



CHRS

Capitol Hill Restoration Society

News

July/August 2026

CHRS Volunteers Lead Walking Tours for Nation's 250th Anniversary at Stanton Park

By Libby Quaid

Visitors to Stanton Park on Saturday, June 20 got an early start celebrating the nation's semiquincentennial. The family-friendly event invited folks to gather

for a community picnic and a day of activities highlighting the history and spirit of the Revolutionary era. Throughout the day, attendees explored Revolutionary War living history, historic lawn games, Junior Ranger activities, and opportunities to learn about Stanton Park and its connections to the early nation.

A highlight of the celebration was the unveiling of the newly restored Nathanael Greene statue. The ceremony featured remarks by National Capital Parks–East Superintendent Serena Bellew, D.C. Councilmember Charles Allen, and

Nathanael Greene was historically reenacted by Daniel Cross. The event also included a parade through the park by the U.S. Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps.

CHRS volunteers offered historic walking tours as part of the day's programming, sharing the history of Capitol Hill with visitors during the celebration. The tours complemented the broader program of educational activities presented throughout the park as the community marked America's 250th anniversary. ★

Reenactor Daniel Cross braved the June heat in full colonial garb to bring Nathanael Greene to life for attendees.

IMAGE COURTESY CHRS



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The Hill Shows Up for the 4th of July

By Elizabeth Nelson

The Capitol Hill July 4th Parade went off without a hitch—a testament to the resilience of Hillites. While other parades were cancelled due to the extreme heat, our community hung in there to keep up this neighborhood tradition. In fact, we attracted two out-of-town high school bands, one from Minnesota and another from Nebraska. They were scheduled to march in the National Parade, which became one of the heat casualties. Of course, the kids were already in town. Not to disappoint them entirely, their adults sought other marching opportunities. They somehow learned about the Capitol Hill parade—and were welcomed (of course). They are great bands (as is the Blue & White Marching Machine at Eastern High School) and the crowd loved them all! The visitors also got to see for themselves that Capitol Hill is a “real” neighborhood.

Many thanks to the CHRS volunteers who sweated it out, carrying our banner and doling out lollipops to the kiddos! Many thanks to the event organizers at capitolhill4thparade.com. ★



IMAGE COURTESY ELIZABETH NELSON



The Capitol Hill July 4 Parade hosted bands from Nebraska (top) and Minnesota (bottom) who had come into town to participate in the National Parade, which was cancelled.

Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS)

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Vacant

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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 Report

By Nick Alberti

On June 3, 2026, three members of the CHRS Zoning Committee met to discuss two cases. Representatives from both cases participated to present their proposals. The Committee voted to support both cases.

BZA #21463, 443 17th Street SE.

The Committee voted to support the applicant's request for a special exception for the rear addition requirements Subtitle E §207.5 (2-1) and a special exception for Subtitle E §204 (3-0). The applicant is proposing to construct a third story and a three-story rear addition to an existing, attached, two-story principal dwelling unit in the RF-1 zone.

The proposed addition will extend 16'0" beyond the adjoining residence to the south, which is beyond the maximum 10' allowed by right, and 6' beyond the adjoining residence to the north. The applicant has provided a sun/shade study which shows minor impacts on light, air, and privacy on the neighboring properties.

To date, no letters of support or opposition have been filed from neighbors, including both adjacent neighbors. The Committee's support for the rear addition requirements special exception is conditioned upon receiving a letter of support from the adjacent neighbor to the south, where the addition will extend 16'.

Regarding the cornices, the Committee recommends that the applicant construct a false cornice on the building at top of the second story to mimic the original cornice line and to correspond to cornice lines on neighboring row houses.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for July 22, 2026.

BZA #21465, 1724 Potomac Avenue SE. The Committee voted to support (3-0) the applicant's request for a special exception for the side yard requirements of Subtitle E § 208.4 to construct a two-story plus cellar rear addition and a detached two-story accessory structure with a principal dwelling unit to an existing two-story plus cellar principal dwelling unit in the RF-1 zone.

The owners of the property had previously obtained necessary permits and construction had begun. However, the permit was later found to have been issued in error due to zoning issues involving the elimination of a conforming side yard and the proposed second dwelling unit. The project was almost complete before the applicant was informed that the permit had been issued in error.

The applicant has filed a letter of estoppel and not heard back from the Dept. of Buildings (DOB).

Letters of support from neighbors have been filed by both adjacent neighbors.

The BZA hearing is currently scheduled for July 22, 2026. ★

Historic Preservation Briefs

By Beth Purcell

The Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB or the Board), considered the following cases at its virtual hearing on June 25, 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.

HPRB approved the following cases on the consent calendar:

- **1331 North Carolina Avenue NE, HPA 26-294**, concept/two story rear addition.
- **316 Massachusetts Avenue NE, HPA 26-291**, concept/awning for café (Bistro Cacao). ★

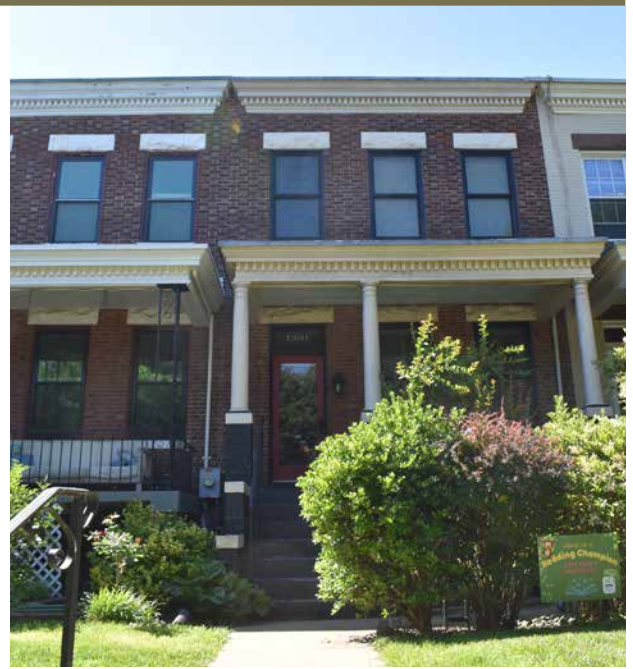


IMAGE COURTESY BETH PURCELL

1331 North Carolina Avenue NE.

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

Capitol Hill Art Walk

By Elizabeth Nelson

On September 12–13, 2026 from 12–4 pm, local artists and artisans will display (and sell) their work in their own micro-galleries in Capitol Hill home-studios, on porches or in yards. The Capitol Hill Art Walk is presented by the Capitol Hill Art League (a program of the Capitol Hill Arts Workshop) and co-sponsored by the Hill Rag and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society. Artists are not

required to live in the neighborhood but their set-up location must be on the Hill. There is no age requirement or limit on the type or art or crafts that may be on display—all are welcome. No fees or commissions are taken. The registration deadline for sellers is August 10th. For details and an evolving list of participants, visit: HillRag.com/Art-Walk-2026. ★

Stanton Park Clean Up on August 22

Revive Stanton Park and the National Capital Parks-East (NACE) is organizing a late summer clean up of Stanton Park on **Saturday, August 22 from 9–11 am**. Volunteers will be picking up trash/debris, sweeping walks and pulling weeds. Gloves, tools and supplies will be provided by NACE. You are welcome to bring your own gloves and hand tools if you prefer. Volunteers 18 and older must sign an NACE Volunteer Service form on-site. Volunteers under 18 must have a parent or guardian complete the form on-site.

This is a great opportunity to support your neighborhood park, connect with your community, and make a real impact. We hope you’ll join us!

Proposed CHRS FY2027 Operating Budget

At its July 15, 2026 meeting, the CHRS Board of Directors approved an operating budget for Fiscal Year 2027. The Board is now recommending that the CHRS membership approve the budget, as outlined below. A vote on the FY 2027 budget will take place at the upcoming CHRS membership meeting on

September 23 at 6 pm at the newly renovated Southeast Library. We encourage all members to review the proposed budget in advance of the meeting. If you have any questions, please contact CHRS Treasurer Nick Alberti at alberti6a04@yahoo.com or bring them to the September meeting for discussion. ★

	FY 2025 Income & Expenses October 2024 – September 2025	FY 2026 YTD Income & Expenses October 2025 – May 31, 2026	FY 2027 Proposed Budget October 2026 – September 2027
INCOME: Operating Revenue			
Membership	22,530.00	17,692.50	28,100.00
General Contributions	3,435.00	6,210.00	10,500.00
House Tour Revenue	77,960.00	63,000.96	71,000.00
House Expo & Walking Tours	4,762.20	2,938.40	4,500.00
Other Income (Investment earnings, etc.)	534.37	48.04	73,746.00
TOTAL INCOME	109,221.57	89,889.90	187,846.00
EXPENSES			
Administration	61,080.60	35,226.07	72,000.00
Outreach	16,749.14	17,073.94	27,446.00
Advertising	4,625.21	4,284.90	11,000.00
House Tour Expenses	10,603.59	11,441.41	12,650.00
House Expo	2,488.80	3,548.55	3,100.00
Committees	6,629.60	952.26	11,200.00
Fundraising	125.00	341.00	450.00
Community Development Projects	0.00	0.00	50,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	102,301.94	72,868.13	187,846.00

Walking Tour Highlights Homes with Fourth Estate Connections

Research by Rosemary Harold, Beth Purcell, Angie Schmidt and Libby Quaid

We developed a walking tour along 5th Street for the June 20 celebration at Stanton Park to mark the nation's 250th anniversary. We're highlighting a few of the houses along the route, all of which share connections to journalism.

420 Constitution Avenue NE. The Kelly family bought this house around 1970. Tom and Marguerite Kelly were journalists, he with the *Washington Daily News* and she with *The Washington Post* as a columnist,

and Tom was born a few doors down at **404 Constitution Avenue NE** to Irish immigrants from County Roscommon. His father Michael operated an Irish tavern downtown.

Tom and Marguerite's son Michael Kelly was a writer for *The Atlantic* magazine and was killed in Iraq in 2003.

Marguerite said that she and Tom came to D.C. from newspaper jobs in New Orleans to live in 404 and take care of his parents. Tom died in 2010.

Dominated by its distinctive three-story corner tower, this house was built in two phases by Samuel H. Walker, who lived there with his wife, Susan, and children, 11 of whom survived to adulthood. He died in 1938 and she died in 1942.

100 5th Street NE. Built in 1886, the house was originally two stories and an English basement. The second owner, Carlos Hitchcock, added the mansard roof in 1890.

It later became the home of Jonathan Yardley, book critic at *The Washington Post* from 1981–2014. His wife, Marie Arana, biographer and novelist, was the editor of *The Washington Post Book World*.

Their garden was designed by Adrian Higgins, former gardening columnist for *The Washington Post*. This house was on the 1983, 2005 and 2012 CHRS House & Garden Tours.

9 5th Street SE. The building permit was granted to German businessman and Capitol Hill saloon-keeper Rudolph Bleifuss in 1879, and it was occupied by P.V. DeGraw and his family from 1880 to 1898.

While he lived there, DeGraw was employed by The Associated Press as a newspaper correspondent and went on to become the Washington manager of the United Press wire service in 1885.

Active in the community, DeGraw was a founding member of the Gridiron Club and in 1881, he and his wife Emma were among those who met in Clara Barton's living room to form the Red Cross. Emma was recognized as the last surviving founding member of the Red Cross in 1940. When it was on the market for sale in 1909, the house was marketed as a "handsome three-story structure, with pressed-brick front ... ten rooms, two baths, and hot-water heat ..." *The Washington Post* listed the sale price at \$6,500.00. The home was on the CHRS House & Garden Tour in 2010.

IMAGES COURTESY CHRS

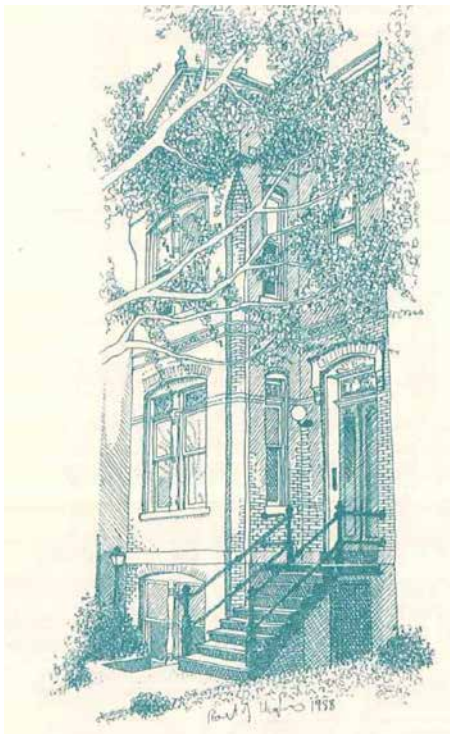


TOP LEFT: 420 Constitution Avenue NE.

BOTTOM LEFT: 100 5th Street NE.

BOTTOM RIGHT: 9 5th Street SE.

OPPOSITE PAGE: A drawing of 115 5th Street SE.



115 5th Street SE. Built in 1890 by A. Clemens, its former owners are Richard and Ann Schmidt, both of whom lived here until their respective deaths—he in 2004, she in 2012.

The couple met while working at Denver radio station KMYR and married in January 1948. The family moved to DC for a year in 1959 and

then permanently in this home in 1966. Ann Schmidt reported on Washington events and news for Colorado newspapers for nearly 30 years. Her weekly column, “Ann’s Washington,” appeared in *The Denver Post*, the *Longmont Times-Call*, and *Loveland Daily Reporter-Herald*.

Mr. Schmidt was a high-profile First Amendment attorney. He was known in particular for his work in *Miami Herald Publishing Company v. Tornillo*, a case he argued in front of the Supreme Court in 1974. At issue was a Florida statute that required the state’s newspapers to grant a “right of reply” to political candidates criticized in their pages. Mr. Schmidt argued that the law violated the First Amendment’s guarantee of freedom of the press. He won: The court struck down the law, in a unanimous decision, ruling that the government had no right to tell a newspaper what to print. The case is considered a landmark. He later was general counsel to the American Society of Newspaper Editors until weeks before his death. The home was on the CHRS House & Garden tour in 1974 and 1988. ★

Summer Membership Meeting

The summer membership meeting was held on June 29 at the Kenneth Nash American Legion chapter. The members learned the results of the election to the Board of Directors—the main change being that Rosemary Harold is joining as an At Large Director. All of the officers will be returning to one-year terms. Afterwards, an ice cream social was held, with 35 members enjoying make-your-own sundaes and having a nice time visiting with new and long-standing members. It was an enjoyable way to spend a warm evening.

The next membership meeting will be September 23 and will be held at the Southeast Library. This is an important meeting because we need membership to vote on the 2026–2027 budget—we hope you can make it!

Thank You, CHRS Supporters!

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

CONTRIBUTORS

General Donations

Fynnette Eaton & James Miller
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Joanna Kendig & Eugene Imhoff
Kendall & Barbara LePoer
David Moore

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual

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Nick Hartigan

Household

Deborah Edge
Michelle Grifka
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Bronze

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Hazel Kreinheder
Stephen Lawlor
Nancy Simpson & Keith Bridger



Capitol Hill Restoration Society

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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.



Capitol Hill Restoration Society

AUGUST

The CHRS Board and Historic Preservation Committee will not meet in August.

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

10 Monday
Deadline for artists to register for the
Capitol Hill Art Walk. Details:
HillRag.com/Art-Walk-2026.

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

SEPTEMBER

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

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

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

10 Thursday
Southeast Library Reopening. Details:
chrs.org/selibrary-renovation-pc.

12–13 Saturday/Sunday, 12–4 pm
Capitol Hill Art Walk. Local artists
and artisans display their work in
micro-galleries, home studios,
porches and yards.

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

23 Wednesday, 6 pm
Fall Membership Meeting at the
Southeast Library, 403 7th Street SE.

COMING THIS FALL!

Halloween
October 30, 5–7:30 pm

CHRS House Expo 2026
October 31, 9 am–3 pm