



June 2024

# CHRS

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

# News

## June Walking Tours: Alleys and More!

By Angie Schmidt

Following up on the April Preservation Café given by Kim Prothro Williams about her new book, *The Hidden Alleyways of DC: A History*, we decided to plan a weekend in our neighborhood alleys.

On June 1 and June 2, we will be offering walking tours at 10:30 am and 1 pm with an alley focus. There are four tours, all approximately 1.5 miles (1–2 hours depending on the group) and all happen rain or shine.

We will have the SE Alley tour in the area around 12th Street SE. The NE Alley tour will be offered both days and winds its way from Constitution Avenue to East Capitol Street. The Industrial Past tour takes a look at the former sites of many commercial operations, many in or accessed by alleys, in the area to the east of Eastern Market.

All tickets are \$15 and available on Eventbrite or via our website at: [chrs.org/walking-tours-june-2024](https://chrs.org/walking-tours-june-2024). ★



IMAGES COURTESY BETH PURCELL

Learn more about the unique character of Duvall Court on our SE Alleys Tour.

### Election for CHRS Board Underway

The election for the 2024–2025 CHRS Board of Directors is now underway. Please make sure to mail back your ballot to CHRS by June 1 so that it can be counted!

*If you have not received your ballot by May 29*, please contact the CHRS office at [caphrs420@gmail.com](mailto:caphrs420@gmail.com).

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# History Highlights of the House & Garden Tour

By Libby Quaid

We're so grateful to the homeowners, volunteers and supporters of this year's House and Garden Tour—it was another sellout year! There's history behind every door on the annual tour, and 2024 had some fascinating details from homes never before featured on the tour.

This 1895 Queen Anne Victorian on A Street SE (below, right) is associated with Maryland's Bowie family, whose ancestor John Bowie emigrated to Prince George's County from Scotland in 1703. His descendant Robert Bowie served in the Revolutionary War and was governor of Maryland.

Then there was Thomas Fielder Bowie, a Confederate Army major who died in this house while staying with his son, Walter Worthington Bowie, in 1896. Thirty years after the Civil War, *The Washington Post* nevertheless reported that Maj. Bowie had served the South "with distinction."

Walter Worthington Bowie was chief clerk and freight agent of the Pennsylvania Railroad. He moved to northwest Washington, DC sometime before 1903. ★



IMAGE COURTESY LIBBY QU Aid

Tour participants stepped into a trove of local history at 803 A Street SE.

## Thank You for Your Support!

Thank you to our 2024 House & Garden Tour sponsors and advertisers—we couldn't do it with your support:

700 Constitution Avenue

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IMAGE COURTESY JACKIE KREIGER



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To reach any of the above, please contact the CHRS office at (202) 543-0425 or via e-mail at: caphrs420@gmail.com.

## ABOUT CHRS

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society is a nonprofit, volunteer organization devoted to protecting, preserving, and celebrating our historic Capitol Hill neighborhood.

Founded in 1955, CHRS is a pioneer in the urban preservation movement. CHRS was instrumental in securing Capitol Hill's designation in 1976 as a national historic district. Since then, CHRS has worked continuously to protect historic spaces and to enhance life on the Hill.

CHRS is driven by members who love their neighborhood and want to preserve and share the dynamic story of Capitol Hill for future generations. Come join us!

Learn more and join at [chrs.org](https://chrs.org)

# Zoning Report

By Nick Alberti

On May 8, 2024, 6 members of the CHRS Zoning Committee met to discuss one case. Representatives from that one case participated to present their proposal. The Committee voted to support the case.

## BZA #21131, 430 10th Street NE.

The Committee voted to support (6-0) the applicant's request for a special exception for lot occupancy requirements to construct a rear addition to an existing, attached, two-story with basement principal dwelling unit in the RF-1 zone.

The applicant is proposing to construct a one-story, 10'x10' mudroom for additional storage.

The building will continue to be used as a single-family dwelling. Lot occupancy will increase from 61.75% to 68.4%. The applicant has provided a sun/shade study which shows no significant impact on the light and shade in the neighboring properties.

The applicant is also proposing to add a one-story addition, with access stairs, to the garage. The height of the additional story once built will be 19'. No special relief is required for this addition.

Letters of support have been filed from seven neighboring households, including both adjacent neighbors. The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for June 5, 2024. ★

# Healthy Homes Act of 2024

By Joanna Kendig

On May 8th, the DC Council passed Councilmember Charles Allen's Healthy Homes and Residential Electrification Amendment Act of 2024, Bill 25-119, that sets DC on a course to replace fossil-fuel powered appliances and home heating with electric appliances in the homes of 30,000 low- and middle-income DC residents by 2040. The bill marks an ambitious undertaking to address a key source of both CO2 emissions and in-home air quality issues. (This bill is building on 2008 law.)

This is one more step in steady progression towards electrifying DC and meeting sustainability goals developed in recent decades. In 2018, the Council passed the Clean Energy DC Omnibus Amendment Act (building on 2000's laws) to

transition DC to 100% clean electricity by 2032 through various programs (energy efficiency, building energy performance standards, vehicle fuel efficiency) aiming to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2022, two bills, the Climate Commitment Act and Clean Energy DC Building Code Amendment Act established DC's carbon neutrality targets and set limits on the use of natural gas in new buildings. These bills mandate that all new and substantially renovated buildings in the city be powered by 100% carbon-free energy (except for low-rise residential structures). These laws put DC on a path to phase out natural gas use across our city.

CONTINUED PAGE 6

# Historic Preservation Briefs

By Beth Purcell

Interested in learning more about historic district designation?

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

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board), considered the following case at its virtual hearings on April 25, 2024. 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. HPRB did not meet in March 2024, due to a lack of a quorum.

**425 4th Street NE**, HPA 24-046. HPRB approved this three-story rear addition at the hearing on January 25, 2024. CHRS testified that the addition was overly large and not compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Neighbors opposed the project and requested reconsideration of the Board’s January order, which was denied at the April 25, 2024, hearing. For prior coverage, see *CHRS News*, March 2024.

**633-rear E Street SE**, HPA 24-161. This one-story masonry building with three garage door openings, designed in 1925 by Lewis Wentworth Giles, is a contributing building. We understood that while the building was used for commercial purposes in the past (e.g., as the prop-making shop for the Shakespeare Theater), it is now a residential building.

The existing first story has a three-car garage, two bedrooms, and a kitchen, bath and living room. A section of the roof on the first story will be removed to create a courtyard, created by removing the middle

garage. The proposed first story would have a bedroom, kitchen, dining room, music room, exercise room, bathroom, powder room and a two-car garage. There would be two entrances off the 30-foot alley.

The new second story would have four bedrooms, an office, bathrooms, closets, a terrace and an open space in the roof opening down to the courtyard on the first floor. The project would add one terrace and two flanking green roof areas. The terrace is set back, a positive feature for fitting the building into its

context. The roof would be a green roof with a skylight.

The elevation on Archibald Walk would have a door and clerestory windows. The second story would rise approximately five feet above the adjacent alley dwellings, for a height of 28 feet. We suggested that the second story’s height be reduced to better fit into the context of the other buildings in this alley (zoning rules limit height to 22 feet; the applicant has requested zoning relief). The applicant noted that it would be very difficult to alter the steel reinforced concrete roof to lower the height of the second story.

The first story would be painted gray. The second story would be clad in weathering steel, calling attention to the second story, which we thought should recede and not stand out. We suggest that the second story be clad in grey brick, or brick painted gray, or gray Hardi-board siding. Nevertheless, we believed that this project was compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District.

The Board approved the project, including the weathering steel cladding and the 28-foot height (not to be a precedent for adding a second story to a garage).

**31 11th Street NE**, HPA 24-087. This two-story bay brick row house designed by Nicholas R. Grimm, was built in 1903 by Harry Wardman for owner L.E. Breuninger. This is a contributing building, an end house in a row of five built by Wardman, all under one permit in 1903, all listed as “apartments.” Turreted roofs on the project house and 323½ on the other end mark the ends of this Wardman row.



The two-story bay brick row house at 31 11th Street NE.

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# Howard University's Houses for Freedmen on Capitol Hill

By Beth Purcell

At the Preservation Café on April 23, 2024, Kim Williams discussed her book, *Hidden Alleyways of Washington, DC*. One of the book's many interesting accounts is Howard University's housing project for Freedmen on Liberty and Union Street NE (later 14th Place NE) running north/south through squares 1054 and 1055 (14th/15th/C/Constitution Avenue NE). The university acquired the two squares and in 1871 began subdividing them into rowhouse lots and built pairs of frame houses on the northern part of square 1055: at 238, 240, 242, 244 (later replaced by a condominium), 246, and 248 14th Place NE. The university built four more houses on 15th Street NE, which are not extant.

We did some additional research on the houses and the people who lived in them. As Williams' book notes, the university's purchase of two entire squares suggests plans for a large community for Freedmen, like Barry Farms, but it did not materialize. Nevertheless, these houses provided homeownership opportunities for Black families.

Catherine Diggs (1856–1901), a Black woman, lived at 246 14th Place NE, in a house that she owned. She worked as a laundress, which was a common occupation for Black women at the time. She could not read or write.

Diggs left a life estate in her house to her daughter, Stachia Ellen Addison (who lived there until she died in 1937) and a remainder to her granddaughters (Jennette Addison, Mary Eva Addison and Hattie Addison) as tenants in common. Stachia Ellen Addison was a member of the Community Methodist Church on 15th Street SE. She was buried at Payne's Cemetery, a historic Black cemetery which no longer exists.<sup>1</sup>

These residents of 14th Place NE as of 1900 were Black and were born into slavery: Sarah Gordon, 238 14th Place NE; Robert H. Daggs (1853–1904), 240 14th Place NE, engineer; Randolph Payton, 242 14th Place NE, clergyman; James Spencer, 244 14th Place NE; and George Lucas, 248 14th Place NE, porter. ★



IMAGE COURTESY BETH PURCELL

The houses at 246 and 248 14th Place NE today.

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<sup>1</sup> Census, Washington, DC, 1900, ED 140. U.S. Freedmen's Bureau, "Payne's Cemetery," Wikipedia. Internet; accessed 18 May 2024.

# Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

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

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## Healthy Homes Act, *continued from page 3*

We are already in transition to an all-electric future. We can buy power from renewable wind and solar power sources. Solar panels are already on many of our roofs. While the Healthy Homes Act focuses on subsidizing lower income DC residents, technologies, products, and know-how are becoming widespread and available to all. We all have the opportunity to switch from fossil fuels to clean and efficient electric for home heating, hot water and cooking.

For more information on the laws and environmental issues please see the DC DOEE website. ★

## Help Us Scout for Next Year's Tour

Did you attend the 2024 House & Garden Tour and think: "my neighbor's house would be perfect for this," or "once the renovation is done, I know the perfect house for this," or even, "*my* house would be perfect for this?"

Give us your recommendations! We are always on the hunt for the next year's tour, which will be held May 10–11, 2025. Whether you are volunteering your place, or would like to draft someone else, please send an email to [caphrs420@gmail.com](mailto:caphrs420@gmail.com)—we'll be happy to follow up.

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# Join Us for the Capitol Hill Community 4th of July Parade

By Elizabeth Nelson

It's that time of year again! The Jeanne Phil Meg Team at Compass Real Estate is organizing the Capitol Hill Community 4th of July Parade. As in past years, CHRS will participate and you are welcome to march with us!

We need to report for duty at 9:30 am near the underpass on 8th Street and Virginia Avenue SE, but won't step off before 10 am. We'll have lollipops to distribute along the parade route, which extends north

on 8th Street to D Street, where it turns left on the corner and disbands.

We'd love to have as many members as possible join us—and invite their friends, neighbors, and anyone else with an interest in community fun. An RSVP is not required

but if you know you're coming, please let us know! Just shoot an email to [Elizabeth\\_knits@yahoo.com](mailto:Elizabeth_knits@yahoo.com) with "July 4th Volunteer" in the subject line.

We look forward to seeing you at the parade! ★



IMAGE COURTESY CHUCK BURGER



IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON

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## Preservation Briefs, *continued from page 4*

Currently this row house contains two one-bedroom apartments on the first and second floors. The applicant proposes to expand the living space of the upper floor apartment by building a third story addition containing two bedrooms, bath and the rear deck. The addition's front bedroom is setback 13.5 feet from the front façade, and four feet from the north-facing side wall. The back bedroom is slightly setback from the brick wall below. The light well on the south side is maintained.

According to the drawings and the mockup, the addition will not be

visible directly from across the street, the public space. The back bedroom will be slightly visible when seen from a limited oblique angle over the narrow side walkway. The addition is subordinate to the historic house.

The addition's design and materials are clearly differentiated from the existing historic brick walls. We agreed with the staff's request for additional detail on the plans and lumber mockups. We believe that this project is compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District. The Board approved the project. ★

# CHRS

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 10th Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003

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

## Mark Your Calendar!

Please check [chrs.org](https://chrs.org) for current information—cancellations or postponements will be posted as they are known.

### JUNE

**1 Saturday & 2 Sunday,**  
10:30 am and 1 pm

Alley-focused walking tours by CHRS volunteer tour guides. Go to [eventbrite.com](https://eventbrite.com) or [chrs.org](https://chrs.org) for more details.

**3 Monday, 6:30 pm**

Historic Preservation Committee meeting, 420 10th Street SE.

**5 Wednesday, 7 pm**

Zoning Committee meeting, 420 10th Street SE.

**17 Monday, 6:30 pm**

June Membership Meeting. Steve Callcott, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer will give a presentation and answer questions after a brief membership meeting to announce the 2024–2025 Board election results. Reception to follow. Hill Center, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE.

**19 Wednesday, 6 pm**

Board meeting. Due to Juneteenth closures, the meeting will be held at 707–709 8th Street SE.

### JULY

**1 Monday, 6:30 pm**

Historic Preservation Committee meeting, 420 10th Street SE.

**3 Wednesday, 7 pm**

Zoning Committee, 420 10th Street SE.

**4 Thursday, 9:30 am**

Capitol Hill July 4 Parade. Details: [chrs.org/july-4-parade-2024](https://chrs.org/july-4-parade-2024).

**17 Wednesday, 6 pm**

Board meeting, Northeast Library, 330 7th Street NE.

### OCTOBER

**26 Saturday, 9 am–3 pm**

CHRS 2024 House Expo, Eastern Market North Hall. Free. Details: [chrs.org/house-expo-2024](https://chrs.org/house-expo-2024).

# CHRS

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

### Enjoying this newsletter?

### Please consider joining CHRS!

Annual membership is only \$35 and includes the newsletter, a set of historic guidelines, and early access to events, including our annual House and Garden



Tour. Scan this QR code or visit [chrs.org](https://chrs.org) for more information.