On May 28, 2015, the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) unanimously voted to extend the Capitol Hill Historic District four squares north of the existing boundary along F Street, NE. The decision reflects many years of hard work by the community, Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 6C and CHRS. The effort to protect this area is part of CHRS’s “Beyond the Boundaries” project. This new part of the Historic District is called the “Swampoodle Addition,” as it lies in and around the vicinity once known by that name for its flood-prone location adjacent to the Tiber Creek and its tributaries. Drainage improvements in the 1870s made way for much of the rowhouse development that now characterizes the neighborhood.

ANC 6C sponsored the nomination following a lengthy, deliberate and thorough public outreach and education program. Through 2013 and 2014 the ANC held several community meetings to explore the possibility of the four-square expansion. These were well-attended and included presentations by the city’s Historic Preservation Office (HPO) staff on the specifics of historic district designation. At the conclusion of the public outreach phase, which determined there was sufficient support, ANC 6C voted overwhelmingly to submit the Swampoodle nomination that had been prepared for CHRS by EHT Traceries, Inc. The final documentation and survey materials were prepared for submittal in the fall of 2014 and designated as Case 15-01.

In March of this year, CHRS petitioned Gretchen Pfaehler, Chair of HPRB, in support of the extension and the HPO Staff Report. CHRS wrote: “Not only are the historic resources within these largely intact squares worthy of protection, but the adverse effect of incompatible development at the adjacent Historic District boundary is troubling to CHRS. Great care must be taken to protect this neighborhood’s cohesive architectural character, both inside and outside the current boundary. These lines of designation run through the middle of streets. Fully protected historic structures on one side of the street directly face vulnerable and undesignated buildings on the other side, buildings that share the exact same age, significance, and definitive qualities. In a rowhouse streetscape, just one demolition or one ‘pop up’ can destroy the integrity of an entire row. CHRS has long supported historic district designation as the

Map illustrating the northern half of the Capitol Hill Historic District and its recent expansion, the “Swampoodle Addition.”

Continued on page 6
On Monday, June 15, CHRS held its annual members’ meeting at the National Community Church theatre space on Barracks Row. As required in the bylaws, the results of the recent officer and board elections were announced.

Our guest speaker for the evening was the Architect of the Capitol, Stephen T. Ayers, AIA, LEED. Always an entertaining and informative speaker, Mr. Ayers brought us behind the scenes on work being done on the Capitol dome and other areas on the Capitol Hill campus. He showed many colorful slides illustrating both the big picture of the work as well as close-up details. Some of the highlights of his presentation:

**Capitol Dome**

- The dome work will be finished in time for the scaffolding to be down before the next Presidential inauguration.
- This is the first major renovation of the dome in 50 years and the first complete renovation since the dome was built during the Civil War.
- The scaffolding alone weighs 1.1 million pounds. That’s too much weight for the Capitol roof, so the scaffolding is actually hanging from the Dome itself.
- Over 1,300 cracks in the cast iron are being repaired.
- Over 20 layers of paint have been removed, much of it lead paint. That’s one of the reasons why you see the white sheeting over various portions of the scaffolding—to contain the lead paint so it can be sent through long tubes down to the ground and then disposed of properly.
- Another reason for the sheeting is to protect the workers from the elements and, during the winter, to contain the heat that’s blown in. Once all the layers of paint are removed, the cast iron needs to be coated within 8 hours or it flash rusts. During the winter the area being painted needs to be heated above a certain temperature or the paint won’t adhere.
- The method being used to repair the cracks uses pins as filler. The pins essentially stitch the cracks shut.
- The work is done at night and on weekends so as not to disturb the work of Congress.

Soon, the interior of the Rotunda will be closed off in order to install scaffolding all the way up to the top so interior work can begin once the outside cracks are repaired and there is no longer the potential for interior water damage.

**Cannon Building**

We also heard about the 10-year project to repair and restore the Cannon House Office Building. The building has been divided into four sections; each section is scheduled to take two years, plus a year at each end to set up and finish up. During each two-year span, members of Congress in a particular wing will have their offices relocated to either the Longworth or Rayburn Buildings; they need to remain close to the House floor in order to be available to vote. Their staff and others are being moved offsite in order to make enough room.

**Capitol Power Plant**

The Capitol Power Plant (CPP) burns natural gas as its primary fuel source. CPP has reduced its use of coal from 56% in 2007 to about 4% in 2014. If the cogeneration project is approved, coal use will drop to zero. Cogeneration will allow the power plant to generate steam and electricity in an environmentally friendly and highly efficient manner, generating enough electricity to run itself. (The buildings on Capitol Hill will still use electricity provided by Pepco.) In the last eight years, due to efficiency improvements and energy reduction efforts, the CPP has reduced its annual fuel use by 15%.

After his presentation, Mr. Ayers answered questions from the audience on topics including parity of the flowers on the House and Senate sides (he said he tries very hard to be even-handed!), more details on the stitching method of repairing dome cracks, if the west side of the Capitol is painted before inaugurations (not especially for that event, but the sandstone is occasionally painted), if the work on the dome will help with earthquake readiness and many more.

Mr. Ayers said he loves speaking to CHRS and promised to come back again soon. We look forward to it!
Incoming and Outgoing Board Members—Welcome and Thanks

By Elizabeth Nelson

There are big changes on the CHRS Board of Directors this year. We will be joined by four new members; five current Board members will have new positions; and one member will be stepping down. The Board of Directors would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals for their past service.

First, grateful thanks are due to Monte Edwards who served so ably as First Vice President. Lucky for us, Monte will continue on the Board as the Chair of the City Planning Committee.

Second, we thank Drury Tallant for his service as Second Vice President. Drury is leaving the Board altogether, a huge loss for us but an equally big win for his wife. He’ll continue as a member of the Historic Preservation Committee but he will certainly be missed at Board meetings where his insight was always greatly appreciated.

Third, many thanks to Patrick Crowley for serving as Treasurer, one of the most demanding, frustrating and important positions on the Board. Patrick put his own stamp on the position and implemented some new and useful changes. He’ll continue on the Board as the new First Vice President with an emphasis on House Tour activities.

Fourth, thanks go to Susan Burgerman for her service as Secretary, a position that is difficult to fill because potential nominees correctly suspect that it is a lot of work. It’s not easy to participate in Board meetings all the while taking notes. Susan will continue on the Board in her new role as Second Vice President with an emphasis on Membership.

Thanks also to Greg Holeyman and Undine Nash who are leaving At Large positions for Chairmanships of the Environment and Public Safety Committees, respectively.

The Directors also welcome the following new members: Gloria Junge, who is assuming the responsibilities of Secretary; Adam Apton, who will be our new Treasurer; and Scott Davis, Ryan Moody and Susan Oursler, who are filling the at large vacancies.

Information on their backgrounds was published in the May newsletter, also available on our website.

Draft Amended Bylaws To Be Published in Special August Newsletter

The current bylaws of CHRS date from 2007 (available online at: www.chrs.org > About CHRS > Bylaws). Effective in 2012, the DC Nonprofit Corporation Act was amended and required certain changes in operations of nonprofits, including CHRS. CHRS has been complying with the changes in the law and to reflect these changes, a CHRS committee has prepared amended bylaws to be published in a special August newsletter. The draft bylaws will then be submitted to a vote of members at the next membership meeting.

To learn more or join, please visit: www.CHRS.org
The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board) considered the following cases on May 28, 2015. 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.

146 13th Street SE, HPA 15-127, concept/rooftop addition. HPRB heard this case on April 2, 2015 and approved part of the concept but directed the applicants to re-think the size of the penthouse, a third story on one of a row of two-story rowhouses. See CHRS News May 2015. As requested, applicants constructed a lumber mockup showing the dimensions of the proposed penthouse. CHRS and three neighbors testified at the HPRB hearing on May 28, 2015. CHRS testified that the third-story penthouse on a row of uniform, intact two-story buildings, visible from public space (Independence Avenue, SE) raised important issues for the Capitol Hill Historic District and that HPRB needed to provide guidance on whether a balance could be struck and, if so, how.

At the May 28 hearing, HPRB denied the concept for the penthouse because although the penthouse cladding was changed to ipe wood to better blend in and was scaled back from the prior plans, it would still be very visible from Independence Avenue. While acknowledging that rooftop access is important, HPRB stated that applicants can meet their goal with a roof deck and railing. Individual HPRB members noted that this is an intact block of two-story rowhouses and allowing a third story (penthouse) over the main block would create a strong visual impact in public space, set a bad precedent and, in addition, if this penthouse were allowed, that precedent that would be impossible to administer in future cases. The Board listed the rules it has been following for additions in the Capitol Hill Historic District:

- Additions must not be visible from public space.
- Additions may be attached to the historic structure but must not be built on the original block of the historic structure.
- The materials for the addition should be compatible with the historic structure.

The following cases, which CHRS also reviewed, appeared on the HPRB consent calendar:

- 631 South Carolina Ave SE, HPA 15-305, concept/rear addition.
- 224 9th Street NE, HPA 15-285, concept/rear addition and fill in dogleg.
- 642 Lexington Place NE, HPA 15-353, concept/rear and roof addition to a Kennedy Bros. rowhouse (1912). The applicants accepted CHRS’s suggestions to improve project’s compatibility with the historic district by eliminating a new entrance porch on a house that never had an entrance porch and retaining more of the original interior spaces on the first story. Both suggestions reduced the applicants’ construction costs.
- 732 7th Street SE, HPA 15-367, permit/raze of Pepco substation, built in 1941. CHRS did not object to razing this building. See related article on HPRB’s approval of the extension of the Capitol Hill Historic District on page 1.

New R-4 Zoning In Effect

On June 8 the Zoning Commission voted to revise the R-4 zoning regulations—the zoning classification for most of DC’s rowhouse neighborhoods, including Capitol Hill. Complaints about “pop-ups” that add an additional 1–2 floors on top of an existing structure led the Zoning Commission to reduce the matter of right height from 40 feet to 35 feet. The Commission reaffirmed that residential buildings would be limited to two units as a matter of right and require a special exception to convert a building into more than two units. Four units and above are subject to Inclusionary Zoning, i.e., affordable housing rules.

Other aspects either carried over from the previous R-4 regulations or subject to further clarification include:

1. Minimum lot area of 900 square feet per dwelling unit
2. Maximum 30% demolition of the gross floor area
3. Limit rear additions to no more than 10 feet past the furthest rear wall of any principal residential building on an adjacent property
4. Specific language prohibiting additions such as roof structures or penthouses from blocking or impeding a chimney or other external vent, or a solar energy system on an adjacent property.
Look to the core of any thriving community and you’ll find real estate agents. While some are there because it’s thriving, it’s often the case that the community is thriving thanks to a small number of real estate agents who strive to build not just businesses but communities. What makes Capitol Hill stand out is that its development in the second half of the 20th century included real estate agents who understood the value of historic neighborhoods—agents who not only worked with historic properties but helped build the framework for preserving those neighborhoods, and in doing so built a stronger Capitol Hill.

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society and real estate professionals have long been intertwined. Among the founders of CHRS in 1955 was Curley Boswell, a life-long resident of the Hill and award-winning restorer of houses. Although some early members felt that CHRS was “dominated” by real estate agents, looking back 60 years, it doesn’t seem like such a bad thing. Rather, it appears more like a merging of mutual interests: one group looking out for business interests and the other looking out for the value of their homes—and investments. All wanted to promote Capitol Hill as an attractive place to reside. Preserving and promoting the historic character of Capitol Hill added value to the housing stock and became a point of pride for Hill residents. A former resident remarked that he had “forgotten how much Hill people talk about their houses.”

Another Realtor was Arline Roback (1913–2000), one of the longest active resident Realtors on the Hill. Born in Nebraska, Arline Smith grew up in the state of Washington. She moved to DC in 1953, taking a job in the office of Senator “Scoop” Jackson (D-WA), where she met her future husband, Herbert Roback. They lived for many years in the 100 block of C Street SE.

In 1955 she went to work at Barbara Held, Inc., a new real estate firm on the Hill. She sold commercial and residential properties, many of them outstanding restorations. Arline’s intimate knowledge of the Hill was gained on foot—she never drove. Her mantra was, “You know I don’t drive! Could you do this anywhere but in a neighborhood like the Hill?”

She worked tirelessly; her reputation and contacts so established by the end of her long career she never had to solicit listings—they just came to her. She slowed up only a little in her later years, working well into her 80s. She was known for her real estate savvy and her wonderful-to-wicked sense of humor. She was merciless on the subject of Marion Barry. Her response to a remark that he was his own worst enemy: “No, I am.”

Like many Hill residents she was active in many organizations beyond her profession. She volunteered for 30 years at Friendship House, a community service organization, and served on its board for 12 years. Much of her generosity went unheralded; much of it private. In one case, she treated a Friendship House staff member to a well-deserved vacation. She was active in CHRS for over four decades. A behind-the-scenes person, she never served as president of anything but for years served on CHRS committees, including zoning and membership as well as in various capacities for the house tour. Her own house at 638 A Street SE was featured on the 1988 tour.

When Barbara Held (1923–2007) opened her Hill office, it was one of the earliest of new firms attracted to the developing Hill. Although a native of Virginia, she grew up in Georgetown. She lived for a time in New York before returning to Georgetown in 1953. Barbara married Robert Reich (1913–1982) in 1963 and soon was drawn to work as a real agent because she had a small child and the hours were flexible.

Her interest in the Hill was piqued by a client interested in Philadelphia Row on 11th Street. She and her husband moved to the Hill, restoring and living in three different homes: 617 A Street NE, 115 Kentucky Avenue SE, and 650 Independence Avenue SE, all on CHRS house tours. She returned to Georgetown years later and remained there until her death.

She opened her first office on the south side of the 300 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE. She later bought a building across the street, since demolished, adjacent to the old National Capital Bank building. The office received a CHRS award for commercial restoration. In the 1970s she moved her firm to 7th Street SE, across from Eastern Market, in the spot now occupied by Tunnicliff’s Tavern. Her firm tried to find vacant properties, in preference to displacing renters, and became interested in alley houses. After determining that people (rather than horses) had lived behind Christ Church, she named it Archibald Walk, after Archibald Donohue, who remembered collecting rents there. She described the Hill as the “friendliest place” in Washington.

Barbara often lent her offices to various community groups for meetings, including the early days of the Association for the Preservation

Continued on page 7
best mechanism to provide such protection.”

CHRS’s commitment to protection of this area stretches back several decades. Under the leadership of past presidents Gary Peterson and Dick Wolf and former board member Ruth Ann Overbeck, CHRS in 1996 first explored historic district protection for squares between F Street, NE and H Street, NE. This area was omitted from the original 1976 designation of the Capitol Hill Historic District due to prevailing urban renewal policies following the 1968 riots. A new sense of urgency developed, however, when in 2010 every rowhouse in the western half of Square 753 was demolished to make way for “Station House”—a planned unit development (PUD) of 378 apartments and retail that has recently opened. Local residents, CHRS and the ANC rallied to mitigate some of the PUD’s adverse effects through a developer-provided historic preservation grant program for property owners in the affected area and a survey of the undesignated blocks north of the Capitol Hill Historic District’s F Street boundary to H Street from Second Street, NE, all the way to 16th Street, NE. That work ultimately produced a widely-supported nomination to incorporate into the Historic District four Squares (752, 753, 777, and 778) where the most intense development pressures of NoMa, H Street’s Atlas District and Capitol Hill converge. Residents outside these four squares in the recently surveyed area will also have the documentation they need if they, too, should seek protection under the DC Preservation Law.

“The information that came to light through the survey and provided in the nomination was crucial to the unanimous HPRB vote,” said CHRS Board member Drury Tallant. “It helped galvanize residents’ support for protecting their neighborhood’s valuable history and the role it played in the development of the city we call home. It also gave the HPRB the irrefutable evidence it needed on the area’s architectural design integrity with the historic fabric of the Capitol Hill Historic District, so much so that some HPRB members questioned why the expansion was limited to only four squares.”

The documentation now available through this initiative illustrates that many of the same nineteenth and early twentieth century District of Columbia “master builders,” known for their work in other parts of Capitol Hill, were also very active in the Swampoodle Addition. Their architectural designs express working- and middle-class tastes for prevailing styles of the era and reflect the post-Civil War emergence of Washington’s first firmly established residential wage earners on an unprecedented scale. The development patterns chronicle the growing prosperity of immigrants and laborers as they moved out of Swampoodle’s center and into newer and better dwellings erected after major infrastructure improvements in the vicinity. Certain noteworthy historic buildings included in the expansion, such as the 1891 and 1933 Logan Schools—pioneering structures in the District’s African American elementary education—provide even further insight into the Swampoodle Addition’s rich history.

For more information, please see:

- CHRS’s Beyond the Boundaries project: http://bit.ly/1FmUg4r
- Swampoodle Home Improvement grant program: http://bit.ly/1d1EfK
- The application submitted to HPRB: http://1.usa.gov/1d1F7i0

Two Historic Walking Tours: North Lincoln Park, September 13 and 27

See Calendar on page 8 for more information.
CHRS Preservation Committee Plans to Document Soon-to-Be-Razed or Demolished Buildings

By Alison Ross

The Pepco Substation at 732 7th Street, SE was built in 1941. It is a one-story brick building with two doors and no windows. The symmetrical façade features a coursed stone veneer foundation of large rectangular blocks; this decorative feature is continued up through the monumental door surround around the front entrance. This industrial building is unique on the Capitol Hill landscape; its lack of windows varies the rhythm of the block. A structure of utilitarian design, it is bold and efficiently simple, but could nonetheless evoke structures of grander purpose in the mind of an imaginative passerby.

In May, the Preservation Committee decided not to object to the razing of the Pepco Substation. This decision sparked a question: what does CHRS do to document contributing properties in the Capitol Hill Historic District that will be partially demolished or razed? To help the Preservation Committee with our decision-making process, as well as supplement our recommendations to the Historic Preservation Review Board and further our goal of serving the community, we plan to create a photographic archive of these buildings. We are still discussing the parameters of the project and the methods of documentation. Buildings built prior to 1945 contribute to the Historic District, but what about newer buildings that were vital to the community at one time? What about buildings on the edge of the expanding Historic District? Documenting the Pepco Substation is the pilot property for this project.

CHRS is a resource for the community about the historic built environment on Capitol Hill; we are also a resource for future builders. Something else will be built in place of the Pepco Substation. Hopefully, some aspect of the Pepco Substation’s simple strength will carry on into the next structure built at 732 7th Street, SE.

If you have any recent photographs of properties on Capitol Hill before they were razed, or would like to get involved with the project, please email caphrs@aol.com or call the CHRS office at (202) 543-0425. ✯

1 According to the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, to demolish is to remove a portion of the building; to raze means to take an entire building completely down to the ground.

Real Estate Agents, continued from page 5

of Historic Congressional Cemetery. The Held firm’s newsletter was often hilarious, as devoted to neighborhood news and gossip as real estate. Arline became one of her first agents. Arline stayed with the firm even after it merged with another real estate office in 1987.

Barbara Held helped establish Pennsylvania Avenue, Market Row and Barracks Row associations. The idea to create an umbrella organization for these, CHAMPS, was reputedly hers. She supported the Folger Shakespeare Library and the Sasha Bruce House and worked on a 1970s attempt to restore Eastern Market. She was given a Community Achievement Award in 1984.

Barbara Held’s legacy to the Hill includes her daughter Catherine, who has lived here many years and, like her mother, holds a real estate license. She describes Barbara and Arline as the “best of friends” and their personalities as very different. Her mother was a bit zany, outgoing and the “most creative person” she ever knew, who never measured anything. Home and office décor both were described as “eclectic.” Arline was reserved, very deliberate and self-effacing—she typically turned down awards. Catherine said that Barbara’s early agents credited her with their economic well-being; she encouraged them to invest in properties. Both Arline and Barbara were early members of CHRS, among the first of many real estate professionals to support it. A look at the house tour pamphlets shows much support in the form of ads and volunteer time. ✯
Mark Your Calendar!

JULY

4 Saturday, 10 am
Capitol Hill Independence Day Parade.
Meet under the overpass at 8th and I Streets, SE at 9:30 am. Contact Elizabeth Nelson, elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com.

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

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

21 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

AUGUST

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

SEPTEMBER

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

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

13 Sunday, 10 am
Historic Walking Tour: North Lincoln Park, Tennessee to Constitution. Topics include brick coursing, Colonial Revival/Craftsman, Charles Gessford’s small 1-story houses, Harry Kite, Landvoight, Albert Beers, Howenstein, George Santmyers, B. Stanley Simmons. Meet at Maury School. The tour will be held rain or shine. Free and open to the public, no reservations needed. Details: CapHRS@aol.com or (202) 543-0425.

15 Tuesday, 6:30 pm

16 Wednesday, 7 pm
CHRS Preservation Café: Brick Rowhouses: To Paint or Not to Paint? Kaiser Permanente Building, 700 2nd Street, NE. Details: Elizabeth Nelson, (202) 543-3512.

27 Sunday, 10 am
Historic Walking Tour: North Lincoln Park, 14th/15th to Constitution. Topics include The Nock, Harry Kite, Albert Beers, H.R. Howenstein, Kennedy Bros, A.H. Sonneman, A.B. Mullett, Lewis Wentworth Giles, brick coursing, foliate carving, Craftsman-inspired rowhouses. Meet at the triangle park at 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NE. The tour will be held rain or shine. Free and open to the public, no reservations needed. Details: CapHRS@aol.com or (202) 543-0425.