



CHRS CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PRESERVATION

NEWS

www.chrs.org

December 2021/January 2022

The Next Phase of Developing Reservation 13

By Monte Edwards

Plans have been proposed to develop a second portion of Reservation 13, one of the East Coast’s largest undeveloped parcels of public land. The DC Council will review the Mayor’s plan to contract with two developers to develop separate parcels on which, in combination, they would build more than 2,300 housing units, a 150-room hotel, and 60,000 square feet of retail space. Nearly two thirds of the housing units planned by the two developers—Donatelli/Blue Skye and R13 Community Partners — would be “affordable housing.”

CHRS hopes to testify before the DC Council to offer suggestions to ensure the success of the plans for affordable housing and applauds the Mayor’s current plan that would prevent undesirable uses

of Reservation 13 that have been proposed in the past.

The proposals encompass about 11 acres, referred to as *Hill East Phase 2*, to be developed under the Master Plan approved by Council in 2002. The 2009 Zoning Order (ZC Order No. 04-05) that implements the Master Plan describes the vision of creating a mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood that extends Capitol Hill to the riverfront parks, transforming the area into a vibrant, lively district, with a continuation of the Hill East neighborhood street grid.

One of the developers, Donatelli/Blue Skye, plans to build 1,068 housing units, two-thirds of which would be for low-to middle-income families: 994 rental units and 74 for-sale units. One-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom units are proposed, with 25,000 square feet of retail space, including a grocery store.

The other developer, R13 Community Partners, plans 1,241 housing units, with 407 deeply affordable units, 334 middle income units, 500 market rate units, and 5 units reserved for building superintendents.

There would be 1,116 rental units and 125 for-sale units, with 60,000 sq ft of retail and a 150-room Marriott Hotel as a flagship under their proposal.

The proposals are in response to the Mayor’s November 2020 Request for Proposal for development of *Hill East Phase 2*, and has implications that extend beyond Reservation 13: “The approach we’re taking on Hill East is really indicative of how we’d approach the RFK site if we ever get control of it from the federal government,” said John Falcicchio, Bowser’s chief of staff and the deputy mayor of planning and economic development.

Continued on page 2

IMAGE COURTESY DC OFFICE OF DIVERSE WASHINGTON POST



The newest area for redevelopment in Reservation 13.

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CHRS Sends Letter to DC Council to Keep Capitol Hill Historic District in Ward 6

The following letter was sent to the City Council, regarding the new ward redistricting:

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) to express our concerns regarding Bill 24-371, Ward Redistricting Amendment Act of 2021 to be considered by the Council on December 7, 2021. Our concern

is that the plan put forward by the Subcommittee on Redistricting divides the Capitol Hill Historic District into three wards, Wards 6, 7 and 8. We request that the entire Historic District be included in Ward 6.

The proposed redistricting places most of the Historic District in Ward 6. However, one sliver generally south of Potomac Ave, north of the freeway and west of 13th Street would become part of Ward 7, and

the part of the Historic District south of the freeway and north of M Street SE, between 7th and 11th Streets, would become part of Ward 8.

Attached you will find a map of the Historic District showing these parcels in red. Currently CHRS works with three Ward 6 ANCs and one Councilmember on issues regarding the Historic District. The proposed plan will add two ANCs (one in each additional ward) and two more Councilmembers. We believe that no other Historic District in the city has been similarly divided.

Finally, we testified before a meeting of the Subcommittee on Redistricting, calling to their attention this problem of splitting the Historic District between wards. It is hard to understand why our request to keep the Historic District together wasn't granted, especially since we are talking about less than 200 residents. We urge you to correct this error.

Sincerely,

Beth Purcell, President
Capitol Hill Restoration Society ★

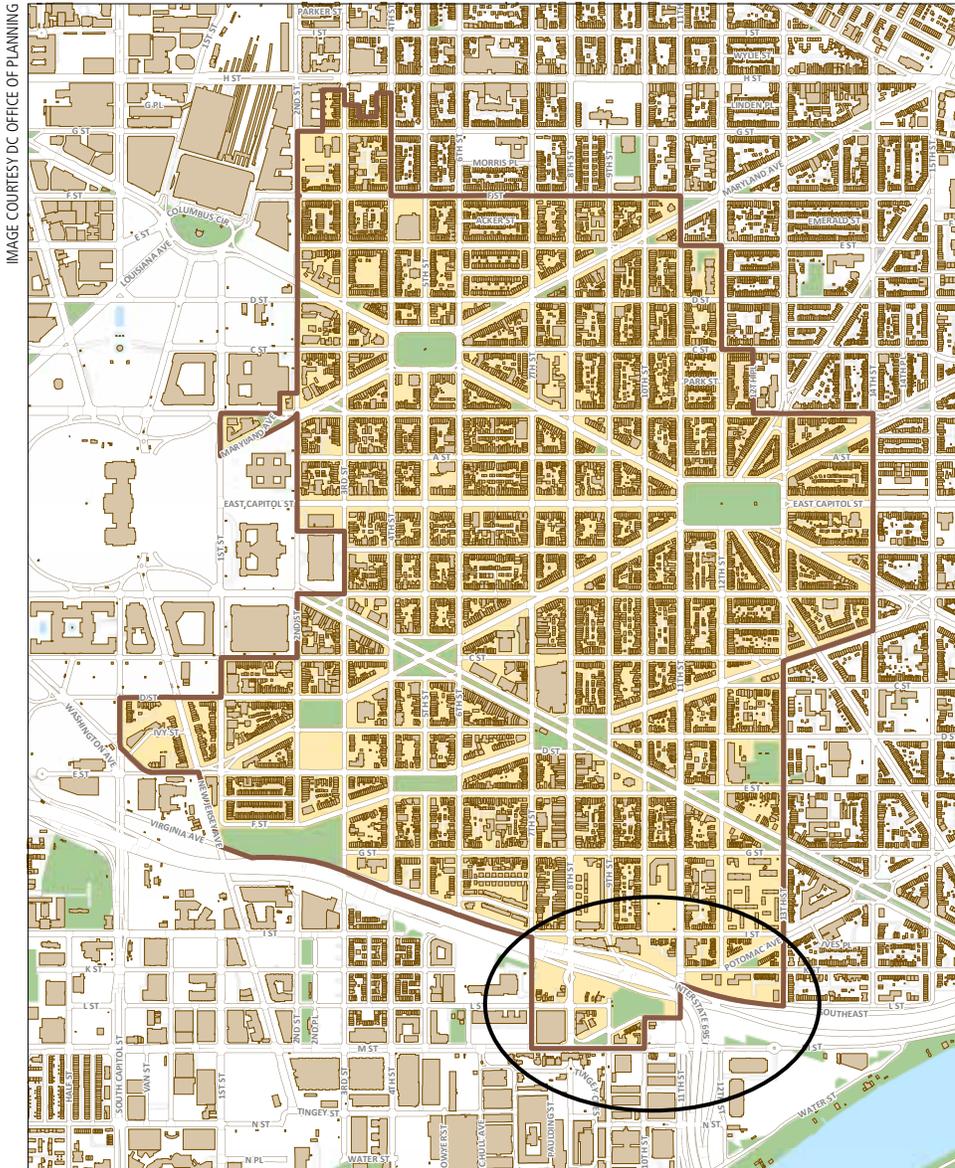


IMAGE COURTESY DC OFFICE OF PLANNING

The Capitol Hill Historic District, with the area of concern circled.

Reservation 13, continued from cover

The proposals are subject to review by the Council in 2022. When the Council considers the proposals, CHRS should offer comments. We were deeply involved in the planning and zoning of the parcel. Our comments should make it clear that CHRS supports the positive aspects of the affordable housing proposals and offer suggestions to ensure the success of the plans for affordable housing. ★

Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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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

Zoning Report

By Beth Hague

The Zoning Committee did not hold an in-person meeting in November. We decided two cases by e-mail as information on those cases became available to the committee.

BZA #20586, 103 4th St NE. The CHRS Zoning Committee supports the applicant's request for a special exception for lot occupancy requirements and rear addition requirements. We note that both adjacent neighbors (at 101 and 105 4th Streets NE, respectively) support the request.

The applicant, responding to our questions about the length of the house beyond the neighbor's, confirmed that the **existing** wall of the house extends 14.8' beyond their next door neighbor at 101 4th Street NE. The new addition would be less than the existing 14.8', at 13.3' beyond.

This is still beyond the 10 feet allowable under current zoning regulations, but the existing 14.8' beyond was probably built before the existing zoning regulations. Finally, the neighbor in back of the house does not have any windows that would cause concern for privacy. The hearing is scheduled for 12/01/21.

BZA #20596, 621 A St NE. CHRS's Zoning Committee supports the proposal to replace an existing two-story deck with a newly designed two-story deck. The footprint of the new deck is similar to the existing deck. The lot occupancy would increase from 62.58% to 66.07%. The increase in lot occupancy appears to come from the larger footprint for the steps. The BZA hearing is scheduled for 12/22/21. ★

2022 Mother's Day House and Garden Tour: Live and in Person!

By Elizabeth Nelson

Yes! We're planning a traditional in-person House Tour for Mother's Day weekend. Robert Burns had it right: "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley;" so I say that with a mixture of caution and optimism. Still, after nearly two years in limbo, it's very nice to be back on track with this much-loved tradition.

We expect to adopt a "hybrid model" to accommodate a range of comfort levels. We'll offer a package that includes some houses that will be open to guests, some that will be virtual, and guided walking tours addressing the architecture and history

of the immediate area, especially in the aftermath of the Civil War.

The projected footprint is south of Pennsylvania Avenue between 2nd and 11th Streets SE. If you would consider including your home, please contact the Committee at HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com. We promise to take every precaution to ensure a safe experience for hosts, docents and guests; masks and proof of vaccination required.

Mark your calendars for May 7 & 8; and plan to purchase your tickets in April through Eventbrite. ★

Historic Preservation Briefs

By Beth Purcell

Interested in learning more about historic district designation?

Contact CHRS at info@chrs.org.

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board) considered the following cases at its virtual hearings on November 4 and December 2, 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.

Anacostia Historic District boundary expansion, Case 21-10. The Board amended the historic district’s designation by extending its boundaries to take in the properties proposed for addition/designation in the application, with the exception of Square 5601, Lot 54; Square 5778, Lots 163-165, 833, 834 and 838; Square 5803, Lots 800, 802, 803, 810, 877, 878, 880 and 980; Square 5860, Lot 96.

The Board found that the properties merit designation under District of Columbia designation criteria B and D and National Register criteria A and C. The Board set a period of significance from 1854 to 1948. The nomination will be forwarded to the National Register once the applicants revise it to update the background and the property information to apply to the entire existing district. See article on facing page.

626 Lexington Place NE, HPA 21-555, concept/two-story rear addition, roof alteration. This three-bay brick porch-front contributing rowhouse is part of a large Kennedy Bros. project designed by A. H. Sonneman and built in 1912. It has a two-bay front porch, dormers, and is a contributing building. In 2017, HPRB granted concept approval for raising the attic

and changes to the rear elevation HPA 17-521 (consent calendar).

The applicant changed architects and filed a new request for concept approval, HPA 21-555. No changes are proposed to the front elevation. The plans call for increasing the height of the roofline to enlarge the attic, as has been done with several other nearby Kennedy Bros. rowhouses (e.g., 625 E Street NE (HPA-169), 630 Lexington Place NE (HPA 17-401) and 631 Lexington Place NE (HPA 16-100)). It appears that raising the roofline will not be visible from public space.

The rear porch had already been enclosed with an unsympathetic treatment, which would be reversed. The proposed new rear elevation has appropriate design and materials. The applicant also proposed to enclose the dogleg. On the blockface including 626 Lexington Place NE, doglegs remain on 19 of the 21 rowhouses, i.e., approximately 90 percent of the original doglegs are intact. (The applicant contended that a third house also had a previously enclosed dogleg.)

Doglegs are character-defining features of Capitol Hill rowhouses. The Board has protected intact rows from infilling and should do so again in this case. (See 316 G Street, NE, HPA 17-227, and 1355 A Street, NE, HPA 19-608.) The applicant points to differences in rear elevations on Maryland Avenue NE, enclosing porches, and building or changing garages as justification for enclosing this dogleg.

The key inquiry is intact doglegs in the blockface, not the entire square. The Board agreed. Enclosing a porch preserves the massing of the building, unlike enclosing a dogleg. Garages are not relevant to doglegs. We believed that because the applicant proposed

to infill a dogleg in a substantially intact row of doglegs, this project is not compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District. The Board found the concept of the alteration to the roof at the third story and the rear addition to be compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District, on the condition that the rear addition be revised to reflect the form of the rear sleeping porches original to this row (thus preserving the dogleg), and delegated final approval to staff.

1007 8th Street SE, HPA 21-548.

The applicant proposed to add a commercial deck to The Brig Beergarden, a noncontributing building constructed in 2015 in a relatively isolated area. We believed that because this is a noncontributing building, and will be temporary because of economics, that the applicant should have latitude in expanding the building. The Board agreed with the staff that the deck should be moved, that the existing canopy over the bar should be removed, and, to minimize the view from the corner and that the new stairs and ADA chair lift should be relocated. The project will return to the board.

Consent calendar. These cases, in which CHRS participated, were decided on the consent calendar:

- **152 11th Street SE**, HPA 21-551, demolish existing shed and build accessory dwelling unit. The Board applied the 22-ft height limit from unpublished zoning regulations: 5002.1 “The maximum height of an accessory building in an R zone shall be two (2) stories and twenty-two feet (22 feet).”
- **1208 D Street SE**, HPA 21-552, concept/add second story to one-story garage. ★

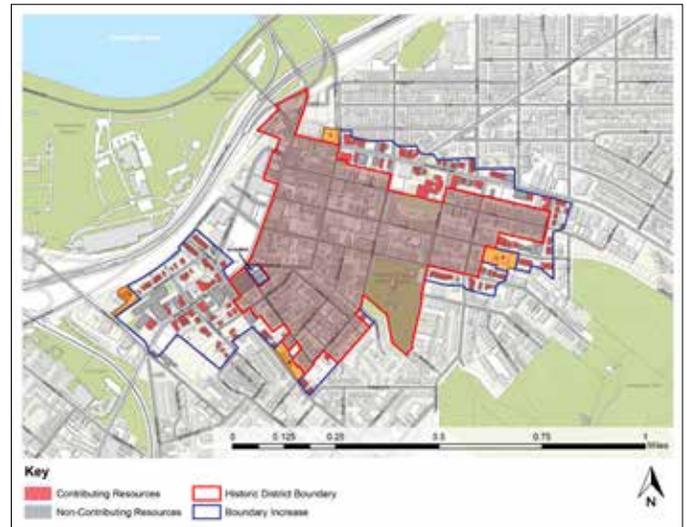
Anacostia Historic District Boundary Expansion

By Beth Purcell

The DC Preservation League, Historic Anacostia Block Association, and Historic Anacostia Preservation Society applied to the Historic Preservation Review Board to expand the boundaries of the Anacostia Historic District. CHRS voted to join the Historic Districts Coalition in supporting the boundary expansion.

At the hearing on November 4, 2021, the Board amended the historic district's designation by extending its boundaries to take in the properties proposed for addition/designation in the application, with the exception

of Square 5601, Lot 54; Square 5778, Lots 163-165, 833, 834 and 838; Square 5803, Lots 800, 802, 803, 810, 877, 878, 880 and 980; Square 5860, Lot 96. This draft map indicates the properties the Board excluded and will inform the final map. ★



Draft map of boundary expansion of the Anacostia Historic District.

November Walking Tours a Success!

The last round of 2021 guided walking tours went off without a hitch, November 13 & 14. (Well, the weather could have been a bit warmer but that's not something we can regulate.) As with the May and September offerings, we had an excellent turn out and fun times sharing our love of all things Capitol Hill with our guests. These tours are an opportunity to introduce ourselves to folks not previously familiar with CHRS—and hang out with our longtime members and friends.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our success: tour guides and assistants, Joanna Kendig, Undine Nash, Elizabeth Nelson, Beth Purcell, Heather Schoell, Maygene Daniels, Fynnette Eaton, Jackie Krieger, Marcia Montgomery, Angie Schmidt, and Dru Tallant; Tour Manager Karine Semple; and everyone who helped spread the word through social media!

Make a Year-End Gift to the Annual Fund

Even at the end of another challenging year, CHRS and its members continue to find creative and safe ways to protect our neighborhood, and adapt to changing circumstances and increased development pressure. We are pulling together to ensure that Capitol Hill remains the place where we want to live, raise our families, and spend our retirement years.

In a typical year, CHRS offers in-person educational and entertaining programs and community-building activities. When the pandemic made these activities impossible, we responded to this challenge and offered many outdoor and online programs. We hope it will soon be possible to resume a full in-person indoor and outdoor program.

Throughout the year our dedicated volunteers also represent your interests before regulatory agencies and make time to address your concerns. We regularly answer questions about home maintenance, house histories, zoning and historic preservation cases, inappropriate signage, development of public property, or transportation planning.

CHRS is working hard to serve you. Our volunteer organization takes a lot of time and effort. It also takes a lot of money, and this year we could not hold an in-person House Tour, our primary fundraiser. Your contribution helps CHRS to continue to expand its activities.

That is why we are asking you to please consider a tax-deductible gift to the CHRS Annual Fund in addition to your membership dues.

Please be as generous as you can; your gift really will make a difference in keeping Capitol Hill the vibrant, beautiful, historic neighborhood we all love. See www.chrs.org/join-chrs for details, call 202-543-0245, or email us at caphrs420@gmail.com.

Thank you for your membership and support of CHRS. We wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. Best wishes for a fabulous Capitol Hill 2022!

November Preservation Café: The Living New Deal in Washington

By Christine Mullins

On November 17, Richard Walker, director of the Living New Deal (livingnewdeal.org), met virtually with CHRS members to explain how Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal—a series of more than 80 programs, public work projects, financial reforms, and regulations—transformed the nation's capital in one short decade, 1933-43.

The Living New Deal grew out of a book its founder Gray Brechin began writing on the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in California. Brechin's initiative soon evolved into a national project which he described as similar to unearthing a lost civilization: many New Deal projects were never documented and have long since been forgotten. The Living New Deal is now a nonprofit organization that has mapped more than 16,500 public work projects, large and small, that the New Deal legislation funded and completed. Walker said thousands more have yet to be documented.

The mission of the Living New Deal is to record the legacy of the New Deal, educate people about this crucial period of American history, and promote the New Deal as a model for good government and public service.

Walker said the New Deal employed more than 10,000 individuals in the Washington area alone. Its projects transformed the nation's capital by breathing new life (and funding) into the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans for the city.

The New Deal not only added the Jefferson Memorial to the National Mall, but it restored the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. WPA funding completed the monumental Federal Triangle and

Judiciary Square areas, extended federal offices south of the Mall, and enhanced federal buildings with hundreds of murals and sculptures.

Work on government buildings included "completely gutting" and rebuilding the West Wing of the White House, as well as the construction of the State Department, the Udall Department of Interior, the Federal Trade Commission, the Cohen Federal Building (which formerly housed the Social Security Administration), the Adams Building of the Library of Congress, the North Wing of the IRS on Pennsylvania Avenue, the Clinton Federal Building (which now houses the EPA), the Bureau of Engraving and Printing Annex, the Government Publishing Office, and more. Examples of D.C. offices include the Daly Building (the D.C. Municipal Center) and the D.C. Courts Building B (which houses the Small Claims and Conciliation Branch Court) at Judiciary Square.

The New Deal also paid for the construction and renovation of several local school buildings and hospital expansions. Examples include Coolidge Senior High School, and substantial additions to Capitol Hill's historically-black Giddings Elementary School (12 new classrooms and an auditorium) which now houses Sport&Health. Howard University was another key beneficiary with the construction of several new buildings: Founders Library, two wings of Cook Hall dormitory, a new chemistry building, and a building for education classrooms.

The New Deal helped Washington develop and upgrade its extensive park system, adding dozens of ball fields, playgrounds,

pools, and trails, with new and refurbished recreation facilities. New programs built and renovated the National Arboretum, Anacostia Park, Brightwood Recreation Center, Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, Meridian Hill Park, Theodore Roosevelt Island National Memorial, and Langston Golf Course, the first public course in the city open to African Americans.

The National Zoo was adorned with new buildings that have won many awards for their architectural design, sculptures, and artworks. Although it is now showing its age, Capitol Hill's Folger Park was substantially revamped, while Marion Park and Stanton Park were cleaned up and refurbished.

The New Deal redeveloped the Washington waterfront and constructed Blue Plains, the city's first water treatment plant. Programs upgraded other parts of the city's sewage system to clean up the Potomac River, which had previously been the recipient of the city's raw sewage.

New infrastructure programs funded new bridges and miles of street repaving. The New Deal gave a major boost to Rock Creek Parkway, with new bridges at P Street, Massachusetts Avenue, and the Duke Ellington Bridge on Calvert Street.

Walker described how FDR took a personal interest in building today's "old terminal" of National Airport, which was ironically named after Ronald Reagan who was no fan of big government.

The New Deal constructed Washington's first public housing, the Langston Terrace Dwellings at 21st and Benning Road NE. Hilyard Robinson, an African-American architect, designed the international-

“The Capitol Hill Home” Photo Contest Returns

By Elizabeth Nelson

Once again, the Society is sponsoring a photo contest to whet our appetites for the annual Mother’s Day House & Garden Tour: We’re waiting for you to submit images that exemplify your vision of “The Capitol Hill Home.”

Certainly, there’s plenty of “eye candy” competing for your attention. Can’t decide which image you like best? Let us be the judge and send both! Email your high resolution images (> 1MB), exterior shots only, to HouseTourCHRS@gmail.com. Cell phone photos can be texted to (202) 329-7864.

Be sure to include your name and address, email address, and the address of the property in the photo. The winner will be awarded two complimentary passes to the House Tour. If you need inspiration, please visit chrs.org/photo-contest-2022 for details and links to past winning entries.

Entries are due Sunday, March 13, 2022. Early notice gives you more time to take that winning shot—and our next newsletter doesn’t come out until February. ✨



Robert Weinstein’s image of a front yard pond was the winner of last year’s contest.

style buildings for African-American residents at a time when the city was wholly segregated. The face of the buildings include a terracotta frieze by Daniel Olney, *The Progress of the Negro Race*, while the playground featured five large animal sculptures by Hugh Collings, Lenore Thomas and Joe Goethe.

On top of all this, New Deal art programs enhanced the city with a new commitment to the commission of local artists who created magnificent murals and sculptures. You can find specular examples in the

Department of Interior, the Clinton Building, and many other New Deal buildings, large and small. All of this work was completed using the labor and artistic talents of tens of thousands of unemployed men and women of all races.

This year, the Living New Deal has published a large colorful map of the work of the New Deal in Washington DC. This map folds to a pocket size and locates more than 500 New Deal sites located around the city. The map describes 35 notable sites on the back. The Living New

Deal encourages visitors to use an inset of the National Mall area for walking tours. You can purchase a copy of the map from their website at: <https://livingnewdeal.org/washington-dc-map-guide> for \$5. ✨



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.

DECEMBER

15 Wednesday, 6 pm
CHRS Board of Directors, Northeast
Branch Library, 330 7th Street NE. Masks
required. Details: caphrs420@gmail.com.

FEBRUARY

16 Wednesday, 6:30 pm
Preservation Café: *Uncovering the History
of the District's Buried Streams*. A WebEx
link and call in number will be posted
prior to the meeting. Details:
chrs.org/buried-streams-pc.

MARCH

16 Wednesday, 6:30 pm
Preservation Café: *Arming a Navy—
The Naval Gun Factory and Its Local
Workforce*. A WebEx link and call in
number will be posted prior to the
meeting. Details: [chrs.org/naval-gun-
factory-pc](http://chrs.org/naval-gun-factory-pc).