

**CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY BOARD MEETING**  
**MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 17, 2013**  
SECOND FLOOR BOARD ROOM, CAPITOL HILL TOWNHOMES COMMUNITY BUILDING

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**Present**

Janet Quigley, Shauna Holmes, Patrick Crowley, Elizabeth Nelson, Maurice Walters, Monte Edwards, Gary Peterson, Lisa Dale Jones, Chuck Burger, Ben Klay, Susan Burgerman, Gloria Junge

**Meeting Minutes:** Susan Burgerman

- The minutes of the November 2013 meeting were included in the monthly meeting packet.
- By email, Susan Young requested that the following be included: “Can you just clarify ... the statement regarding house tours that a list was passed out to Board Members with houses we would like to try and get for the Tour. If any members know these residents, please contact Susan Young.”
- A motion to approve the November minutes. **Moved, Seconded and Approved:** Unanimous.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Patrick Crowley (report in packet)

- Patrick proposed that unrestricted funds be transferred out of the restricted account 7072 and moved into the general operating account 7775.
- Chuck proposed that CHRS obtain a SQuORE credit card device to improve CHRS ability to accept credit card donations.
- Patrick raised the question of whether the funds (\$20k) earmarked in the Swampoodle grant for administration are restricted. Gary clarified that the intent was to compensate CHRS for expenses and organizational resources, and is not restricted to specific grant-related expenditures. He noted that the grant was made without a contract and that the donor’s intent was to promote historic preservation projects.
- Patrick announced his intention to provide the Board at future meetings with monthly reports that summarize expenses by broad subject category rather than by sub-account detail. The Board agreed to this approach without requiring a vote.

**President’s Report** – Janet Quigley

**Bylaws Committee:**

- A set of proposed amendments to the 2007 CHRS bylaws, which had been drafted in 2012 but never implemented, was distributed for review and approval. The bylaws need to be amended in order to conform with new DC Nonprofit Corporation regulations, IRS conflict of interest rules, and to cover additional topics not in the 2007 bylaws.
- Discussion of whether committee decisions need be ratified by the entire Board: Shauna remarked that her committee would not be able to function effectively if all HP testimony and letters had to be approved by the entire Board before being submitted. The Board agreed with a general understanding that ratification of time-sensitive committee decisions can be post-hoc.
- Decision: amendments to CHRS Bylaws section VI concerning approval of committee decisions will be revised with the participation of relevant committee chairs.

**Height Act:**

- Monte was present at the December 2 Congressional hearing at which very different recommendations from NCPC and DC OP were presented: NCPC recommended no change, except possibly to penthouses; OP recommended considerable increases in the height of buildings throughout the City, including the downtown area.

- Discussion of the Mayor's characterization of the Height Act debate as being a matter of home rule, and of OP's arguments that DC is running out of space for development. Both were found to be specious.
- Discussion of whether a formal lobbying effort on the issue had been formed, who was spearheading the operation and with what funds and what strategy: Monte noted that the Historic District Coalition, the Committee of 100, and Erik Hein were prepared to coordinate lobbying efforts, if necessary.
- No decision has been made on the matter since the hearing. Those involved hope that the proposal to change the Height Act will simply die, without the need for lobbying or further efforts.

**Southeast Blvd/Barney Circle Project:** – Beth Purcell in absentia (comments in packet), Shauna Holmes

- Discussion of proposed CHRS position and comments opposing DDOT's project: motion made to endorse position and to authorize Beth to submit comments by letter and seconded. Chuck noted that the comments included in the meeting packet were a summary, and requested to see the full comments prior to a vote. His reservations concerned the need for underground parking to accommodate tour buses. Other members argued that tour buses have the use of RFK's parking lots.
- Resolution: motion was passed with two abstentions.

**City Planning** – Monte Edwards

- Update on the Virginia Avenue Tunnel: nothing new since the last newsletter article.
- Metro Plaza: Janet attended the recent meeting at Hill Center, noting that the comment period ends in January. Chuck suggested that the Board look at the latest plan, pointing out some aspects that are particularly infeasible, such as a two-story glass extension of the public library to be connected to the main building by an underground passage across 7<sup>th</sup> St.

**Zoning** – Gary Peterson

- Gary described the two cases considered at the last Zoning meeting: (*something on 4<sup>th</sup> St – I got lost here*); a request to convert 325 MD Ave NE to office space, which was rejected.
- Zoning Regulation Rewrite: the ANCs had not been able to prepare their (*recommendations?*), so there will be a meeting only of ANCs in January, following which there will be public ward meetings. These should be announced in the newsletter.
- Fragers: the street-facing facades should be saved if at all possible, unless preserving them creates safety issues. The insurance assessment at first claimed the entire block totaled and recommended demolition, but then the recommendation was reconsidered. The original building was constructed in 1920 and expanded in 1930 – bricks and mortar made during this period were more durable than those used for 19<sup>th</sup> century houses. The facades will be very expensive to buttress, but the engineer's estimate was inflated. CHRS and HPO both support saving the facades.

**Historic Preservation:** –Shauna Holmes (included in packet)

- South Capitol Bridge: A proposed realignment has required that the environmental and historic preservation reviews be re-opened. A meeting was scheduled for December 19.
- Union Station: Earthquake and ceiling repairs are ongoing. A meeting was convened on the expansion projects, at which it was decided that the air rights model must be revised. USRC has received grants from American Express and the National Trust to develop a smartphone-based tour of Union Station emphasizing its history.

**House Tour:** – Susan Young in absentia

- Work has begun on the logo for the brochure, poster, postcards, and tickets. The theme is “Share Our Homes, Our Gardens, Our History.”
- Ads are being placed for volunteers in the CHV newsletter, CHRS’s newsletter, and other such venues. Susan requests that Board members encourage anyone who might be interested to contact her or the CHRS office to volunteer for a committee.
- A few more homeowners are considering opening their homes for the tour. a committee will be looking at homes in January. Susan requests that Board members contact her if they know of appropriate homes within the tour footprint.

**Newsletter** –Lisa Dale Jones

- Swampoodle grants: before and after photos should be published in the newsletter. Before photos should be taken as soon as possible, before work begins. All photos should be high-resolution, so those submitted with the grant applications would not be useable. The next newsletter (February) should announce the grants that have been disbursed – listing amounts and project type but not names and addresses.
- There will be no January newsletter.

**New Business**

- Communications Committee: lack of action on the part of the Chair was noted. A meeting with anyone who has an interest in the committee should be scheduled as soon as possible. The Communications Chair will be responsible for sending out blast email announcements in future.
- DDOT/inappropriate use of public spaces: there was an altercation between the owners of the home at 13<sup>th</sup> & Tennessee SE and another resident over use of the pocket park that resulted in the city issuing a restraining order and defining the incident as a matter of trespassing on private property. ANC 6A needs to request a legal interpretation of the issue.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm