

Capitol Hill Restoration Society
Board of Directors Meeting
November 15, 2023

President Angie Schmidt convened the meeting at 6 p.m. at the Northeast Library, 330 7th St. NE

Members Present: Chuck Burger, Fynnette Eaton, Monte Edwards, Delancey Gustin, Joanna Kendig, Jackie Krieger, Tina May, Undine Nash, Elizabeth Nelson, Gary Peterson, Beth Purcell, Libby Quaid, Schmidt, Jim Thackaberry

Audio recording of board meetings: Communications and Community Relations Committee Chair Elizabeth Nelson read an email that at-large member Christine Mullins had sent to the board raising concerns about meetings being recorded. Mullins worried recordings could be subpoenaed by someone unhappy with a CHRS decision and said the board makes decisions that cost folks lots of money.

During board discussion of the issue, Schmidt noted that board Secretary Libby Quaid said she would be recording at her first meeting in the position in July. She said the board meetings are open to the public, that D.C. law allows for recording, and that a decision to prohibit recording would require an amendment to the CHRS bylaws and notification and approval of the organization's membership. She noted CHRS only advises homeowners and that it is the city that enforces building code and said the organization would not be liable in a legal action. Schmidt said the purpose of recording is to ensure the accuracy of meeting minutes.

Community Development Committee Chair Chuck Burger said recordings are valuable in that they help verify discussions. Burger moved that minutes will come from recordings at meetings and be destroyed after six months and that the secretary remind members at each meeting that proceedings are being recorded. The motion was seconded and approved with two members opposed and one abstaining.

Secretary's Report: Quaid presented minutes of the October Board meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved by a voice vote with no objection.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Nick Alberti was absent. The report was circulated to the board in advance of the meeting.

President's Report: Schmidt said she trained a dozen people to give Eastern Market tours for the October House Expo and shared their contact information and the CHRS script with organizers of the Market's 150th anniversary weekend. She said about 200 people went on tours during both events.

Schmidt said she has offered to have CHRS keep archival materials related to Eastern Market and board members expressed support for this.

RFK Redevelopment: The board discussed whether to take a position on redevelopment of the RFK stadium site. Members raised concerns about the need for space, especially for tailgating, if the Washington Commanders return to the site and the city builds a stadium for the team. Board members tabled a motion to adopt a position due to lack of consensus on its content.

Swampoodle Grants: There is approximately \$47,000 left in the Swampoodle grant fund that CHRS administers, Historic Preservation Committee Chair Beth Purcell said. Under consideration were two \$5,000 grants: To Elissa Silverman/692 4th St. NE, for solar under the energy grant program and to Matt Gravatt/626 3rd St. NE for brick repair and repointing due to heavy construction, now completed at Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan, adjacent to his property. A motion to approve the grants was seconded and approved without objection.

Committee Reports

Communications: Nelson distributed copies of a Hill Rag invoice for an ad package approved by the Communications Committee that had been paid. Nelson said this differs from an earlier invoice for an ad package that she had requested from the Hill Rag and said the main differences are that CHRS will no longer have monthly ads in the Hill Rag (ads will be timed to the House Tour, House Expo and Dick Wolf lecture), and that CHRS will now purchase six months of online ads on the publication's website timed to those events. Nelson said members could discuss in more detail if they wished. No one had comments or questions. Schmidt said the next Communications Committee meeting would be November 29 if any members were interested in attending.

Nelson said committee members are looking into pricing for advertising in other outlets and also mentioned changes to Eventbrite pricing that result in a modest fee for events with more than 25 tickets.

Community Relations: Nelson said participation in Eastern Market's Hilloween event came off as planned. Nelson asked whether CHRS should move forward with the photo contest beginning in September that helps to promote the House Tour. Along with two tickets to the tour, winners in the past have had their photos published in the Hill Rag, but Nelson said it is unclear whether the Hill Rag would be willing to run the photo contest winner this year because of the Communications Committee's changes to the CHRS ad package. Board members expressed support for continuing the photo contest, and Schmidt said there are other outlets, including social media, for promoting the contest winner.

Art Walk: Nelson said the Capitol Hill Art League has asked if CHRS will cosponsor the Art Walk again, likely Sept. 7-8 in 2024. Nelson said the CHRS website would be where people could register to exhibit, as was the case in 2023. But she said she had managed that herself at no cost (because CHAL must pay for its website management), and that the new CHRS website being developed by the Ad-Hoc Marketing Committee might result in costs to CHRS if the Art Walk promotion and registration is done by our organization. Schmidt said the website will be in development for the next few months and recommended the board express interest in cosponsoring the Art Walk but not commit till spring, and members generally agreed.

Historic Preservation: Purcell said Eastern High School is now on the National Register of Historic Places. CHRS had nominated it to the list of D.C. historic sites as well as the national register.

House Expo: Burger said the Oct. 28 expo went smoothly. He said the cost of the 2024 event will be roughly \$900. Purcell moved the board approve holding the House Expo in October 2024, and the motion was seconded and approved without objection.

House Tour: At-large member Jackie Krieger said the committee is pursuing five or six houses and that while the footprint isn't yet clear it likely will include East Capitol Street and resemble the 2023 footprint. She encouraged board members to let the committee know about homes whose owners might consider joining the tour.

Membership: Membership Committee Chair Maygene Daniels was absent. Schmidt said renewal notices are going out, and Office Manager Jill Uvena Cullinane said new members are coming in.

Zoning: Zoning Committee Chairman Alberti was absent. The Zoning Committee report was circulated in advance of the meeting and reported in the subsequent newsletter.

Preservation Cafes: Mullins was absent but Schmidt noted the upcoming November Preservation Cafe about private gardens.

Newsletter: Schmidt and the board agreed to include items on zoning and historic preservation and stories on the Preservation Cafe, annual appeal letter, photo contest, National Register designations, a call for houses and sidewalks.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made and seconded, and the board approved it on a voice vote with no objection.

Respectfully submitted
Libby Quaid, Secretary