be held from 6:30-7:15 pm in the downstairs Community Room at Ebenezer's Coffee House at Second and F Streets, NE. The Preservation Café is free, wheel-chair accessible, and open to all. ✧

Northeast Capitol Hill Walking Tour

Beyond the Boundaries
on 14th Street,
Constitution Avenue, C
Street, and Ames Place

by Beth Purcell

On October 20, 2007, Elizabeth Nelson, Donna Hanousek and Beth Purcell led a walking tour featuring the history and architecture of rowhouses beyond the boundary of the historic district in Northeast. Some of the featured homes included:

The one-story brick rowhouses at 1337-1353 C Street, NE, designed and built by Charles Gessford in 1886. They are 11 feet wide and 25 feet deep, with a stepped design at the cornice. Gessford is one of the best known Capitol Hill architect/builders. Some of his rowhouses include “Philadelphia Row” (132-144 Eleventh Street, SE) and Gessford Court, SE.

The rowhouse development at 1400-1434 C Street/311-319 Fourteenth Street, NE/ 310-340 Fifteenth Street, NE., was designed by Albert H. Beers in 1910. These rowhouses have Flemish bond brick. The houses also have a two-bay front porch, with a projecting cornice in front of the parapet wall, and two alternating designs: an eyebrow raking cornice on center and a stepped pediment with the step in the center. Architect Beers is credited with Harry Wardman’s breakthrough designs for porch-front rowhouses. This design, for another builder, is an example of early porch-front houses.

The 200 block of Fourteenth Street, NE, illustrates the transition from nineteenth century rowhouses to the 1920s “daylighter” porch-front rowhouses. 220 Fourteenth Street, NE, built in 1893, is a square-bay, three story with sandstone lintels



Hill residents on the Oct. 20 Beyond the Boundaries Walking Tour. More tours are in the works—watch the News for a schedule. Photo: Elizabeth Nelson

and foliate stone carving on the keystone above the front door (a Richardsonian Romanesque feature) and cast-iron stairs (grapevine design). Next door, at 216-218 Fourteenth Street, NE, are classic 1920s “daylighter” porch-front rowhouses, in the Colonial Revival style. They feature common bond “tapestry brick” popular in the 1920s (beige brick with vertical lines, said to resemble a tapestry). The porch-front extends over the entire width of the house. The houses have slate mansard roofs with a gable dormer. Unlike many nineteenth century rowhouses, daylighter houses are only two rooms deep, allowing air and sunlight into all the rooms in the house. The front porch encouraged outdoor activities and interaction with neighbors.

All of Square 1056, including the 1400 block of Ames Place, NE, was built by Kennedy & Davis in 1907-1908. Alexander H. Sonneman, who remained active through 1954, designed these Flemish bond brick rowhouses, with two alternating designs: an angled bay (often with a one-bay porch) and flat-front with a porch. Sonneman worked

for many Washington developers, including Harry A. Kite.

In 1936, Joseph St. Clair wanted a new building for the restaurant he planned to open at 129 Fifteenth Street, NE. He hired Lewis Wentworth Giles to design a one-story brick commercial building. The building has tapestry brick and transom windows across the front. Giles was one of the best known African-American architects in Washington. In addition to many churches, apartments, and office buildings, he designed small projects for many customers, such as this building.

The tour also featured rowhouses built by two well-known developers, Harry A. Kite and Herman R. Howenstein. Kite and Howenstein each built hundreds of beige brick porch-front daylighter rowhouses, many on Capitol Hill. The rowhouses at 207-261 Fourteenth Place, NE were built by Harry A. Kite in 1914, early in his career, with Flemish bond brick (with iron spot brick headers), and a scalloped pediment on every third house. Howenstein’s 1907 rowhouses at 232-238 Fourteenth Street, NE, also built early in his

Walking Tour *continued from previous page*

career, are flat-front brick houses. Examples of his later rowhouses are nearby at 1430-1436 North Carolina Avenue, NE. These beige brick porch-front rowhouses, classic daylighter houses, were built in 1924.

Some Capitol Hill Architects and Builders

Albert H. Beers, architect (1859-1911). Originally from Bridgeport, Connecticut, at the time of his death he lived at 757 Park Road, NW, Washington, D.C.; his office was at 1342 New York Avenue, NW. Beers designed many apartment buildings and rowhouses for Harry Wardman and is credited with Wardman's breakthrough designs for "daylighter" porch-front rowhouses. Two of their projects appear on the National Register of Historic Places. He also worked with other builders, including Harry A. Kite.

Charles Gessford, architect/builder. (1831-1894). Gessford, who lived at 661 South Carolina Avenue, SE, was one of the best-known builder/architects on Capitol Hill. His work includes "Philadelphia Row" (132-144 Eleventh Street, SE) and Queen Anne-style brick rowhouses (824-832 D Street, SE; 638-642 East Capitol Street). He also built alley dwellings (Gessford Court). He borrowed to build his houses; when the Depression of 1893 hit, he was left with houses that no one would buy. He died a year later and was buried at Congressional Cemetery.

Lewis Wentworth Giles, architect (1894-1974). Giles was a well-known African-American architect who graduated from Armstrong Technical and studied architecture at the University of Illinois. After serving in World War I, he worked in the office of Isaiah Hatton from 1918 to 1921. In 1921, he opened his own office at 1200 U Street, NW. He designed many churches (Rock Creek Baptist Church, 4201 Eighth

Street, NW; New Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Fifty-eighth and Grant Streets, NE), offices, apartment buildings and houses in Capitol Hill, Brookland, Eastland Gardens, Capitol View and Deanwood. Later, his home and office was at 4428 Hunt Place, NE, a house that he designed.

Herman R. Howenstein, builder (1877-1955). Howenstein was a major Washington developer in early twentieth century. He built many "daylighter" porch-front rowhouses including many on Capitol Hill, beginning in the early twentieth century. His rowhouses often feature a straight slate mansard roof with a gable dormer. Later, with a partner, he built and owned a number of large apartment buildings, including 1301 and 1321 Massachusetts Avenue, NW; as well as the Wakefield, Potomac Park, Chatham, Highview (2505 Thirteenth Street, NW), and the Embassy (1613 Harvard Street, NW). In 1933 and 1934, lenders foreclosed on Highview and the Embassy. The foreclosure sale proceeds were less than the mortgage balances. Howenstein and his partner had personally guaranteed the mortgages, and were liable for this deficiency, which they could not pay. As a result, they both went bankrupt in 1935. Howenstein had \$13.80 in cash plus the stock in H. R. Howenstein Co. (also bankrupt) and owed almost \$400,000. He died in 1955, after a long illness.

Harry A. Kite, builder (1882-1931). He was a prominent Washington developer who built many "daylighter" porch-front rowhouses all over Washington including many on Capitol Hill, as well as apartment buildings (Kew Gardens, 2700 Q Street, NW).

Alexander H. Sonneman, architect (1872-19??). He was born in Montgomery County, Maryland, and attended high school in Rockville. He studied architecture

with his father (who had taught architecture at the University of Giessen, Germany) and began practicing architecture in 1901. He worked extensively for Harry Kite, designing rowhouses and apartment buildings including Kew Gardens, 2700 Q Street, NW. In 1910 he designed two-story Mediterranean Revival rowhouses with front porches and over-hanging red tile roofs for the entire Square 862 (Seventh/Eighth/D/E Streets, NE, including Lexington Place, NE). Sonneman remained active through 1954. ✧

CHRS Board Membership Update

by Dick Wolf

There is a change in Board membership due to the resignation of Peter May. Peter was appointed to a one-year term as a Board Member at-Large. He has just been selected to replace John Parsons as the Land Use Coordinator for the National Capitol Region of the National Park Service. In that position Peter will sit on both the Zoning Commission and the National Capitol Planning Commission. We wish Peter much luck and success in his new and very influential job. Thank you, Peter, for all your fine work as a member of the CHRS zoning committee.

In Peter's place we have appointed Lisa Alfred who is a Hill East resident and active in their concerns regarding planning, zoning, historic preservation, transportation, and the development of Reservation 13. We will benefit from her advice and experiences. ✧

The Hill on Film

by Mike Canning

(Continuing our regular series about how Hollywood movies have treated elements of Capitol Hill. CHRS board member Canning writes movie reviews for the Hill Rag.)

We may think of our Capitol Hill as a time-tested, permanent part of American life, a symbol of our nationhood that will stand the test of time. You could say that moviemakers see us the same way and have proved it by incorporating the Hill into movies of the future and science fiction.

One of the best examples is the science fiction classic, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) that treats the city's geography with some intelligence. One early, memorable sequence begins with the alien's

flying saucer sliding past the Capitol dome. Later, there is a shot at the Sewall-Belmont house on Constitution Avenue, NE.

The Capitol dome can be the object of violence, too. In *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*, a cheesy shocker from 1956, the finale has the Capitol's dome (a model) being knocked off, and, for good measure, the Supreme Court is whacked in the front. More recently, in Tim Burton's garish *Mars Attacks!* (1996), Martians come to address Congress after landing on the Capitol lawn. Being little impressed with our legislators, the Martians blow up the place, with smoke from the explosion pouring out of the dome.

One of the most interesting uses of a Capitol Hill location was

in Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002), where Tom Cruise, as a "crime anticipator" in the future (working for an omniscient Metropolitan Police Department) gets a call to fly to a potential crime at a house just off the park at Seventeenth Street and Massachusetts Avenue, SE. It's an effective opening action sequence for this thriller. The shoot proved that Hollywood interventions in our neighborhood can be beneficial, not just disruptive. Spielberg's production company, wanting to spruce up the triangle park in front of the featured house, did a nice make-over of the park and installed brand-new equipment which remains to this day.

Perhaps the funkiest use of Capitol Hill in future-oriented films was in *Logan's Run* (1976). Set in a 23rd century domed city where no one was allowed to live beyond 30 or leave the dome, the story culminates in a long chase sequence where the young heroes escape their plastic dome to enter the wider world, where they find—another dome! The Capitol peeks up from an overgrown jungle, and the youngsters end up bemused by the sole survivors of an earlier civilization, a dotty Peter Ustinov and dozens of stray cats, as they stroll up and down the steps of a weed-strewn US Senate. To be honest, this is probably how some cynics would like to see the Senate end up some day... ✧

Looking Back on Capitol Hill

by Nancy Metzger

Present-day Capitol Hill is composed of many smaller neighborhoods. One such neighborhood is in the Barney Circle area where Rose Lovelace, born in 1911, spent part of her childhood at 1612 H Street, SE. In an interview with Linda O'Brien, conducted in 2003, Ms. Lovelace remembered lamplighters, horse troughs, hansom cabs and electric cars. She also recalled some other scenes from her childhood:

"...[N]o one ever heard of H Street SE, but it was all to itself, and it was one block and at the end of it was the man (I forget his name right now) who had made the gravestones [at Congressional Cemetery] and engraved those. And then you went a little further and there you're facing one of the gates of Congressional Cemetery so that was part of what we did—go over into the cemetery. I remember some of the—it had a statue of a little girl who had run out in the street and been killed ... I remember that in the cemetery. And

then as I say, Sousa and some congressmen way back when, and that's why it was given the name it was. ...

"At one point, the house that was near the cemetery there, we had a big back yard, and they would have a watermelon plugged and then cut for the kids, had homemade ice cream. You made ice cream in one of those little freezers; you only made so much at a time but that was given over to the kids to make ... the adults had hard-shell crabs and, of course, beer or whatever it was they drank at the time and that was it. It was just, you know, everything was sort of homemade; you never thought of doing anything else."

The complete transcript from this and other interviews can be found on the web site of the Ruth Ann Overbeck Capitol Hill Oral History project, www.capitolhillhistory.org. Volunteers are needed for transcriptions and interviews; if you can help with this project; please contact Bernadette McMahon (mcmahons@his.com; 543-4544). ✧



New Historic District Signs for Capitol Hill. This one is at 3rd and E Streets, NE.

Photo: Charles McMillion

Mark Your Calendar!

NOVEMBER

5 Monday, 6:30 pm

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

6 Tuesday, 8:00 pm

Overbeck Lecture: John Philip Sousa on Capitol Hill. Capitol Hill historian and historical collections curator Cindy Janke will discuss and show photos of Sousa's life on Capitol Hill. Naval Lodge Hall, 330 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Meeting is free but reservations required due to limited seating. To reserve a spot, e-mail OverbeckLecture@aol.com or phone 202-544-1845 and supply your name, phone number, and e-mail address.

8 Thursday, 7:30 pm

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

14 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

CHRS Preservation Café: Caring for Historic Wood Floors. 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, 202-546-5211. See page 5.

15 Thursday, 10:00 am

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

20 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

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

28 Wednesday, 6:30 pm

Historic Districts Coalition Meeting, with featured speaker DC City Council Chairman Vincent Gray. Gray will discuss the challenges and opportunities for historic preservation in the city. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034.

DECEMBER

3 Monday, 6:30 pm

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

13 Thursday, 7:30 pm

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

18 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

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

20 Thursday, 10:00 am

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

Green Ideas

by Elsa Huxley

The DC Greenfestival took place at the Convention Center during the weekend of October 6–7. Featuring over 300 businesses and approximately 125 speakers, the festival presented ways in which homeowners can become more environmentally friendly. Some of these ideas concerning recycling and renewable energy follow:

Two places where unused building materials can be donated are: The Loading Dock, 200 North Kresson Street, Baltimore, Maryland. (www.loadingdock.org; 410-558-3625 x 17) and Community Forklift, 4671 Tanglewood Drive, Edmonston, Maryland (www.communityforklift.org/; 301-985-5180).

In addition, instead of throwing out used cell phones and battery chargers one can donate them to Secure the Call, an organization which collects them, reconditions them, and gives them for free to people who need a phone to call 911. (www.securethecall.org/; 301-891-2900)

The DC Renewable Energy Demonstration Project will reimburse 50% of the cost of certain renewable energy installations: solar photovoltaic panels, fuel cells, biomass-fired CHP systems, and small wind turbines. (www.ddoe.dc.gov/; 202-673-6750)

Further information can be found at www.greenfestivals.org/. ✧



Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 Tenth Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003