

NEWS

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July 2009

CHRS Board Backs Developer for Hine Site

by Gary Peterson

After receiving a recommendation from a special committee of the board that reviewed all of the proposals, the board of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society voted at its June meeting to support a preference for the Hine site development proposal of Stanton-Eastbanc. A detailed letter of support will be sent to the Deputy Mayor for Development before the July 10 deadline and will be made available at www.chrs.org.

To understand the decision you must go back to early 2008. CHRS at its February 19, 2008, board

meeting laid out its vision of what the successful development proposal should be. This resolution was reported on the front page of the CHRS News of March 2008. The Board resolution spelled out 11 criteria:

- 1 Comply with the recently enacted comprehensive plan,
- 2 Be the best example of smart growth and sustainable development,
- 3 Reflect the importance of the location,
- 4 Be compatible with the surrounding zoning and existing building scale,

- 5 Restore the original L'Enfant Plan by reopening C Street between 7th and 8th,
- 6 Provide for commercial uses on 7th Street compatible with the existing commercial uses,
- 7 Set aside Pennsylvania Avenue for mixed use with retail on the first floor and office above,
- 8 Design the 8th Street frontage as residential and include a substantial percentage of workforce housing.
- 9 Consider live/work studios on C Street.

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Hine School as seen from Pennsylvania Avenue and 8th Street

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President's Column: Today and Yesterday

by Beth Purcell

This is my first column as President of CHRS. There are many challenges facing the Capitol Hill community. We have two bridge construction projects underway and a proposed new traffic circle at Pennsylvania and Potomac Avenues. Major real estate developments are in process: DC government has promised to select

a developer for the Hine School site near Eastern Market in August 2009. But the Reservation 13/Hill East Waterfront Project is stalled; three years after federal legislation authorized transferring title to DC, DC still does not have title to Reservation 13. Development cannot go forward until DC has title. We are waiting to see the final

planning study for historic Boat House Row. On the other hand, there is much to celebrate, including the re-opening of Eastern Market. I look forward to working with our volunteers, including our board of directors, to meet these challenges. ★

Urban Oasis or Wasteland: the Eastern Market Metro Plaza

by Dick Wolf

I've walked through it a thousand times. In the summer, it's blistering hot with little shade; in the winter, the winds whistle through the large open spaces of the park and across the wide roadway. It's a place to get through as quickly as possible with little regard for the protocols of walkways and traffic lights. It's paved with Metro brown brick which – along with the meager landscaping – has little to do with the charm and Victorian buildings around the perimeter. But you have to go through it to get a bus or catch Metro. Does it have to be utilitarian ugly?

Back in early 2002, some of us thought that Eastern Market Metro Plaza could be so much more. The late George Didden, wearing his hat as co-founder of Barracks Row/Main Street and the Capitol Hill BID, thought it should be the principal gateway to Barracks Row. Some of the rest of us thought it should be the central organizing location for tying together the principal Capitol Hill business streets: Seventh Street/Market Row, Eighth Street/Barracks Row, and the 600 block of Pennsylvania

Avenue, SE, plus a significant green park. It had the room.

These ideas had their origins in the early 1970s when the first post-World War II rehabilitation of Eastern Market was undertaken and the Office of Planning produced a poster showing the connection between the Market and Eighth Street. It was at that time that the plaza was greatly enlarged by the closing of South Carolina Avenue through the area and the name of the Metrorail Station was changed from "Marine Barracks" to "Eastern Market."

That history, the confluence of development, and the growing sense of Capitol Hill as a special neighborhood within the city caused CHRS and CHAMPS, using special donations, to enter into a small contract with the nationally renowned landscape architecture firm of Ohme, van Sweden & Associates, which has its offices at Eighth and G Streets, SE. We asked the firm to develop some concepts about how to achieve an enhanced public realm on the plaza. A steering committee was established with representatives of citizen

groups, business groups, and elected officials. We met with the architects to discuss different ways of improving what everyone viewed both as a wasteland and a missed opportunity. A pamphlet of several pages was the result of that study.

Shortly after publication, the study was shown to a number of public agencies who liked the ideas but did not commit themselves to going further – with one notable exception. It was shown to several members of Congress who felt that since the study suggested the improvement of Federal land and explicitly acknowledged the importance of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, as a major entry way to the US Capitol, a more definitive study should be undertaken. Funding from a congressional earmark was sent through the District Government to Barracks Row/Main Street to continue the work. The leadership established a small working group of the community organizations that had been involved in the earlier studies and selected consultants to do the

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Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President.....Beth Purcell
1st Vice President.....Rich Luna
2nd Vice President.....Monte Edwards
Secretary.....Lisa Wilson
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At Large.....Donna Hanousek
At Large.....Elizabeth Nelson
At Large.....Shauna Holmes
At Large.....Catherine Davis
At Large.....Chuck Burger
At Large.....Michelle Carroll
Immediate Past President Dick Wolf

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Donna Hanousek, *Beyond the Boundaries*
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Dick Wolf, *City Planning*
Aileen Moffatt, *Communications*
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House and Garden Tour
Catherine Smith, *Membership*
Elizabeth Nelson, *Special Events*
Vacant, *Transportation*
Gary Peterson, *Zoning*

NEWS:

David Holmes
202design, design & layout

OFFICE MANAGER: Gloria Junge

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.

Election Results – The 2009-2010 CHRS Board

The slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee has been elected. On July 1, 2009, they joined two At Large members who are serving the second year of a two year term.

President: Beth Purcell has served on the CHRS board for four years and as the First Vice-President this past year. She works on the CHRS Beyond the Boundaries Project, was the co-leader of several recent historic walking tours, and chairs the CHRS Environment Committee. She is also President of Trees For Capitol Hill, Inc. She lives in the Hill East neighborhood, has been an Orange Hat walker for over 10 years, and researches and publishes articles on the architecture of eastern Capitol Hill. She works as an attorney in the federal government.

First Vice President: Richard Luna has been an at-large board member since 2007 and serves on the CHRS Zoning Committee. He first moved to Capitol Hill in 1996 to work as a senate staffer. After leaving to pursue opportunities in Annapolis, Brooklyn, New York City and Houston, he returned to the Hill in 2002, drawn by its vibrancy, sense of community and beauty. Since then, he has worked through ANC 6A's Economic Development and Zoning Committee to protect and encourage neighborhood-appropriate architecture, businesses and transportation by

working on zoning cases, public space cases and proposals for regulation changes. By day, he is a benefits and compensation attorney at a law firm. He and his wife Kara, who grew up on the Hill, are renovating their home on Linden Place, where they look forward to raising their daughter.

Second Vice President: Monte Edwards is a Washington area native, having grown up in Montgomery County and lived on Capitol Hill, in the 300 block of E Street, NE, for over 20 years. He has served as an At Large Board Member of CHRS and has been the Second Vice President for the past two years. Monte also serves as a Steering Committee member and as the Co-Chair of the Land Use Committee of the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association. He has been a member of the Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee (EMCAC) since it was first established and now serves as its Secretary as well as Chair of the Capital Improvements Committee. Now retired, he worked as an engineer and attorney for Washington Gas Light Company.

Secretary: Lisa Wilson moved to Capitol Hill with her husband in 2007 and joined CHRS the same year. She is an attorney in the Solicitor's Office at the Department of Labor. Previously, she worked with the National Association of Attorneys General

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Editorial Help Needed

There are a host of significant issues facing Capitol Hill. If you have a desire to serve the community, want to be part of the process that deals with these issues, and can edit copy, the CHRS needs help on its editorial board. Please contact David Holmes at dw.holmes@verizon.net

The Market Reopens



Shopping resumes for the first time in more than two years in the South Hall



Community members enter the new North Hall

Eastern Market re-opened on Friday, June 26, 2009, after a two year restoration following a disastrous fire which destroyed much of the building on April 30, 2007. We commemorate this event with the serial publication of material regarding the Market's history compiled by the Eastern Market Citizen's Advisory Committee. The Market's North Hall currently displays an exhibit that describes the Market's history and the people who made a difference in the Market's development and reconstruction.

The Beginning

Eastern Market is one of three public markets proposed in the L'Enfant Plan. It was established by order of President Thomas Jefferson in 1805, and originally located near the Navy Yard at Sixth Street, between K and L streets, SE. With the urbanization of the District undertaken by Territorial Governor Alexander Shepherd, it was relocated to its present site in 1873, as a new building, designed by Adolf Cluss, which is now known as the South Hall. The Center and North Halls, designed by Snowdon Ashford, Inspector of Buildings of the District's Office of Public Works, were added in 1908. The Market was designated a DC Historic Landmark in 1964 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971. The bronze plaque on the side of the South Hall portico entrance was dedicated by our Mayor Williams and the Mayor of Heillbronn Germany, Cluss' birth place, as part of a celebration in October of 2005 marking the 200th anniversary of Jefferson's proclamation establishing the Market and 100 years after the death of Adolf Cluss.

Cluss's plan included a roof-truss system that permitted high, open ceilings, large windows for ample natural light, numerous doors for easy access and exit, roof ventilators for natural ventilation, and a cellar for cold

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- 10 Accommodate one to two underground levels of parking over 100% of the site, so there is parking for the residential, commercial, and weekend parking for the Eastern Market,
- 11 Provide for green space as well as an outdoors area for craft vendors, food vendors and the flea market.

The city received a number of proposals and winnowed them down to four: Bozzuto Group/Scallan Properties; DSF Group/Menkiti Group; Stanton-Eastbanc; and National Leadership Campus. (CHRS believes the Campus proposal is too vague to evaluate and has so advised the appropriate District officials.) The Board found that the Stanton-Eastbanc proposal most closely

meets the criteria. Significantly the proposal offers the highest LEED certification (Platinum) and twice the number of affordable housing units than the two next closest proposals. The mixed use of the proposal is also superior because it provides for substantially more office space thus putting more people on the street to patronize the retail and restaurants during the daytime. Finally an appealing aspect of the Stanton-Eastbanc proposal is that it's the only one that includes an arts and culture component by allowing the Shakespeare Theatre Company (STC) to consolidate its rehearsal, office, storage, and temporary housing space needs in one location. It also keeps STC, which has always been a Hill entity, on the Hill where it started.

Picking a developer is not the end of the process, but the beginning. The winner will have to go through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) before the Zoning Commission and will also have to get the approval of the Historic Preservation Review Board. There will be many more opportunities for public comment.

The community and the city are fortunate to have three good proposals, one of which is very good, to choose from. All the bidders deserve our thanks for their hard work, but the Stanton-Eastbanc proposal best meets the criteria and, above all, will best meet the needs of the Capitol Hill community. ★

The Market Opens continued from page 4

storage: an innovative and functional public market design for its time.

Among the 80 buildings Cluss built in the Nation's Capital and environs were two other public markets: the former Center Market (c. 1872), the nation's largest, at Pennsylvania Avenue between Seventh and Ninth Streets NW (now the site of the National Archive), and the Alexandria, Virginia, market house and city hall (c. 1873), on Cameron Street, which continues in use as the Alexandria City Hall.

Threats to Survival

With the advent of supermarkets Eastern Market lost business and its fate became uncertain. The North Hall was closed as a Market in 1929, and transferred to the adjacent Fire Station, current site of

the Natatorium, to be used for storage. Center Market was demolished in 1932, followed by the closing of the City's remaining public markets. By the 1950s, Eastern Market was the last remaining City Market and its South Hall Market was threatened with closure. Charles Glasgow, Sr., who ran the fish stall at Eastern Market, suggested he assume management, and formed the Eastern Market Corporation that leased the South and Center Halls from the City beginning in 1954. Currently, under the Eastern Market Legislation, the entire Market is now under unified



Mayor Fenty tours the Market at the reopening

management, currently with Barry Margeson, an employee of the City serving as Market Manager. ★

(To be continued. Next in the September issue: The 1960s – Threats of closure and demolition)

and the Washington Lawyers' Committee. As a resident of NE just outside the historic district, she is interested in the Beyond the Boundaries efforts. She also is a member of the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association, and participated in the development of the CHRS House and Garden tour brochure in 2008 and 2009.

Treasurer: Sharon Ivy Weiss received her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of North Carolina in Charlotte. After working in public accounting for four years, she made the career switch to non-profit accounting and has remained in that field for over 13 years. Sharon has extensive experience in supervising the financial functions of Federal grants and contracts and has worked in the capacity of Chief Financial Officer for non-profit advocacy organizations for the last eight years. She has experience with strategic planning, budgeting and all aspects of organizational financial accounting. She began working as an independent consultant in 2008 and currently works with three different non-profit agencies in DC: The National Congress of American Indians, The Council on Library and Information Resources and The Atlantic Council of United States. She has worked with the House Tour and the Budget Committee of CHRS.

At Large (one year): Shauna Holmes and her husband David moved to Capitol Hill as empty-nesters in late 1997 and have been CHRS members ever since. She has served on the CHRS Board since 2007, has been on its Historic Preservation Committee over ten years, and has been managing CHRS Preservation Cafes for several years. She also belongs to the DC Preservation League and

the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Before retiring in late 2004, she worked over 21 years for the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation handling publications, training, awards, and educational outreach. Shauna is committed to working with neighbors and community organizations to protect Capitol Hill's historic integrity and distinctive character.

At Large (two years): Catherine Davis born in the District and raised in Northern Virginia, moved to Capitol Hill with her husband in July of 2007. She served the Board as Secretary for the past year and participated in the development of the House and Garden Tour brochure for 2008 and 2009. She has worked at the US Department of Education as Chief of Staff for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and as Deputy Chief of Protocol for the Secretary of Commerce. A graduate of the University of Virginia, Catherine has lived in Charleston, SC; Atlanta, GA; and Chicago, IL.

At Large (two years): Michelle Carroll originally from New York, moved to DC when she was a freshman at the Corcoran School of Art and the George Washington University. After college, moving back to NY, getting married, and having children, her husband, Dennis, had an opportunity to work for USAID. Since her husband had been born and raised in DC and because of her love for the city, it took no time at all to decide that DC was going to be home. Michelle is an events planner for the Pew Charitable Trusts and other, primarily environmental, organizations. She has chaired the CHRS House Tour twice and has been in charge of the House Tour Tea for five years.

At Large (two years): Chuck Burger is a Capitol Hill real estate agent with Coldwell Banker and has served on a variety of local and District Committees, including a stint as chair of the ABC Board. He has served as a House Captain for the Tour for a number of years. He currently serves as Vice Chair of EMCAC and is on the board of CHAMPS and Barracks Row / Main Street.

At Large (serving a second year of a two year term): Elizabeth Nelson and her husband, Nick Alberti, moved to their home in the 1300 block of North Carolina in 1985. She is employed by the Federal government as an information technology specialist. Elizabeth currently serves as the Chair of both the North Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association and the ANC 6A Community Outreach Committee. Her focus within CHRS has been to increase awareness and appreciation of the organization's mission and activities, particularly in areas beyond the existing boundaries of the Capitol Hill Historic District. Elizabeth has served in an At Large seat on the Board for the past five years.

At Large (serving a second year of a two year term): Donna Hanousek has served as an At Large Board Member for the past three years and has been an active member of CHRS for the past ten years, including several years serving on the Historic Preservation Committee and a few years as the CHRS EMCAC representative. She currently chairs the CHRS Beyond the Boundaries Committee. She has served as the director of two 501(c)(3) organizations on Capitol Hill: Penn East, Inc., and Friends of the Old Naval Hospital. She also is a member of the

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Did You Know?

- **Hine Site Development.** After the Mayor selects a developer – likely by the end of August – there will be at least 12 to 15 months of clearances and approvals before construction (18-20 months) can start. Opportunities for public input will be during the process for re-zoning and the development of a PUD (Public Unit Development), as well as during the historic preservation review of the resulting plans.
- **Local ban on coal-tar pavement products.** Effective July 1, the District of Columbia has made it illegal to use, sell or permit the use of coal-tar pavement products. These products typically come in the form of pavement sealants and pavement dressing conditioners. The purpose of the ban is to keep toxic chemicals in coal tar from poisoning local streams and threatening the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and Chesapeake Bay. Property owners and contractors should avoid using products with listed ingredients including the words “coal,” “tar,” “refined coal tar pitch,” or “RT-12.” The penalty for using, selling or allowing the use of coal-tar products is a fine of up to \$2,500 per day.
- **Artomatic at Hine?** From all reports, Artomatic 2009 at 55 M Street, SE, was a smashing success. Local artist Carol Spils suggests Artomatic at the Hine Jr. High School in 2010 before its demolition.
- **Closure of Seventh Street, SE.** At its June 9 meeting, ANC6B voted to urge Mayor Fenty to set up a public process to fully explore all facets of continuing the closure of the Eastern Market block of Seventh Street, SE, following the reopening of Eastern Market.
- **Another restaurant for Barracks Row?** Matchbox, the popular Barracks Row eatery, is reputed to have leased the former District Lock and Hardware Store, with plans to install an upscale diner/restaurant. ★

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Landmarks Committee of the DC Preservation League. Donna has a Master’s degree in City Planning and a graduate Certificate in Historic Preservation. She currently works for the District of Columbia Office of Zoning and has previously been a Main Street Director and a Historic Preservation Consultant.

Immediate Past President: **Dick Wolf** has been a CHRS member since moving to Capitol Hill in 1964. He has been on the Board of CHRS since 1969 and served as President from 2005 to

2009. He also served as President from 1977 to 1980. His particular interests have been the DC Comprehensive Plan and zoning issues, and he currently chairs the CHRS City Planning Committee. He currently serves on the planning and zoning committees of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. He is a retired Federal government lawyer. ★

Welcome CHRS Supporters

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

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Nancy Collins and Michael Hoare
Alison and Sandy Clark
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(new members)

Historic Preservation Briefs

by Nancy Metzger

Fenty Nominates Pamela Scott, Architectural Historian, To HPRB – Mayor Adrian Fenty has forwarded to the Council the nominations of Pamela Scott as architectural historian on the Historic Preservation Review Board and Catherine Buell as citizen member. Chairman Gray has scheduled a hearing on July 8 on those two nominations. Pamela Scott, a resident of Ward 4, has compiled a lengthy list of writing, teaching, research and curatorial projects focused on Washington architecture and history. Catherine Buell lives in Historic Anacostia and has served on the HPRB for the past two years. The Council confirmed the nomination of architect Chris Landis to the HPRB on June 16 but the executive branch agreed not to swear him in until after the June HPRB meeting so that John Vlach could provide architectural historian coverage for the June meeting. It is expected that Scott and Buell would be confirmed before the Council adjourns on July 15 so Scott could be seated for the July HPRB hearing. This arrangement will satisfy National Park Service requirements for professional representation by an architectural historian on the HPRB, thus not jeopardizing the \$500,000 federal payment in support of the historic preservation program.

Barney Circle, Meads Row Join Friendship House on Endangered List – In addition to Friendship House at 619 D Street, SE, an 18th century manor house now entangled in bankruptcy proceedings, the DC Preservation League (DCPL) named two other Capitol Hill historic resources to its Most Endangered Places list for 2009. (The inclusion of Friendship

House was known at the time of the June Newsletter deadline so was announced in last month's newsletter.)

Barney Circle neighborhood (bounded by Potomac Avenue, SE, 17th Street, Kentucky Avenue, and Pennsylvania Avenue, SE), is a residential neighborhood of porch-front houses developed during the first quarter of the twentieth century for workforce housing. DCPL noted that the historic nature and architectural character of the neighborhood is largely intact, with only a few inappropriate alterations. However, as housing prices and rents have increased over recent years, development pressures to build larger houses and to enlarge existing ones with additional stories threaten to destroy the historic fabric of the neighborhood, irrevocably compromising its historic and architectural integrity.

Meads Row, a set of the earliest remaining buildings on the 1300 block of H Street, NE, were trend-setting high-style commercial buildings when they were built in 1892 as three-story purpose-built combinations of store and home. Charles C. Meads was a prolific 19th century Capitol Hill developer, designer and builder, focusing mainly on middle-class to upper middle-class dwellings. The buildings at 1305, 1307 and 1311 H Street, NE, incorporate pressed brick, limestone, and patterned metal to achieve an eclectic mix of the Italianate and Renaissance Revival architectural styles. Two buildings in the row, 1309 and 1311, are threatened with demolition by the owner who has not maintained the buildings and now proposes to build a parking lot for the site (1309 replaced an

earlier Meads building). The possibility of demolition is now imminent as the landmark nomination submitted by CHRS was denied by a 5 – 3 vote by the Historic Preservation Review Board on May 28, despite the support of the ANC 6A and Stanton Park Neighborhood Association.

The Historic Preservation staff report, while acknowledging the imminent danger to buildings that are important to the historic H Street streetscape, argued that they did not rise to the level of integrity and historic significance required for city landmarks and buildings that would be submitted for inclusion on the National Register. The community, led by David Holmes, ANC 6A commissioner and CHRS member, argued that the buildings met the criteria because Meads was an important although long neglected Capitol Hill designer/builder who deserved recognition, that the buildings were trend-setting for the developing H Street corridor and were important to the neighborhood, that they were an essential element of the development of H Street, NE, and the near northeast community as an important shopping and transportation corridor, and that the Comprehensive Plan calls for the preservation of H Street's historic character. After much discussion, HPRB members Andrew Aurbach, Catherine Buell, Maria Casarella, Robert Sonderman, and John Vlach voted to support the staff report and deny landmark status while Elinor Bacon, Jim Kane, and Joseph Taylor voted against denial of landmark status. ★

Gas Station at 1400 Maryland Avenue Advances Through the Regulatory Process

by David Holmes

A motion authorizing the controversial location of a gas station at the corner of Fourteenth Street and Maryland Avenue, NE, was adopted by the city's Public Space Committee (PSC) on June 25. If the developer can meet a series of conditions included in the motion, this leaves only the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) as a potential barrier to construction.

The names and signatures of about a thousand neighbors on a petition in opposition to the Shell station (Shell, No), the resistance of

the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, and letters from three Councilmembers (Tommy Wells, Kwame Brown and Mary Cheh) were insufficient to stop the project.

The developer has withdrawn construction from public space except for the driveways necessary to access the private property; has agreed to do extensive plantings in the public space area; and has found and committed to exclusively use a 35 foot-long fuel tanker, instead of the normal 55 foot tanker (to avoid needing to prohibit public parking on Fourteenth Street).

In addition, the motion to approve is provisional on restriction of the hours for fuel delivery to between 9 pm to 7 am; the developer extending the median of Maryland Avenue five feet to the west (to prevent illegal left turns from the station to go eastbound on Maryland); that there be no increase in government-documented unsafe behavior resulting in crashes between vehicles, pedestrian, or into physical structures; and that there be no increases in traffic crashes

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Eastern Market Metro Plaza continued from page 2

further planning. Amy Weinstein was chosen as the lead architect/planner, assisted by Ohme van Sweden. Gorove/Slade & Associates was selected for traffic studies. The steering committee was enlarged to include representatives from the several streets that are adjacent to the plaza. This group has met several times to view the progress of the consultants. A community-wide meeting on July 1 saw the three design concepts for the plaza that have resulted from the work of the consultants and the steering committee. Several Federal and local agencies would have to approve any proposed changes to the Plaza.

The three design concepts that have received detailed analysis are as follows. First, the "as is" design, which does not propose changes to Pennsylvania Avenue but does put forth a much stronger landscape design with more in the way of trees, plantings, and useful community areas. Second, the

"Central Park" design, which creates out of the four parts of the plaza a rectangular park of substantial acreage that would be more on the order of Stanton Park in NE. Pennsylvania Avenue would run around the Park, much as Massachusetts Avenue, NE, circles Stanton Park. However, both Metro buses and emergency vehicles (but not private automobiles and trucks) would be able to pass through the park in a north-south direction via a narrow roadway through the middle of the park, making Eighth Street, SE, an uninterrupted street for those purposes. Third, the "Triptych" design would create in the center a space similar in size to Thomas Circle with the Northeast and Southwest plaza areas remaining largely intact.

Pennsylvania Avenue would run around the Circle but would not intrude on existing businesses and residences substantially more than it does now. The Triptych would result in three parts to the plaza with substantial park space as it is

now and a more formal space in the middle. Intense landscaping would provide both an abundance of greenery as well as opportunities for public gatherings.

A 45-day period for submitting comments on the proposals began at the end of the July 1 public meeting. During the comment period, the design team will meet with staff from the District, WMATA, and two Federal agencies – the Fine Arts Commission and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). Early in the fall, the steering committee will reconvene and will attempt to select a preferred alternative from all the design ideas put forward.

Even if the community coalesces around a single proposal, nothing can move forward without the approval of the DC government, WMATA, Fine Arts, and NCPC. In initiating this design study, we have taken a very important first step. But if change is to come to the Eastern Market Metro Plaza, the journey will be a long one. ★

Rosedale Historic Walking Tour Uncovers Rosedale's Hidden History

by Donna Hanousek and Beth Purcell

On May 30, Rosedale Citizens' Alliance (RCA) and CHRS held a walking tour of the Rosedale neighborhood. About 30 neighbors attended. The tour began at the Rosedale Recreation Center, Seventeenth and Gales Streets, NE, with a survey of the area's earliest history. The tour went on to cover a variety of topics and eras, including a look at some early residents of Kramer Street, 20th century row houses, a description and examples of 1920s porch-front houses, and examination of Graceland Court. (Future editions of the News will include features on "The Oldest Houses in Rosedale," and the "Early Demographics of Rosedale.")

Earliest History – RCA members Ken Granata and Frank Madrigal offered a survey of area history. During the Civil War, Camp Barry, an army artillery camp, was located near the northeast corner of Benning Road and Fifteenth Street, NE. Graceland Cemetery (an integrated cemetery) was at the same corner from 1872 to 1895. Most of the persons buried there were later re-interred at Woodlawn Cemetery.

19th Century Buildings – 1892 was a boom year when many small frame row houses went up in Rosedale. These houses were typically 12 to 14 feet wide and approximately 28 feet deep. These include 1626-1684 Kramer Street, NE, and 1615-1627 Rosedale Street, NE. These houses are two stories and two bays wide (i.e., one door and one window), have a pediment (triangle) over the windows and doorway, and have wood brackets at the cornice. The



PHOTO: ELIZABETH NELSON

CHRS Board member Donna Hanousek leads Rosedale Walking Tour

real estate records show that some were owner-occupied and others were rented to tenants.

The Panic of 1893 – The Panic of 1893 ended the construction boom in Rosedale. Dana Wyckoff explained that first, railroads had over-expanded and began to go bankrupt, and then bank failures followed. Runs on banks caused still more bank failures and a credit crunch. Many people lost their savings and their jobs – unemployment nationwide was estimated at 12% or higher. As a result, some walked away from their homes and mortgages. This depression lasted about five years, and left its mark on Rosedale. Very few houses were built here between 1893 and 1898.

Early Residents of Kramer Street – Kramer Street was a diverse, integrated street in the early 20th century. The 1910 census offers a snapshot:

- An African-American couple and their nine children lived at 1652 Kramer Street. The husband was 39, a laborer; his wife and two daughters age 16 and 19 worked as laundresses.

He was born in DC and his wife was born in Virginia. They were renters.

- At 1658 Kramer Street was a white family of three. The 66-year old father came from New York; his parents were Irish. He and their 24-year old son were bricklayers (the building trades were a predominant occupation in Rosedale). His wife did not work outside the home. They owned their home and had a mortgage.
- At 1648 Kramer Street was a German immigrant family of four. He was 44 and worked as a laborer. The wife did not work outside the home; their 17-year old daughter was a saleslady. They were renters.

Early 20th Century Buildings – By 1908 row house building was picking up in Rosedale. J. A. Clark hired Speiden & Speiden to design brick row houses at 1686-1694 Kramer Street, NE, and around the corner at 624 Seventeenth Street, NE. Albert H. Beers (the well-known architect who worked with Harry Wardman) designed brick

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New Traffic Circle for Pennsylvania and Potomac Avenues?

by Dick Wolf and Beth Purcell

DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) is undertaking an Environmental Assessment (EA) to determine if the intersection of Pennsylvania and Potomac Avenue should be transformed into a Washington traffic circle, with a pedestrian area and cross walks inside the new circle. The traffic circle appears in DDOT's 2005 Middle Anacostia Crossings Study. The EA considers two options: (1) "Build" (the traffic circle) or (2) "No-build." Whether this project is a good idea is unclear. The concept appears to be sound, but DDOT has not yet performed an adequate study integrating and answering design, traffic, environmental, and safety questions. For this reason, CHRS has limited its comments sent to DDOT primarily to environmental issues.

Water runoff is the most serious environmental problem affecting the Anacostia River. Vegetation and permeable sidewalks inside the circle would help reduce runoff. If DDOT decides to build the traffic circle, they need to work with the

Urban Forestry Administration and DC Department of Environment to study the type and depth of soil required to sustain shade trees vs. other types of vegetation. A rain garden inside the circle should be considered. Trash traps would be needed in all the nearby storm drains.

Other questions regarding effects on the surrounding neighborhood need to be addressed and answered. How will the project affect volume of vehicle traffic and air quality? Will the project redirect traffic into the surrounding neighborhood streets? Will the placement of bus stops serve the needs of the community? Will the lighting at the crosswalks and inside the circle be adequate to insure pedestrian safety at night?

In addition, there are design issues. Will the design for the proposed traffic circle respect the L'Enfant plan and the neighborhood? This area is one block from the Capitol Hill Historic District, and shares the same architecture and design as the Capitol Hill Historic District. For example, all the row houses across

Fourteenth Street from the Potomac Avenue Metro Plaza were built in 1907 by Harry Wardman, one of the most important builders in Washington history. If the circle goes forward, its design needs to take into account the design recommendations for the Eastern Market Metro Plaza.

The 2005 plan for the traffic circle had X-shaped sidewalks inside the circle. But the design shown at the ANC 6B meeting on June 9, 2009, has only a single sidewalk bisecting the circle. Because people always want to walk the shortest distance, we believe that they will create a muddy path through the center of the circle where the "missing" sidewalk would have been. Short-cut dirt paths have already proven to be a problem on Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. There was a mess at the Eastern Market Metro Plaza until a walkway was built between the escalator and Eighth Street, SE.

DDOT needs to hold additional public meetings to present the project to the community, respond to these and other questions and learn of community concerns. ★

Gas Station at 1400 Maryland Avenue continued from page 9

owing to traffic arriving or departing from property as documented in police reports.

The Chair of the PSC stated that "...the question of internal flow is not before us,..." that the movement of vehicles in the tight quarters around the pumps and mini-mart is a matter for the BZA. Since the total space between the center of the pump island and the curb is only 20 feet, this will be very tight.

A vehicle at a pump typically

stands two to three feet away from the pump island (which itself is usually two and a half to three feet wide), then add the width of the car, van, truck or mini-bus (five to eight feet wide) plus enough space for another vehicle to pass around either to advance to the forward pump or to exit the station after fueling. It's feasible if the vehicles are smaller cars, but doubtful if they are SUVs and impossible if one of them is a large van or one of the mini-buses seen so often

carrying people to the Capitol or other federal buildings.

The H Street Commercial Overlay prohibits gas stations along H Street. This is the only property on this small triangular block that does not touch H Street. And the Comprehensive Plan admonishes that gas station location on Capitol Hill should be discouraged. Regrettably the city agencies seem to treat the Comp Plan as if it has no prescriptive or enforceable power. ★

Mark Your Calendar!

JULY

1 Monday, 6:30 pm

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

21 Tuesday 6:30 pm

CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, second floor. Details: Beth Purcell 202-622-4303

23 Thursday, 10:00 am

Historic Preservation Review Board, 441 4th Street NW, Room 220 South. Details: Nancy Metzger, 202-546-1034

Saturdays - May 2 to November 21, 9 am to noon

H Street NE FRESHFARM MARKET, 625 H Street NE (across from H Street Self Storage). Shop for fresh fruits and vegetables, pasture-raised meats, local cheeses, yogurt, breads and baked goods, cut flowers and more. Open rain or shine! WIC, Seniors' Farmers Market Coupons and Food Stamps accepted. www.freshfarmmarkets.org.

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row houses at 1635-1633 Kramer Street, NE, for the Zepp Brothers.

Rosedale also has many 1920s brick porch-front houses, a product of cultural and economic trends. The Philadelphia Centennial celebration in 1876 sparked interest in Federal-period architecture, leading to the "Colonial Revival" style, featuring a two-story symmetrical design with equal numbers of windows on either side of the front door, a front porch, and double-hung windows, often in pairs. In the early decades of the 20th century, middle class homebuyers also liked bungalows (deep front porch, over-hanging roof, projecting eaves). But land prices in Washington were too high to build detached houses for these buyers, so developers had to build row houses. The challenge was to

build row houses with Colonial Revival and bungalow design elements. Examples of developers' success in incorporating these designs include the beige brick row houses at 1612-1656 Gales Street, NE, (front porch across the entire front of the house) built by Herman R. Howenstein in 1924, and 1645-1673 Rosedale Street, NE, (front porch, paired windows) built by J. F. Mills in 1925.

Graceland Court – Dana Wyckoff talked about alley living in Washington, DC. In 1892-1893, five frame dwellings were built in the alley, Graceland Court (Fifteenth/ Sixteenth Streets, Benning Road and Gales Street, NE). They were demolished sometime before 1960. ★

(More on alley life in Graceland Court in the September issue)



Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 Tenth Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003