



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

NEWS

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March 2019

2019 DICK WOLF MEMORIAL LECTURE

Dismantling the Streetcar System: What Have We Learned?

By Monte Edwards

The fifth annual Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture will be held on Friday, March 29, and will again showcase excellence in urban planning and historic preservation in the District of Columbia. The Lecture will be held at the Hill Center at 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE at 7pm and will be preceded by a brief Members meeting beginning at 6:45pm. The event is free and open to the public.

The winner of the 2019 prize is John Hillegass, a student of Uwe Brandes in the Urban & Regional Planning program at Georgetown University. His paper is on the subject of planning and the historic context behind dismantling the

District's extensive streetcar system and converting all lines to buses, between 1956 and 1962. The goal was to ease traffic and congestion, speed up transit, improve transit reliability, reduce transit costs and thereby keep transit affordable. By those measures, the plan was a failure.

Hillegass examines indicators of reliability (number of passengers, headways, and span of service), speed (headways and scheduled runtimes) and affordability (fare price as percentage of minimum wage). He concludes that the replacement transit system today is equal to or worse than the transit system of 1946 and that today's planners should proceed with

caution. The lesson of the District's streetcar system can help transportation planners avoid the next mistake.

Following his lecture, a panel of special guests from the fields of Transportation and Planning will discuss the major points of his lecture:



IMAGE © CHRISTIES PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIOS

John Hillegass, winner of the 2019 Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture.

IMAGE COURTESY STREETS OF WASHINGTON



Streetcar leaving the Navy Yard barn at M and 8th Street SE; the building on the right is now painted a deep blue.

Also in this issue

ARTICLES

Photo Contest 2019	2
2019 House & Garden Tour	3
CHRS Board Nominations	3
Demolition on A Street SE	7
Small Cell Design Hearings	7

COLUMNS

Historic Preservation Briefs	4
Thank You CHRS Supporters	5

LOOKING AHEAD

House Tour Ticket Form	6
Mark Your Calendar	8

Continued on page 2

- Andrew Trueblood, the new Director of DC's Office of Planning and a resident of Ward 6. Previously he was the Chief of Staff at DC's Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED).
- John DeFerrari, author of the blog Streets Of Washington. DeFerrari has recently published a book: Capital Streetcars: Early Mass Transit in Washington, DC. He is also a trustee of the DC Preservation League.
- Shyam Kannan, WMATA's Managing Director, Planning and Transit Asset Management. On a daily basis, Kannan deals with issues of contemporary transit planning for Metro. He has worked across public, private and non-profit sectors.

John Hillegass is pursuing his Master's in Urban and Regional Planning at Georgetown University after receiving his degree in International Studies at Boston College. He spent two years living in South America (2006 in Brazil, 2010 in Brazil & Argentina) where he gained a deep respect for the importance of learning from other cultures. Hillegass moved to Washington DC in 2014, working as an intern on Capitol Hill, then as a Member Relations Manager at the Common Application, before joining Ward 1 Councilmember Nadeau's team as a Constituent Services Coordinator. His interests include equitable development, housing, transportation, and the environment. Hillegass is currently the president of his community organization, The Friends of the Park at LeDroit.

The Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture showcases excellence in research and writing on urban planning and

historic preservation in the District of Columbia. Dick Wolf (1933–2012) was one of the District's most ardent and effective visionaries. For over 40 years, he worked tirelessly and effectively on community planning (including the Comprehensive Plan), historic preservation, and sound neighborhood development. He served on the CHRS Board for many years, most often as President, and also served on the Committee of 100 on the Federal City.

Wolf's vision for Washington was of a great, world-class city that houses both the nation's great institutions as well as families with

young children; balances its appetite for growth with preservation of the character of its irreplaceable historic residential neighborhoods; and integrates sound, sustained city planning principles, practices and administrative processes into all the city's business. The Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture program seeks to preserve and advance that vision. ★

Photo Contest 2019: The Capitol Hill Home

In anticipation of the 62nd anniversary of the Mother's Day House and Garden Tour (May 11–12, 2019), the Society is sponsoring a photo contest: "The Capitol Hill Home."

You know it when you see it, the quintessential Capitol Hill home. It could be a bay-front Victorian with arched windows, perhaps, and maybe a tall double door front entry or iron steps. It may not be the house itself but some almost hidden feature that steals the show: a small, round window overlooking an alleyway; an old corbel architectural adornment has no structural function, brick detail over the front door, the stained glass transom window, or the rusted fountain in the yard. For each of us, it's a different answer.

We'd like to hear how you define "The Capitol Hill Home." Even better, show us—take a high-resolution (1MB+) exterior shot of what you think makes a home a Capitol Hill home and email it to HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name and address, email address, and the address of the property in the photo. Entries are due March 16, 2019.

The winning images will be awarded two complimentary passes to the 2019 CHRS Mother's Day House & Garden Tour and are displayed on the website.

For more details (and photos of past winners) visit: chrs.org/photo-contest-2019.

In submitting your photo to the CHRS House Tour photo contest, you agree that it will become the property of CHRS, which may reproduce, modify, digitize and adapt the photograph. You retain the right to continued use of the image.

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To reach any of the above, please contact the Society offices at (202) 543-0425 or via e-mail: CapHRS@aol.com.

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

2019 House Tour Celebrates Leafy Lincoln Park Area

By Janet Quigley

CHRS is pleased to present the 62nd Mothers Day House and Garden Tour on May 11 and 12th, 2019. This year's tour highlights the area around Lincoln Park, where homebuilding flourished in the 1890s and 1900s, spurred by the arrival of streetcars. The area is now a family-friendly community with broad leafy streets, lively alleys and a mix of Victorian and Wardman homes.

In conjunction with the tour, CHRS will offer a free walking tour of Gessford Court (two blocks south of Lincoln Park) guided by our own historic preservation expert, Beth Purcell. New this year, CHRS is collaborating with the Capitol Hill Garden Club to enhance the tour's greenery. Refreshments will be served both days at Kris Swanson and Roy Mustelier's Corner Store arts space (900 South Carolina Avenue SE), which will also serve

as the will-call site for tickets that Saturday and Sunday.

Members can take advantage of the discount ticket rate of \$30 through April 14, 2019 (see order form). Advance tickets for the public will be \$35 through May 10, available at CHRS.org and at local shops. Full-price tickets on May 11 and 12 will be \$40.

As always, we seek and welcome volunteers who can spare a few hours during the tour to serve as a docent in a splendid house or as staff at the refreshment break. To volunteer, contact Elizabeth Nelson at Elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com.

The Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour was founded in 1956 to highlight the livability of Capitol Hill neighborhoods. Proceeds support CHRS's historic preservation, civic and educational activities throughout the year. We look forward to seeing you on this year's tour. ★

CHRS Seeks Nominations for Board

CHRS will hold elections for the 2019–2020 Board of Directors by postcard ballot in May. The Elections Committee, chaired by Nancy Metzger, includes Monte Edwards 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 2019–2020 CHRS Board of Directors will be announced at the end of April and postcard ballots will be mailed to CHRS members in May.

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 info@chrs.org 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 2, 2019.

Historic Preservation Briefs

By Alison Ross, Drury Tallant and Beth Purcell

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board) considered the following cases on January 24 and 31, 2019. 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.

201 8th Street NE, HPA 19-104, concept/subdivide lot, alter facades, and construct new multiple unit dwelling. This project includes both a renovation of the apartment building at 201 8th Street NE (to be converted to five large condominiums) and construction of four new dwelling units at the northern portion of the existing parking lot.

The existing building is a contributing structure built in 1939 as an apartment building, designed by A.S. Rich for owner W.F. Hummer. In 1962, Hummer’s family sold the building to Eastern Dispensary and Casualty Hospital.¹ The building became the nurses’ residence in 1962, and at some later point became a medical office building.

The applicant proposed to retain the entrance on 8th Street as a non-operational architectural element and create a new pedestrian entry from Constitution Avenue. While we would have preferred retaining the existing entrance on 8th Street as a functioning entrance, we believed the proposed renovations were nevertheless compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District. Several neighbors opposed the new entrance on Constitution Avenue, and the Board approved the plans but with

the stipulation that the primary entrance at 201 8th Street be retained as a functional entrance.

At the northern portion of the existing parking lot the applicant proposed a four-unit brick condominium building with a single entrance. It is three stories plus a basement, with two units on each lot and a shared central court. We believed that the plans were compatible, but offered suggestions.

The applicant preferred a building that is light in color, proposing painted brick at one point. We suggested that using a light colored brick is a better solution than painted brick, because unpainted brick is the vocabulary of Capitol Hill apartment buildings. In 300 8th Street NE (HPA 16-443), a new brick condo building, the Board required that the brick remain unpainted. The Board approved the new building.

628 A Street SE, HPA 19-079, concept/two-story rear and side addition, one-story rooftop addition. This contributing two-story brick dwelling was built before 1887. The applicant plans to keep the street façade unchanged and build a two-story rear and side addition, and one-story rooftop addition with roof deck. The applicant will also be removing an interior-end chimney and adding new French door openings with Juliet balconies in the existing second-floor rear elevation. The side addition will enclose the dogleg and fill in a portion of the five-foot wide side yard between 628 and 630.

The first-floor addition is essentially a brick passageway, as it will be open to the elements and will feature a brick-arched opening with an iron gate in the front and a wider brick-arched opening in

the rear. The second-floor addition will be made up of azek panels and two-over-two sash aluminum clad double-hung windows.

It is commendable that the proposed side addition is set back roughly 20’ from the façade and that this new first-floor passageway will continue to function as a means of circulation from the front yard to the rear yard. Open side-yard spaces in Capitol Hill are threatened and becoming scarcer due to trends to maximize the square footage of small rowhouses. Thus, this is a subject which needs careful consideration.

Nancy Metzger’s “Streetscape Spaces” describes how the variety of volume and space add to the richness of the Capitol Hill and how the spaces around buildings contribute to the way we experience urban places. On side additions filling in historically open space, “The open space was quite often the result of a deliberate choice by the owner of the building regarding placement on the site and the uses to be accomplished...They are instead a reflection of the times in which the building was constructed.”²

The footprint of 628 A Street SE is visible on the 1887 Hopkins Map of Washington, Plate 32. Currently, between the alley and 7th Street, there are four intact side yards which run the length of the houses. All side yards date to before 1887, as seen in the Hopkins map. This series of voids creates a rhythm which is a significant part of the character of this block and provides views of trees and light from the sidewalks to the back yards. Closing off the open side yard with the proposed addition removes the sense of space around the building. We believed that the side yard addition was not

compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District. The Board voted to find the concept to be compatible with the historic district and to delegate further review to staff.

121 7th Street SE, HPA 19-078, concept/three-story rear addition, one-story rooftop addition, alter front façade. Two adjacent properties, 121 and 119 7th Street SE, are noncontributing two-story, three-bay brick flat front rowhouses built in 1961.³ (In 2016, HPRB approved alterations the front and rear of 119, HPA 16-692.) At 121 7th Street there is a curb cut, which would remain.

The applicant proposed a three-story rear addition, and a one-story rooftop addition. The plans retain the existing cornice, enlarging the window openings in the front, adding brick rowlock lintels and double-hung windows, plus a third story addition set back from the front elevation with seamed metal coping and casement windows. The entrance and garage door would mirror the treatment at 119 7th Street SE. We believed that the plans for the front elevation are compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District.

After meeting with neighbors, we concluded that there was an important issue concerning the rear elevation that required additional investigation. To the rear of 121 7th Street SE is Brown's Court, an inhabited alley. The height of the rear addition is 35 feet. Neighbors questioned whether an addition at this height would dominate and adversely affect Browns Court. We raised the adverse effect of proposed over-tall additions on historic landscapes comprised of smaller buildings.⁴

The staff's research was very thorough and concluded that the rear addition is in keeping with other rear additions; would be seen from Brown's Court over an existing building; aligns with the rear of 119; would not extend beyond the rear

wall of 125; and that 121 has a deep lot. However, to be sure that there will be no adverse impact on Brown's Court, we suggested that the applicant submit to staff a perspective depicting the view of 121 7th Street from Brown's Court. Several neighbors testified against the project. The Board did approve the concept and delegated further review to staff but asked that the applicant complete a visibility study of the rear addition.

302 South Carolina Avenue SE, HPA 19-140, revised concept/two-story rear addition. For prior coverage (HPA 18-671), see CHRS News December 2018 - January 2019. This rowhouse is the second in from the corner and is highly visible from 3rd Street. At the earlier hearing on this project, the Board "approved the concept of open rear porches as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and delegated final approval to staff. The Board found the proposed rooftop addition incompatible with the historic district and inconsistent with the purposes of the preservation act."

The applicant's revised plans omitted the third story addition, but the new addition projected seven feet from the rear of the house, had angled corners, and no open porch (which would have mitigated the addition's visibility). CHRS testified that the project was not compatible because the applicant failed to comply with the Board's directions. A neighbor testified in opposition to the project.

At the January 24 hearing, the Board approved the two-story addition and delegated final approval to the staff but with the requirement that the angled corners on the addition be eliminated, the depth be reduced, and that the materials and design be revised.

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

Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

CONTRIBUTOR

Douglas R. Thomas
Jan Schoonmaker
Nancy C. Lee
Patricia & Lawrence Molumby

223 9th Street NE, HPA 19-064, concept/three-story rear addition. (December 20, 2018 hearing).

634 Lexington Place NE, HPA 19-097, concept/alter roofline and create basement entrance. One of a series of projects in square 762 to raise the attic floor on these Kennedy Bros. rowhouses, in a way not visible from public space. (January 24, 2019 hearing). ★

¹ Building permit #223599 (5 June 1939). Rec. Deeds 1962000402 (2/6/1962).

² "Streetscape Spaces" by Nancy Metzger, who served on both the HPRB and CHRS Preservation Committee. The paper can be found on the CHRS website or the <http://chrs.org/streetscape-spaces/#more-7118>.

³ DC Assessment Directory (2011).

⁴ See 121 Tennessee Avenue, NE (HPA 18-430); narrow alley; 215 A Street, NE (15-389) (Terrace Court alley dwellings). In 1116 Constitution Avenue, NE (16-526), the Board ordered an addition to be reduced from three stories to two stories, because of the effect on Walter Houp Court.

Interested in learning more about
historic district designation?

Contact CHRS at caphrs@aol.com.

62nd Annual

HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR

May 11-12, 2019 • Mother's Day Weekend

INDIVIDUAL TICKET ORDER AND DONATIONS FORM

Tax-Deductible Contributions

- 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)
- Supporter** (\$50, completely deductible)

Donations received by April 5 will be listed in the Tour brochure.

My / our name(s) should be listed as follows:

Tour Tickets

_____ Member discount: \$30 each through April 14

_____ Regular tickets: \$35 each (\$40 each on Tour weekend)

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.

Please bill my credit card \$ _____ Mastercard Visa
 Discover AMEX

Name on card: _____

Card #:

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3 or 4-digit CVV:

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Expiration Date:

M	M	Y	Y
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Signature: _____

Ticket Delivery Method

- Mail tickets (order must be received by April 30) to:
- Hold tickets for pickup (tour days) at:

Corner Store Arts
900 South Carolina Avenue SE

Contact Information for Billing Questions

E-mail address or phone: _____ REQUIRED

TICKETS ON SALE APRIL 20 AT:

Berkshire Hathaway Eastern Market
Coldwell Banker Capitol Hill
Groovy DC Cards & Gifts
Hill Center
Hill's Kitchen
Labyrinth Games & Puzzles

Tickets may be purchased at any stop on Tour during Tour hours; cash or check only.

Purchase online anytime at:
www.chrs.org

Three Walls Down at Historic House at 326 A Street SE

By Beth Purcell

In October 2017, James R. Jones sought HPRB approval to demolish entirely or in significant part the two-story frame house at 326 A Street SE and to replace it with a new house designed by architect Kim Jones (HPA 17-591). This house, with Greek Revival elements, was built between 1854 and 1857, probably by John Kidwell, a carpenter. It's perched on top of a hill, with an unusual side entrance in a five-bay porch as the main entrance, and is one of few remaining pre-Civil War frame houses with original porches.

Although the house was not well maintained, the owner's engineer stated that demolition was not structurally necessary. A member of the HPRB viewed the house's interior and found that the house was salvageable. The Board ruled that if the owner proposed to demolish the house, that "they complete a thorough conditions report detailing the existing conditions at the property and a document detailing plans to dismantle, salvage, relocate, and reconstruct the original house should be developed and that as much original historic fabric be retained and re-used as possible; that the entrance at the house's east elevation be retained ..."

The owner decided against demolition and in February 2018, the applicant returned to HPRB with a proposal to restore the house, which HPRB approved. Building permits were issued and work began on the project in 2019, but then problems developed.

A neighbor alerted Larry Janezich, editor of Capitol Hill Corner, that all but the front wall of the house had been demolished, and sent him a photo. He asked CHRS whether HPRB had approved demolition, and we quickly replied that HPRB had ordered the house to be preserved. As the result of that opinion and a review of the videotape of the hearing, the resident contacted HPRB which then sent an inspector to the site on Monday, February 11. The inspector issued a stop work order; both the owner and the contractor, Impact Construction and Consulting, have been fined.

HPO met with the owner, architect, and the contractor during



TOP: 326 A Street SE as of September 20, 2017.

BOTTOM: The same house on February 15, 2019, with only the front wall remaining.

IMAGES COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON, BETH PURCELL

Small Cell Infrastructure Design Hearings

The DDOT Public Space Committee has announced two public hearings to be held Friday, March 15, at 5 pm and Thursday, March 21, at 1 pm at 1100 4th Street SW, Room 200, 2nd Floor Hearing Room. Written comments are due by March 15. The Draft Small Cell Design Guidelines contain supplemental requirements and specifications for the placement and design of small cell infrastructure within the public right of way. Installation of this technology could have a major impact on the streetscape, viewsheds and tree canopy throughout the District. For more information, visit chrs.org.

the week of February 11. They need to file new drawings reflecting the full amount of demolition and detail how the house will be reconstructed, and receive a new DCRA permit (approved by HPO). They salvaged the interior stair and plan to reinstall it, and also salvaged some exterior wood trim work that will either be re-used or used to make an exact replica. We hope that this remedial work will proceed quickly.

For more on the history of this house and prior coverage of the HPRB case, see the December 2017–January 2018 and March 2018 issues of *CHRS News*. ★



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

Capitol Hill Restoration Society
420 10th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Mark Your Calendar!

MARCH

11 Monday, 7:30pm
Overbeck Lecture. Capitol Hill History: "The Razzle-Dazzle: Mary Ann Shiner Almarolia." Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. Details: CapitolHillHistory.org.

12 Tuesday, 7:15 pm
Capitol Hill Garden Club: "The Eleventh Street Bridge Project." Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Details: capitolhillgardenclub.org.

15 Friday, 5 pm
DDOT's Public Space Committee Special Meeting: Draft Small Cell Guidelines. See article. Details: info@chrs.org.

16 Saturday
CHRS Photo Contest 2019 entries due. See article. Details: info@chrs.org.

19 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, 2nd Floor board room. Details: info@chrs.org.

21 Thursday, 1 pm
DDOT's Public Space Committee Special Meeting: Draft Small Cell Guidelines. See article. Details: info@chrs.org.

21 Thursday, 7:30 pm
CHRS Zoning Committee. Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details: info@chrs.org.

29 Friday, 7 pm
2019 Dick Wolf Memorial Lecture: "Dismantling the Streetcar System: What Have We Learned?" Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, reception to follow. Membership Meeting at 6:45 pm.

APRIL

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

1 Monday, 7 pm
Village Voices: "Alice Donnigan." Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Details: info@capitolhillvillage.org.

9 Tuesday, 7:15 pm
Capitol Hill Garden Club (topic TBA). Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE. Details: capitolhillgardenclub.org.

16 Tuesday, 6:30 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, 2nd Floor board room. Details: info@chrs.org.

18 Thursday, 7:30 pm
CHRS Zoning Committee. Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details: info@chrs.org.

62nd Annual Capitol Hill House and Garden Tour

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