



April 2026

House & Garden Tour Returns May 9–10

By Fynnette Eaton, Jackie Krieger and Angie Schmidt

Our annual House & Garden Tour will be held on Mother’s Day Weekend – Saturday, May 9, and Sunday, May 10. Since we focused on the northeast side of the Hill last year, this year we are highlighting the southeast side, with its lovely parks and older homes.

The tour this year will include eight homes, three semi-public buildings and a newly installed native plant garden. Some of the homes have been on the tour in the not-recent past, but anyone with a long history of attending the tour probably wouldn’t recognize their interiors due to fresh and interesting updates in decor.

Refreshments from local DC vendors will be offered in the lobby of 507 8th Street SE, on Barracks Row, which will also operate as tour headquarters. “The 507,” as it is known, is an event venue and also the offices of Taoti Creative. Both parts of the building will be available for tourgoers to see. The building itself has been many things over the years—some more reputable than others, which we have lots of information about—and we are so pleased to be able to introduce this space to those who have not seen its new iteration.

The homes on the tour feature both historic and more modern layouts and interiors. A few of the homes are on lightly used streets and some are ones that you may have always wondered about, due to either their unusual exterior shapes or paint colors. We have standalones, corner lots, clapboards, and former boarding houses. We have an infamous alley, an infamous business and one with some interesting collections.

We also have some stately and well-behaved stops, such as the Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church and the Hill Center, both of whom have graciously offered their locations as rest stops and



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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

ARTICLES

- House Tour: Docents Needed! 2
- CHRS Poetry Invitational 4
- CHRS Photo Contest Update..... 7

COLUMNS

- Zoning Briefs 3
- Historic Preservation Briefs..... 6
- Thank You, CHRS Supporters..... 7

LOOKING AHEAD

- Mark Your Calendar..... 8

House Tour, *continued from cover*

will also offer tours of their buildings. The church is a beautiful example of gothic architecture with impressive stained glass windows and The Hill Center has made a few changes to their outdoor garden, which should look good by May.

The tour as always is foot-friendly. This year's map will take you through some of the beautiful parks south of Pennsylvania Avenue and CHRS will provide information about them in the tour catalog.

Tickets go on sale via Eventbrite on April 1. CHRS members will receive a discount code to purchase tickets for \$30 each. The regular advance non-member price is \$40, and the price increases to \$50 on the weekend of the tour. ★

Love Old Houses? Become a Docent for the 2026 House and Garden Tour!

We are also looking for volunteers to be docents at the houses during the two-day event. We need your help to make this tour a success!

No experience necessary and training will be provided.

All docents who sign up for a minimum of a two-hour shift will be given a free ticket to visit the other tour stops during the weekend. For more information, please contact the CHRS House Tour Committee at caphillhousetour@gmail.com.



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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

Zoning Briefs

By Nick Alberti

On March 4, 2026, four members of the CHRS Zoning Committee met to discuss two cases. Representatives from both cases participated to present their proposal. The Committee voted to support one case and seek additional information for one case.

BZA #21436, 313 2nd Street NE (St. Joseph's Catholic Church). The Committee voted to support (4-0) the applicant's requests for one area variance for the theoretical subdivision rear yard and vehicular access width requirements of Subtitle C §305.3, and for one special exception for the subdivision regulations of Subtitle C § 302.1. The applicant is proposing to raze an existing accessory structure and construct a new, detached, two-story religious building in the RA-2/CAP zone.

The applicant has occupied the property for over 150 years. Currently the property includes the St. Joseph's Catholic Church building, the Madonna House, a rectory, a parish center, and a carriage house. The proposed project will replace the existing parish center and carriage house with a new, expanded and renovated parish hall. The new parish hall will be upgraded and modernized to meet safety and accessibility standards, and the environmental efficiency of the building will be enhanced.

The Committee believes that the applicants face an exceptional circumstance, that the requested relief is consistent with the goals of the zoning regulations, and that the project will not adversely affect the church and neighboring properties.

The Committee notes that the project has received concept approval from the Historic Preservation Review Board and the U.S. Commission on Fine Arts.

To date, no letters of support or opposition have been filed from neighbors. ANC6C supports the applicant's request.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for May 20, 2026.

BZA #21438, 406 8th Street SE (Emerald Wings). The Committee reviewed the applicant's request for special exceptions for the fast food establishment uses of Subtitle U §513.1(e) and for the refuse dumpster requirements of Subtitle U §513.1(e) (2). The applicant is proposing to permit a fast-food establishment in an existing, attached, three-story commercial building in the MU-4/CHC zone.

The property is currently an attached, three-story brick building with ground floor retail and offices above. The applicant has proposed to reconfigure the existing ground floor space, approximately 1,274 square feet of floor area, on the ground floor to accommodate a to-go only Wingstop fast food restaurant.

The applicant has proposed conditions in a Memorandum of Agreement addressing concerns including: grease collection, storage and removal; rodent and pest control; trash storage and pick-up, customer trash receptacles; and "No Littering" signs. The Committee finds these conditions to be reasonable in comparison with other fast food establishments along 8th Street SE.

The Committee notes concern over the increasing number of fast food establishments along 8th Street SE and traffic concerns once the proposed bus lane along the east side of the street is completed.

CONTINUED PAGE 7

CHRS Poetry Invitational for National Poetry Month: Invitees Actually Showed Up!

The winners of the “mortar” challenge are Evangeline Paschal and Ragnar Thoresen. The prize? More mortar, in the form of Elizabeth Purcell’s book, *Capitol Hill, Past and Present*. Thank you to our entrants! ★

Limerick for March 17—and Every Other Day

By Libby Quaid

The row homes of Capitol Hill
Are verdant from cornice to sill.
Teal, olive, and lime,
Green shades of all kinds!
On St. Pat’s they will give you a thrill.

Nantucket Redivivus

By Elizabeth Nelson

In olden days out on Nantucket
Sanitation was naught but a bucket.
Now on Capitol Hill,
When the weather is chill,
Pipes burst, and then we must muck it.

Mortar

By Marci Hilt

(Submitted “under duress,” sayeth the poet.
Like the mortar itself.)

Springtime in DC
80 degrees yesterday;
Freezing and snow today.
Will my mortar endure
Or crumble to dust?
Time will tell.
Time will tell.

Haiku

By Beth Purcell

Snow falls fast, faster
Dog struggles to reach corner
At last a clear space

A Sonnet for My Mother, Born in April

By Evangeline Paschal

The empty Garfield courts spring back to life
Thrum of a tennis ball rings in my ear.
If perhaps I try with all my might
Victory will be in my grasp this year.

Hope still springs eternal at middle age.
The buds still bloom with their vim and vigor.
Not ready to turn my life’s youthful page,
I’ll summon some discipline and rigor.

But nagging pains warn me I’d best beware.
The mortar is thinning and the chimney now leans.
The birds may be singing on Seward Square.
But I know my birth date—and what it means.

“Stay young at heart,” my mom would often say.
She died this winter; I miss her each day.

Untitled

By Ragnar Thoresen

Snow the color of mortar in the shade
Slowly lets grass breathe

Tree branches twisted
In the shade as another wreath

Birds singing and squirrels leaping
From house to trees, children learning to bike

Leaves from fall, color of mortar
Crocuses pushing for air

Birds and squirrels frenzied
Spring fanfare

The house’s mortar stands still watching
Everywhere

***Portland Cement, Be Gone! or,
Who's Been Dining in My Yard?***

By a Shy but Busy Bricklayer

Oyster shells within my yard
Broken into ivory shards!
Litter from a gourmet order?
Sand plus water makes them mortar.

Spring Stroll

By Adam Uppuluri

your blossom cherry
blizzards in the wind
while sun kisses those iridescent petals

weathered wintered bricks
soften beneath my feet up East Capitol
as time ticks into your refreshing season

hopeful heads without hats
crowd Eastern Market's line
where soaps pickles greens seem anew

a tender gust from yesterday
sweeps down Barracks Row
and washes me into your spring

Untitled

By Nick Alberti

Heaven is over the Hill, they say,
Where the sun shines brightly on this village so old,
Where the neighbors are kinder and the world less cold,
Where our homes stand proudly, bright before our eyes,
And gardens grow gently under azure skies.

An Update to Sonnet 104

By a Folger Neighbor

To me, fair house, you never can be old
For as you were when first I ceased to rent
Such seems your beauty still. A century's cold
Hath from your mullions flaked ten layers of paint;

A century's ice to pavement potholes turned,
In process of the seasons have you seen;
A century's Aprils in swelt'ring Augusts burned,
Since first you were for sale without a lien.

It's true your mortar, like my aching joints,
Dries out and crumbles, too long unconserved:
So your façade may need a few repoints
Though handsome and historically preserved.

For fear of which, hear this, ye Masons All!
I'll hire you fast—but please return my call.

Somewhat Permeable Barriers

By David Pelizzari

I salute the black iron fence,
Partly cast and partly wrought,
Yearly adding to expense—
Still a feature that I sought.

Doesn't keep out much at all,
Picket points yell, "Do Not Sit!"
Squeaking gate announces calls—
Postal people curse at it.

Yet I wouldn't be without
Iron fencing! When I roam
It will still be standing stout
Telling me to get back home.



IMAGE COURTESY CHRS

Historic Preservation Briefs

By Beth Purcell

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board), considered the following cases at its virtual hearing on February 26, 2026. 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.

418 4th Street SE, HPA 25-324, revised concept/demolition. “The Board found the revised scope to constitute substantial demolition under its

regulations and inconsistent with the purposes of the preservation act. Vote: 6-0.”

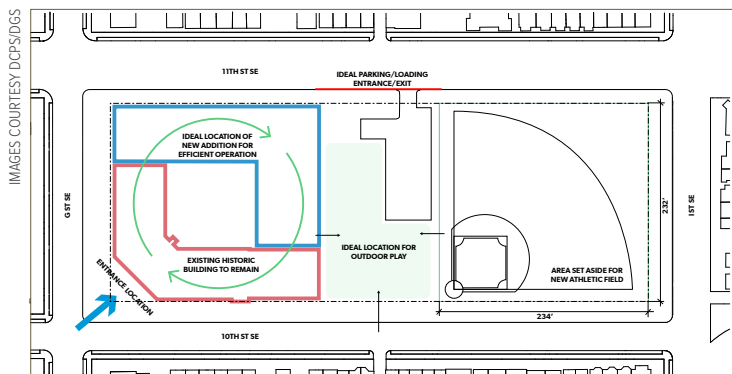
Chisholm Elementary School, 1001 G Street SE, HPA 26-151, concept/additions. “The Board found the concept to be compatible with the character of the Capitol Hill Historic District and delegated final approval to staff. The Board addressed the resolution of the ANC, reaffirming the statement in the staff report that the school was not a contributing building to the historic district, that the Board was not designating or reclassifying the building otherwise, and clarifying that review of the building’s interior

and other matters raised in the resolution fell under the purview of HPO rather than HPRB. Vote: 4-1 (Heath recused).”

The Board approved the following cases on its consent calendar:

- **626 A Street NE**, HPA 26-150, concept/garage addition.
- **315 10th Street SE**, HPA 26-148, concept/renovation and rear addition. ★

Interested in learning more about historic district designation? Contact CHRS at info@chrs.org.



Multiple views of the proposed design options for the addition and modernization at Chisholm Elementary School, 1001 G Street SE.

CHRS Photo Contest Update

By Matt Handverger

The CHRS Photo Contest Committee has received a record number of superior photo submissions this year from an equally record-breaking number of incredible photographers. The committee is now cataloging the photos to pass them off to our judges. After the judges have made their selections, we'll host a reception in honor of the finalists and winner (date TBD).

A special thank you to this year's esteemed judges:

- **Joe Himali**, DC Real Estate Influencer
- **Gary Mintz**, 2025 CHRS Photo Contest Winner
- **William Hauck**, general manager of Frame of Mine on Barrack's Row
- **Marianna Sotomayor**, reporter at the *Washington Post*

Thank you to all our entrants—we can't wait to share your work! ★

Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

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

CONTRIBUTORS

General Donations

Gregory Nixon
Lawrence Monaco
Becky Fredriksson
Bobbi Krengel
Jeffrey G. Mora

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual

Molly Mullin
Larry Janezich
Brenda Sanchez
Louise Cort
Becky Fredriksson
Alex H. Howle
Bobbi Krengel
Jeffrey G. Mora
Mark Engman
Bonnie Hester
Angela Clextion

Household

AJ & Duncan Copeland
Russell Burke &
Shelly Wischhusen
Carrie McDougall & John Varesi
Martin & Mary Liz Burns
Mary & Donald Kaniewski
Rhonda McMillion &
David Whiteman
Beverly Pringle
Kelly Moore

Bronze

Anne Loiret &
Guillaume Deybach
Rachael Loper
Betsy & Michael Rutkowski
Gregory Nixon

Silver

Raymond & Bernadine Prince

Gold

Brian O'Grady

Zoning Briefs, continued from page 3

Captain Hersey of the nearby DCFD Fire House Engine 18 at 414 8th Street SE has filed a letter in opposition expressing concerns about the impact of a to-go-only restaurant on fire fighter and emergency response operations. The applicant has agreed to commission a traffic study in response to those concerns. The Committee decided to postpone a recommendation until that traffic study is completed.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for May 20, 2026. ★

CHRS

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

420 10th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

chrs.org

Mark Your Calendar!

Please check chrs.org for current information—cancellations or postponements will be posted as they are known.

CHRS

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

APRIL

1 Wednesday, 7 pm
Zoning Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

6 Monday, 6:30 pm
Historic Preservation Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

14 Tuesday, 10 am
Communications Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

15 Wednesday, 6 pm
Board Meeting, Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE.

MAY

4 Monday, 6:30 pm
Historic Preservation Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

6 Wednesday, 7 pm
Zoning Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

9 Saturday, 4–7 pm
10 Sunday, 1–5 pm
69th Annual CHRS House & Garden Tour,
Mother's Day Weekend. Details:
chrs.org/house-tour.

12 Tuesday, 10 am
Communications Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

20 Wednesday, 6 pm
Board Meeting, Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE.

JUNE

1 Monday, 6:30 pm
Historic Preservation Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

3 Wednesday, 7 pm
Zoning Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

9 Tuesday, 10 am
Communications Committee Meeting,
420 10th Street SE.

17 Wednesday, 6 pm
Board Meeting, Northeast Library,
330 7th Street NE.

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