



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

# NEWS

www.chrs.org

July/August 2021

## June Membership Meeting Details Researching Oral Histories on Capitol Hill

By Beth Purcell

After the election results for the CHRS board of directors (2021–2022) were announced, the CHRS membership meeting turned to a discussion of a seminal resource for oral histories on Capitol Hill. Bernadette McMahon, project manager for the Ruth Ann Overbeck Capitol Hill History Project, and Brian D. Kraft, GIS specialist, showed how you can research their new online oral history library which features people who have lived or worked on Capitol Hill.

For more than 20 years, volunteers with the Capitol Hill History Overbeck Project have interviewed local residents and transcribed their life stories. The site includes more than 200 oral histories, which are all searchable online. Bernadette McMahon explained how to search the website during her presentation.

For example, she typed the words “Bonus Army” into the search box (without using quotation marks). McMahon explained that using quotation marks on their website, unlike some others, will not limit the search: results yield all of the entries with the terms “bonus” and “army” in them. This type of search can prove beneficial, since it will turn up more

resources, including interviewees who mentioned the Bonus marchers.

McMahon also showed how to conduct searches using a street address. In this case, researchers should insert house numbers from 1 to 10, and spell out the number for the name of the street, such as 19 Seventh Street NE. The most popular results are listed first.

The Overbeck Project website offers search filters for ten topic categories: African American life, business and occupations, childhood memories, community organizations, Eastern Market, immigrant families, places of worship, politics and government, preservation and development, and schools. You can also search by five time periods. Interviews are tagged to these filters if they cover a topic in some depth; the earliest time period associated with an interviewee or their ancestor is tagged. Image collections and some interviews include historic photographs.

The DC Oral History Collaborative gave grant funds to CHRS which contracted Brian Kraft to create an interactive map showing the locations mentioned in oral histories throughout the District. During his review process, Kraft read

all the 400-plus oral histories, and plotted the locations on an interactive map, using symbols for residences, workplaces, businesses, schools, and places of worship.

To use the online map, look for a location of interest, point and click to get a pop-up, and then click the link to read the online oral history. Thanks to the Overbeck Project, Capitol Hill has stored these high-quality oral histories, with the most histories of any neighborhood in the city. You can access this interactive map at: [chrs.org/oral-histories-map](http://chrs.org/oral-histories-map).

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# CHRS 2021–2022 Board Election Results

By Elizabeth Nelson

The Elections Committee is happy to report that in this time of change and uncertainty, so many of our board members will remain with us, even if in different capacities.

Beth Purcell, Angie Schmidt, Tina May, Nick Alberti, and Christine Mullins were re-elected as President, First Vice-President, Second Vice President, Treasurer, and At-Large, respectively. Maygene Daniels, who previously held an At-Large position, will serve as Secretary.

Jim Thackaberry, who just completed his second term as Secretary has been elected to an At-Large position. And Gary Peterson is beginning a term as an At-Large member, having stepped down from chairmanship of the Zoning Committee. The Board of Directors would like to extend grateful

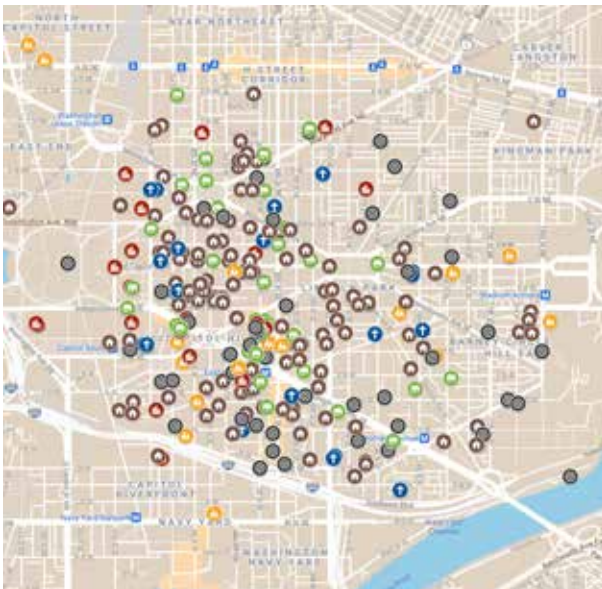


We have another new Director, Karine Semple. As the new Chair of the Communications Committee, she was appointed by the board rather than elected. She's already been extremely helpful, managing the Eventbrite ticket sales and coordinating publicity for the Tour of Tours. A relative newcomer to Capitol Hill, she has a fresh appreciation of our historic neighborhood and new ideas on leveraging our social media presence.

thanks to Gary, for his decades-long leadership of that committee and for his continuing membership on it. Many thanks also to Alison Ross; we'll miss her as an At-Large member. Fortunately for us, she will remain on our Historic Preservation Committee where her knowledge and insight are invaluable.

To those of you who have expressed discomfort with the requirement that ballots be signed—we hear you. But The DC Nonprofit Corporation Act requires that ballots for member voting have a signature line and that members must sign their names, so we are complying. ✨

## June Meeting, *continued from cover*



Brian Kraft created this interactive map.

Visit the Ruth Ann Overbeck Capitol Hill History Project at: [capitolhillhistory.org](http://capitolhillhistory.org). Note that the organization welcomes volunteers and seeks additional people to interview, especially those who have unique and interesting stories. Please send an email to [overbeckproject@his.com](mailto:overbeckproject@his.com) if you are interested. ✨

## Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

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

### Contributors

ANNUAL APPEAL  
Barry W. Johnson and  
Edward Chapman  
Michael and Barbara Eck  
David Moore  
Janet Quigley

### Memberships

BRONZE  
Barry W. Johnson and  
Edward Chapman  
Aileen Moffatt  
Janet Quigley

# Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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Treasurer . . . . . Nick Alberti  
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At Large . . . . . Christine Mullins  
At Large . . . . . Gary Peterson  
At Large . . . . . Jim Thackaberry  
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Zoning\* . . . . . Beth Hague

\* Chair is an appointed Board Member

## NEWSLETTER

Angie Schmidt and Kelly Vielmo, Editors

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

# Paving "Public Parking" on Capitol Hill

By Beth Purcell

CHRS has recently fielded several calls from homeowners interested in installing patios or other hardscape in their front yards. As many Capitol Hill residents already know, large portions of our front yards are "public parking," (public space that does not belong to the property owner), so designated by the Parking Act of 1870.

By the Civil War, the L'Enfant Plan streets had turned out to be too wide to be maintained at public expense.<sup>1</sup> In response, Congress created "parking," authorizing the District government "to set apart from time to time, as parks, to be adorned with shade-trees, walks and enclosed with curbstones, not exceeding one half the width of any and all avenues and streets in the said city of Washington."<sup>2</sup>

DC Code § 10-1101.01(4) provides:

"Parking" means that area of public space which lies between the property line and the edge of the actual or planned sidewalk which is nearer to such property line, as such property line and sidewalk are shown on the records of the District.<sup>3</sup>

DDOT's *Public Realm Design Manual*, section 4.4 states:

**Paving, Grading, and Covering Without the written authority of the Mayor [i.e., DDOT]: no person shall change the grade of any parking; pave or cover any portion of a parking; pave or cover any portion of any sidewalk space; cross sidewalks; or construct any walls, steps, coping, fences, or other structures on a parking. Permits to pave the public parking in districts zoned for commercial and industrial uses shall be granted by the Director of the Department of Transportation (DCMR 24-104). [emphasis added]**

If homeowners want to install a patio or sidewalk in a front yard, they should consult DDOT and determine whether they need a public space permit, and how to apply for one. Visit: [ddot.dc.gov](http://ddot.dc.gov).

DDOT has cited at least one homeowner for paving public parking without a permit, so it is wise to consult DDOT, as well as being the right thing to do. ★

<sup>1</sup> DDOT, *Public Realm Design Manual*, 1-1, 1-2.

<https://ddot.dc.gov/PublicRealmDesignManual>.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. XLVII—An Act establishing the Corporation of the City of Washington to set apart Portions of Streets and Avenues as Parks for Trees and Walks. 16 Stat. 82 (41st Cong., 2d Sess. (1870)).

<sup>3</sup> See also DCMR § 24-102.8.

# Historic Preservation Briefs

By Beth Purcell and Alison Ross

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board), considered the following cases at its virtual hearing on June 3 and July 1, 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.

**420 11th Street SE, HPA 21-253,** concept/three-story rear addition. This two-story semi-detached frame house, a contributing building, was constructed in 1874 or 1875. The applicant proposed to demolish a rear addition (which appears to be in poor condition), and build a new two-story addition, which should not be visible from public space, with the exception of the adjacent alley. On the front elevation, the windows and transom would be retained, and the door replaced. The applicant plans to remove the stucco and replace it with new siding.

The project architect provided helpful information on the condition of the siding under the stucco and specifications for replacement siding. Under the stucco is six-inch wood siding in very poor condition, some vertical studs are also in poor condition, which the applicant intends to replace or sister with new studs. There is no sheathing layer under the siding which also prevents applying a proper air-barrier with the new construction. The applicant intends to remove the existing stucco, and the existing siding layer down to the studs, add 3/4” plywood, air-barrier, and new siding, with batt insulation on the inside. According to HPO’s Walls and Foundations Guidelines, the closest match to the original siding is the beveled siding, but as seen in the photos the applicant provided, it appears to be a flat, non-tapered, wood plank. The plan is to match the same existing six-inch exposure flat/beveled style for the new siding to recreate the original look, and we agreed with the staff on this point.

## Southeast Library Update

The Southeast Branch Library, which was earlier listed on the DC Inventory of Historic Sites, is now officially listed on the National Register. CHRS filed the nomination, supported by ANC 6B.

In 2019 three windows were replaced without a building permit: Two window openings in the front elevation were altered and aluminum one-over-one double-hung windows were installed. On the side elevation a large undivided sash was installed. All these windows violate HPRB’s regulations on windows. A violation was issued. CHRS argued, and the Board agreed, that the outstanding unpermitted windows must be addressed and corrected, with a building permit, before new work is permitted. The Board agreed that proposed the rear addition and alterations would be compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District, with conditions that the parapet walls of the addition roof deck and the front door design be revised.

**313 9th Street SE, HPA 21-262,** second story additions on two garages. In 2010, the Board approved this project designed by Amy Weinstein, delegating final approval to the staff. The applicant did not proceed with the project in 2010, and revived it in 2021. The Board approved the project.

**900 South Carolina Avenue SE, HPA 21-324,** concept/various window and door alterations. This corner brick building, dating from c. 1870, is a contributing building. The project as



IMAGE COURTESY BETH PURCELL

313 9th Street SE.



900 South Carolina Avenue SE.

a whole is commendable. However, the applicants proposed to demolish the existing storefront windows dating from the 1930s, and to recreate the 1870s display windows, based on existing fragments and architectural research. Boyd's City Directories show a long line of grocers living and working in 900 South Carolina; starting in 1870. The last and longest-running grocery store owner was Domenic Cuozzo who opened his grocery store in September 1917 and whose family operated it until 1968. Tony Cuozzo was interviewed for the Overbeck History Project in 2001: The family lived in the rooms in the back and above the grocery store. In the 1930s they modified the original store windows, adding the brick base topped by sheet glass, creating the current store windows. Thus, these 1930s store windows reflect accumulated layers of history, and we believed that they should be preserved. These store windows are visible in photographs from 1949 and 1968 (after the store had closed). The current configuration closely resembles the 1949 image. This building is a "brick front" store, and has the classic elements celebrated in HPO's Design Guidelines of Historic

Commercial Buildings: a recessed entry, masonry window base, display window, transom window. The guidelines state: "The original size, shape, and proportion of display windows and entrances should be maintained" (p. 7).

The historic preservation concept of cultural landscapes considers buildings as they have changed over time, and values those changes. For this reason, we believed that the 1930s windows should be valued and retained. However, the Board decided that the older version of the windows was a clearer expression of the store windows, and approved the design and replacing the 1930s windows.

**733 8th Street SE**, HPA 21-375, concept/new construction of four-story plus penthouse building. The applicant proposed to demolish the existing non-contributing building (dating from 1975, now Howl to the Chief), with a new four-story building with retail on the ground floor (as advocated by CHRS and others) and residential units above. We supported the staff's recommendation to revise the front areaway and eliminate the third floor balcony. The Board approved the project with the staffs' recommended changes.

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

- **360 7th Street SE**, HPA 21-320, concept/add metal pergola at sidewalk of this noncontributing commercial building (The Eastern).
- **140 12th Street NE**, HPA 21-317, concept/three-story rear addition, windows and doors.
- **515 5th Street SE**, HPA 21-369, concept/two-story rear addition.
- **647 A Street SE**, HPA 21-363, concept/two-story rear addition.
- **241 11th Street SE**, HPA 21-361, concept/infill dogleg, rebuild one-story garage as two stories. ★

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

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

# CHRS at the 2021 Capitol Hill July Fourth Parade

By Elizabeth Nelson

**B**ack to normal only better! It felt great to have an in-person 4th of July Parade on Capitol Hill—such a relief it was to enjoy a tradition we used to take for granted. The crowd lining the route was larger than ever and the weather was perfect

In addition to beaded necklaces, we passed out pencils with the CHRS logo which turned out to be a hit. Bob Andretta drove his red 1989 Jaguar XJ-S convertible, a very sharp conveyance. And our green banner saw the light of day for the first time in two years!

Many thanks to everyone who participated and to the event organizers: Naval Lodge No. 4 and Phil Guire of Compass Realty.

## Looking Ahead

No word yet on the Barracks Row Fall Festival (usually on 8th Street SE in September), but if it's on, we will be there. It's a great occasion to introduce ourselves to newcomers to the Hill. We hope we can do so this year.

On September 11 and 12, we'll offer additional guided walking tours. See details in the Guided Walking Tours article on page 7 and at: [chrs.org/guided-walking-tours-september-2021](https://chrs.org/guided-walking-tours-september-2021).



IMAGES COURTESY LARRY JAZENICH, NANCY BROERS



IMAGE COURTESY BETH PURCELL



Saturday, October 30, we'll stage our 2021 House Expo at the Eastern Market North Hall, with 30 home services providers. And we have every hope that we can celebrate Hilloween the night before at the same location.

Please consider volunteering for any of these activities, especially the House Expo; email Elizabeth Nelson, at: [elizabeth\\_knits@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com). ★

These modern alley dwellings on Duvall Court SE will be featured in a new tour coming in September, *Capitol Hill Alleys* (see page 7).

# Guided Walking Tours Return in September

We're excited to offer two fan-favorites from the Mother's Day Tour of Tours—plus two new tours, requested by attendees—on September 11 and 12. We'll reprise *Hollywood on the Hill* (filming locations on Capitol Hill) and *Notable People* (sites associated with many of the historically significant people who have made Capitol Hill their home). And we'll debut *Capitol Hill Alleys* and *Architecture on Capitol Hill*.

Can't get enough of turrets and hanging bays? Mad about masonry? And what's a "horse walk" anyway?

*Architecture on the Hill* will explore the intersection of taste and function that led to the development of the many building styles evident on Capitol Hill.

Ever wondered about the smaller houses and unusual structures tucked behind the grander homes? Who lived there and how did they make their living? Take a trip through this workaday world—and back in time—to learn about the rich history of the residential and commercial uses of our *Capitol Hill Alleys*.

As we go to press, specific plans are still in flux. Keep up

with the latest developments at: [chrs.org/guided-walking-tours-september-2021](https://chrs.org/guided-walking-tours-september-2021). We'll send an email to members when tickets go on sale. The Mother's Day Tour of Tours sold out in advance, so we want to make sure membership has a first chance on these additional tour opportunities. Reservations will be available through Eventbrite beginning in August.

If you have questions about the tours or experience difficulties purchasing tickets, email [HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com](mailto:HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com). ★

IMAGES COURTESY HEATHER SCHOELL, ALISON ROSS, NICK ALBERTI, CAREY PAQUETTE



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The Resistance Tour (having their own "sit-in"), the Parks Tour led by Joanna Kendig, Elizabeth Nelson's Whimsy Tour, and part of the Art at Home Gallery.



**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.*

### SEPTEMBER

**11–12** Saturday–Sunday

Guided Walking Tours. We're pleased to announce that we are offering two fan-favorites from the Mother's Day Tour of Tours—plus two new tours, requested by attendees. Reservations will be available through Eventbrite beginning in August. For more information: [chrs.org/guided-walking-tours-september-2021](https://chrs.org/guided-walking-tours-september-2021).

### OCTOBER

**30** Saturday, 10am–4pm

The CHRS House Expo has been rescheduled to Saturday, October 30, 2021 from 10 am–4 pm at the Eastern Market North Hall, featuring a wide variety of home service exhibitors. For more information: [chrs.org/house-expo-2021](https://chrs.org/house-expo-2021).

**This Queen Anne-style house at 617 A Street NE will be featured in a new tour coming in September, *Architecture on Capitol Hill* (see story, page 7).**



IMAGE COURTESY BETH PURCELL