



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

# NEWS

www.chrs.org

July/August 2019

## CHRS June Community Forum

By Beth Hague

On June 25, Andrew Trueblood, the new director of DC’s Office of Planning, spoke during CHRS’s Community Forum. Trueblood discussed the framework that guides DC’s economic development, housing, environmental protection, historic preservation, transportation, and more.

The Office of Planning is in the midst of updating its current plan, and there have been over 3000 recommendations for changes, including many from CHRS. The Comprehensive Plan is in fact a “family” of plans that includes Federal and District elements.

Federal elements involve mostly the national park and monumental core and are driven by the National Capital Planning Commission. The District’s elements consists of 10 areas (distinct from wards, which change every ten years) throughout the District that share similar typologies and opportunities/challenges. The Comprehensive Plan also includes city-wide elements: transportation, historic preservation, public facilities, housing, environment, and parks and recreation. Land use plans, such as zoning decisions, cannot be inconsistent with the Plan, which governs all plans for future land use.

The Comprehensive Plan amendment process began in 2016,

when the Office of Planning (OP) began coordination with public engagement across the city. In Spring 2017, OP opened the call for proposed amendments. Responding to the 3000 recommendations, a greater-than-expected number, the Office of Planning tried to encourage more public input, including online input from those residents who might not be able to attend meetings.

The next step is development of a framework of the elements that will guide the rest of the Plan. Trueblood further remarked that as the city faces new challenges, it may be time to adopt an entirely new plan and new approach.

Other challenges that the Office of Planning faces include:

- 1) **Providing affordable housing across the broad spectrum of age, income, and family type, which is the biggest challenge for DC.** The Office of Planning, in coordination with other DC offices, is addressing this through the “Housing Framework for Equity of Growth” to address where growth is greatest, what it looks like across the city, and what housing is in each area and what is needed. DC is planning for another 24,000 units aimed

at the workforce, using market rate and lighter tools, such as tax abatement, zoning relief, and measures for higher income seniors.

2) **Linking up the Comprehensive Plan and Community Planning.**

The community planning team focuses on matters in our neighborhoods and will re-engage neighborhood planning. The first focus is on services east of the Anacostia River. In addition to public comment, review, council hearings and ANC planning meetings, the

*Continued on page 6*

### Also in this issue

#### ARTICLES

- CHRS Board Election Results..... 2
- Remembering Tom Grahame..... 2
- CHRS Outreach Efforts..... 3
- Eastern Market Celebrations..... 5
- Preservation Awards..... 6

#### COLUMNS

- Historic Preservation Briefs ..... 4
- Ask CHRS..... 7

#### LOOKING AHEAD

- September Preservation Café..... 7
- Mark Your Calendar..... 8

---

# 2019 CHRS Board Election Results


By Beth Purcell

CHRS members received ballots and voted on officers and directors for 2019-2020. Beth Purcell was elected President and Maygene Daniels was elected First Vice-President. Tina May, Susan Oursler, and Jim Thackaberry continue as Second Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary, respectively. Angie Schmidt was re-elected as an At-Large member. The Officers and Directors welcome the following new At-Large members: Christine Mullins and Alison Ross. Elizabeth

Nelson becomes the new Immediate Past President.

The Directors express their appreciation and send their best wishes to hard-working members who are leaving the board: Michelle Carroll, At-Large; Janet Quigley, First Vice-President; and Lisa Dale Jones, Immediate Past President.

Michelle also served as House Tour Chair, with Janet as Co-chair. Neither will be serving in that capacity next year, so will be doubly-missed. ★

 **CHRS is on Instagram!**

To get cool photos and updates from the neighborhood, follow us at: [capitolhillrestorationdc](https://www.instagram.com/capitolhillrestorationdc).

---

## Remembering Tom Grahame

By Nancy Metzger and Beth Purcell

While it has been about a decade since Grahame's work as chair of the CHRS Transportation Committee was in the CHRS spotlight, his work on those issues and as an at-large member of the CHRS Board contributed to incisive analyses and the smooth functioning of CHRS. Tom Grahame died in June from ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). He was a student of landscapes, whether of the mountains he loved to climb and photograph or of the Capitol Hill neighborhood he called home.

Grahame used his background in city planning and his work as an analyst at the US Energy Department to make outstanding contributions to CHRS and the community. He was one of the first people to criticize DDOT's proposed "park road" from Benning Bridge to Barney Circle, a threat to pedestrians and cyclists using the Anacostia Riverwalk.

His major work on the then-proposed 11th Street Bridges revealed the bridges' adverse impacts on both Capitol Hill and communities east of the Anacostia River. For example, there would be nearly 50,000 more vehicles per day traversing Capitol Hill due to the expanded bridges, which would increase traffic, congestion, noise, and air pollution.

Our suit, *CHRS v. Ray LaHood*, Civil Action No. 09-00367, challenged the failure by DDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to adequately take these adverse impacts into account. In settling the case, DDOT agreed to a detailed communication process as well as other multiple steps with specific deadlines during construction (CHRS News, June 2010). Grahame's excellent work made this good outcome possible. ★

## Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*President* . . . . . Beth Purcell  
*First Vice President* . . . . . Maygene Daniels  
*Second Vice President* . . . . . Tina May  
*Treasurer* . . . . . Susan Oursler  
*Secretary* . . . . . Jim Thackaberry  
*At Large* . . . . . Patrick Lally  
*At Large* . . . . . Christine Mullins  
*At Large* . . . . . Beth Hague  
*At Large* . . . . . Joanna Kendig  
*At Large* . . . . . Angie Schmidt  
*At Large* . . . . . Alison Ross  
*Immediate Past President* . . Elizabeth Nelson

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

*Beyond the Boundaries* . . . . . Beth Purcell  
*Budget & Administration\** . . . . Susan Oursler  
*City Planning\** . . . . . Monte Edwards  
*Communications\** . . . . . Nina Tristani  
*Community Development\** . . . . Chuck Burger  
*Community Relations* . . . . Elizabeth Nelson  
*Environment\** . . . . . Joanna Kendig  
*Grants* . . . . . Larry Pearl  
*Historic Preservation\** . . . . . Beth Purcell  
*House & Garden Tour* . . . . . vacant  
*Investments* . . . . . John Shages  
*Membership\** . . . . . vacant  
*Public Safety\** . . . . . Undine Nash  
*Public Space* . . . . . Steve Kehoe  
*Zoning\** . . . . . Gary Peterson

*\* Chair is an appointed Board Member*

### NEWSLETTER

Angie Schmidt and Kelly Vielmo, Editors

### WEBMASTERS

Donna Breslin, Elizabeth Nelson

### OFFICE MANAGER

Jill Uvena Cullinane

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](http://www.CHRS.org)

# Outreach Efforts: July 4th Parade and Beyond

By Elizabeth Nelson



IMAGE COURTESY NICK L. ALBERTI

CHRS at the 2019 Capitol Hill July Fourth Parade.

As part of our ongoing outreach efforts, Society volunteers fielded a contingent in this year's Capitol Hill 4th of July Parade. Under threat of foul weather, it was deemed too risky to include an open car - so the beads were trucked along in a humble but festively-decorated garden cart. Our caution was for naught as the weather was sunny and hot.

Hip-Hip-Hurrah to everyone who participated: Tina May; Maygene Daniels; Nancy Metzger; Angie Schmidt and her son Jack; Chris, Kerry and Dan Mullins; Nick S. Alberti; Beth Hague; Elizabeth Nelson; and our new President, Beth Purcell. And kudos to event organizer, Phil Guire of Compass Realty -- he made it look easy.

You can see additional pictures here: [chrs.org/capitol-hill-july-4th-parade-2019/](http://chrs.org/capitol-hill-july-4th-parade-2019/), thanks to Nick L. Alberti and Larry Janezich.

On September 28, we will staff a booth at the Barracks Row

Fall Festival (on 8th Street SE), an ideal opportunity to introduce ourselves to newcomers to the Hill and to those living outside the boundaries of the Historic District. We'll offer children's activities to amuse our younger neighbors while we share information about our accomplishments and future plans with their parents.

And on October 26, we'll stage our fourth-annual House Expo at the Eastern Market North Hall, with over 30 home services providers. Note that we're holding it on a Saturday, rather than Sunday, to better accommodate the exhibitors.

If you can volunteer on either of these dates, please contact Elizabeth Nelson, [elizabeth\\_knits@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com). Volunteers are always welcome—and are truly needed. ★

# Historic Preservation Briefs

By Joanna Kendig and Beth Purcell

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board) considered the following case on June 27, 2019. The overflow hearing for June will be July 11, 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.

**Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 East Capitol Street SE, HPA 19-332.** The Folger Shakespeare Library is housed in a building designed by renowned architect Paul Philip Cret in 1932. Both the building exterior and significant portion of main floor interiors are on the National Historic Register. The Library collection of materials related to Shakespeare and the theater are important cultural resources for the Washington community and the world. The Folger Library aims to serve both scholarly research and the broader audience.

The stated goals of this project are supporting the Folger’s mission

by “enhancing Folger’s openness and accessibility to a wider public and expanded visitorship.” To achieve these goals, the Folger proposes to add new space under the existing front lawn and plinth terrace and to create new entries at the lower level by excavating the site on the East and West corners of the property. New gardens and gently sloped walks will lead all visitors to the new lower Deck A lobbies and to the expanded exhibition space. Interior connections to the historic main level will be provided by careful modifications to the existing interior and insertion of new elevators and stairs.

The design of the new entry through sunken gardens creates attractive experiences for handicapped visitors and for the rest of the public. The focus on barrier-free access detracts from some of the experiences embedded in the original design by Cret. The two monumental doors of the North façade will be locked and the public discouraged from that approach to the building by strategically placed railings and benches. Visitors coming to theatrical shows or exhibition openings will be redirected to go down the ramps to enter at the lower level.

We believed that this approach was unnecessarily limiting experiences of the visitors and was not consistent with historic design. (The Commission of Fine Arts expressed similar concerns.) We encouraged the Library to respect the original design intent by allowing the original entry sequence. We suggested not an “either-or” but “both” approach of

designing new accessible entrances to the library and the theater and retaining the continued operation of the grand architectural entrances.

In creating new lower level entries architects had to radically modify grading and expose part of existing foundations of the building. The current drawings only hint at the treatment of those exposed surfaces. We were confident that the very able design team will meet this challenge. The design is already using quietly contemporary materials in new construction presenting clear differentiation between historic and new components of the project. We are looking forward to seeing further detail refinements as the project progresses.

We believe that this project is in general compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District, but the design does need further development to better balance the public’s continued expectations of using the grand entrances with the need and desire to provide mobility-impaired visitors with an equally attractive accessible entrance.

The Board approved the project, while noting a need to resolve access through the original doors, and that the design team should give more thought to this issue.

The following cases were approved on the consent calendar:

**511 5th Street SE, HPA 19-380,** permit/rear addition.

**520 Groff Court NE, HPA 19-311,** concept/side addition, two stories to two-story alley dwelling. The two-story glassed-in bay planned for the rear of the new house would extend past the rear elevations of 512-512 Groff Court, and although there are

IMAGE COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Folger Shakespeare Library, circa 1919–1929.

# Eastern Market Anniversary Celebrations

By Beth Purcell

In 2009, Eastern Market re-opened after a disastrous fire. To mark the 10th anniversary of the market's rebirth, there were celebrations June 7-9, beginning with an all-morning event on WTTG-5, broadcast live from the market. Merchants, farmers, and Capitol Hill organizations were invited to participate and set a festive tone.

CHRS was there, chatting up attendees and handing out newsletters and swag. Hundreds of people showed up to sample the goodies and watch the operations. The TV crew filmed the scene both inside and outside the market, including an exercise class in the North Hall.

The anchors interviewed Donna Scheeder, the Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee Chair; Gary Peterson, representing the Capitol Hill Community Foundation; and others. The Eastern High School Marching Band played. Viewers saw a vibrant and busy market, which was good publicity for this important community institution.

The celebrations continued through the weekend with free docent-led tours of the market, showcasing its rich history and architecture as well as free shopping bags and balloons for the kids. ★



Elizabeth Nelson and Beth Purcell representing CHRS during the TV broadcast from Eastern Market.

fences, these alley dwellings occupy a constrained space with high visibility.

The glassed-in addition would break the building line in the rear, and would be very visible and not compatible with the massing of the other alley dwellings. Although the project was heard on the consent calendar, the staff expressed similar concerns about the two-story glass bay: Reducing the scale of the rear bay either in height, to one story, or in

width would allow for more of the building to read from the rear, which is unusually visible in this alley context. At one story, the rear bay would not be visible behind the existing brick garden walls. If narrower, the bay would no longer overwhelm the rear elevation. The scale of these buildings means that a difference of even two feet in width makes a significant difference in the proportions across the elevation. ★

**Interested in learning more about historic district designation?**

Contact CHRS at [caphrs@aol.com](mailto:caphrs@aol.com).

---

# Preservation Awards Highlight Sonderman's Lifetime Achievement

By Nancy Metzger

**R**obert Sonderman, a Capitol Hill resident well-known to Preservation Café audiences for his talks highlighting “backyard archaeology,” was honored in May by receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation. Sonderman, recently retired from the National Park Service as Director of the Museum Resource Center and Regional Curator of the National Capital Region, notably served for 22 years as a member of DC’s Historic Preservation Review Board.

In a letter of support for the award nomination, CHRS President Elizabeth Nelson wrote that his “years of service overlapped with the terms of at least six CHRS Historic Preservation Committee chairs who might not always have agreed with his position on every case but that it

was clear he was a thoughtful and well-prepared member of the Board. . . . Audiences always left one of his presentations knowing something more of the Hill’s earlier residents and the role of historic preservation in their community.”

In the Design and Construction category of the historic preservation awards, two Capitol Hill adaptive reuse projects shared an award because the jury could not decide between them. The Bell Tower at Stanton Park (609 Maryland Avenue NE) and The Sanctuary (819 D Street NE) both transformed historic churches into residential projects because the congregations wanted to move.

One developer called it a “dialogue between the historic building and the modern use which should sustain these buildings for

another century” in their historic neighborhood. The State Historic Preservation Officer’s Award went to 700 Penn, “not a traditional historic preservation project” at the old Hine School site. Among other reasons, the project was cited for its “traditional materials and the exceptional attention to scale, color, and craftsmanship.”

Videos of these and other Excellence in Historic Preservation award winners can be viewed on the DC Preservation League website at: [www.dcpreservation.org](http://www.dcpreservation.org). ★

---

## Forum, continued from cover

team also is trying to connect with those who do not attend the meetings or fully engage at that depth and is using gaming techniques to engage these populations.

### 3) **Tying the Housing Preservation Fund or other tools to the Plan and to needs of community.**

For more on the plan, see [www.plandc.dc.gov](http://www.plandc.dc.gov).

A lively question and answer session following Trueblood’s presentation included questions on affordable housing, seniors in the District and on the Hill, DC’s Building Height Limitations, the

challenges of DC’s transformation from a sleepy federal city to a recreational destination, zoning laws, and the Census.

### **September Community Forum**

Matthew Gilmore will be the featured speaker on the history of the Swampoodle neighborhood northeast of Union Station on Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. The talk will be preceded by an organizational business meeting at 6:30 pm, at which members will vote on the CHRS FY2019 budget.

The event is free and handicapped-accessible and the public is encouraged to attend. ★

# Preservation Café: Preserving Our Neighborhood Trees

By Christine Mullins

**D**o you want to plant a tree in your yard or file a tree request with DC Department of Transportation (DDOT)? What should you look for when choosing a tree? How much water will your new tree need? How can you tell if a tree is struggling (and what to do about it)? What regulations govern the care of trees in our public spaces? What can you do to help?

Steve McKindley-Ward and Alex Grieve, Ward 6 Arborists from the Urban Forestry Administration (UFA) in DDOT, will offer general tree advice and share their ideas and experiences taking care of the trees

in our living, growing Capitol Hill canopy. Our area has many layers of foliage: it is home to stately trees on the U.S. Capitol grounds, the Library of Congress, the U.S. Supreme Court, our local parks (Folger, Garfield, Lincoln, Marion, and Stanton), myriad large and small pocket parks, and the many trees that grace our homes and streets.

Caregivers include the UFA, the National Park Service, the Architect of the Capitol, Trees for Capitol Hill, our public and private schools, houses of worship, businesses, home and apartment owners, and a cadre of neighborhood volunteers who plant

trees and carry buckets of water to refresh our trees during our long, hot summers. Learn about the history of our tree canopy and what you can do to help keep our streets green, shady, and healthy!

Preservation Cafés are free to CHRS members and non members alike. Watch this space to learn about our featured speakers for October 16 and November 20. We hope to see you at East City Books, 645 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, on September 18 at 6:30 pm! ★

---

## Ask CHRS: Removing Graffiti

**C**HRS takes your questions on home maintenance and repair within historic district guidelines. We encourage members and nonmembers to send your questions to: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org)—we try to answer as best we can!

**Q:** *Recently someone spray-painted graffiti on our brick house. What should we know about removing graffiti without damaging the brick?*

**A:** As it turns out, graffiti removal is a complex topic, requiring a multi-step analysis. The National Park Service technical bulletin, *Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry*, offers detailed advice: [www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/38-remove-graffiti.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/38-remove-graffiti.htm). ★



IMAGE COURTESY JACKIE KRIEGER

## Society Nats' First Season a Success!

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society congratulates our Little League AA team, the Society Nats, on a great spring season. We look forward to seeing you play in the fall!



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

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

---

## Mark Your Calendar!

### JULY

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

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

### AUGUST

**15** Thursday, 7:30 pm  
CHRS Zoning Committee. Kirby House, 420 10th Street SE, first floor. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

**20** Tuesday, 6:30 pm  
CHRS Board of Directors, Capitol Hill Townhomes, 750 6th Street SE, 2nd Floor board room. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

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

### SEPTEMBER

**18** Wednesday, 6:30 pm  
Preservation Café, East City Bookshop, 645 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. Ward 6 Arborists, Steve McKindley-Ward and Alex Grieve will be the featured speakers.

**25** Wednesday, 6:30pm  
Membership Meeting: Voting on FY2019 Budget. Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org)

**25** Wednesday, 6:45pm  
Community Forum: Matthew Gilmore on the history of Swampoodle. Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. Details: [chrs.org/matthew-gilmore-community-forum](http://chrs.org/matthew-gilmore-community-forum).

### OCTOBER

**16** Wednesday, 6:30 pm  
Preservation Café, East City Bookshop, 645 Pennsylvania Avenue SE. Topic and speaker TBD.

**26** Saturday 10 am–4 pm  
CHRS House Expo, Eastern Market North Hall, corner of 7th Street and North Carolina Avenue SE. Details: [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

*If you received a complimentary copy of this newsletter, please consider joining CHRS!*

Annual membership is \$35 and includes a subscription to the newsletter, a set of historic guidelines, and discounted tickets for the annual House & Garden Tour. Learn more at:

[www.chrs.org](http://www.chrs.org)