



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

# NEWS

www.chrs.org

May 2021

## It's Time for the Tour of Tours!

By Elizabeth Nelson on behalf of the House Tour Committee

The Tour of Tours is upon us. The tours will be held on Saturday, May 8th, at 2 pm and 5 pm and on Sunday, May 9th, at 10 am, 1 pm and 4 pm. We hope you'll find something of interest among these guided, outdoor, walking tours:

- **Community Evolution near Logan School** (focusing on the neighborhood east of Union Station, a look at how the city and

citizens turned once-unbuildable land into a welcoming neighborhood)

- **Parks—Treasures of Capitol Hill** (history of Marion and Garfield Parks and their surrounding neighborhood)
- **Hollywood on the Hill** (filming locations on Capitol Hill, with author Mike Canning)

- **The Resistance** (sites significant to civil rights for women, minorities and the LGBTQ+ community, with author and professional tour guide Robert Pohl)
- **Our Industrial Past** (industrial and commercial sites, many of which have been repurposed)

*Continued on page 2*

IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON



Donna Breslin, one of the *Artists at Home* participants, recently updated the iconic Biden-Harris installation in her front yard. It's certain to generate interest in the Tour of Tours. Check it out in person and see what she and her co-exhibitor, Mike Grace, have on display!

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# Duvall Court SE Alley Dwellings

By Beth Purcell

**D**uvall Court SE is named for John H. Duvall who built seven brick two-story dwellings in this alley, 13' x 28', on lots 28–34 in 1891. They disappeared around 1968. Kube Architecture designed new alley dwellings on this site and new residents are moving in. For prior reporting on these alley dwellings see *CHRS News* (March 2017).



IMAGES COURTESY BETH PURCELL

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## Tour of Tours, *continued from cover*

- **Whimsy of Capitol Hill** (search for amusing yard ornaments—a guided version, with fresh images, of the scavenger hunt posted on our website last year)
- **Notable People** (sites associated with many of the historically significant people who have made Capitol Hill their home)

## Artists at Home

We're also organizing an "Artists at Home" gallery, inviting local artists to display (and sell) their work in outdoor spaces at their own homes from 1-5pm on both tour days. Eastern High School and the Capitol Hill Arts Workshop are joining us in the endeavor. This is free to both exhibitors and visitors. Check out the map on our website.

The size of tour groups will be capped at 10 or 15 people and masks are required that cover both the nose and mouth. We're using Eventbrite to manage the reservations so we don't exceed the cap on any of the tours. Prices are \$10 for adults and \$2 for children 12 and under and can be made at [chrs.org/2021-mothers-day-tour-of-tours](https://chrs.org/2021-mothers-day-tour-of-tours). ☆

**The Home for Working Girls at 101 North Carolina Avenue SE, from the Parks walking tour.**



IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON

# Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President . . . . . Beth Purcell  
 First Vice President . . . . . Angie Schmidt  
 Second Vice President . . . . . Tina May  
 Treasurer . . . . . Nick Alberti  
 Secretary . . . . . Jim Thackaberry  
 At Large . . . . . Jackie Krieger  
 At Large . . . . . Christine Mullins  
 At Large . . . . . Beth Hague  
 At Large . . . . . Joanna Kendig  
 At Large . . . . . Maygene Daniels  
 At Large . . . . . Alison Ross  
 Immediate Past President . . Elizabeth Nelson

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Beyond the Boundaries . . . . . Beth Purcell  
 Budget & Administration\* . . . . Nick Alberti  
 City Planning\* . . . . . Monte Edwards  
 Communications\* . . . . . vacant  
 Community Development\* . . . . Chuck Burger  
 Community Relations . . . . Elizabeth Nelson  
 Environment\* . . . . . Joanna Kendig  
 Grants . . . . . Larry Pearl  
 Historic Preservation\* . . . . . Beth Purcell  
 House & Garden Tour . . . . Elizabeth Nelson  
 Investments . . . . . John Shages  
 Membership\* . . . . . Maygene Daniels  
 Public Safety\* . . . . . Undine Nash  
 Public Space . . . . . Steve Kehoe  
 Zoning\* . . . . . Nick Alberti and Beth Hague

\* 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: caphrs420@gmail.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

# Zoning Report

By Beth Hague and Gary Peterson

The CHRS Zoning Committee has considered the following cases:

**BZA #20437**, 1819 A Street SE. The CHRS Zoning Committee opposed this case. The applicant seeks special exception relief from residential conversion requirements and rear addition requirements in order to construct a third-story addition on top of the existing two-story portion of the building and a three-story addition on top of existing cellar space at the rear and to convert the building to three residential dwelling units. The CHRS zoning committee opposed the proposal on grounds that the applicant's proposal would exceed the length of the adjacent neighbor at 1821 A Street SE by 19.5 feet.

We would support the case if it were scaled back to the existing footprint of 14.5 feet and the applicant could produce a letter of support from the adjacent neighbor, who would be most affected by the plans. The hearing was on April 14, but the BZA Virtual Public Hearing will continue hearing this case on May 26. The Board has requested the applicant provide a supplemental filing to address how the three-story addition's design meets the character, scale, and pattern of existing homes on the street and block; and comparison of proposed building setback from the street frontage. The ANC also may provide a response to the applicant's supplemental filing.

**BZA #20382**, 308 11th Street NE. The CHRS Zoning Committee wrote a letter to the BZA taking no position on this case, for which the CHRS Historic Preservation Committee earlier filed a letter of support. Applicants sought a special exception from lot occupancy requirements to build a third-story addition,

roof deck, and a second story on an existing one-story garage. The Office of Planning approved the plan, noting that the proposed third floor was less than 35 feet and set back from the street, where it was not visible. The two-story garage was proposed for an area where only one-story garages now exist, but was allowable by right. CHRS noted that the property had previously had a stop work order on it and that both adjacent neighbors and two neighbors in back of the property were opposed to the project. The case was scheduled for a hearing on April 14 but has been postponed to a virtual public hearing on June 16, 2021, for supplemental filings from the applicant and parties in opposition.

**BZA #18238A**, 413 8th Street SE. The applicant, Chipotle Mexican Grill, has applied for a modification of significance to extend the period of approval to permit a fast-food restaurant for another ten years. The ANC negotiated conditions for the extension. The CHRS Zoning Committee voted to support the application with the conditions that are in the ANC letter, Exhibit 31.

**BZA #20414**, 1637 D Street NE. The applicant in this case needs a special exception to demolish an existing one-story covered deck and replace it with a two-story plus basement addition that is 18 feet 6 inches deep—8 feet 6 inches beyond what is permitted as a matter of right. The Committee strongly believed that the applicant also needs a special exception for covering more than 60% of the lot at the second-floor level. The CHRS Zoning Committee

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# Historic Preservation Briefs

By Beth Purcell

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board), considered the following cases at its virtual hearing on March 25, 2021. 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.

**135 13th Street NE, rear, HPA 21-212.** The applicants own a large lot and plan to demolish an existing one-story garage, approximately 20 x 20 feet (400 square feet) in footprint. The garage, which may be historic, is constructed in cast concrete, with dentil molding at the roofline. The applicants would replace the existing garage with a new two-story second dwelling unit, 20 x 37 feet (740 square feet), almost twice the square footage of a typical garage or carriage house. In this alley there are several one- and two-story garages, and several lots lack garages.

The only comparable case we found is 1013–1015 E Street SE, HPA 14-720, 14-721. At the December 18, 2014, hearing, the applicant proposed combining two lots and building a new two-story alley dwelling, with a footprint of 30 by approximately 39 feet, and 25 feet tall. The staff recommended reducing the alley building's height and mass. The Board denied concept approval.

The applicants cited the one-story garages at 1326 and 1328 North Carolina Avenue NE, which sit on two separate lots. They also cited a large garage nearby at 1329 Constitution Avenue NE; we were unable to obtain information on this garage. We believed that if this



IMAGE COURTESY BETH PURCELL

Existing garage at rear 135 13th Street NE.

project was approved, it would create a dangerous precedent: Any applicant owning a large lot could build an outsize alley dwelling. The majority of our committee believed that the scale of the proposed second dwelling unit is far too large to be compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District and recommend that its footprint be reduced by 50 percent or more.

The new building would be clad in corten steel (a steel alloy developed to eliminate the need for painting, and forming a stable rust-like appearance after several years' exposure to weather).

The Board approved the new building's height and massing based on the size of the lot and the alley's context. The Board also found that applicants must:

- Report on the history of the garage;
- Present a design concept that that preserves the north and south walls of the existing garage;

- Submit additional information on the installation details of the corten steel paneling; and
- Return to the Board for an additional hearing.

**Consent calendar.** CHRS participated in these cases:

- **410 East Capitol Street NE,** HPA 21-214, concept/replace one-story rear addition with two-story addition.
- **15 8th Street SE,** HPA 21-218, concept/two-story rear addition. ★

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

Contact CHRS at [info@chrs.org](mailto:info@chrs.org).

# CHRS Board of Directors Elections

By Elizabeth Nelson

The Elections Committee recommendations for the 2021–2022 Board of Directors have been approved by the current Board of Directors. Ballots will be mailed to all CHRS members who are on the rolls as of May 1, 2021. Once distributed, ballots must be completed and returned within two weeks.

The results of the election will be announced at the June Membership Meeting, if the meeting can be held, and in the July / August newsletter. If the Membership Meeting must be postponed, the membership will be notified by email as soon as the results can be tabulated.

Beth Purcell has been re-nominated to serve as the President of the Society. Angie Schmidt has been re-nominated to serve as First Vice-President. Tina May has been re-nominated to serve as Second Vice-President. Nick Alberti has been re-nominated for Treasurer. Maygene Daniels has been nominated to serve as Secretary. Chris Mullins has been nominated for a second At-Large term. Two additional At-Large Directors have also been nominated: Gary Peterson and Jim Thackaberry.



**Beth Purcell (President)** is currently serving as President and also as Chair of the Historic Preservation

Committee. She moved to Capitol Hill in 1987, and later joined the CHRS board, serving as President from 2009 to 2012. After a career at the Treasury Department, she earned an MS in historic preservation from George Washington University. In 2020 she wrote *Capitol Hill: Past & Present* (published by Arcadia Publishing). She is also the President

of Trees for Capitol Hill and a member of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. In her spare time she enjoys walking her dogs.



**Angie Schmidt (First Vice-President)**

is currently serving in the same position. She moved with

her family to the circa-1881 house on Capitol Hill in 2002. Her career began in editing and publishing and she currently works part-time handling the books for a small business on Capitol Hill. She started volunteering with CHRS in 2016, serving as an editor for the CHRS News, which she continues to edit. Angie's degree at GWU focused on the urban environment and thinks that Capitol Hill encapsulates all the best parts of what Washington has to offer, both in the very old and historic, and the new and improved.



**Tina May (Second Vice-President)**

is completing her third term in this position. She moved to Capitol Hill in

1982 for an affordably-priced rental house with college friends and has lived here ever since. Soon thereafter, she and her husband Peter bought their first house in need of restoration. Working with little more than a subscription to the *Old House Journal* and a lot of patience, they completed that house, and then a second, and are now working on their third (the "gut job"). They have been members of CHRS since at least 2002—back in the days when a membership included a subscription to the OHJ.



**Nick Alberti (Treasurer)** moved to Capitol Hill in 1985 with his wife, Elizabeth Nelson. They were attracted to

the charming architecture of the Hill and are grateful to have found a home in the Historic District. Nick retired from a career as a statistician with the Census Bureau in 2010. He served as a commissioner in ANC 6A where he was initially the Treasurer and later the Chair. He was appointed to the DC Alcohol Beverage Control Board in 2008, serving eleven years. He is currently a member of the Capitol Hill Village Endowment Board, the CHRS Endowment Committee, the CHRS Zoning Committee and the ANC 6A committees providing advice on zoning and alcohol beverage licensing.

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## Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

CHRS wishes to thank the following donors for their invaluable support:

### Contributors

ANNUAL APPEAL  
Evelyn and Lawrence Paulson

### Memberships

BRONZE  
James F. and Mary Lischer  
Norman and Nancy Metzger

SILVER  
Patricia Molumby  
Dorothy Robyn



**Maygene Daniels (Secretary)** is currently serving in an At-Large position. She and her husband Steve have lived

on Capitol Hill for more than 45 years and raised their children here. She began her career as an archivist at the National Archives, where she advocated for preservation of historic DC Building Permits, which remain a key resource for house histories on Capitol Hill. Subsequently, she founded the archives at the National Gallery of Art, where she worked for more than 30 years. In her decades of archival work, she explored subjects relating to the history, urban development and architecture of the city of Washington, the Mall and Capitol Hill. Maygene is also Chair of the CHRS Membership Committee.



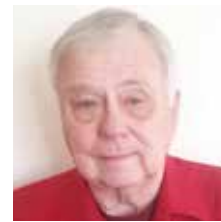
**Jim Thackaberry (At-Large)** is currently serving as Secretary. A registered architect, he moved to

Washington in 1974 to work for Harry Weese Associates, the Metro architect. He has been both in private practice and government employment having concluded his career working many years at the District Department of Housing and Community Development. Upon arriving in the city, he settled on Capitol Hill and immediately loved living here. He then bought the townhouse that he's been renovating and restoring. He joined the Restoration Society shortly after moving here. He is also a member of the CHRS Historic Preservation Committee.



**Christine Mullins (At-Large)** is currently in the same position. She and her husband Daniel have lived on

Capitol Hill since 2003 when they moved here from Adams Morgan. They came to love the Capitol Hill community through their involvement in Maury Elementary School with their two children. Chris has been happy to call Washington, D.C. her home, where everyone and everything seems to have an intriguing and thought-provoking story! She led a higher education nonprofit that advocates for community colleges that teach online for nearly 25 years, and now works with faculty to create free online courses for college students across the globe. Chris brings her love of historic buildings, tin ceilings, old fixtures, finished wood, and walled gardens to CHRS. She organizes the CHRS Preservation Cafés.



**Gary Peterson (At-Large)**, with his wife Trudy, bought their current home on Capitol Hill in 1976. He has

volunteered with the Society ever since, initially with the House Tour and later serving terms as Secretary, Vice-President, President, and long-time Chair of the Zoning Committee. He recently stepped down from this last position but, lucky for us, he will continue as a committee member. Gary was instrumental in the Capitol Hill Community Foundation's fundraising efforts to restore the Eastern Market after the 2007 fire. He also volunteers with Hill Center at the Old Naval Hospital. ★

## "Capitol Hill Home" Photo Contest Update



As we go to press, judging is still underway. There were over thirty entries, each special in its own way, so we're taking our time. Expect a gorgeous photo spread in the June CHRS *News*. The winners will be posted on our website—along with many of the others. They deserve to be seen!

IMAGE COURTESY CHRS

# May Preservation Café: Adaptive Reuse of Our Alley Buildings

By Christine Mullins

Since the 19th century, alley buildings have contributed to the footprint and function of Capitol Hill. Although they are not visible from the street, these structures have served varied and important roles in neighborhood life. The last several decades have witnessed rapid and substantial reimagining of these buildings. Changes in the real estate market, public perception, and zoning have collided to create new spaces within old buildings.

This CHRS Preservation Café will explore this boom: the adaptive reuse of alley buildings to meet contemporary needs. Architectural Conservator Justine Bello will examine alley building typologies, and how the maxim “form follows function” holds true in these

vernacular buildings. She will also discuss the confluence of conditions that led to their inception and propagation throughout the city. As the original needs for and uses of alley buildings evolve or disappear entirely, Bello will explore how these buildings are being adapted today, along with some observations on trends toward the future. ★

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*Justine Bello has worked as a conservator in the private and public sectors since 2007. She is a professional associate of the American Institute for Conservation and lives in Kingman Park.*



IMAGE COURTESY JUSTINE BELLO

## May Preservation Café

*Adaptive Reuse of Our Alley Buildings*

Wednesday, May 19 at 6:30 pm

To join, visit: [chrs.org/adaptive-reuse-alley-buildings-pc](https://chrs.org/adaptive-reuse-alley-buildings-pc).

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## Zoning Briefs, *continued from page 3*

supports the application as it applies to extending the first floor 18 feet 6 inches, however it does not support the second-floor addition that exceeds 10 feet.

**BZA #20429**, 411 New Jersey Avenue SE. The proposal is for a new rowhouse flat on a large vacant lot immediately south of the entrance to the railroad tunnel. The applicant needs a variance from the depth of the rear yard requirements and special exceptions from the rear extension, height, and railing set back requirements. The CHRS Zoning

Committee voted to support the special exceptions. In the case of the rear yard, the Committee considered the request a close call but decided to support the Office of Planning’s argument that there are no practical difficulties in complying with the 20-foot rear yard requirement.

**BZA #20436**, 1300 I Street NE. The applicant needs special exceptions to modify the cornice on the building and to increase the allowable units on the property to 6. The property, totaling 4,465 square feet, is large because it is two lots that have been

combined. The lot on the corner is improved with a two-story brick building that was used as a church. The adjacent lot is vacant. The owner proposes to convert the building to three stories and to make a three-story addition to the side and the rear. The Committee voted to oppose the special exception for 6 units because 900 sq. ft. of land area are needed for each unit and the area of the property is too small to qualify for even 5 units without a special exception. ★



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

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

## Mark Your Calendar!

*Please check website for current information—cancellations and postponements are expected and will be posted as they are known.*

### MAY

**5** Wednesday, 6:30pm

Southeast Library modernization virtual meeting. Learn more about the project at: [dclibrary.org/southeastlibraryrenovation](https://dclibrary.org/southeastlibraryrenovation).

**8-9** Saturday & Sunday

Mother's Day "Tour of Tours." Visit [chrs.org/2021-mothers-day-tour-of-tours](https://chrs.org/2021-mothers-day-tour-of-tours) to learn more.

**19** Wednesday, 6:30pm

Preservation Café: "Adaptive Reuse of Our Alley Buildings." A WebEx link and call in number will be posted prior to the meeting. Details: [chrs.org/adaptive-reuse-alley-buildings-pc](https://chrs.org/adaptive-reuse-alley-buildings-pc).

For 60 years, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) has championed the interests of residential Capitol Hill by working to preserve its historic character and enhance its livability through efforts in planning, zoning, traffic management, and public safety. Become a member today!

[chrs.org/join-chrs](https://chrs.org/join-chrs)

### Coming in October: CHRS 2021 House Expo

The CHRS House Expo will be held Saturday, October 30, 2021, from 10 am–4 pm at the Eastern Market North Hall, featuring a wide variety of home service exhibitors. More details at: [chrs.org/house-expo-2021](https://chrs.org/house-expo-2021).