Mother’s Day is early this year—don’t let it sneak up on you! And Mother’s Day means the annual CHRS House & Garden Tour. So skip the chocolates and flowers and take Mom for a nice stroll through Capitol Hill’s greater Barracks Row neighborhood as you visit this year’s outstanding set of charming homes.

The homes on this year’s tour fall into three distinct styles and types. We have tiny alley houses, historic wood-sided houses and completely renovated houses. We even feature a firehouse and a church bell tower. So, mark your calendar for Mother’s Day weekend: Saturday, May 7, from 4 to 7 pm and Sunday, May 8, from 12 to 5 pm. Tickets are $35 in advance, $40 the weekend of the tour. Order tickets today! Go to www.chrs.org.

Tiny Houses
CHRS is delighted to feature DC’s famous Archibald Walk on the House & Garden Tour this year. Tucked away in the alley behind Christ Church (620 G Street, SE), Archibald Walk dates to the very early 1900s. If the lore is true, Archibald’s Walk has a storied past and a colorful present. These not-so-spacious abodes feature clever space management, thoughtful interior design and close partnerships. The tiny footprints belie impressive floor-to-ceiling artwork, hidden gardens behind old brick walls and surprisingly spacious rooms.

So, how “tiny” is tiny? Well, the typical American home is around 2,600 square feet. But here in Washington the average home is 2,237 square feet. New York City homes squeeze in at about half that at 1,124 square feet. At less than half that size (between 545 and 675 square feet), you won’t want to miss these little gems!

Seeking Nominations for 2016–17 Board
CHRS will hold elections for the 2016-2017 Board of Directors by postcard ballot in May. The Elections Committee, chaired by Susan Oursler, includes Scott Davis, Elizabeth Nelson and Beth Purcell. The committee is seeking recommendations of individuals who wish to be considered for positions on next year’s CHRS Board of Directors. These positions include President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, each for one-year terms and three At-Large Members for two-year terms. Nominations for the 2016–2017 CHRS Board of Directors will be announced at the end of April.

If you wish to be considered, to recommend someone, or to find out more about the duties of each position, please contact the CHRS office at (202) 543-0425 or email caphrs@aol.com and a member of the Elections Committee will respond. Each recommendation must cite the position for which the person wants to be considered and must include his or her resume. Recommendations must be submitted by the end of the day on Tuesday, April 12, 2016.
CHRS Urges Quick Action on Boys and Girls Club, 17th Street, SE

By Beth Purcell

On March 2, 2016, CHRS testified at the Council oversight hearing for the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED).

The DC government owns an important building on Capitol Hill, the former Boys and Girls Club at 261 17th Street, SE. It’s a Classical Revival building constructed in 1937 as a recreational facility. The building is vacant. In 2015, responsibility for the building was transferred from the DC Department of General Services to DMPED. This is an important building in our neighborhood that could be put to productive use, possibly as affordable housing for seniors. We need DMPED to engage with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B and the community and to make adaptive use of this building a top priority.

DMPED has completed award-winning projects to convert other older buildings, similar to the Boys and Girls Club, into affordable housing. DMPED helped to make the House of Lebanon at 27 O Street, NW a success as a tax rehabilitation project converting a school building into housing for seniors. That project subsequently won numerous awards. The Boys and Girls Club should be eligible for the federal rehabilitation tax credit because it should be eligible to be listed on the DC Inventory of Historic Places. This building could help contribute to the District’s shrinking stock of affordable housing. If there is community support, we urge DMPED to also consider the low-income tax credit.

We urged that DMPED make the Boys and Girls Club a top priority and work with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B, CHRS and the community to create another award-winning project.

Boys and Girls Club, 261 17th Street, SE, currently owned by the DC government.

Historic Preservation Briefs

by Beth Purcell

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board) considered the following case on February 25, 2016. HPRB is responsible for determining if proposed changes to a building are consistent with the DC Preservation Act. A “concept review” is a preliminary determination of a building owner’s plan to alter the building, and if the concept is approved, the owner will return to the HPRB for a final review. In these reports, “staff” refers to the staff of the Historic Preservation Office (HPO), which serves as the staff of the HPRB.

No Capitol Hill Historic District cases were set for hearing in February.

The following cases, in which CHRS participated, was on the consent calendar:

- **125 D Street, SE**, HPA 16-005, concept / rear addition
- **231 10th Street, SE**, HPA 16-209, concept / garage addition
- **229 10th Street, SE**, HPA 16-207, concept / rear addition and garage addition.

Interested in learning more about historic district designation? Contact CHRS at caphrs@aol.com.

- **647 South Carolina Avenue, SE**, HPA 16-203, concept / rear addition
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Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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ABOUT CHRS
Capitol Hill is a special place. We promote, preserve, and enhance the character of our historic neighborhoods.

Since its founding in 1955, CHRS has worked continuously to make Capitol Hill the desirable location it has now become. Due to CHRS’s efforts, Capitol Hill won designation as a historic district in 1976. Today, that legacy of standing up for the community continues with our work in planning, zoning, historic preservation, and public safety.

CHRS is a volunteer organization, made up of Hill residents who love their historic neighborhoods and want to ensure that the unique character of the Hill is around for future generations. Come join us!

To learn more or join, please visit: www.CHRS.org

Zoning Briefs
By Gary Peterson

The CHRS Zoning Committee considered two Zoning Commission cases at its meeting on March 10, 2016.

ZC-15-13 is a PUD application to build 44 residential units at 1311 E Street, SE. The property is currently mixed zoned R-4 on E Street and C-M-1 (an industrial zone) in the rear. North across E Street is the Buchanan School site; Frager’s Hardware store is immediately to the east. The bulk of the property is located in the center of the square. As part of the project, the property will be rezoned R-5-B. The project will provide 45 underground parking spaces and 48 bicycle spaces in a secure underground room. There will be 23 3-bedroom townhouse units, 17 2-bedroom units and 4 units that are 1 bedroom plus loft or den. Five of the units are designated as Inclusionary Zoning units. The committee found the design to be compatible with the neighborhood and voted to support the application.

ZC-16-03 is the first case involving the HE (Hill East) zoning category that applies to Reservation 13. CHRS was very active in writing the small area plan and the zoning regulations for this district. The zoning requires the Zoning Commission to approve the design of the buildings to ensure that they meet the design criteria in the regulations. Reservation 13 contains over 60 acres and this is a small portion that the City has put forward for development. This project involves two parcels, F-1 and G-1. Parcel F-1 faces the Stadium-Armory Metro plaza on 19th Street and is bordered by unconstructed Bay Street and C Street, SE on the north and south. Parcel G-1 is immediately to the south and fronts 19th Street, SE. It is bordered by unconstructed C Street, NE and Massachusetts Avenue, NE on the north and south. The developer will construct the unconstructed streets bordering the property. The property is within the Anacostia Waterfront Development Zone and must provide 30% of the units for low and moderate incomes. The developer also needs some minor variances to make the project work. The committee was impressed with the design and found it complied with the design regulations. The developer has not finished the design for the rear of the properties that border alleys and the committee withheld approval of these particular walls until further review. The committee voted to approve the application except for the design of the rear of the buildings. *
This article could begin with, “It was a dark and stormy night…” The winter Members’ Meeting was initially scheduled for January 25 but was preempted by “Snowzilla” and instead rescheduled for February 24. Unfortunately, the weather was no more cooperative on that evening. Despite the raging storm and tornado watch, the meeting went on as planned at Maury Elementary School. The speaker, Rhonda Sincavage, is Director of Publication and Programs at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Her presentation addressed the core of CHRS’s mission: to promote, preserve and enhance the character of our historic neighborhoods.

Through her work with the National Trust, Ms. Sincavage has observed that the focus of much historic preservation—both national and local—has shifted from saving individual buildings to preserving the character and quality of communities. As she noted, Capitol Hill incorporates many ideal traits of an urban community. It is human-scale, walkable and well-served by public transit. The streets are lined with historic rowhouses and punctuated by parks and green spaces. Local businesses provide essential goods and services, while residents have easy access to cultural resources and to a variety of public spaces for socializing.

Ms. Sincavage demonstrated how profoundly the built environment influences the sense of community by comparing Capitol Hill with Southwest DC. Most residential spaces in Southwest are occupied by large, Modernist planned housing developments built in the late 1950s and 1960s as part of that quadrant’s urban renewal redevelopment program. While architecturally interesting and even brilliant in some cases, the buildings present the pedestrian with hard glass and steel surfaces and the inward-looking planned developments create a sense of isolated groupings rather than a greater organic community (which, sadly, is what they replaced). By contrast, the largely 19th century brick and wood rowhouses and early 20th century apartment buildings in Capitol Hill may not be as space efficient as the large multi-residential buildings in Southwest, but they are human in scale: they invite residents to walk around, look at the scenery, shop at the market, visit with their neighbors.

There are many sound reasons to preserve and adapt old buildings rather than demolish and replace them. If the building is intact, it usually makes financial sense to retain the structure. Doing so creates less damage to the environment and less disruption to the neighborhood. But beyond these quantifiable reasons, preservation also contributes to residents’ psychological and emotional health. This was demonstrated by an interview-based research project conducted by Ms. Sincavage’s colleague, Tom Mayes. Mayes found that people become attached to places because they provide continuity, stability, personal memories and identity and that this process can take place within a single generation. According to Mayes, “Old places foster community by giving people a sense of shared identity through landmarks, history, memory, and stories.” For example, most Capitol Hill residents feel a personal attachment to Eastern Market and not necessarily because the vendors sell everything that a shopper could want, or because it is the most convenient place to buy food. Eastern Market’s “specialness” has to do with tradition and community.

A Knight Foundation study, conducted by Gallup, called Soul of the Community surveyed 43,000 people in 26 US cities to determine the factors that cause a person to become attached to a particular place. Although it might seem intuitive that education, safety and economic considerations would rank the highest, the study concluded that the leading factors are aesthetics, openness and social offerings; the order of preference was the same across a variety of cities. The qualities that lead to a sense of belonging and emotional well-being come first and the tangibles—good schools, safe streets, healthy businesses—that enable a community to thrive seem to follow.

Do older buildings contribute to a sense of community? To answer this question, Ms. Sincavage cited a report by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, “Older, Smaller, Better: Measuring How the Character of Buildings and Blocks Influences Urban Vitality.” This study was conducted in San Francisco, Seattle and Washington, DC. The research measured the age, range of ages and size of buildings against forty socioeconomic and environmental attributes such as density, ownership, employment and efficient use of space. This yielded a “character score” for each 200 x 200 meter area.

Continued on page 6
On Friday evening, March 18, an overflow of guests crowded the Hill Center to hear a lecture by Brook Hill, this year’s awardee and speaker for the Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture. Mr. Hill explained how economic pressures to convert existing affordable housing to market rate housing is greatly diminishing the stock of affordable housing and that this redevelopment has attracted wealthy newcomers. Gentrifying neighborhoods are rapidly becoming off-limits to low-income buyers because of price. The Fair Housing Act imposes an affirmative duty on the City to preserve economic integration but, in Mr. Hill’s opinion, the City is not exercising its authority. Mr. Hill identified the factors causing this trend and suggested how to reverse it in order to retain affordable housing; he also describes how varied housing stock contributes towards maintaining character of place.

Mr. Hill described three opportunities that, if effectively exercised, could provide a solution:

1) **Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act.** This would require a developer to inform the tenants of its intent to convert the building to market rate housing and allows the tenants to organize and negotiate with the developer; that could involve bringing in an alternate developer.

2) **District Opportunity to Purchase Act.** This would allow the Department of Housing and Community Development to essentially assume the same rights as the tenants, that is: to provide the developer with notice, negotiate with the developer and possibly bring in an alternate developer.

3) **Planned Unit Development (PUD) mechanism** allows a developer to seek density and height bonuses in return for providing public benefits. But in considering those public benefits, Inclusionary Zoning—which requires only 8-10 percent affordable housing rather than one-for-one affordable housing—is evaluated and the Department of Housing and Community Development is usually not involved in that evaluation.

Mr. Hill’s lecture was followed by a panel discussion with panelists who represented the views of a DC Developer, an Affordable Housing Activist and the DC Government.

**Affordable Housing Activist View**
Will Merrifield, the Staff Attorney with the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, expanded on Mr. Hill’s points and explained that frequently the statutory rights contained in the **Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act** are not exercised because the tenants are not able to organize and begin...
of each city. Not surprisingly, the report highlights Barracks Row and H Street / Atlas District as scoring high on these measures.

The study concluded that, “Neighborhoods containing a mix of older, smaller buildings of diverse age support greater levels of positive economic and social activity than areas dominated by newer, larger buildings.” Older, mixed-use neighborhoods are more walkable and have greater access to public transit. They correlate with younger and more diverse residents. The older business districts with smaller buildings provide more flexibility for entrepreneurs; they have a higher proportion of creative economy jobs and women- and minority-owned businesses. Further, the older commercial and mixed-use districts are space efficient: they have a higher population density, more businesses and more jobs per square foot than newer, larger commercial developments.

On the other hand, recently reinvigorated older business districts like H Street, NE and Barracks Row also contain the seeds of their own destruction. Ms. Sincavage cited 14th Street, NW between P and U Streets as an example: within the last dozen years, the area has evolved from nearly deserted, to lined with unique small businesses, to a nearly solid stretch of oversized upscale retail, apartment buildings and expensive restaurants. It has become a destination independent of the local community. What can prevent H Street and Barracks Row from following this path?

Part of the answer lies in the existence of neighborhood historic districts. Much—although not all—of the large scale development took place north of the 14th Street Historic District boundary. All of Barracks Row is protected by the Capitol Hill Historic District, but the buildings on and north of H Street are not, as can be seen by the large scale development taking place at the western end. It will require community vigilance and advocacy to protect the neighborhood’s historic qualities, at least until the Capitol Hill Historic District is extended to include it.

Ms. Sincavage ended her presentation by recognizing that, contrary to a widely-held perception, historic preservation is not the enemy of progress. The goal of preservation advocacy is change management: retaining the historic character of a place, while also welcoming and controlling progress, for the benefit of the community. Preservation advocacy at its best is a positive community-based response to growth in the built environment and in population density, changing demographics, economic change, and environmental challenges.

CHRS has been doing this for decades by providing expert testimony to DC government offices and through its participation in local development projects, most recently Union Station redevelopment, the Hine School redevelopment, the 11th Street Bridge project, the Height Study and Hill East development. In addition to advocating on behalf of our old buildings and neighborhoods, CHRS provides residents with information on historic preservation methods and assists them with Historic District policy questions. The organization shares information through walking tours, preservation cafés, this newsletter and high-caliber talks at quarterly meetings and now the annual Dick Wolf Lecture series. Through all of these channels, CHRS seeks to engage members of the community in the process of promoting, preserving, and enhancing the character of our historic Capitol Hill, the neighborhood we call home.

April Preservation Café: Mortar Matters

To repoint, or not to repoint: that is the question! Mortar may be the most over-looked and under-appreciated aspect of your row house. Architectural conservator Justine Posluszy Bello will discuss mortar and repointing fundamentals for the Capitol Hill homeowner at our next Preservation Café, Thursday, April 21, 2016. This will include a discussion of mortar terminology and tips, signs of trouble and things to be aware of when you’re considering embarking on a repointing project.

Bring your questions! The presentation will begin at 6:30 pm at Ebenezers Coffeehouse, 2nd and F Streets, NE, first floor. The event is free and handicapped accessible and the public is encouraged to attend.

Thank You, CHRS Supporters

We thank the following new members and sponsors.

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Peter & Constance Robinson
New Historic Landmark: The Furies Collective, 219 11th Street, SE

by Beth Purcell

In the early 1970s, the rowhouse at 219 11th Street, SE was the headquarters of the lesbian-feminist collective, The Furies (named for the Greek female spirits of justice and vengeance). In 1971, twelve young women founded a socialist/anarchist collective advocating lesbianism as a political movement, challenging oppression and male supremacy. The collective’s newspaper, The Furies, sold primarily by subscription, offered essays on ideology, self-reliance, self-defense and the collective. The collective dissolved in 1972.

The house was designed by the prolific architect Nicholas T. Haller in 1913 for William Murphy. Owner Robert Pohl and the D.C. Preservation League applied for the landmark designation. The Historic Preservation Review Board designated the house as a historic landmark on January 28, 2016 (Historic Landmark Case No. 15-18).

April Films at Anacostia Community Museum

This month the museum is showing two films of interest to the Capitol Hill community. There will be a discussion following each film.

Near the River explores the environmental heritage of Anacostia River and its impact on East of the River residents. Showing Saturday, April 16, 2–5 pm.

Fate of a Salesman documents the final year of Men’s Fashion Center on H Street, NE, which for 60 years was the choice outfitter for Chuck Brown and other well-known figures. Showing Tuesday, April 19, 11 am–1 pm

All films showing at the Anacostia Community Museum, 1901 Fort Place, SE. To register please call the Museum at (202) 633-4484.
Old Wood Houses
Shortly after the federal government relocated to the District, carved out of farm and forest land upstream of Alexandria, the building of the Capitol became one of the primary economic engines for the new city. All of those stone carvers, carpenters and laborers needed homes to live in. Many of those first settlers found homes in the new Navy Yard neighborhood at what is now the south end of 8th Street. Fortunately, several of those old homes are still standing and remain in good use.

This year’s tour features three historic wood houses. Kitchens and bathrooms have been updated but the homes retain their old character and charm, over-laid with great interior design details and furnishings. In one, you’ll need sharp eyes to spot the hidden closets and in two you’ll wonder how such large gardens are so well-hidden.

Renovations
No house tour would be complete without including homes that have been remodeled top to bottom. This year we feature four homes that were rescued by complete renovations. Open floor plans is the paradigm, making houses that are constrained by standard lot sizes feel wider and deeper than they really are. Designed with the modern family in mind, they feature large kitchens with island counters and ample appliances.

Tickets Available Now!
We have a great line-up of houses and gardens this year, large and small. Tickets are available on line at www.chrs.org. And after the tour, flash your ticket at participating Barrack’s Row eateries for discounts off food and/or drinks. ✯
Individual Donations and Ticket Order Form

**Tax-Deductible Contributions**
Benefactors, Patrons, and Sponsors will be listed in the Tour brochure if received by April 15.

- **Benefactor** ($1,000, 8 complimentary tickets, $760 deductible)
- **Patron** ($500, 4 complimentary tickets, $380 deductible)
- **Sponsor** ($250, 2 complimentary tickets, $190 deductible)
- **Contributor** ($100, completely deductible)
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My/our name(s) should be listed as follows: __________________________________________

**Member Tour Tickets**
For tickets only, mail or scan and e-mail this form with full payment by April 24.

- ____ Member Tour tickets @ $30 each (limit 2 per household)
- ____ Additional Tour tickets @ $35 each ($40 each on Tour weekend)

Name: ___________________________________________________________________________
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**Payment Information**
Sum of contribution and tickets. *Your cancelled check or credit card statement will be your receipt.*

- ____ Enclosed is my check for $______________ payable to CHRS, Inc.
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Signature: ______________________________ CVV Code: ____________

Tickets will be mailed approximately 7–10 days before the Tour.

CHRS
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In 1897, 11 percent of Washington residents lived in alley dwellings and 93 percent of these residents were African-Americans. Reformers urged that housing for the poor be improved to replace unsanitary, unsafe and crime-ridden buildings (especially alley dwellings) with affordable “sanitary” housing. One group, the Washington Sanitary Housing Company (WSHC), founded in 1903, advocated building affordable low-density sanitary rental housing for the working poor. Its business model was to raise funds from investors, buy affordable vacant lots near employment centers, then build two-family flats to be rented at the lowest feasible rate and pay shareholders only a limited dividend (initially four percent). WSHC’s leaders debated the best form for housing the poor: apartments could house more people at a lower unit cost, but single-family housing was believed to be more uplifting. The compromise solution was to build two-unit flats (sometimes called rowhouse flats) with a private entrance for each flat. For-profit builders were already constructing such two-unit flats. For example, in 1903, Kennedy and Davis built ten two-unit flats on the 100 block of 15th Street, NE.

To minimize risks, WSHC’s apartments were to be rented not to “the idle and dissolute [but] only for those who pay their rents and take reasonable care of the apartments.” WSHC rented to both African-American and whites. WSHC had built approximately 97 two-unit flats by 1914, and 400 by 1950. The company was sold in 1954.

Although WSHC built most of its units in Southwest, it also built in Hill East. The 1300 block of L Street, SE was near employment centers such as the Navy Yard and the Pennsylvania Avenue commercial district. In 1911, Appleton P. Clark, Jr. designed rental flats built by WSHC at 1000–1022 13th Street, SE; 1301–1311 K Street, SE; and 1306–1332 L Street, SE. Each flat had a private entrance: a door to the first story unit and a second door to the upstairs unit. They were 20 x 40 feet, brick, constructed at an estimated cost of $2,117 per building. WSHC’s flats typically had three or four rooms, a bathroom and hot...
the process of negotiating with the developer. A companion remedy is available to the City under the District Opportunity to Purchase Act, but that authority has never been exercised.

Developer View
Buwa Binitie, the Managing Principal of Dantes Partners, explained the economic pressures facing a developer. Even if a tenants’ organization exercises its rights under the Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act, the time required to negotiate with a tenants’ organization is not adequate, particularly in a PUD proceeding.

DC Government View
Allison Ladd, the Chief of Staff of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), explained that the Mayor has committed 100 million dollars to affordable housing, but her department has not issued regulations to implement the District Opportunity to Purchase Act. DHCD is studying whether the regulations should provide that the city will own purchased properties, or assign purchased properties to a developer.

Following the lecture and panel discussion, Mr. Hill was presented with a check for $1,000. The program concluded with a champagne reception that allowed the public to visit with Mr. Hill and the panelists.

This is the second Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture Program, showcasing excellence in research and writing on urban planning and historic preservation in the District of Columbia by a student or intern. It is free and open to the public, funded by contributions from people like you. We need donations to keep the program going and also to purchase software that will convert the audio recordings of the first two lecture programs into text. Our goal is to create a library of Dick Wolf Lectures, beginning with these first two lectures and panel discussions.

and cold running water. In the early 1950s, WSHC began to sell its Hill East houses and today these houses are privately owned. Most owners closed off the second entrance, but a few can still be seen on L Street, SE.


When you make a donation to CHRS, please note “Dick Wolf Lecture” in the memo field so that your tax-deductible contribution will be directed specifically towards this important program. Thank you for your continued support. ✯

Hill East, continued from page 10

2 DC Building permit # 5306 (11 May 1911).

Dick Wolf Lecture, continued from page 5
Mark Your Calendar!

APRIL

4 Monday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Beth Purcell (202) 544-0178.

14 Thursday, 7:30 pm
CHRS Zoning Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Gary Peterson (202) 547-7969.

16 Saturday 2–5 pm
Film Near the River, environmental heritage of Anacostia River and impact on East of the River residents. Anacostia Community Museum, 1901 Fort Place, SE. Details: (202) 633-4484.

19 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

MAY

2 Monday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Historic Preservation Committee, Kirby House, 420 10th Street, SE, first floor. Details: Beth Purcell, (202) 544-0178.

59th Annual Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour
Saturday, May 7 · 4–7 pm | Sunday, May 8 · 12–5 pm
More information available at (202) 543-0425 or www.chrs.org.