

LANDMARKS

A PUBLICATION OF THE D.C. OFFICE OF PLANNING/HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

SPRING 2009



Government of the District of Columbia Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor

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HOMEOWNER GRANT PROGRAM EXPANDS: NOW AVAILABLE IN 12 DISTRICTS

After a successful pilot program in the Anacostia Historic District, the Historic Homeowner Grant Program has been expanded to 12 historic districts. Low- and moderate-income homeowners are eligible for grants of up to \$25,000 (\$35,000 in Anacostia) to restore the exterior of their homes or make major structural repairs. To date, 69 grants have been awarded for over \$1.2 million of rehabilitation work.

Mayor Adrian Fenty announced the first award of grants at an Anacostia press conference in 2008. Since then a flurry of restoration activity has enlivened that historic district. For one house on Valley Place SE, the grant came

just in time. Grant funds were used to peel fake stone siding off a 1909 four-square style house. Removal of the "Formstone" exposed a rampant termite infestation and water leak that were slowly but surely destroying the house from underneath. Today, the house stands good-as-new with its wood siding restored and its termites evicted.

The grant application has two parts: Part 1 establishes eligibility and lets HPO identify the *continued on page 2*

PRESERVATION AWARDS NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

The Historic Preservation Office is accepting nominations for the Seventh Annual District of Columbia Awards for Excellence in Historic Preservation. The 2009 awards program, slated for November 5th, will honor significant contributions by individuals, organizations, and businesses promoting historic preservation in the District of Columbia. The award categories are as follows:

Excellence in Archaeology: recognition of outstanding achievements in contributing to the understanding of past cultural behavior.

Excellence in Community Involvement: recognition of individual or organization support and/or involvement in neighborhood preservation issues, plans, projects or initiatives.

Excellence in Historic Preservation: recognition of exceptional work completed in *continued on page 4*



Photo Credit: HPO

1 Before, 2 Formstone removal, 3 Termite and water damage exposed, 4 After.

This publication was funded through a U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund grant.



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COMMUNITY OUTREACH UPDATE

by Patsy Fletcher

Did you know that sixteen African American architects designed at least 105 homes in a DC community named Eastland Gardens between 1928 and 1955? Actually do you even know where Eastland Gardens is located? Had you attended the eighth DC Community Heritage Symposium held January 8, 2009, you would have learned this bit of amazing neighborhood history.



Photo Credit: HPO

Patsy Fletcher,
Community Outreach
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The DC Community Heritage Project is a program sponsored by the DC Historic Preservation Office and the Humanities Council of Washington, DC to provide support for community historians and preservationists. Over the four years since its launch, a couple hundred DC residents concerned about the heritage of their communities have participated in skills-building seminars and networking opportunities, including face time with builders, developers, and planners, all to foster local history and preservation “from the ground up,” so to speak.

In addition, for the past two years, the Community Heritage Project has provided small grants to community groups wanting to protect and promote their unique heritage. As a result, almost thirty projects representing each of DC’s eight wards have yielded won-

derful results that are helping to preserve the city’s heritage. One of these is the Eastland Gardens Flower Club project, where members came together to research the homes in their neighborhood, document what before was simply unverified oral history, and produce a brochure explaining the proud architectural history of their community.

Another project was a colorful directory of Latino cultural organizations in DC with a brief history of some of the traditions and art forms of the local Latino community. Stuart Hobson Elementary School completed a youth-focused resource library on Capitol Hill history and the Tenleytown Historical Society developed a National Register nomination for a small collection of historic houses in Armsleigh Park. As you can see, there has been a wide range of heritage preservation projects emanating from “non-professional” preservationists and historians. Many of the products from these projects will be available on the HPO website.

Your community may have a project related to an aspect of its heritage or preservation that needs a small cash infusion to become a reality. The Community Heritage Project is calling for **applications for up to \$2000 in funding. Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. on May 1, 2009** at the Humanities Council. You can visit <http://www.wdchumanities.org> to access an application or call me at 202-741-0816 or Albert Shaheen at the Humanities Council at 202-387-8391. There will also be orientation sessions on April 14 and 21 to learn how to complete the application.

By the way, Eastland Gardens is in far northeast DC between Kenilworth, the Aquatic Gardens, and Mayfair Mansions off I-295, in case you didn’t know! ❖

Grant Program continued from page 1

most urgent restoration needs while Part 2 determines the scope of the project and its estimated cost. All Part 2 applications are reviewed by a committee of preservation experts, which then advises the HPO on which grants should be awarded.

To apply for the grant, homeowners can download an application from the HPO website www.planning.dc.gov/hpo, or call the office at (202) 442-8818 to have one mailed.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis; upcoming deadlines for 2009 are August 3 and December 1. Eligible historic districts include Anacostia, Blagden Alley/Naylor Court, Capitol Hill, Greater Fourteenth Street, Greater U Street, LeDroit Park, Mount Pleasant, Mount Vernon Square, Mount Vernon Triangle, Shaw, Strivers’ Section, and Takoma Park.

For additional information regarding the program contact Brendan Meyer at (202) 741-5248 or brendan.meyer@dc.gov. ❖

HISTORIC PRESERVATION DESIGN SYMPOSIUM HELD

Over 80 District residents and preservation professionals participated in the Contemporary & Compatible Symposium on March 15 at the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.’s Carnegie Library building.

The discussion centered on contextual modern design in historic neighborhoods and featured principal speakers Amy Weinstein, FAIA, former HPRB member and principal of Weinstein Studio at Esocoff & Associates; Robert Sponseller, AIA, principal at Shalom Baranes Associates; and G. Martin Moeller, Jr., senior vice president and curator at the National Building Museum.

Architectural case studies of new buildings and additions in several DC historic districts

continued on page 3



Photo Credit: Norman Metzger

Nancy Metzger, Historic Districts Coalition Coordinator, welcomed participants to the contemporary and compatible symposium.

Design Symposium continued from page 2 were included the Ridge Street Townhouses at 1630 19th Street NW, 3530 Newark Street NW, 1612 16th Street Condominiums, the Folger Shakespeare Library Addition, and the Peter G. Peterson Institute for International Economics at 1750 Massachusetts Avenue NW.

The event was sponsored by the Dupont Circle Conservancy, Historic Districts Coalition, the Historical Society of Washington, DC, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the DC Historic Preservation Office. ❖

HPO LAUNCHES WEBSITE REVISIONS

During the coming months, the Historic Preservation Office will undertake an aggressive update and expansion of the office's website to better serve the citizens of the District of Columbia.

When the project is complete, visitors will be able to access the HPO through a direct portal or through the standard Office of Planning website. The site will also feature special sections tailored to homeowners, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, District agencies, and developers. ❖

HISTORIC PERMITS DATABASE TRAINING SESSIONS WELL RECEIVED

On April 7th, for a second consecutive year, the Historic Preservation Office sponsored hands-on training for the D.C. Historic Permits Database at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Public Library.

Each of the two training sessions drew a full house with over 70 participants convening at the library's computer lab. Brian Kraft, the database designer, walked participants through the system, demonstrating how to retrieve nearly 75 years of construction permit data for buildings in the District.

Information from over 60,000 permits detailing 132,000 buildings was keyed into the database over a period of several years by Kraft, a contract historian with the HPO. Funding for the project was granted through the annual fund HPO receives from the National Park Service. The resulting product has been highly praised and was recently featured in "John Kelly's Washington" column in the Washington Post.

Participants represented a wide range of interests from individual homeowners, histori-

ans, community preservationists, realtors, and developers.

The database is available to the public at the Washingtoniana Room on the 3rd floor of the MLK Library (202-727-1213) and at the Historical Society of Washington Kiplinger Library (202-383-1850). Please contact each institution for their hours of operation. ❖

PROCEDURES FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION PENDING

The Historic Preservation Office is in the process of drafting revisions to the existing rules in Chapter 2 of the Historic Preservation Regulations (DCMR Title 10A) for consideration by the Historic Preservation Review Board. The proposed revisions refine and amplify the rules for public comment and other matters in the historic landmark and historic district designation process.

Recommended by the Board at the January 22, 2009 meeting, the proposed rules are currently under review by the Office of Attorney General. The draft regulations are also posted **continued on page 4**

HPRB APPROVES DC'S FIRST GAY RIGHTS LANDMARK

On February 26th, the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Review Board voted unanimously to approve the designation of the Franklin Kameny Residence at 5020

Cathedral Avenue, NW to the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites.

Kameny's home, regarded as the epicenter of the city's gay rights movement, was nominated by the Rainbow History Project and the DC Preservation League. HPRB's decision was based on Criterion A for history and Criterion B for significant individuals that are applicable to both the local designation law and the National Register of Historic Places. ❖



Photo Credit: HPO

The Palisades home of 83-year-old gay rights advocate Franklin Kameny was added to the DC Inventory of Historic Sites at the February meeting of the Historic Preservation Review Board.

Historic Designation continued from page 3

on the HPO website at www.planning.dc.gov/hpo.

Once the review process is completed, the regulations will be published in the D.C. Register for public comment. ❖

Preservation Awards continued from page 1

accordance with the purposes of the DC historic preservation law, in the categories of restoration/rehabilitation and new construction. Both small and large projects will be considered but must be completed to be eligible.

Excellence in Preservation Advocacy: recognition of individual or organizational advocacy of a particular project, historic preservation initiative, or threatened resource.

Excellence in Public Education: recognition of innovative and exceptional preservation education programs, curricula, or informational tools. Outstanding media coverage of preservation issues by reporters, writers, publishers and publications are also eligible.

Excellence in Stewardship: recognition of stewardship efforts on behalf of a significant historic resource exemplifying superior, quality preservation.

Individual Lifetime Achievement for Excellence in Historic Preservation: recognition of an individual who has made a significant, long-term (20 years or more) contribution to historic preservation in the District of Columbia.

Nominaton forum is accessible on the HPO website at www.planning.dc.gov/hpo or by sending an email request to: historic.preservation@dc.gov. The application deadline is May 1, 2009. ❖

HPO ANNOUNCES 2009 COMMUNITY GRANT AWARDS

The District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office is pleased to announce its 2009 Community Grant awards. The HPO will provide grants for five projects totaling \$37,896. The funds are disbursed by HPO from its annual Historic Preservation Fund grant from the National Park Service to support activities consistent with the 2009 DC Historic Preservation Plan.

The Community Grants program provides funds to nonprofit organizations and supports Cooperative Agreements for such activities as the annual Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Historic Preservation.

The following grant awards were selected by the grants committee:

Project: Hill East Survey
Applicant: Capitol Hill Restoration Society and ANC 6B
Amount: \$17,887

Project: Brochure and Walking Tour of Historic Adas Israel Synagogue Neighborhood
Applicant: Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington
Amount: \$5,000

Project: Study of District of Columbia Municipal Architects

Applicant: Pamela J. Scott
Amount: \$5,000

Project: History of the Brightwood neighborhood
Applicant: Pamela J. Scott
Amount: \$5,000

Project: History of National Churches in DC
Applicant: Pamela J. Scott
Amount: \$5,000



Photo Credit: HPO



Photo Credit: Library of Congress

Above: A 2009 community grant will result in a brochure and podcast walking tour of the neighborhood surrounding the historic Adas Israel Synagogue. This work is the second phase of a Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington sponsored project.

Left: A history of the 19th - and early 20th - century development of the Brightwood will result from a 2009 community grant award to historian Pamela J. Scott. Camp Brightwood, pictured, took its name from the crossroads community.

