

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell
Governor of Virginia

Members, Virginia General Assembly

FROM: James E. Wootton
Executive Director, Capitol Square Preservation Council

DATE: December 1, 2011

SUBJECT: *2011 Preservation Council Annual Report*

Pursuant to Chapter 976 of the 1999 *Acts of Assembly*, the Capitol Square Preservation Council “shall make a report on its activities and recommendations, if any, annually by December 1 to the Governor and General Assembly.”

It is with mixed emotions that I present the 2011 Annual Report of the Capitol Square Preservation Council. While I am proud of the commitment and accomplishments of the Council, this report will be my last, as I am leaving my position at the end of the year.

It has been a distinct honor to serve this Council, and I look forward to its continued success.

Cc: The Honorable Lisa Hicks-Thomas
The Honorable G. Paul Nardo
The Honorable Susan C. Schaar

CAPITOL SQUARE PRESERVATION COUNCIL

Annual Report—December 1st, 2011

Created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1999, the Capitol Square Preservation Council oversees “the architectural, historical, archaeological and landscape features of Capitol Square.” The fourteen-member Council recommends actions for “the enhancement of their historical and architectural integrity” and strategies “that will enhance interpretive and educational opportunities.” The Council began meeting in late 1999 and hired its first Executive Director in June of 2000.

The Preservation Council is charged with making a report of its activities to the Governor and General Assembly by December 1st of each year. This year’s report chronicles the Council’s activities during both the past year and the past decade.

Capitol Square Landscape Master Plan

Among the Capitol Square Preservation Council’s first priorities was raising \$50,000 to match a provisional appropriation to develop a landscape master plan for Capitol Square. The Council joined others to recommend the removal of two aging and diseased magnolias from in front of the Capitol, which built awareness of the Square’s need for a master plan. The Council also sponsored a one-day landscape workshop, led by Charles Birnbaum of the National Park Service’s Historic Landscape Initiative. Partnering with the Department of General Services, the Council began documenting Capitol Square and developing a Request for Proposals as the matching funds were secured. In June 2004 the ***Capitol Square Landscape Master Plan*** was approved by the House-Senate Joint Rules Committee and endorsed by Governor Mark Warner later that year.

The ***Landscape Master Plan*** was a guiding force in the Capitol’s restoration and extension, completed in 2007. It continues to be consulted for such projects as the selection of benches for the Square, installation of storm-water planters, replacement of the Monument Walk on the Capitol’s west side, and the installation of a rain garden south of the Bell Tower. Each of these projects recently came under the Council’s advisory review.

Capitol Restoration, Extension, and Exhibits

Preservation Council members and staff participated in the review of existing conditions at the Capitol and in the initial design for restoring the Capitol and creating new space without placing a new building on Capitol Square. The Council had created a walking tour of Capitol Square during the development of the ***Landscape Master Plan***, and this tour became the basis of ongoing tours of Capitol Square while the Capitol was closed during construction.

When the restored Capitol re-opened in May 2007, both its restoration and its new underground Extension were widely praised. Working with the Library of Virginia, the Preservation Council installed the Capitol’s first temporary exhibits in its new and restored spaces, and the Council later partnered with the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities to install an exhibit on the history of Virginia’s Indian tribes. In 2008 the Council created a program and

mounted an exhibit commemorating the 150th anniversary of the unveiling of the Washington Monument on Capitol Square. More recently, the Council has assisted staff members from the House of Delegates in the unveiling of portrait busts of Meriwether Lewis and Andrew Lewis in the Old Hall of the House of Delegates.

Other Buildings and Sites

In addition to the Capitol, the Preservation Council has been an advisory voice for several major restorations and rehabilitations on Capitol Square. These include the Patrick Henry Building (former Virginia State Library), the Oliver Hill Building (Old Finance Building), the Washington Building, Morson's Row, and the Bell Tower. The Council's Director also makes recommendations, on request, to the Citizens Advisory Council for the Executive Mansion.

In 2004 the Preservation Council sponsored a semester-long design charrette for graduate landscape architecture students from Virginia Tech to develop design proposals for Governor Street. Over the past two years, the Council has reviewed the components of the project to manage storm water on and around Capitol Square.

Internships

Beginning in 2003, the Preservation Council has sponsored summer graduate internships through the University of Virginia's Institute for Public History. These projects have included histories of the nineteenth and twentieth-century buildings on Capitol Square, an account of the series of nineteenth-century repairs to the Capitol, and an analysis of the practical and symbolic aspects of Jefferson's design of the Capitol. In 2010 and 2011, interns interviewed over 20 persons to create an oral-history archive of Capitol Square. A 2010 independent intern researched, designed, and wrote an electronic "scrapbook" of famous historic visitors to Capitol Square.

Funds Raised

By 2002 the Preservation Council had raised \$51,160 in matching funds for the *Landscape Master Plan*. The Council also worked with the Department of General Services and with the Curator of the State Art Collection on a successful \$50,000 grant from *Save America's Treasures* for conservation work on the Washington Monument. In 2003 the Department of Historic Resources awarded the Council \$22,250 toward the development of programs for the Capitol. From lecture fees and honoraria, the Preservation Council has raised \$17,735 over the past ten years.

Once the Virginia Capitol Foundation was created in 2004, the Preservation Council partnered with the Foundation for several grants, including \$60,000 to plant trees on Capitol Square, \$100,000 for the conservation of the Capitol's historic perimeter fence, and \$365,000 for the documentation and conservation of the Capitol's late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century interior woodwork. From 2007 through 2010, the Foundation and the Council assisted the Virginia chapters, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), in raising \$109,026 in funds dedicated to the restoration of the Bell Tower. The DAR also granted the Council a separate \$4,000 research scholarship award in 2009.

Publications

Under the guidance of the Preservation Council, articles on the Capitol and Capitol Square have been written for the *Professional Journal of the Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries*, *Vineyard Magazine* (National Park Service), *Virginia Cavalcade*, *Virginia Review*, and *Virginia Capitol Connections*. Council staff edited the chapter on the Virginia Capitol for Hugh Howard's 2003 book, *Thomas Jefferson, Architect*. The Council also collaborated on the revised 2004 Capitol guidebook, the current Capitol brochure, and new interpretive signs in the Capitol in 2010 and 2011.

Authors and historians Tyler Potterfield and Sarah Shields Driggs have proposed completing a book on the history of Capitol Square drawn from Mr. Potterfield's extensive volunteer research in the development of the *Capitol Square Landscape Master Plan*. With a \$5,000 donation from the Garden Club of Virginia in 2010, a total of \$15,000 is now in hand. In 2011, Library of Virginia staff expressed renewed interest in partnering with the Preservation Council to have the book edited and published.

Logo Design

Since late 2009, the Preservation Council has worked with Kelly O'Keefe and his students at Virginia Commonwealth University's Brand Center to develop a Capitol logo. After several modifications, the final design was presented to the Preservation Council at its June 2011 meeting. The Council enthusiastically approved the design and recommended presenting it to the House-Senate Joint Rules Committee for consideration.

Monuments

In addition to collaborating with the Department of General Services and the Library of Virginia on the conservation and maintenance of Capitol Square's monuments, the Preservation Council advised on the design of Virginia's Civil Rights Memorial, dedicated in 2008. The Council currently participates in projects for three new proposed monuments on Capitol Square—Virginia's Indian tribes, the women of Virginia, and Virginia's fallen first-responders

Administration/Partnership

In daily operations, the Preservation Council works with the Division of Legislative Services to manage budget, payroll, invoices, and other fiscal services. The Council also works regularly with the Virginia Capitol Foundation, the Library of Virginia, and the Department of General Services. For particular projects, the Council also assists the staff of the House of Delegates and Senate, as well as such agencies as the Department of Historic Resources. These projects have included development of the Capitol web site, special programs and tours, and conservation and restoration projects.

Summary

Since 1999, the Capitol Square Preservation Council has been chaired by Betty Schutte, James Whiting, David Bradley, Richard Gibbons, Mary Harding Sadler, and Sally Guy Brown. Their leadership and shared vision, along with the efforts of all the Council members, have made possible the accomplishments noted in this report.