



# NEWS

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June 2009

## Eastern Market Grand Opening on June 26 Neighborhood Celebration on Saturday June 27

by Barbara Eck

**C**arpenters, contractors, utility installers, brick and cobblestone layers, arborists, and most importantly our faithful merchants, farmers, and artisans are gearing up for the re-opening of the restored and renovated Eastern Market on June 26th with Mayor Fenty and other city officials and a ribbon cutting ceremony. A grand neighborhood celebration will commence the following day. Capitol Hill and all the city neighborhoods and our suburban supporters are invited to shop and join in the special festivities planned for the day.

In accordance with city law, the trees that were removed from the

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**Finishing the cobblestones**

PHOTO: LARRY JANEZICH

### CHRS Annual Meeting Focus on Public Schools

CHRS will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, June 25, at 7:30 pm at St. Peter's Church Hall at 2nd and C Streets, SE (door on the C street corner). Refreshments will be provided starting at 7:00. The event is open to the public, and all are encouraged to come. The newly elected CHRS officers and board will be announced.

The meeting will focus on the future of public schools in the District of Columbia. Lisa Raymond, President of the DC State Board of Education and representative from Ward Six, will discuss the future of Capitol Hill schools and the impact of various school closings and combinations. Justin Cohen of the DC Public Schools facilities management department will specifically address the new Eastern School complex that will enroll former Hine students as well as students from other areas of Capitol Hill.

Please join your neighbors for this important community forum and bring your comments and questions.

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# President's Column: Today and Yesterday

by Dick Wolf

This is my last column as President. The last four years have seen an expansion of CHRS activities and initiatives in the fields of planning, zoning, and historic preservation. Our board members have played prominent roles in the development of a new comprehensive plan, the creation of small area plans for Reservation 13 and NoMA, the current rewrite of DC's zoning code, initiatives to survey historic resources outside the Capitol Hill Historic District, and assisting community groups in a historic district nomination and a landmark nomination. CHRS has played a significant role in the planning and rehabilitation of the fire-damaged Eastern Market and the possible development of the old Hine school property into a key mixed-use site on Capitol Hill. In addition, we brought new attention to the Hill's growing traffic problems through our opposition to the proposed 11th Street bridge project. We have been leaders in recognizing the importance of a new DC park at the site of Boat House Row, with its historically important boat houses and extraordinary natural habitat.

All this has been done at the same time as our committees have been engaged in their usual consistently competent efforts in handling a myriad of zoning and historic preservation cases before our local boards and commissions. We have continued initiatives in historic preservation outreach with our popular Preservation Cafés, which supplement our usual

membership meetings on more general topics. Our highly regarded Capitol Hill house and garden tour, which generates much of our income, has just successfully concluded: the 52nd tour in a row. We also generate for our membership an informative newsletter, which has grown to an impressive 12 pages and is published 10 times a year.

Today's CHRS organization is built upon the legacy of our past. I previously served as President between 1977 and 1980. Then we had just finished establishing the historic district and playing a leading role in creating DC's acclaimed historic preservation law. The new home rule government was resisting the development of a required comprehensive plan, only part of which was created in 1980, with the most important element—land use—delayed until 1984. Our membership meetings were more frequent because our membership was much smaller and played a role in determining our position on many policy issues. Committees, except for zoning, were virtually non-existent, and board members played many roles. Our newsletter was only 4 to 6 pages. Yet, CHRS played a significant role in dealing with the problems of Capitol expansion, lack of a strong business community, and the perception of the Hill as a dangerous neighborhood and not a good place to raise a family.

Our successes then and now were based on the extraordinary

commitment of many who bought into our view of a community based on a careful preservation of our historic character with the incorporation of new initiatives by individuals and businesses. We always thought that a strong vision adhered to consistently and thoughtfully would result in what we have now: a community of choice for young families; a place where long-time residents want to remain in their old age; a locus of investment in an environment of limited investment sources; and the incorporation of many kinds of housing opportunities. It's a complicated process to achieve these ends, but we have done it and will continue to do it in the future.

The new CHRS administration will be taking over soon. Some of the faces have changed, but not the adherence to our mission. Thank you, members and board members, for the last four years; your support has been unstinting. I am most appreciative for the opportunity to have served with you. ★

## Lifetime Achievement Award to Dick Wolf

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City has decided to present the 2009 Vision Award for Lifetime Achievement to CHRS' President Dick Wolf. This will be the only award at the ceremony given to an individual. ★

Correction: *The cover story in the May issue of CHRS News about the House Tour was not written by Aileen Moffat; instead it was authored by Roberta Gutman.*

## Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President.....Dick Wolf  
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*House and Garden Tour*  
Catherine Smith, *Membership*  
Elizabeth Nelson, *Special Events*  
Tom Grahame, *Transportation*  
Gary Peterson, *Zoning*

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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.

# Capitol Hill Solar Roof Project

The Capitol Hill Energy Coop is hoping to facilitate a group purchase of installed solar panels. They are conducting a survey to identify Capitol Hill residents, businesses, and institutions that are interested in the possibility, and to gather information about skills, interests, and decision points that individuals may have in regard to participation in the project.

The Coop offers help in: getting an assessment of your roof condition and sunlight potential; applying for the tax rebates; deciding on the technology and vendor; getting the necessary permits; and getting a hookup to Pepco's grid. Costs are still undetermined. The payback period is expected to be 6 – 10 years.

Similar efforts, such as the Mt. Pleasant Solar Cooperative, are working to obtain group discounts and pricing for solar panel installation. The Mt. Pleasant project involves a \$20,000 investment for a 3.4kw photovoltaic solar system with approximately \$12,000 in subsidies and an estimated 6-10 year cost recovery period.

The Coop states that the information provided on the survey will be aggregated for discussion within the group, but will not be posted online, nor will it be made publicly available. Go to <http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=cGZTQW9qSFlobEY1T2Y5UGFOWTIITWc6MA> to access the survey.

For further information, contact Jeewon Kim at [info@capitolhillenergycoop.org](mailto:info@capitolhillenergycoop.org). ★

## Election of CHRS Officers for the 2009-10 Year

Ballots were mailed on Wednesday May 20, and are due back to CHRS by June 3. Election results will be available on the CHRS website by the end of the first week in June. In accordance with Section 24 of the CHRS By-laws, the newly elected officers will assume their positions on July 1, the first day of the month following the annual meeting.

# CHRS to Be a Consulting Party on South Capitol Street Corridor Improvements Project

In late April, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) invited CHRS to be a consulting party when the South Capitol Street Corridor Improvements Project is reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. During Section 106 review, federal agencies consult with state and local government agencies, interested community organizations, and citizens about a project's potential to affect historic resources and ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects. The process ensures that community concerns, the views of the public, and preservation values are factored into agencies' planning and decision making.

CHRS has accepted FHWA's invitation and looks forward to working with involved agencies and other organizations to balance preservation interests and project objectives. ★



North Plaza will be replaced along 7th Street, North Carolina Avenue, the west side of the plaza, and in Turtle Park on the north side of North Carolina. These will provide shade for the plaza, as well as allow for more ease of movement for shoppers and pedestrians. Three varieties of hardy elm trees have been proposed, and CHRS has recommended that Accolade elm be planted because it is closest to the American elm in appearance and is a relatively new hybrid that

has been developed to withstand life in a crowded city environment.

New lighting will also be installed to illuminate the plaza in the evening. New street lamps have already been put in place.

The Hine parking lot has been striped, signage and parking machines installed, and a wider access/egress gate on 7th Street has replaced the old gate. ★

Interior work in progress



PHOTO: LARRY JANEZICH

## Historic Preservation Briefs

### Historic Homeowners Grants Open to Qualified Capitol Hill Residents

**S**ome homeowners in the Capitol Hill Historic District might qualify for up to \$25,000 assistance to pay for exterior repairs, rehabilitation and structural work. The funds are available through the Targeted Historic Preservation Assistance Amendment Act of 2006 that created a new financial incentive to help qualified low- and moderate-income homeowners in 12 historic districts pay for certified rehabilitation work. The next grant application deadline is August 3, 2009.

The grant application is a two-part process. In Part 1 of the application, homeowners provide photographs of their house and a general description of work being proposed for funding. In response, applicants are provided confirmation by the Historic Preservation Office that their house is a protected property that contributes to the character of an eligible historic district, a determination on whether the proposed scope of work meets

basic preservation guidelines, and recommendations on how an application might be improved. In Part 2 of the application, applicants provide a more detailed scope of work and three itemized bids by contractors. The applications are reviewed and selected by a committee appointed by the Director of the Office of Planning and the Chairman of the Historic Preservation Review Board.

For more information on the grants program, check the Historic Preservation Office website for a Frequently Asked Questions sheet, Part I Application Form, and Income Eligibility Tables. If you would like some assistance with the application or know someone who might like to hear about the program, contact Norman Metzger either through the Capitol Hill Village office (543-1778; [info@capitolhillvillage.org](mailto:info@capitolhillvillage.org)) or the CHRS Office (543-0425; [CapHRS@aol.com](mailto:CapHRS@aol.com)).

### Friendship House Named One of DC's "Most Endangered"

**A**t a June 2 press conference with the boarded-up Friendship House as the backdrop, it is expected that the DC Preservation League will include the over 200-year-old manor house as one of the most endangered properties for 2009. (The CHRS newsletter deadline was May 26, too early for the complete list and other information.)

Nominated by Capitol Hill residents, including former Council member Sharon Ambrose, and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, the historic house in the 600 block of South Carolina Avenue is unfortunately caught in a bankruptcy proceeding that many fear could take years to complete. Years of deferred maintenance have taken a toll on the building, as part of the metal roof is flapping in the wind and allowing water to infiltrate. It has been vacant since last fall, with doors and windows boarded up. ★

# Beautiful Weekend, Wonderful Tour

by Roberta Gutman

It's hard to imagine more perfect weather for this year's Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour, which surely added to the high spirits in the neighborhood this Mother's Day weekend.

On Saturday, May 9, hundreds of people lined up outside the Marine Commandant's House on G Street, SE, and around the corner, chomping at the bit to see this beautiful historic residence. Some 400 people toured the 15,000-square-foot home in the early hours of the Saturday twilight tour, with hundreds more visiting the home until the Saturday tour ended at 8 pm.

The next day the Marines again opened their doors—or, more appropriately, their gates—to the public, but this time to the Parade Ground and the Center Building. Informally known as the Officers' Club, Center Building is one of the brick buildings that line the east side of 8th Street between G and I Streets. Capitol Hill residents pass these Marine Barracks buildings all the time, so it was a treat to be inside one of them. One tour, led by an entertaining and extremely well-informed young officer, was filled with information on the Marines' history and the summer concerts at the Parade Ground, and his tour ended with a clang. He explained that when an officer violated social protocol in the Officers' Club bar, a brass bell is struck to announce that for 10 minutes, refreshments are courtesy of the hapless officer. Needless to say, the bell is rarely struck. A later tour of the Parade Ground was led by the base commander himself, Col. Andrew H. Smith, and his wife Colleen, who graciously entertained and informed visitors



PHOTO: ERIN MCKEON

## Commandant's House on Tour Day

for more than an hour, ending when the day's touring came to a close at 5 pm.

Across G Street, landscape architects Oehme, van Sweden & Associates opened a side door of the old City Bank Building to show how they reconfigured the classical space to meet the needs of this very 21st-century firm, an excellent example of this year's tour theme: "Historic Homes, Contemporary Lives." Photos of the many major projects they've worked on were beautifully displayed throughout the sleek yet sumptuous working areas of the three-story building.

Heading east on G Street, two houses, at 808 and 906, both with traditional exteriors, had radically different interiors. The New Orleans House, at 808, was rich with period interior and exterior features, including a lovely outdoor covered patio. The ultramodern, newly reworked interior of 906, with its open first floor and clean lines, prompted one visitor to ask, "Do any kids live here?" Yes, indeed, two – the

owners' 4-year-old daughter chose the very bright pink color of her room.

Turning north on 9th Street, the house at 522 provided an excellent example of a house of recent vintage (it was built in 1990), traditional looking on the outside but with all the advantages of a modern interior home – including an extensive and colorful collection of contemporary art bedecking the brightly painted walls.

Across from the Marine Barracks, Lola's Barracks Bar and Grill welcomed hungry and thirsty visitors later Sunday afternoon as they paused for snacks of fresh fruit, cookies, and juice before continuing the tour.

West of 8th Street, tourgoers walked through the first floors of homes to the featured gardens. The garden behind 638 G Street was wonderfully deep and filled with a huge variety of plants that most Capitol Hill residents can only dream of. In strolling through the

*Continued on page 7*

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# CHRS Urges Changes to Boat House Row Planning Study to Protect Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources

by Dick Wolf and Beth Purcell

**B**oat House Row is a narrow strip of land on the west bank of the Anacostia River, between Barney Circle and the 11th Street Bridges. It's home to the Anacostia Rowing Association and four historic power boat clubs. At least two of the clubs are among the oldest continuously operating power boat clubs in the country. Starting in the 20th century, all four clubs have contributed to developing private recreational boating on the river for African-Americans and working class people.

There are few, if any, locations this close to a densely populated part of the city with an air of having been sculpted by nature: there is a completely untamed and wild bramble of bushes and trees on both sides of the railroad tracks. Because the planning study did not include a wildlife biologist to survey animals, birds and plants, we were forced to rely on the observations of members of the boat clubs and the DC government's "Wildlife Action," to estimate the types and numbers of species present on Boat House Row. In late spring, summer, and early fall, the road through Boat House Row is completely shaded by a variety of trees that create a tunnel of green. This area is a valuable natural resource for people and wildlife, and needs to be preserved.

DC government now owns the Boat House Row land and is completing a planning study on the future of the area and the boat

clubs. Planning study goals include preserving wildlife habitat and affordable recreational boating. In general, the study will help develop a plan to allow this valuable area to be more fully utilized, yet preserve its important attributes, although important improvements are still needed. Comments on the latest draft of the planning study were submitted on April 30, 2009. CHRS joined the Historic Anacostia Boating Association and the Anacostia Riverkeeper to urge changes to the study.

## **Environmental risks of dredging**

DC is considering dredging the Anacostia River to deepen the channel. This will cost \$20 million to \$30 million, and there is no funding to pay for this. More seriously, we oppose this option because the river sediment contains hazardous substances such as heavy metals, PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). Disturbing this hazardous sediment may have serious adverse environmental effects. The DC government has not adequately studied how (or if) dredging can safely or lawfully be done.

## **Preserving natural and cultural resources**

We thank the DC government for recommending a change in the Anacostia Riverwalk route through the forest area west of the Eastern Power Boat Club. However, additional changes are needed to preserve natural resources. For

example, wildlife habitat and "open space" are not the same. Replacing the existing habitat with "community open space" (such as a proposed amphitheater – when there is already an amphitheater on the east side of the river) destroys wildlife habitat. For this reason, we request that certain proposed "community open spaces" remain as wildlife habitat. DC government must also engage a wildlife biologist to evaluate the mammals, birds, fish, invertebrates, and plant life in Boat House Row, and work with the community to develop a plan to preserve wildlife and plant life.

As plans are implemented, DC government must preserve Boat House Row's archeological, historic, and cultural resources, including possible Native American campsites, a ferry site, and the boat clubs. These are vital cultural resources.

The DC government has suggested extending four Capitol Hill streets through Boat House Row to the river. The Row, however, is a narrow strip of land already connected to Capitol Hill by Virginia Avenue, 12th Street, M Street, Water Street, and the Anacostia Riverwalk. The CSX tracks run through it. Punching four more streets through this narrow strip would destroy the area's quiet natural charm and wildlife habitat and produce no benefit. ★



first floor of 325 South Carolina, visitors learned that the house at one time sat in the midst of a large apple orchard. The shady garden and its water features provided a calm and cool respite from the spring sun. The solarium and garden at 530 F Street Terrace brought the tour into one of the Hill's historic and intriguing alleyways. The home, built in 1969, was one of three recent-vintage homes in the enclave, interspersed with historic, tiny alley dwellings – the kind that are tucked in hidden spaces on many parts of the Hill.

Around the corner, at 517 Seventh Street, the home's cozy yet elegant living room contained, among other intriguing furnishings, a three-panel screen covered with books' spines, inspiring one observer to quip that these "books" would never be a torment to the owner for not reading them. The eye-catching screen provided aesthetic cover for the home's electric circuit panels. The owner devoted extensive time and treasure to the home's interior, leaving the back yard, currently in a "natural state," for future efforts. For the tour weekend, the owner's "Field of Dreams" sign there elicited many a chuckle.

The two homes at 500 and 528 Fourth Street were filled with family antiques and other treasures. The huge garden adjacent to 500 Fourth Street contained a labyrinth made of bricks the home owner collected from Capitol Hill friends. The home at 644 South Carolina Avenue was a repository of wonderful Victoriana.

Capitol Hill has a number of historic school buildings that have been converted into loft homes, and are a source of inspiration for how to put old spaces to wonderful new uses. The two units at the Lenox School Condominium on the tour were excellent and truly inspiring examples of this year's "Historic Homes, Contemporary Lives" tour theme. The beautifully furnished and decorated Unit 23 overlooked the Southeast-Southwest Freeway, but it was amazingly quiet. Indeed, the large windows illuminated the spacious and elegant living-dining area with its 14-foot-high ceilings. The smaller Unit 4, on the ground floor, oozed charm and had the additional advantage of an exterior patio extending the length of the unit.

The police substation at 500 E Street, so important to the Hill's

security, generously welcomed tourgoers to the inner workings of the building. Officer Rachel Pitzen was present nonstop on Sunday to tell curious visitors the history of the building and to explain what currently goes on behind the scenes.

The tour's jitney was especially useful in bringing visitors to 101 E Street, an "outlier" well worth going out of the way to see. The open and airy first and second stories, with their flowing spaces, drew oohs and ahs. The owner was present to show before and after pictures of the extensive changes she made to what had been converted into a three-apartment building when she bought it, in 1990. Her endearing 93-year-old mother greeted visitors near a pastel still-life she drew as an 18-year-old. The home's *pièce de résistance* was the gorgeous garden these two imaginative and industrious women created from the sterile, clay-packed grounds at the time of purchase. Nature cooperated for the tour. Just days before, peonies, poppies, and other plants burst into bloom in this exquisite and lovingly maintained garden. ★

## Zoning Brief

**T**he CHRS Zoning Committee met on May 14, and heard and approved one case located in Rumsey Court at 124 D Street, SE. The owner lives at 129 C Street, SE.

The property is improved with a two-story carriage house, and the applicant proposes to provide two parking spaces and storage on the first floor and a one-bedroom

apartment on the second floor. The building stands on its own alley lot. A variance is needed because none of the access alleys is 30 feet in width. Rumsey Court itself is 30 feet wide, but the three access alleys are 10, 15 and 15 feet each. The committee approved a similar request two months ago for a property located behind the Northeast Library at the corner of 7th and Maryland Avenue, NE. The 30-foot rule was originally for fire

truck access, but is no longer required because fire trucks no longer go down alleys, even if an alley is 30 feet in width. New fire equipment is too big to handle in a 30-foot alley. The fact that there are already five row houses and three occupied carriage houses on Rumsey Court also influenced the committee to support the application.

The next meeting will be held on August 13. ★

# Speakers from Public Space Policy Office Draw Large Crowd at May Preservation Café

by Shauna Holmes

The May 20 Preservation Café was standing-room-only when officials from the DC Department of Transportation's (DDoT) Public Space Policy Office presented **Public Space and Front Yards: Yours, Mine, and Ours**. Alice Kelly, the Public Space Program Manager, and Matthew Marcou, a Policy Analyst, accompanied their talk with a PowerPoint presentation to explain public space policies and regulations, demonstrate the purpose of the 1870 Parking Act, and illustrate the various elements of public space. A summary of their presentation follows.

Though Pierre L'Enfant's plan for the federal city provided wide rights-of-way for streets and avenues (90-160 feet), when the city found it impractical to pave and maintain the full widths, it decided to pass the Parking Act, which has nothing to do with parking vehicles. Rather, the act was passed to create and maintain a park-like environment in the space between the paved public streets and sidewalks and residents' front property lines by allowing homeowners to use that space, with some restrictions, and treat it as their front yards (and side yards, in the case of corner properties). The intent was to create and preserve a sense of openness along public streets, with uninterrupted green vistas landscaped primarily with low bushes and shrubs that extend along both sides of the streets. This has given Washington unique streetscapes and a consistent, garden-like identity that fosters beautiful neighborhoods, active street life, and public safety.

DC's Code and Regulations reinforce this concept of the public "parking" as green space to be used for plantings and walkways between the public sidewalks and residents' front doors. For example, the DC Building Code limits projections into public space, and DC Public Space regulations authorize planting and landscaping, with certain limitations.

Elements of public space along streets include evenly spaced street trees in four- to six-foot-long tree boxes (6' is preferred); open fences no more than 42" high; limited-size bay projections on buildings; public "parking" beautification areas with plantings; walkways (leads) to buildings; driveways that provide access to private property; and public sidewalks at least six feet wide paved with concrete, brick, exposed aggregate, or London pavers. In historic districts, sidewalks are usually brick.

Property owners are not taxed on the public space in front of, and sometimes beside, their homes, even though they enjoy the use of it, but they are required to care for and maintain "their" public space. This includes clearing public sidewalks of snow and ice and keeping them free of obstructions, as well as ensuring residents have any permits necessary for things like hardscaping or fencing in public space.

When landscaping your public space, grass, flowers, and shrubs are okay as long as hedges are no more than 36" high so they don't obscure drivers' sight lines. A permit is necessary for planting trees. Hedges and other plantings should not protrude more than six inches onto sidewalks to keep

them clear for passage. Any paving in the "parking" area – even when repairing or replacing an existing walkway or other paved space – is prohibited without a permit. Plants in tree boxes should have shallow roots so they don't compete with the trees for water; non-woody perennials and annuals were suggested, though mulch alone is preferred. Borders and low fencing around three sides of the tree boxes are permitted as long as they're no more than 12" high and the curb side remains unobstructed so people can get in and out of parked cars.

Open-design fences up to 42" high are allowed in public space to delineate areas, for example along the sidewalk and between adjacent front "parking" areas, and are typically cast iron in the Capitol Hill Historic District. A permit is needed to replace a fence or put up a new one, in part to ensure drivers' visibility. To keep dirt off sidewalks, retaining walls are allowed for existing grades only; homeowners cannot construct a retaining wall and then grade behind it. The total height of a retaining wall and fencing along the sidewalk cannot exceed 42".

Regarding residential driveways and curb cuts in public space, they can be a minimum of 8' and a maximum of 12' wide. Alley access is much preferred, and any homeowner seeking a permit for a front or side driveway and/or curb cut must show a clear need. If and when a permit is issued, it is only for constructing and driving across the driveway, never for parking in the driveway. Such permits are good for the life of the driveway. Curb cuts and driveways in public

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space are permitted only for the purpose of transporting vehicles from the street across public space onto private property. Vehicles may not be parked in these driveways, and their owners are at risk of tickets and fines if they do so. While this has not been enforced consistently in past years, ticketing has increased recently, especially when vehicles protrude onto the public sidewalk.

DDoT is currently drafting regulations regarding curb cuts and driveways to provide clear guidelines for developers, and the agency hopes to address parking in driveways in the context of this process. When the regulations are published for comments, DDoT looks forward to hearing views from the public.

For information about public space permits, go to [www.ddot.dc.gov](http://www.ddot.dc.gov) and click on the

“Public Space Management” link under “Services”. There you will have access to downloadable permit forms, specifications for submittal materials, frequently asked questions, and more. Although some permits may take several weeks to process, the speakers said it can be possible to walk in with a permit application and necessary documentation for a fairly simple project and walk out the same day with a permit. The Public Space Committee handles all complex or unusual uses of public space and cases seeking to use non-standard materials.

As for building something like a deck or stairs in your privately-owned back yard, you can get permits from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs. However, if your back yard includes public as well as private land, as some do on the Hill, you should get in touch with the Public Space folks as well for guidance. To

reach the Public Space Policy Office, call 202-671-2333 and ask to speak to a member of the staff. To report illegal use of public space, such as paving or constructing without a permit, call the Inspections unit at 202-645-7050 and ask for Team 3.

For CHRS’s summary of public space issues and requirements, go to [www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org) and click on the Publications link on the left side of the home page. Scroll down the Publications page until you get to CHRS Historic District Guidelines and click on the link to *Yours, Mine, and Ours: Front Yards and Other Public Space on Capitol Hill*. The information is accurate, although the contact information in the guideline is out-of-date.

The next Preservation Café will be in mid-September, so keep an eye on the CHRS website and newsletter for the topic, date, and other details. ★

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## Looking Back on Capitol Hill

**T**hirty-five years ago, Milton Sladen was interviewed by Suzanne Ganschietz of the DC Historic Preservation Office and Hazel Kreinheder of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society to provide background information for the application to create the Capitol Hill Historic District. Sladen was born in 1900 at 203 C Street, SE, but the Sladen family moved to 120 11th Street, SE, in 1907, where members of the family resided until fairly recently. His remembrances reflect not only Capitol Hill of the early 1900s, but also of the 1970s.

“Lincoln Park was a family gathering place with meandering

walks and many benches. It seemed an escape from the city and I used to read Horatio Alger and G. A. Henty books there in the summertime. There was no ball playing in the Park. It was a pleasant oasis, and there was, at that time, no violence or vandalism in the area. Once or twice a year there would be a black ceremony at the foot of the Lincoln Statue. ...

“Lincoln Park provided summer attractions in the form of band concerts. In those days there was the U.S. Marine Band. Also the Engineer’s Band which was stationed at the Washington Barracks ... (now Ft. McNair). The U.S. Marine Band and the U.S.

Engineer’s Band alternated. The Park was safe in those days and there were large gatherings of families at night to attend the concerts. These concerts were great neighborhood events and afterwards, people would go to the drugstores such as Lamb’s at 11th and East Capitol and Van Emmon’s at 13th and East Capitol for sodas and sundaes and ice cream cones.”

*A transcript of this 1974 interview was recently given to the Ruth Ann Overbeck Oral History Project by Hazel Kreinheder and can now be found on the [capitolhillhistory.org](http://capitolhillhistory.org) website. ★*

# National Park Service Sends Warning on Historic Preservation Board Review Composition

by Nancy Metzger

For months, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society and other historic preservation groups have been concerned that Mayor Fenty's nomination of architect Christopher Landis to replace Dr. John Vlach, an architectural historian, on the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) would conflict with the city law mandating that the HPRB include an architectural historian. During the May 21 Council hearing on the nomination, Council Chair Vincent Gray urged Mayor Fenty to withdraw the Landis nomination (it will expire at the end of June) and resubmit it at the same time that a nomination for an architectural historian is submitted to the Council for confirmation.

Key to Gray's proposal was a letter written by Hampton Tucker, chief of the Historic Preservation Grants Division of the National Park Service, to Mayor Fenty stating, in part: "If the DC Historic Preservation Review Board is left without a qualified architectural historian, NPS would be obliged to view the situation as cause to suspend Washington, DC, from approved program status and eligibility to receive Historic Preservation Fund matching grants. There are existing HPF matching grant agreements between the National Park Service and the District of Columbia totaling in excess of \$396,000. In FY

2009, the HPF allotment for the District of Columbia is \$497,313." The grants provide an important part of the Historic Preservation Office budget, supporting four staff positions as well as grants for survey research, historic context reports, and other education and outreach efforts.

At the Council hearing, Barbara Zartman of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, Rebecca Miller of the DC Preservation League, Rick Busch of Dupont Circle Conservancy, and Nancy Metzger for the Historic Districts Coalition (HDC) all testified about the importance of adhering to the federal mandates regarding the composition and professional qualifications of the Board. They urged the Council not to confirm Landis until the architectural historian position is filled, emphasizing not only the potential loss of funds, but also the need to follow the city's own regulations and to avoid compromising the legitimacy of the Board. All the speakers acknowledged that Landis would be an appropriate addition to the Board in either an architect or citizen slot, and Chairman Gray made clear that he felt that Landis' education and professional experience were impressive. Ten neighborhood preservation groups signed on to the HDC statement, thus showing wide support for adherence to the preservation law.

In addition to citizen members,

## Welcome CHRS Supporters

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

### NEW MEMBERS

Laurence Allain  
Charles Bergen  
Kate and Sandy Evans  
Cheryl Hargrove and John Bauser  
Ted Knutson  
Eric Landree and Beth Cameron  
David Mueller and Ann Baldinger  
Tia Pausic  
Andrea Nash Planzer  
Joanna and Todd Turner  
Janet Vail

### PATRONS

Merritt Chesley  
Janet Crowder  
Monte Edwards  
David Massey and  
Katharine Matthews  
Randell and Linda Norton  
Margaret Vining and Bart Hacker

### SPONSORS

Kitty Kaupp  
Gordon Tanner and Robert Patlan  
Harry Martin and John Pull

the nine-member HPRB must include a majority of members representing the fields of history, architectural history, archaeology, and architecture. Both federal and city legislation list specific education and professional experience that qualified candidates must meet. Archaeologist Robert Sonderman and architect Joseph Taylor were confirmed earlier this year to terms ending in July 2011. ★

## STREET DRAINS NEED CLEARING

This spring's rains have caused many storm drains to become clogged and flood. If there is a storm drain near your house, please keep it clear of plant material, trash, and debris. If you have a current backup, you can report clogged storm drains or catch basins by calling the DC Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) Emergency Line at 202-612-3400.

## Did You Know?

- Trees for existing, empty tree-boxes can be requested from the Urban Forestry Administration at <http://ufa.ddot.dc.gov/ufa/cwp/view,a,1293,q,575620.asp> or by calling 311. Requests received by June 15 will receive priority for the next planting season (October – December). To request creation of a tree box, call DDoT's Public Space Administration / Street Maintenance Division at 727-1000.

Once you have your tree, run a hose to the treebox, set it on very low flow, and let it run until the ground is saturated. This action needs to be repeated every week, unless there has been heavy rainfall. This is especially important during the first year, as the roots become established. As an alternative, the city will provide plastic watering sacks to attach to the tree that can be filled and will then slowly release the water you've added each week.

- Reservation 13 – The Office for Planning and Economic Development (OPED) has received final offers from all four developers. It will take approximately four weeks to

evaluate them. OPED hopes to select a developer by late June.

- 11th Street Bridges – CHRS is still in litigation with the city and the federal government on this issue. The city has asked for an extension until June 5 to answer CHRS' complaint.
- Friendship House – Bankruptcy Court has placed the property in the hands of real estate concerns. Asking price: \$5.5 million.
- Heritage Foundation – No decision has been announced on the 227 Pennsylvania Avenue/Heritage Foundation case that is before the Mayor's Agent (and there has been no indication from the Office of the Attorney General when it might be announced). The Heritage Foundation is proceeding with the rear addition/basement/storefront-renovation/alterations approved last July.
- Hine site – There are six proposals for development being considered. All have certain themes in common: row house style façade on 8th Street, retail on Pennsylvania Avenue, and below-ground parking. There will be a community meeting in early

June for community input. The Mayor hopes to select the developer by the end of June, but additional input by community organizations may delay the decision until mid-July. Demolition of the current structure could begin a year from now.

- Navy Yard/Union Station Circulator bus – Currently running every eight minutes (6:00 am – 7:00 pm, with extended service on Nationals game days), this pilot program is being subsidized by the city. Stops are still being tinkered with; a stop in front of Union Station has been added. The regular fare is \$1, and 50¢ for seniors.
- Bag bill – Trash-reducing legislation proposed by Councilmember Tommy Wells placing a nickel fee on both paper and plastic bags will begin moving through the DC legislative process in June.
- Old Naval Hospital – The city has provided design funds to the Old Naval Hospital Foundation. After the land transfer to DC is finalized and design issues resolved, renovation will begin, possibly before next fall.

## Capitol Hill North Memories Needed

It takes a thousand voices to tell a single story! The Capitol Hill North Neighborhood Association (CHNNA) is exploring ways to bring to life stories of the Uline Arena (Washington Coliseum) located on Third Street, NE. CHNNA is inviting the community to help chronicle the days when the Uline hosted many historically significant entertainment, religious, sports, and political events. They are looking for individuals who are interested in helping with this project. If you remember the "Days of Uline", send an email to [history.chnna@gmail.com](mailto:history.chnna@gmail.com) or call Tanetta Isler at (202) 544-2224. ★



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# Mark Your Calendar!

## JUNE

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

**10** Wednesday, 6:00 to 9:00 pm  
Tyler Elementary School, 10th & G Streets, SE  
Councilmember Wells has announced that the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development will host a community meeting to present the qualifying proposals received in response to its RFP for redevelopment of the Hine Jr. High site (700 block of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE). The meeting will be an opportunity for the neighborhood to ask questions, provide feedback, and make recommendations. If you have any questions about the meeting, contact the Wells office at 724-8072 or twells@dccouncil.us.

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

**25** Thursday, 7 pm refreshments, 7:30 meeting  
St. Peter's Church Hall at 2nd & C Streets SE  
CHRS annual meeting. The event is open to the public, and all are encouraged to come with comments and questions. School Board President Lisa Raymond will address the meeting, and the newly elected CHRS officers and Board will be announced. Justin Cohen of the DC Public Schools facilities management department will specifically address the new Eastern School complex that will enroll former Hine students as well as students from other areas of Capitol Hill. See page 1.

**25** Thursday, 10:00 am  
Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 4th Street, NW, Room 220 South. Details: Nancy Metzger, 546-1034.

Saturdays – June 6 to November 21, 9 am to noon  
H Street NE FRESHFARM MARKET, 625 H Street, NE (across from H St. Self Storage). Shop for fresh fruits and vegetables, pasture-raised meats, local cheeses, yogurt, breads and baked goods, cut flowers and more.

## JULY

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



**Capitol Hill Restoration Society**  
420 Tenth Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003