



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Nancy Metzger

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

DEUTSCH: This is Stephanie Deutsch. I'm sitting with Nancy Metzger, and it is February 17, 2005. And Nancy, you've just told me that you've been an observer of Capitol Hill all your life.

METZGER: Yes. I grew up in Beltsville, Maryland, actually, on the plant industry station there, but every week my family would come in to church at 12th and E Street SE, where the First Brethren Church was for many, many years. And, so, sort of a counterpoint to the rural plant industry station was this wonderful city of Capitol Hill with like houses close together that looked like castles, with turrets and all kinds of embellishments, and I can remember a horse cart with a guy who would collect, somebody told me it was rags, I have no idea, I mean at the time I was a child of four or five.

DEUTSCH: It sounds like something from Dickens.

METZGER: I know. It really did. But he would come down the street, and I guess it was sort of an early recycling thing. And there was a horse trough there in the little park in front of the church, and so the horse would get a drink and off they'd go again. Of course, there were trolley cars and ...

DEUTSCH: This would be in the 50s?

METZGER: This was in the late 40s and early 50s. Yeah, I don't remember how long the (laughter), I just remember that vivid picture. So it was just a wonderful place, I thought, and ...

DEUTSCH: Because Beltsville was fairly rural then?

METZGER: Yes, and particularly the plant industry station.

DEUTSCH: What was that?

METZGER: My father was a horticulturist and, so they, there were greenhouses and they did plant science. He was a geneticist and developing new plants, new flowers and bushes for the horticultural trade, both florists and nursery. So it was—you know, they'd have test patches and so you'd have an acre of daffodils or an acre of grapes or whatever it was that they were working on, so it was a very different world. But I loved that part, and I also loved coming in and seeing what was going on on Capitol Hill.

DEUTSCH: Besides the houses and the horses and ... did the people you encountered make an impression on you?

METZGER: Well, I thought that the kids who could—they would make their, the soap box scooters out of the old, I guess they were soap boxes or orange crates or whatever it was, and a board and they'd take

apart the skates so you could make a scooter and go down the sidewalk and, of course, I had no sidewalk so I was very jealous of this whole thing (laughter). And, then, you know, I can remember as later on, as a teenager, the choir would go caroling around the neighborhood to the people who lived in the neighborhood, and so a lot of the houses I can remember so and so lived there and somebody else lived there, so it was very much a part. I can also remember, this sounds really old, when there were people who were, the old veterans who were at the Old Naval hospital and I ...

DEUTSCH: Really?

METZGER: Well, they were there till the 60s so I wasn't that old. But they would sit outside on the lawn and so they were, so that was sort of one of the scenes of that, and of course the trolley car coming down the middle of Pennsylvania Avenue and just ... I also remember sort of a—when the church—and this I am pretty sure was in the early 50s, I don't—they wanted to expand, build a Sunday School annex. And they took down three townhouses, row houses, and I can remember saying to my mother, “Well, why do they have to take down the houses?” And, of course, I guess that was my first reaction to historic preservation. I also remember when the controversy over the freeways coming through, that the church sent in their most dignified elder of the church to testify in front of the commissioners, I presume, about how this was not a good idea, that you know this was going to, I guess it would have taken out the church, but it would have certainly impacted a great deal ... so ...

DEUTSCH: That was early 60s, I think?

METZGER: That was early 60s. So, the church was sort of a part of that community. A lot of the members of the church had grown up on Capitol Hill in very close, near there, in this area. And then some of them moved, probably right after the war, across the river to, well, what was always referred to as Anacostia but really the Heights. I'm not sure what was the ...

DEUTSCH: Was the church all white, or ...?

METZGER: Yes, it was. I can recall occasionally some black members coming in, but it was not, it was essentially white.

DEUTSCH: So after ... so you went to school out in Beltsville?

METZGER: Yeah, when I grew up in Beltsville. We moved off of the plant industry station into sort of Beltsville proper (laughter) ...

DEUTSCH: ... town (laughter).

METZGER: ... which was still very rural. I mean when we moved off the plant industry station it was a dirt road for many years and out there we had our house, and then went to High Point High School and on to Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

DEUTSCH: Ohio University?

METZGER: Ohio University in Athens.

DEUTSCH: What took you out there? Were your parents from there, or ...?

METZGER: No, they were from up around Thurmont, Maryland. I had a teacher in high school, and I was editor of the school newspaper, and she said Ohio University had a very good journalism department, and I didn't want to go to Maryland, which was just down the street, you know, and so I thought, well, (laughter) I don't know anything about it and as opposed to what we did with our kids, which was to go visit all these schools, I never even went there. I just sent in an application and said ... they accepted me and I got a little scholarship, and so I trooped off never having seen the place (laughs).

DEUTSCH: And how did it work out?

METZGER: It worked out fine. It's a small, wasn't that small, was 10,000, and so it was a beautiful little campus, pretty isolated. I mean it wasn't ... Athens, Ohio, is a small town. There was a train that went through on the way to Cincinnati, and so I would get the train at Union Station and take the train. And you'd get off at like five o'clock in the morning, I think, was when it would arrive at Athens.

DEUTSCH: So you could go straight through, or you did you change trains in Cincinnati?

METZGER: No, you went straight through. I think it went to Cincinnati and then maybe some place further west. I don't remember. So that was sort of the way I commuted ...

DEUTSCH: Cool. And did you major in journalism?

METZGER: I did major in journalism. Graduated with a degree in journalism and then worked for, I don't remember ... I guess about five or six years for Professional Engineer magazine.

DEUTSCH: Where was that?

METZGER: That was here in Washington. I came back to Washington.

DEUTSCH: Had you, was that a goal, I mean, did you, were you, did you want to be in Washington or is that where you ...?

METZGER: I didn't have a job when I graduated so I came back, and I was filling out applications for other places but ...

DEUTSCH: That's what you got.

METZGER: This is what ended up and it was, I ended up doing production work, copy editing and then became production editor and got into layout and design work, which I'd never had any experience doing before. But they sent me to the Corcoran and various other places, so I learned graphic design just at the time when we were going from hard typeset to computer type so it was a very interesting time to bridge that. I mean, when I was in college we were learning to use the little cold type lead and set it on the thing and then, you know, my first job, that was already going out the window.

DEUTSCH: So were you living at home, or did you ...?

METZGER: I lived at home for a year or two and then ... And I bought a car (laughs) and certain things and paid off my (laughs) college loans and then got an apartment in Georgetown ... because that was very much ...

DEUTSCH: That was what we did ...

METZGER: Well, and it was much more convenient to work, which was at 20th and K, so I just walked to work from this little basement apartment in Georgetown. And I absolutely loved it. Sort of got very interested in urban design at that point, and you know what, history of neighborhoods.

DEUTSCH: Because of being in Georgetown?

METZGER: Because of being in Georgetown. And then after five or six years, I went off to North Carolina University, North Carolina State, for a master's degree in landscape architecture.

DEUTSCH: Oh.

METZGER: I sort of, combining all this interest ...

DEUTSCH: And taking something from your heritage with your father.

METZGER: And I sort of, the urban thing, that I thought I would do small scale gardens, that was really what I was interested in. But after a year down there ...

DEUTSCH: Where is North Carolina State?

METZGER: That's in Raleigh. And it was a lovely, once again, just a lovely experience, and I was finished a year of work, I mean classes and everything, and I came back up here for the summer and I'd met Norman, my husband, before I went down there, about a year before. And in that summer of '74, Norman's son from his first marriage came to live with him, and we decided then that we'd get married and somehow or the other ...

DEUTSCH: How old was his son?

METZGER: Ben was seven. And somehow or another I'd finish up my degree up here.

DEUTSCH: You'd do it sort of long distance, or ...

METZGER: Well, I didn't know what I was going to do

DEUTSCH: Yeah.

METZGER: ... but it just seemed that the thing that needed to be done was for Ben to have a stable environment and so we needed to do that then. You couldn't sort of shift that around.

DEUTSCH: Couldn't put that on hold for a year?

METZGER: Yeah. Or whatever it would have taken and going back and forth just wasn't going to work.

DEUTSCH: So you got married.

METZGER: So we got married at Christ Church and ...

DEUTSCH: Now, was Norman living here then?

METZGER: Norman was living, he had a house on Capitol Hill, he had a, 629 E Street SE, which is right behind or in front of whichever way you look at it, Christ Church.

DEUTSCH: So was he a member of Christ Church?

METZGER: No. But he knew ...

DEUTSCH: It was in the neighborhood.

METZGER: It was in the neighborhood (laughs) and he knew that, Lynn McCallum was the rector at the time.

DEUTSCH: So you got married in ...

METZGER: ... in Christ Church in September of '74. And Ben started at the [Capitol Hill] Day School in '74.

DEUTSCH: Which must have been the very beginning of the Day School.

METZGER: Well, it had been, they were still in two campuses. First through third or kindergarten through third was up at the Lutheran Reformation, and then fourth through sixth was at Christ Church. So let's see, I think, they said, what, it's just had the 35th anniversary?

DEUTSCH: Um huh. [affirmative]

METZGER: So five years. Early Day School. And I'd decided, it really wasn't a landscape architecture program in Washington at the time, there was not even landscape design. So the closest thing was a program at GW [George Washington University] in urban design. And so I (laughs) I took a year there (laughs) and I just wasn't, it just wasn't the right program for me. It was too, it was not people oriented enough and so I finally said, "No, there's no sense in putting in this kind of money into this program. I'll go do something on my own. I'll educate myself" or whatever. So I stopped. So I have a year at Raleigh and a year at George Washington (laughs) ...

DEUTSCH: What was Norman doing?

METZGER: He was a, right at that time, he was a, when I met him he was with the American Chemical Society as a writer and editor. Actually did a radio program for them. And then he moved to Triple AS, American Association for the Advancement of Science, for a couple of years in science, popularizing science, or science for the layman kind of thing. Once again, writing and reporting kinds of things. And then after, I guess shortly after we married, six or nine months after, he got a job with the National Academy of Sciences as a writer doing some special projects. And he stayed there for the next 25 years basically. And then he retired, he retired from there.

DEUTSCH: So you decided, I'll educate myself about urban gardening ...

METZGER: ... gardening and stuff like that. And I did some, that's when I wrote *Brick Walks and Iron Fences*. Sort of having landed on Capitol Hill, remembering my time in Georgetown and what I had learned there, and I was just very curious sort of the history of Capitol Hill and why it was different from Georgetown.

DEUTSCH: How did you go about researching it, what did you ...?

METZGER: Landed in the library and just started looking through anything I could find.

DEUTSCH: How is it different from Georgetown?

METZGER: Well, Georgetown is really a federal city. And one of the first things you'll notice is that Georgetown houses are right on the side walk, and of course, we have the—we're a part of the L'Enfant plan, so we have the wonderful front gardens and so that became sort of the, when I realized why that was the way it was ...

DEUTSCH: That was part of the L'Enfant plan?

METZGER: Well, what was part of the L'Enfant plan was that it was very—he allowed for very wide streets, and when in the 1870s the city realized that there was (a) no way that we needed that wide of a street and (b) it was going to cost a fortune to pave these things, that's when the idea came of giving—"retaining"—the public use of our front gardens as really public space. We don't own that. But that was also the time when you, you know, ah, Central Park, it was the whole parks movement, and so it was the idea that we were going to have linear parks lining the streets of Washington and that's what we have. And that's part of the L'Enfant legacy really. So that's really a key difference. And, of course, then we have the avenues crossing so we have the vistas that you don't have in Georgetown. So those two are pretty ...

DEUTSCH: So you wrote *Iron Walks* and ...

METZGER: *Brick Walks and Iron Fences*, and I did graphic design and some garden design at that time.

DEUTSCH: Garden design for individuals?

METZGER: For individual people, yes.

DEUTSCH: Any gardens that still are around?

METZGER: Still are around? I don't think so. (Laughs). I haven't checked at least.

DEUTSCH: Did you have fun with your own garden?

METZGER: Oh, I did. Norman will tell you, the first thing I did before we were even married, I had him tear out all those pyracanthas, they were dying, but all these pyracantha bushes which, if you've ever tackled pyracantha bushes, they are horrendous. But yeah, I remade, of course, the garden was 20 by 20 which was a very different thing for me having grown up in these vast expanses to figure out how you deal with a 20 by 20 space. (Laughs)

DEUTSCH: Yeah, but it's fun ...

METZGER: But it's fun, and I learned, you know, the discipline of having a 20 by 20 space and what you can do and how important the microclimates are and the microclimates can be (laughs) can be one foot by one foot, and that's where the sun hits. But if you take advantage of that, so it was a lot of fun. I learned a lot. And really enjoyed that.

DEUTSCH: So what did you do with your book? Did you have it privately ...?

METZGER: We privately, we printed it ourselves (laughs). We're still selling it. (Laughs).

DEUTSCH: How many have you sold, do you think?

METZGER: Oh, I can't remember what the print run was. It was several thousand but I, you know at some point the print, it becomes so cheap you print a lot of them, as we know ...

DEUTSCH: With the photo book which is still in my basement.

METZGER: The photo book. So I know I hit the "break even" point quite a while back, and I'm just not paying any attention to it. When Steve [ed: Steve Cymrot at Riverby Books] and Capitol Hill Books call and say they need some more (laughs), I just send them out.

DEUTSCH: That's exactly the way I am. Every now and then Steve will hand me a pile of 20 dollar bills and I'll say, "Oh, thank you."

METZGER: Oh, right! (Laughs)

DEUTSCH: It's going to make no sense to the transcriber, but ... And at some point you had a baby.

METZGER: Ted was born three years after we were married. I guess, after about, I guess it was six months or a year, I did go on the board of the Day School representing Christ Church because at that time it was, I think it was three members from Christ Church, three from Lutheran Reformation and four or five parent members. And that was a very interesting experience, you know, I really learned a lot and got to know the neighborhood and different people. And, of course, that was a very interesting time in the history of the school because that was, we got the Dent School and we expanded to eighth [grade], you know, not only, I can't remember if they had a pre-K as well as a K, but expanded to eighth grade, and we had, I think, three different ...

DEUTSCH: Directors?

METZGER: Directors. Charlotte Myklebust when I first came on the board and then Bob Garland, then Laurel Montgomery.

DEUTSCH: Charlotte ...?

METZGER: Myklebust [spells it]. She been there, maybe she was one of the first, she might have been the first director of the expanded school. And then Bob was there when they got the Dent School and when it was renovated. I worked with Bob Herrema. And then actually in one of these flukes, at the time we went in to the Dent School, then the representation from the churches was reduced because they had less of a say, or they still had some monetary stake, but not as much so their representation reduced for a little while. And at that point I went off from Christ Church, but Lutheran Reformation asked me (laughs) to represent them because they were (laughs), so I'm probably the only one, I am the only one who represented two different churches, on the Day School board. (Laughs)

DEUTSCH: You have a relationship with many churches on Capitol Hill.

METZGER: (Laughs) Right. But that was a great experience. It was just, I mean Ida Prosky. And just wonderful, Walter Barnett who was on the board at the time, you know, just wonderful, wonderful people that sort of saw that school through those years and Ben went there through eighth grade and ...

DEUTSCH: Where'd he go after that?

METZGER: He went to Field School. And then, Ted was born in '77, and then he went to the Day School for pre-K but he was having so much trouble with his eyes and had several operations in there and the Burgundy Farm had different ... two grades were combined. They had an extra grade in there, and they have one-two and two-threes, and Ted really loved Burgundy and felt very comfortable there, so he switched to Burgundy through eighth grade and then went to Georgetown Day for high school. And so that's sort of, so that was my Day School ...

DEUTSCH: The Day School piece.

METZGER: The Day School piece. And then I guess I worked for Roberta Blanchard at Fairy Godmother for many years. A couple of years when she was down in North Carolina with her husband when he had a job down there. I sort of managed that for her. So I got to see all these, a whole new set of kids come up and that was fun, that was a lot of fun. I mean, who is not, how can you not like children's books and toys and ...

DEUTSCH: One of the things I miss about having little children. I never get to read ... you know.

METZGER: Yeah, you don't know what those books are anymore. So that was really a lot of fun, and I got to know a lot, you know, families from all over the Hill. And so I really enjoyed that for however

many years that was all together. And then I started, Pat Schauer and Judith Capen asked if I would join the Historic District Committee and “rewrite” *Brick Walks and Iron Fences*.

DEUTSCH: Now this is the Historic ...?

METZGER: ... District Committee ...

DEUTSCH: ... of?

METZGER: ... the Capitol Hill Restoration Society.

DEUTSCH: Which you did?

METZGER: Which I did. And I said at the time, I said, “Well OK, it’s time to rewrite the work, but I don’t want to do any monitoring,” which is when you look at the projects which have been submitted to the Historic Preservation Office ...

DEUTSCH: Like when people want to renovate their houses?

METZGER: When people want to add on or build something new or something like that. I just said, “No, I don’t want to get involved with that.” And, of course, here I am eight years later doing it. (Laughs) But it’s a wonderful committee. They are extremely knowledgeable ...

DEUTSCH: How many members does the committee have?

METZGER: It varies but around ten, 12, committee members. Not all of whom do monitoring but ...

DEUTSCH: Do they have any, do they all have some particular background in architecture?

METZGER: Most do, most do. Either architects, architectural historians, we have one member who is in the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation. So most, we do have some that have just very interested and sort of have the ... and I’m not an architectural historian, so ...

DEUTSCH: You’ve kind of become ...

METZGER: I’m sort of the history person.

DEUTSCH: So what does the monitoring consist of?

METZGER: The way it happens is that if somebody wants to make, say an addition, they work with an architect and draw up plans of what they would like, and one hopes that the architect goes to see the Historic Preservation staff early in the process so they know, you know, what kinds of things to avoid.

DEUTSCH: And by Historic Preservation staff, you mean city?

METZGER: City historic preservation staff. So what kinds of things to avoid and then when it's developed enough that they're submitting it to the Historic Preservation Review Board [HPRB] for approval, the plans, materials are shared with us, with the ANC [Advisory Neighborhood Commission], with other community, Stanton Park, other community organizations and then people can comment and we give our advice to the staff and to the board.

DEUTSCH: People can comment, you mean, members of the committee can comment?

METZGER: Well, we comment as a committee but anybody could comment. I mean, you know, a next door neighbor could comment, anybody could, the ANC comments sometimes. And we have our guidelines that the Society has published, and we try to stay within those things so that you're not always, that it is a matter of consistency and people know that as unique as each one of these situations is because you're always next to something different, you know, all our backyards are different, we have different lots, we have different house steps, all different kinds of issues, but the hope is that there will be a consistency, that people will feel that they're being treated essentially the same as someone else. That it's not arbitrary or that you know, people's friends get whatever ...

DEUTSCH: What are the main issues that come up in that process?

METZGER: Scale, materials. Lots of times, and it's gotten really tricky on the backyards because when people add on obviously you're affecting your neighbor's light and air, but you know, if, and it gets very tricky if, like the neighbor has a garage and so they can't add on as much to the back of their house because they already have a certain amount of lot coverage, and maybe this other house doesn't have a garage, doesn't want a garage, can't have a garage, so they could—

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

METZGER: ... talking about the length of some additions and how that really does impact. Generally speaking, although it's not totally, but if you, let's say it's 60 percent lot coverage you're allowed, you, your neighbor may be in, may just have to grin and bear it. The most we can probably do is to make sure that the side walls that the neighbors are going to have to be looking at are perhaps brick which most people find preferable to stucco or ...

DEUTSCH: But do you, as the Restoration Society, have any legal ...?

METZGER: We, no, we have a right to comment but the only people who have a legal decision, the people who make the decision, is the Historic Preservation Review Board. Even the ANC, which has a legal right to comment as well, they don't have a legal, it's not their decision.

DEUTSCH: So you can make a recommendation to the Historic Preservation ...

METZGER: We can make a recommendation and the thing of it is you have to really say why you're making this recom—you really have to have a reason based on the Secretary of the Interior standards, what's good practice, to be able to explain it to the ...

DEUTSCH: It takes a lot of keeping up with kind of thinking and ...

METZGER: Well, somewhat keeping up with the thinking. I mean, it has changed. If you'll look at things that were allowed, there are a couple of things that were allowed in the early parts of the Historic District that would not be allowed now.

DEUTSCH: Tom Simmons's house? Would that be allowed now?

METZGER: That's interesting. I haven't gone back and revisited that.

DEUTSCH: I mean, I'm just aware of it because I lived next door to it and it was certainly very different from anything else ...

METZGER: Right, and yet Tom was doing, you know, if you look at it, he has ...

DEUTSCH: It blended.

METZGER: ... it blended, you know, some of the materials, the shed roof, certain things. Whether it would be allowed now, I don't know.

DEUTSCH: Does the Preservation Review Board tend to take your recommendations?

METZGER: If ...

DEUTSCH: I mean do they tend to uphold your ...

METZGER: We quite often are on the same page because we're all dealing with the Secretary of the Interior standards, we're all trying to do the same thing. And so we're quite often on the same page. There've been some notable differences.

DEUTSCH: When you say we're all trying to do the same thing, how would you in a brief sentence—what is that thing?

METZGER: To allow people to adapt their homes to modern life and still be within a historic context so that it, the new doesn't overwhelm the reason for the Historic District. So it's issues of compatibility. But at the same time it's become more that you don't want to be replicative, you don't want to replicate something that was done before. This is particularly true in new construction. Amy Weinstein's work blends in very well, but if you look at it you'll see that certain things are of a more modern nature, you know, it's not exactly the way it was done before. So you try to avoid replicating something so that somebody walking down the street doesn't say, oh, that's a neat old building, and it was built 20 years ago. You want them to say, that fits in well. And if you're really good, and it's very difficult to do ...

DEUTSCH: Well, I think these houses actually ...

METZGER: These houses [ed: 500-504 East Capitol Street] work in very well.

DEUTSCH: They blend in very well and a lot of people don't pick them out as new.

METZGER: As new.

DEUTSCH: They assume that they've been here.

METZGER: Yeah, but if somebody has been walking around, they would probably pick them out as new, but that they work. There's a depth, they're compatible. And that's what we're trying to foster and yet at the same time be of, as the Secretary of the Interior's standards say, of its time. So it's a very difficult thing to accomplish.

DEUTSCH: And do you have regular meetings, or how does ...?

METZGER: We meet, yes, once a month. First Monday of the month so that we have time to make our comments to the staff, the architect and the applicant have time to, if they want to change anything before they go to the board, that they've got time to do that, and then usually we go to the board and make comments to the board there. It could be done in writing, but I've found it's most effective to be there, because they'll have questions that you don't anticipate. So to be there and to be able to answer those questions is very important.

DEUTSCH: I assume sometimes it's difficult. I mean sometimes it becomes quite fraught.

METZGER: Sometimes it's very difficult. I mean because people, of course, put a lot of themselves into an addition or a new construction, and no matter what you say, it's quite often people assume that you're saying, I have bad taste, which is not (laughs), you know, that's not the issue. I mean there are, just as there are 15 different ways to paint a picture, there are probably 15 different ways to do something and it,

and it's, it is very difficult. It's not one of my favorite things, but it is something that I've decided is very critical for ...

DEUTSCH: For the neighborhood?

METZGER: ... for the neighborhood to have this and this is the group that has the longest experience and the most experienced people commenting. I mean because it's a committee decision. We most often do it by consensus, working out, well, why does this bother you, that kind of ...

DEUTSCH: So I assume there is homework, I mean you ...

METZGER: Well, people are very familiar with, well, it's homework for me having to present this because I have to figure out in my head, OK, how can I best explain this to the board of what we are concerned about and why we're concerned about and, so yeah, there's a good deal of really thinking about it and remembering other cases and sort of the lessons you learned after something sent up and wasn't as good as we thought it was going to be or you know, there are those situations and just saying, look, you know, this didn't turn out, you thought it was going to turn out. It didn't turn out like we thought it was going to turn out, and we need to make sure that this cornice's got some real depth to it, you know, when we're getting down and, so those kinds of issues are brought out.

DEUTSCH: Are there particular issues that you see sort of coming up again and again or particular areas that ...?

METZGER: Well, it's a very—when people choose architects who haven't worked in historic districts, it's very difficult, quite often, you'll end up with people saying, "Well, just tell me what you want me to do and I'll do it," and that's not, you know we can't design a building. It really requires an architect to get in there ...

DEUTSCH: Sensitive to ...

METZGER: Sensitive to it, to really walk around the neighborhood and to see for themselves because there's a big difference between, and all of our houses are different widths and there's a very big difference between a window that looks good, window wall relationship that looks good in a 18 foot wide house, and now we've got some that are 20, 22, 24, and if you're not a very good architect, to get that relationship right is very, very difficult. And we can say, "Well it's not the right relationship, it should be bigger," but you know, we don't, I mean we have quite often six and seven cases a month to look at. And when you look at these cases it takes you at least ten minutes to go through the plans and then to be able to put your finger on what it is that's good and or bad and what needs work, what needs more study.

You're talking about quite often a half hour or more, even for some simple cases. So these meetings are very long. (Laughs).

DEUTSCH: I guess. (Laughs) And of course, you're a volunteer.

METZGER: Of course, everybody's a volunteer. You know, they come in after work at 6:30 and you know, so it's 8:30, 9 or after before we get done, because Capitol Hill's a big place and people want to ...

DEUTSCH: And getting bigger all the time.

METZGER: (laughs) and getting bigger all the time.

DEUTSCH: Now has the Capitol Hill Restoration Society changed its definition of the Hill? Do you go north of H Street?

METZGER: The interest area, we have what's called an interest ... The Historic District, of course, is one thing.

DEUTSCH: And the Historic District doesn't ...

METZGER: The Historic District. Well we did add on to the Historic District because we added on the Navy Yard section. So that was just several years ago that we did expand the Historic District by seven, I think it is, blocks. But the interest area, things that we could, that we feel we should be able to comment on for transportation issues, construction kinds of issues, does extend up to Florida Avenue and down to the river and down to the Navy Yard and Second Street. So you know even though, for instance, Station Place was outside the Historic District, we were definitely involved in dealing with, trying to convince the Fine Arts Commission to have a better transition between that huge building and Station Place is at Second and, it's the new SEC building at Second and F NE. So that issue, you know, Reservation 13 on the Hill East area, been involved in that. Southeast Federal Center below M Street because that impacts us up here as well. And not too much H Street. I mean H Street has so many overlays, but if there were, the Zoning Committee for instance looked at the Children's Museum, that PUD [ed: planned unit development] there. It's outside the Historic District and so we didn't really look at it. They came and gave us a presentation. So, but we don't have generally speaking any cases from out there.

DEUTSCH: The cases are from ...

METZGER: ... from the Historic District, because they're the only ones that would go to the Historic Preservation Review Board. But if they're historic preservation issues beyond the Historic District we would certainly comment on those.

DEUTSCH: So you've been doing this for how many years?

METZGER: I think it's about ten. (Laughs)

DEUTSCH: So you must have a relationship with half the houses on the Hill.

METZGER: Well, yes ...

DEUTSCH: A lot of them.

METZGER: You know, when somebody says, "You know that house that ..." (laughs), oh yes. I do a lot of houses, I do remember a lot of them, rear yards and various things. And ...

DEUTSCH: Are there some things there you want to mention?

METZGER: I don't know, there are I guess some of the issues that I think that our committee has been very successful with. Well, one of those successes was just holding onto the Louise long enough till the Medlink townhouses were proposed. The Louise was that very derelict building opposite the Medlink Hospital on Seventh Street, and when Holladay had their proposal up, they agreed to restore that and so it was, that was a matter of holding on and saying, "No, you know, it's a historic building, you can't take it down," until finally something really did happen, so I think that's the real success even though it's always very difficult because people you know, if you're living next to a house that's not being taken care of, it is a real bear to do that. I mean, I think that's one of the things we're very interested in now, the Society, in getting this vacant and abandoned housing on to the right tax rolls so that it's no longer so profitable for people just to sit there and ignore the neighbors' anguish. You know, if they're not going to do something about it, they should at least sell it. But that's a whole thing of working with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs ...

DEUTSCH: Are there a lot of houses like that?

METZGER: There are more than you would think. Not as many of course in the Historic District, but some gorgeous houses that you, you know, some of it's in probate, and you just, you think, why can't this family get together and just sell this thing.

DEUTSCH: There's a wonderful house across from St. Mark's. You know the house with the side yard?

METZGER: Yes.

DEUTSCH: ... that I don't know if, does anyone live there? It's—it looks abandoned, but it—

METZGER: Yeah, or at least up until a couple years ago ...

DEUTSCH: It's a wonderful house.

METZGER: Well, that's the one that they always call the Brumidi House.

DEUTSCH: Well, the Brumidi House is on the corner.

METZGER: No, the Brumidi House is in the middle of the block.

DEUTSCH: Oh, is it?

METZGER: Yeah.

DEUTSCH: I thought the one on the corner was the Brumidi House, the big red brick house with two entrances?

METZGER: No. The one there in the middle with that, with the porch along the side, is that the one you're talking about?

DEUTSCH: Yeah.

METZGER: But it wasn't, he [Brumidi] actually didn't live there.

DEUTSCH: He didn't?

METZGER: It was she, Mrs., his ex lived there.

DEUTSCH: In the corner house or the one in the middle?

METZGER: No ...

DEUTSCH: Because I looked at the corner house when it was on the market and they had a medallion in the living room and I thought they told me that they had discerned that underneath the paint that there was a ...

METZGER: A fresco?

DEUTSCH: A fresco of some kind.

METZGER: Well, Castagni, who is, who worked with Brumidi and took over from Brumidi when he died, is supposed to, and I think it was 120 Fourth [Street SE], which is about ...

DEUTSCH: 120 Fourth, that could be it, yeah.

METZGER: And I think that's where he lived.

DEUTSCH: Ok, ok so that, yeah ...

METZGER: I need to do a call box on that cause I always thought the Brumidi House, and he lived in it but I when they did that big book, when the Capitol Historical Association did the big book on Brumidi, and I said what (laughs).

DEUTSCH: So he lived in that middle house.

METZGER: She did.

DEUTSCH: She did, ok.

METZGER: I think, I don't think he ever did. But I think she did.

DEUTSCH: Well, I will stop telling people that he lived in the house on the corner. (Laughter)

METZGER: I will let you know. But I think that Castagni was the one who lived there, who was also very talented. (Laughs). I mean really. But I would like to do a call box on ...

DEUTSCH: Now what does that mean, "do a call box"?

METZGER: A call box project and having ...

DEUTSCH: That's something we haven't talked about, Nancy.

METZGER: We haven't ...

DEUTSCH: The call boxes.

METZGER: Call boxes. Well one of the things that the committee has really wanted to do is education so we have the guidelines and we have the Preservation Cafés where sort of we bring in a speaker on some topic relating to living on Capitol Hill or old houses.

DEUTSCH: Speakers to speak to the Restoration Society?

METZGER: No. To speak, it's a open to everyone of course and we have it in the upstairs of a restaurant, that's why it's called a café, and it's just for like 45 minutes and very down, dirty, quick and easy, you know roofs, chimneys, brick, your ironwork, how to take care of it,

DEUTSCH: Practical stuff.

METZGER: ... practical kinds of topics and but then the call boxes, we were approached, I don't know how many years ago now—six—by Will Fleishell, who wanted to insert in these old police and fire call

boxes sort of a portrait of Capitol Hill residents, old, you know, historic figures, and I said, “Well that sounds like an informative kind of thing,” so sort of started ...

DEUTSCH: Who is Will Fleishell?

METZGER: He’s a—he’s a sculptor actually with the, or an engraver with the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, and he just has this vision for these things. So I wrote some letters to the Fire Chief to see, you know, what’s with these fire boxes and I got back this letter that said, “Well, you know actually DDOT’s [DC Department of Transportation] got these things to take them all away, so if you want to save them, you’d better work with DDOT,” and at the same time then I met Cathy Smith and apparently some other people were trying to do the same thing, so the DC Cultural Tourism became the head focus and dealt with the Department of Transportation and the city and various other entities to get the program going. But essentially the communities that wish to, and Capitol Hill wished to, are responsible for adopting the call boxes, painting them, and then in some way inserting some kind of art/history plaque, something ...

DEUTSCH: Do you have to submit them to some kind of central ...?

METZGER: And it’s—the process is, whoever “adopts” a particular box submits it to Capitol Hill review committee and then it’s submitted after, we make sure the history is good and you know just making sure it’ll meet the city requirements, then it’s submitted to the Cultural Tourism/Arts and Humanities for review and then they approve it and then it can be manufactured and inserted.

DEUTSCH: And how many of these?

METZGER: We have a hundred on Capitol Hill.

DEUTSCH: Wow.

METZGER: And that’s greater Capitol Hill.

DEUTSCH: How many are already ...?

METZGER: Well we only have one absolutely finished. Betsy Damos has the second one ...

DEUTSCH: What’s the one that’s absolutely finished?

METZGER: That’s the one at Lincoln Park. Betsy Damos has another one that’s ...

DEUTSCH: And these are different from the things, like the one that’s outside Eastern Market now.

METZGER: That's different from the Heritage Trail. Because these are all just scattered. You'll come upon these because that's where they were historically.

DEUTSCH: But a hundred on Capitol Hill, that's a lot.

METZGER: That's, (Laughs) believe me.

DEUTSCH: How many do you have plans for?

METZGER: All of them.

DEUTSCH: So you have plans for all of them?

METZGER: Well, I plan that all of them will be done. (Laughs) Do I have plans for all of them at this point? No. There are about—I'd say we have pretty fixed topics and maybe people really working on 25 now, another 15 to 20 that people have said they are going to work on and then we have a lot to be even that far along (Laughs). But it's a really fun project.

DEUTSCH: That is fun. Now, OK, so the others are the Heritage Trail and is that done by the Cultural Tourism people?

METZGER: That was done by Cultural Tourism, Barracks Row and Capitol Hill Restoration Society.

DEUTSCH: And how many of those do we have?

METZGER: We have one trail and that's the Barracks Row Trail. There are 18 signs—18 or 16, 18 I think it is—signs on that trail and I would like to have another trail that would do Pennsylvania Ave down towards the Capitol and maybe coming up East Capitol towards the Lincoln Park and then maybe take a swing over by Sewell Belmont House to Union Station. The idea is to sort of connect those Metro stops so you would get tourists as well as residents, but the idea was to get tourists off the Mall and into the neighborhoods.

DEUTSCH: Now are you just fanatic when you visit other cities about checking out their neighborhoods and walking through them?

METZGER: (Laughs) Yes, of course. (Laughs) And that's sort of, well Steve Morris is a member of the committee and I—he works or used to with the Park Service on the Rivers and Trail program, he's now an international something, but he and I would say why can't we have signs that explain things to people like we see all over and we tried to work with the Park Service in getting some signage for Lincoln Park

and they were sort of, but it's a lot of bureaucracy, I must say. So it was very nice to have Cultural Tourism take over the bureaucracy part.

DEUTSCH: Is Cultural Tourism, I assume that's a newish ...

METZGER: That's five, six years. Cathy Smith's the head of that, who is once again a Capitol Hill resident. But she's done a superb job with those things, of dealing with the bureaucracy and the communities and neighborhoods having a real say. The thing, then you just don't have to deal with all of that. (Laughs)

DEUTSCH: So that's been a big, pretty time consuming thing, I should think, working on all these things, the call boxes.

METZGER: I mean I didn't write those, I didn't write the trail.

DEUTSCH: You didn't write the trail.

METZGER: But certainly I did work on, editing and suggesting and more editing and more suggesting. It was a very iterative process, as they say.

DEUTSCH: Is all that stuff from the trail gathered into a book somewhere?

METZGER: There is a booklet. And you can get—the shop owners along Eighth Street have the booklet so you can stop in there and get one. It doesn't contain new information, necessarily, although there is a bibliography in the back but it does give you that. So it is a nice addition to your Capitol Hill library.

DEUTSCH: We should mention the photo project that you worked on.

METZGER: We should mention that.

DEUTSCH: The Capitol Hill photo project.

METZGER: "Beyond the Monuments," which was a delightful group of people. That really was a lot of fun.

DEUTSCH: It was.

METZGER: To just get so many visions of different people's visions of Capitol Hill, which we were thinking of as contemporary Capitol Hill but I, you know it's been now ...

DEUTSCH: At some point contemporary Capitol Hill becomes historic Capitol Hill. We, I often think, gosh, we should do it again.

METZGER: Yeah. And I just think, I also think the Overbeck thing, I'd really like to do some kind of publication with a lot of our excerpts from the oral histories because we have such wonderful portraits of life on Capitol Hill that you just can't find any other place.

DEUTSCH: Where was Norman from?

METZGER: New York City and Frankfort, Germany.

DEUTSCH: From being in the Army or ...?

METZGER: No, he was born in Frankfort and came to the United States in 1946 when he was nine.

DEUTSCH: So he grew up in New York City?

METZGER: He grew up on the Bronx.

DEUTSCH: So did he seek out Capitol Hill, I mean was Capitol Hill sort of ...?

METZGER: He came to Capitol Hill because the ACS, the American Chemical Society, his job was transferred down here from New York, and he said he opened up the New York Times one day and they had a little article on this wonderful Italian deli on Capitol Hill so he figured it had to be a good neighborhood. So that was Mangialardo's. So because of Mangialardo's, that's the reason I'm on Capitol Hill. (Laughs)

DEUTSCH: Because of Mangialardo's, that's great. And I assume you're not retiring to Florida.

METZGER: No we're not retiring to Florida. We bought this wonderful house after living in our other house for 25 years. We bought this wonderful house that belonged to a friend, that has this very deep garden, so I have my garden.

DEUTSCH: You bought the house about five years ago, or ten years ago?

METZGER: It was '96, so it's getting close to ten.

DEUTSCH: So with a big garden?

METZGER: A big garden, a hundred foot deep garden. So I have my—I have all the space that I can deal with to garden at this point. So we are happy. We have friends galore, it's a wonderful neighborhood. Got a great church, great ... I mean what else could you want? Why go to Florida? I don't understand it.

DEUTSCH: Well this time of year, I suppose the weather possibly, but ...

METZGER: Well, we made the great discovery that we live on the south side of the street now, so the sun takes care of most of the ice. Before we were on the north side of the street and I have to say there is a difference.

DEUTSCH: Now, see, it's funny, I'm on the north side of the street, I think it's sunnier. The front of my house is sunny.

METZGER: No. But you're getting, it's the southern exposure you're getting. You're right. I live on the north side of the street but the sun comes in so you have this southern exposure.

DEUTSCH: Yes, so I'll say you're on the north side of the street. My old house was on the south side of the street and it was always in shadow. You never approach your house and see the sun shining on it.

METZGER: Of course, the problem is that the wind blows the leaves to your side of the street so it's not a total wash.

DEUTSCH: Teddy? What's Teddy doing now?

METZGER: Ted is, he's here. He's looking for a better paying job but he's up at Sullivan's Toy Store. And you know he's learned a lot about selling and customer relations and how to plan for running a small business.

DEUTSCH: Is he still living with you?

METZGER: He is at the moment. As I say, he's looking for a better paying job. Retail jobs are not major, so he is looking for something else, which he'll find some fine day, but it's been very good for him to have Sullivan's and it's a nice bunch of people.

DEUTSCH: Is there anything else that should be ...?

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

DEUTSCH: This is Stephanie Deutsch, with Nancy Metzger, Tape Two. We're continuing with our interview on March 17, 2005 at Nancy's house. OK, Nancy, just say a few words.

METZGER: Well, this is a good time to get started on this again.

DEUTSCH: We were going to pick up with the Capitol Hill Group Ministry, and I think you said you were on the board of the Group Ministry representing Christ Church?

METZGER: Yes. And that was for a couple of years, and I can't really remember how many. Two or three. Lynn Kneedler was in charge, she was the executive director at the time.

DEUTSCH: In the late '80s maybe?

METZGER: No, this is late '90s.

DEUTSCH: Late '90s. OK, so more recently.

METZGER: This is much more recent. And as I was thinking about it, I was even remembering that I was treasurer. But it was a wonderful experience because, once again, you had a lot of different people that you'd never met. It was all the different churches ...

DEUTSCH: How many churches were ...?

METZGER: Well, nominally it's—I think they said at the time it was about 20 churches and different churches had different roles that they would do. I mean this, the social workers are over here at Christ Church, the sort of administrative is at the Methodist Church on Seward Square. We were able to get a house on G Street right off of Pennsylvania Avenue, 1300 G, where a couple of the programs moved. The after school programs moved over there. So it was a wonderful time that things were really happening and working and they had a great program to help the homeless families, where the families went to the churches as their first stop right off of the streets. And then as they became more stabilized they'd find them an apartment and work with them. But there was always the thing that they were working with social workers to set goals for themselves and to move on and it was just a wonderful program and it was always wonderful to see people being able to turn their lives around and to have, as I say, the whole community of Capitol Hill working together on these problems that are pretty intractable sometimes.

DEUTSCH: And you were the treasurer?

METZGER: For a couple of years, yeah. And then I gave that up when my father came up and I needed to find him a place to stay and take care of him because he was very elderly at that point, 90, and in need of medical care and everything, so, I went off the board at that point. But we had also gotten, Lynn had left to go on to other things and there was a new director that we had ...

DEUTSCH: Angelia? [ed: Angelia Baker-Matthews]

METZGER: Angelia and she was wonderful.

DEUTSCH: Yeah, I knew her a little bit, she was wonderful.

METZGER: Yeah, she was, you know we thought no one could ever replace Lynn because she had such strong ties and everything, but Angelia was marvelous, I think, and we were so lucky to have her for a couple of years and have a transition and then go on and Emily Guthrie is now doing it and seems to be moving right along and progressing nicely, so, and so that's, it's a, was a wonderful idea I think. Dr. Keller and the minister from the Brethren Church were two of the—

DEUTSCH: Ramsey, Duane Ramsey.

METZGER: Ramsey. Were two of the really movers back in the 1960s and '70s when it first got started and then Bob Tate from Christ Church and probably Jim Adams from St. Mark's. Dr. Keller sort of pulling it into, seeing that need for the social workers which was very, very important.

DEUTSCH: Yeah. Well it's very, you know that they're renovating the Day Center on G Street now. There's a big renovation going on. And really that program is kind of coming into its own in a wonderful way.

METZGER: Yeah, so it's good to see all that happening.

DEUTSCH: Nancy, let's get back to the work of the Historic District, the Preservation Committee.

METZGER: OK.

DEUTSCH: Talk a little bit about what your experience has been on the committee and the various functions that you've filled.

METZGER: OK, when I came on the committee probably it was about ten years ago and it was just at a time and I guess I'd like to back up a little bit more because the Restoration Society has been really very responsible in many ways for how the Hill looks now, both in what is here and what isn't here. And it's

kind of an interesting evolution because as I understand it, and I wasn't active in the Restoration Society until let's say ten years ago, right after the Historic District was inaugurated and ...

DEUTSCH: Which would have been when?

METZGER: 1977. And then the Historic Preservation Law actually is really the thing that makes the Historic District work because without that strong preservation law it doesn't matter what you've got because it can always be, if no one's enforcing something and if you don't know what they're supposed to enforce, it's just paper. And so as people started grappling with this issue, of well what are we enforcing, what does a Historic District mean, the people that were really grappling with it, in addition to the city Historic Preservation Office, were the Historic District Committee, which I think Robert Weinstein and Judith Capen are, if they weren't on the committee at the very beginning certainly shortly after that they were. Robert Hughes and Ruth Ann Overbeck were very active for a long time. Pat Schauer. Pat Lally was chair for a good time in there. But the way, and it made a lot of sense that the committee would look at the cases that were going to be heard by the Historic Preservation Review Board and they would make recommendations that would be taken to the community at large at the monthly Restoration Society meetings and then the membership would vote on the position. Which works well in theory. It's very democratic and everything.

DEUTSCH: These meeting were open to the public?

METZGER: These meeting are open to the public. Now I'm not clear whether, I think you have to be a member to vote.

DEUTSCH: But anybody could come.

METZGER: But anybody could come and, of course, anybody can join the Restoration Society. The more the merrier. And at the time when it first started, I don't even think there was an ANC. If there was an ANC, it was very early in the stages of the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions. So that was sort of the idea and in many cases it worked very well. But then you had cases where people would come, they'd want to put on an addition or do something and they might be very good persuasive speakers and they could sway the public or they may have a lot of friends and so their friends were there. And so you started getting this problem of the cases weren't being consistent. I mean, sometimes some addition would be allowed to be built and other times not and if you looked at the cases you couldn't really tell what was different about one or the other so I think people started feeling very uneasy about that, feeling like there was a need to be consistent so that there wasn't this feeling of favoritism on one hand and that the

Historic Preservation Review Board, I mean that's who you're giving advice to, and that's who's making the decisions, but if you're stumbling all over the landscape and they can't see a pattern in what ...

DEUTSCH: They're not going to take you seriously.

METZGER: They're not going to take whatever you're saying seriously because then it's simply popularity that's moving this. And the other thing is that the Historic Preservation Review Board and the communities are supposed to be looking at the Historic Preservation Law; what you're trying to apply to the situation ...

DEUTSCH: Not just your own personal sense of what ...

METZGER: ... of what is good, bad or indifferent even that always comes in, it sort of has to but it does have this really good framework behind it. So I think there was a growing sense of unease about this kind of process and then there was a case in the late 1980s that sort of blew the whole thing out of the water which was the Prosper Court Case which was here on Seventh Street SE between E and G. And at the time there was a Sousa Neighborhood organization that was right here in, that went sort of like between Third and 11th SE and from Pennsylvania Avenue down to the Navy Yard, just sort of this area. And the community had come together. There were at the time problems with a number of night spots on Eighth Street that were too rowdy and they had really worked, we had really worked to get those moved to more, to less residential areas that would not be conflicting with residential life. And then this Prosper Court thing came up, which was a proposal on Seventh Street where the old Safeway was, to put in one—put up two buildings, one of which would be residential apartments and one would be office building.

DEUTSCH: Take down the Safeway and put these up.

METZGER: Take down the Safeway and put up these two buildings where the Safeway was, and where the parking lot was, and there would be underground parking and as it turned out there were a number of people particularly on Seventh Street that were very incensed that even though that is a commercial zone, they (a) did not want any more commercial establishments on the street and they didn't want any apartment buildings ...

DEUTSCH: Because they felt there would be too much traffic or ...?

METZGER: Traffic is always one thing. These were, well they were proposed at four stories which of course is bigger than what's there now. But within the zoning. And traffic, a sense that it should be row houses instead of anything else, they didn't like the architecture. It was a very good architect. I'll think of his name but—Leftbridge, Francis Leftbridge, and his son Chris, very good architects. They had chosen

to do a more classical revival architecture than, say bay front Victorian, and that was not sitting right with a number of people. So, anyway, this proposal went to first off to the Sousa Neighborhood Association, which said—and Norman, my husband, was president at the time—said, “Well, we kind of like the idea of having both an office and a residence, you know we need it, we don’t have very many apartment buildings.” At the time we had a woman who was suffering with MS and it was very obvious that she was not going to be able to stay in her house; she needed one floor. She needed some place, you know, she could drive into and take an elevator up, you know. And the idea was, well, people like Barbara would really benefit from staying in the neighborhood and having this, and so they were not opposed to the idea of the office because there would be people coming and going during the day when a lot of people were gone and residents so there would be people at night. And they were not going to take a position on the way it looks. The Restoration Society can deal with the way it looks. Well, for whatever reason (laughs) and so it went to the Restoration Society via the Sousa Neighborhood Association ...

DEUTSCH: The Sousa Neighborhood Association said they weren’t going to weigh in on how it looked but they were going to weigh in in favor of ...

METZGER: ... in terms of concept. Let’s just say conceptually that it was a reasonable ...

DEUTSCH: ... a desirable thing.

METZGER: And you know it’s one of those cases where a community just sort of blows up. And there was one individual in particular just became very belligerent ...

DEUTSCH: Passions were high.

METZGER: Passions were *very* high. I mean we got phone calls sort of saying, “How can you say this?”

DEUTSCH: Was this because of Norman’s position on this rather than you were ...

METZGER: Yeah, because I wasn’t doing anything at that time and Norm, except I was editing the Sousa Newsletter that got delivered to everybody’s doorstep or something. The Sousa Trumpet. (Laughs). But it just totally totally blew up and this one individual would come down the alley and our house was on the alley, yell things first thing in the morning, and the other members of the, you know, the vice president or secretary whatever, leave things on your answering machine that were really rather nasty and threatening.

DEUTSCH: Goodness.

METZGER: It was really bad and then of course these cases, because it was a fairly big one, you know, the ANC weighed in, HPRB had one hearing and said it needed modifications. And there, so it just went on for like four or five months of this very nasty stuff in the neighborhood where it finally got to our son. Ted was about 11 or 12 at the time and it, he got very nervous about things because of course this particularly one individual was going down the street yelling and threatening. And so he started, Ted started stuttering ...

DEUTSCH: Oh, my God.

METZGER: Because he was so nervous and every day it was really bad for four or five months. In the end the project was approved; it was brought down in size and scope and things and then of course in the late 1980s the bottom fell out of the market and we, they ended up not doing it.

DEUTSCH: It got approved but wasn't built.

METZGER: It got approved but was never built and—but it just was a long time in, it did I think, was sort of the thing that pushed the Restoration Society to stop that thing of going to the membership for votes. And instead the committee ...

DEUTSCH: So they created the committee in the wake of this?

METZGER: The committee, well the committee always had been created but the committee at that point, we no longer take cases to the membership for approval or disapproval because one thing, we don't have monthly meetings so we really couldn't. But the other thing is that we, that they realized the problems that would be coming along with these very intense cases. The problems that they were having in the popularity contests ...

DEUTSCH: So was the idea to take those very contentious issues and put them in the smaller ...

METZGER: In the smaller group where the committee of course listened to people's things but they would still only be dealing with historic preservation law and but it would sort of not have another layer where people would be fighting. If they were going to fight about it, it was better to take it to the city who's going to be making the decision than fight it out at the ANC, at the Restoration Society, wherever else, and then once again at the city where the decision was going to be made. So at that point the committee became, the committee now functions as the voice for the Society based on the guidelines that were developed. There's a whole stack of published guidelines. So that there's a definite framework within which decisions are made, and the point is to try and be as consistent so that everybody knows where we're coming from and then, but not get embroiled in these kinds of decisions. Which is why,

when Judith and Pat asked me if I would join the committee, I said, “Well, OK, but I sure don’t want to get involved in monitoring.” because my big experience was pretty bad about these cases. And of course I didn’t know how many more cases they had but this one had been pretty traumatic for my family.

DEUTSCH: Did it die down once the decision was, I mean it sounds like—the decision went against the people who ...

METZGER: It died down. It went against the people who had been so opposed and so vehement and of course, so I guess in a sense everyone won. The people who supported the project won in the sense that it was approved. The people who were against the project won in that it was never built. And it took a long time for the community around here to come back together again. Just because it had gotten so vehement and, well I can only say nasty. And that’s the kind of thing that you really don’t want to see happen over these cases.

DEUTSCH: Well have there been other cases since you’ve been on the committee that have been particularly intense or ...?

METZGER: Well, yes (laughs). There’ve been, most of them of course are smaller and you end up with either the owner and or developer being mad about a position. I think, for instance, of Michael Baker, who’s a wonderful builder, he built your property, (laughs) and he had his eyes set on what’s now Sen. [Mary] Landrieu’s [Louisiana] house, that property that was vacant for so long and he wanted to do a house with a garage underneath. That’s a landlocked property; there’s no alley access. And the committee, and I am sure it never got to the Board but I’m sure that the Board would have said, “No you can’t have a driveway going into an underground garage on East Capitol Street. That’s just not going to happen.” And he was just absolutely furious with us because we were the first line and I have to say that was sort of very early in my introduction to the committee, and his argument was well, nobody who’s going to be building an expensive house is going to go without parking and I sort of thought, well, you know, he’s probably got a point there. Everybody seems to want parking. I mean, I didn’t really have parking ...

DEUTSCH: Except someone came along and built an expensive house without parking.

METZGER: Exactly. And I learned my lesson then that you know you have to do it by what’s right according to the preservation law for the most part, I mean as a real baseline, because Sen. Landrieu came along and said, no, you know, she didn’t bat any eye at the whole thing. And when I talked to her about it since, she said, “Oh my gosh, a driveway on East Capitol Street! That would have been terrible!” I mean, it was just totally, but I learned that you can say no, you have a reason why no—

DEUTSCH: And just because someone wants to do it is—

METZGER: and just because somebody wants to do it and in another case it might be OK doesn't mean that you should say yes. Something will happen; something will come along and it will work out in the long run. And that was my first case where I learned that very well. The one that's been the most contentious since then I think has been, well, there've been two. One was the St. Coletta's case on Pennsylvania Avenue.

DEUTSCH: What is the address is that? That was supposed to be ...?

METZGER: It's actually two addresses. One is 1230 approximately Pennsylvania Avenue [SE], the 1200 block and then the other is 1229 E Street [SE] where there is a small 1857 shotgun house that is in very bad condition, well it's in better condition now than it was then but it was in very bad condition. And sort of because it had been covered with this 1940s shingle stuff, you really didn't realize how old it was just looking at it. It just looked like a little tarpaper shack really. And the porch was off and the roof was bad and everything was bad and it was this tiny little thing. And of course every developer in the world would probably say get rid of this. But St. Coletta's, which was [a school] for developmentally disabled children, was looking for property. And they looked at the Pennsylvania Avenue site and felt that they could put up a building there and the real issue though came down to how to bring down the buses that would be picking up the kids into the property.

There were two issues really. One of them was the bus issue. And then the other issue was, there were still two very old frame houses on the Pennsylvania Avenue property and would those be considered contributing buildings to the Historic District. Could they be taken down? And the history of that site goes back long, much longer because there had been eight wonderful frame buildings on that site through demolition and by neglect and other things all basically, basically all had been lost. And so there was a great deal of feeling, Pat Lally for instance had been very active in the 1980s trying to save those houses, the ones that were left, and the Restoration Society had been very active in trying to get the city to work to save those, make the owner restore them or at least stabilize them but obviously the city was not effective because they are gone. And so there was some residual anger about that.

But I have to say when the committee got the proposal from St. Coletta's other than—and most people had not been involved in any of that—and the new members just said, “Well what is going on with that property, why isn't anything there?” I mean, they had no background in it. So somebody explained what it was, they said. “Oh, OK, but this is, it's gone now.” I mean that's a fight we lost and so we didn't have any problem with the concept of St. Coletta's building there. And they had a fairly good architect. I mean

there were some things conceptually that you didn't know and design wise but the real issue was they wanted to take down the shotgun house and bring the buses ...

DEUTSCH: Because the lot went all the way through?

METZGER: Well, the one lot on E Street is a residential lot but it connected, it backed up against the commercial lot on Pennsylvania Avenue. And that's really very problematic to all of a sudden start using a residential lot as a driveway for a commercial building is kind of, I'm not even sure it would have made it through the zoning. It would have been a spot zoning issue. But of course it hit the Historic Preservation Committee first (laughs) and so we were the ones that had to say, "Well, wait a minute, we do have this historic building here, which is very unique to the Hill, and then we do have this problem about having buses come through here. Can't we figure out a way to use the front as loading more appropriate loading?" And that was one that just sort of blew up as well.

DEUTSCH: I certainly remember the tremendous amount of furor around that.

METZGER: Furor over that. And then there were many people who feel, felt, and you can understand it, that this little shack (laughs) should not be holding up this whole thing and it's been years since anything has been built here and finally we get some development and you're standing in the way of that. And so it was pretty brutal for ...

DEUTSCH: Although you could certainly make an argument that the site that has now been chosen down by DC General is much more appropriate.

METZGER: Oh, yes.

DEUTSCH: ... that Pennsylvania Avenue arguably should develop in kind of a different direction.

METZGER: Different way. I mean, and we weren't even hitting the—

DEUTSCH: And you weren't even hitting that but—

METZGER: ... that argument that was this really the best spot for a school. You know ...

DEUTSCH: Yeah, it seems to me the new, the lot they have ...

METZGER: I guess my first question when they came to the committee was, why did you pick Pennsylvania Avenue? It just did not seem the place that I would have chosen. And the answer was, well we couldn't find anything else. And you know, that's neither here nor there really when you're doing that

but it was always sort of a puzzle and I'm delighted that they do have a bigger space. Because the mission of the school is very important.

DEUTSCH: Oh, yeah.

METZGER: You know, it's extremely important both for children and then for the adult services. I mean, DC really does not have much for developmentally challenged adults. So it's a vitally important mission and, so I think definitely in the long run, you know, and people have, the people on E Street that were furious and because I was the chair, I sort of got the brunt of the, (laughs) of things ...

DEUTSCH: The people on E Street were furious at you?

METZGER: Well, at the Restoration Society but also at me because I'm sort of the personification—

DEUTSCH: For holding up, I mean they wanted the school.

METZGER: At the time, they wanted the school because that was the best thing that had come down the pike in years. But after the project was, the project never got to Historic Preservation Review Board. St. Coletta's pulled it back. And I think recognizing probably that they would have more (a) that they were not going to have any room to grow at this site; it was really very cramped for them even then. That they were going to have problems with the bus even if they got whatever it was that they wanted they were really going to have problem with the buses because the bus drivers in their little vans, but they were going to be sitting out there in the winter running their bus engines. It was going to be a nightmare for those people. And you know a couple of months ago one of the people who was very angry about it said to me, "You know, we were really lucky we didn't end up with that because it really would have been bad."

DEUTSCH: It must have been a moment of some satisfaction.

METZGER: (Laughs) Satisfaction but you know it was, it was great.

DEUTSCH: In a way it vindicates the work of the committee.

METZGER: It does.

DEUTSCH: You have to kind of be the brake a little bit on the enthusiasm that sometimes can get carried away for something and say, "Well let's make sure we've just considered everything."

METZGER: And that we need to be consistent. How can we say yes to this and ten months later, somebody else is going to be coming and saying, well, my something needs a back, you know, we can

take down whatever and do this. So I mean it is very hard to say that, but the committee has been, in the ten years that I've been associated with them, and I believe before, has been trying very difficult, with these difficult decisions to be very consistent and to really think about why one's deciding something as well as. I mean everybody wants some kind of development to happen and you know, now there's, JPI has a project for that site.

DEUTSCH: JPI?

METZGER: I forget if it means anything. But it's the same people who are developing the Boys' Town site. And they want to put in an apartment house on Pennsylvania Avenue. They'll restore the shotgun house and add another unit in the back of the shotgun house property. And you know when it first came in it was the addition to the shotgun house was bigger than it actually could be, and it's very difficult when you finally get somebody saying something, all this bad stuff. You want to say, oh yes, and fall down. But you still have to restrain yourself and say well, but we've also said—there's another shotgun house on Ninth Street and we've made that addition had to be reduced somewhat so that it was not overpowering the shotgun house, and we need to ...

DEUTSCH: What is the definition of a shotgun house?

METZGER: It's a house where if you stand at the front door you could shoot, pull the trigger, that a bullet would go straight through the house without hitting any walls. So all your rooms lined up. I think some places they might have also called them railroad flats cause all the rooms just lined up one right after another. But traditionally for instance in New Orleans which is well known for its shotgun houses, they have a gable and facing the street so you have this little sort of iconic house and this one actually when it's restored will be very lovely. It has a—it will have a sort of like 1920s style porch right there that had, we found plans in the building permits so that will be added. So it will really be a lovely addition to the block. And then, so if that goes through, you never can tell when the market's going to go down, and the building on Pennsylvania Avenue, you know, the architects are working on design issues that but ...

DEUTSCH: So it will be an apartment building?

METZGER: It will be an apartment, probably condos. So it will be more residences. You know that block has been sort of businesses and that fence has been there. Sort of a funny block. It needs something. So that's, that's I hope the end of that story.

DEUTSCH: When do they plan to start building St. Coletta's, do you know?

METZGER: Anytime now. I mean they had the groundbreaking in the fall. So it should be as soon as they can get the big things out there, I think. The other really big fight that people got into was the Medlink, the Capitol Hill Hospital. At least, that's the one that I remember. Now, you may know some others (laughs) ...

DEUTSCH: Well, I certainly remember that that was very controversial, but I don't know the stories, I don't really know what happened.

METZGER: I think it, well, this is another one that sorts of sits around for a while. The first big controversy was whether the hospital would be declared a contributing building. This is a site that's between Seventh and Eighth, Constitution, Massachusetts Avenue and C Street ...

DEUTSCH: Northeast.

METZGER: Northeast. And the, what's now known as the Capitol Hill Hospital or Medlink that had originally started as Casualty Hospital and then had been known for a period of time as Rogers Memorial Hospital. There was a 1928 building at the whatever that is, the southeast, no, it's the northwest corner of Eighth and Constitution. And the question was, is that a contributing building and the reason that was a real question was when the Historic District was established the documentation went up to about 1900 and it sort of petered off, and over the years the Park Service has sort of said the 1920s is sort of the end of the period of significance of Capitol Hill, but there was no official change in the National Register nomination, the city documentation. So it was kind of an open ended question ...

DEUTSCH: As it what constituted the historic period.

METZGER: The historic period which would go to the fact whether they could tear down the whole thing and start over again or whether they had to retain that 1928 building and rehab it. And so it got, for some people, there had been the possibility that drug rehab would have been in there and some other less than desirable uses, a lot of people, including Sharon Ambrose who was the ward ...

DEUTSCH: City Council ...

METZGER: City Council person at the time, really felt very strongly that take it all down, don't mess around, don't delay this project whatsoever because you never know what's going to happen. Well (laughs) you don't know what's going to happen, but you can't just say because you're afraid about what might happen that a building is a recent, you know, you sort of have to address the first question is this a contributing building. And the committee, you know, had some of those same issues about, well if we say

it is, what's going to happen and finally everybody said, "Well we can't decide on that basis. We have to say ..."

DEUTSCH: That's not the question. The question is ...

METZGER: That's not the question, the question is, is it or isn't it. So we finally decided, and the building isn't a wonderful example of classic revival architecture, but it is a really icon there, I mean it had gotten somewhat modified at the top of the years, so we finally said, yes, it was. And this was one where the board of the Restoration Society sort of was saying, "Well, are you sure?". Really questioning this decision, but finally, you know, I was able to say why everyone felt this even though there were still some questions. And ...

DEUTSCH: So you were the one that had to articulate that to the ...

METZGER: I was the one that had to articulate why the committee finally came down to, yes, it is historic and it must be saved. And there were a number of people, Dick Wolf for instance, did not think it was historic and should be gone and then there were a number of people as well that were very skeptical ...

DEUTSCH: Had the site been purchased by someone?

METZGER: Well, there was a contract. Now I don't know how ...

DEUTSCH: And the plan was to build a big apartment?

METZGER: The plan was for apartments, yes. As it went to the HPRB and the HPRB did say yes it was a contributing structure. And just the 1928 portion. The other parts could be taken down or whatever. So it was Holladay Corporation was the developer and they came back with a plan, they had put all of it, at the time they had only bought, were only thinking about the front half of this square, but every—

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 1

TAPE 2/SIDE 2

METZGER: ... Holladay Corporation was the developer and they had put most of the, all of the building on the front part of this and so they had like 300—I don't remember what it was, 250 or 300 units—on that first thing which people were very nervous about that and talked to them and said, "Well why don't you take the entire" you know, this is all of the zoning for this whole square. It's a wonderful square, St. James Church and rectory is the real historic and that beautiful garden, you know, and it's just a treasure. So they came back with a proposal to redevelop the entire square as apartments, which is still very

anomalous for Capitol Hill. We don't have that many apartments, and so it took a lot of time, there was a lot of anguish in the community near there about the impact of that many more people in the community, what do you do, cars, what do you do with all of the visitors' cars, you know, how does that really impact. But historic preservation can't deal with cars and those impacts, I mean, that's really zoning; it has nothing to do with historic preservation.

DEUTSCH: So once you'd made the call about the building, you would kind of ...

METZGER: Once we made the call about the 1928, now then we could address how the development of that square looks in relation to other nearby things.

DEUTSCH: Whether it was apartments or anything else, that ...

METZGER: No we can't say "You can't have an apartment building." The zoning says an apartment building is acceptable. You know, there are certain frameworks that you have to, that we don't have any say over. I think everybody would have preferred to have some row of townhouses or something.

DEUTSCH: Although I remember at the time the argument being made that there aren't a lot of apartments and we have a lot of young people on the Hill who come to, you know, Hill staffers and so on and there aren't a lot of places for them to live.

METZGER: Right. And that's what happened in the 1990s after we got out of that one sort of recession where nobody was selling anything for some period of time. Now people started buying houses that had had apartments in them and restoring them back to single family houses so we were losing a lot of the cheap apartments that the Hill staffers had lived in. The other place that people keep thinking that there is going to be a real call for apartments is folks like us when we don't want to live in two or three story houses and we want to stay in the neighborhood, we'd like to have generous-sized apartments.

DEUTSCH: They just aren't here.

METZGER: They just aren't here like they are in Northwest. And that goes back to the 1930s.

DEUTSCH: So what happened to the Holladay project?

METZGER: Well, they got sort of conceptual approval. Once again, they got conceptual approval and then Dr. Shin declared bankruptcy.

DEUTSCH: Dr. Shin was ...?

METZGER: Dr. Shin was the owner of the Capitol Hill Hospital. He declared bankruptcy and sort of got out of the contract. They put up the townhouses on Seventh Street that was part of the project but then for the apartment house, they sort of got, you know, it just went away. Now Dr. Shin and another developer are seeking to revitalize those plans, and they have (laughs) a new architect who's looking at sort of the same idea but some changes. So it's—

DEUTSCH: ... revisiting that.

METZGER: Here we go again. But we've already, I mean, you know they have to hold onto the 1928 building, and they know, I mean we've made a lot of decisions have been made and so, and they know what people were concerned about. And so I'm hopeful that this will not be as traumatic as the first time around which really got very traumatic for that neighborhood. And that something will happen there. Because it's not good to have that big hulk of a building just sitting there.

DEUTSCH: Just empty.

METZGER: Just empty. And to have various kinds of clinics is also not good. It's not that close to Metro stops and so you have the bus situation and it's just not a really good location for clinics and that kind of thing anymore. So it's really time to go to a new use, so I hope that's what it will be. But it does really point out, there is a real problem about how to fit in apartment houses into the Capitol Hill Historic District. We have some, and we always look at those as sort of examples, but it's very difficult to do it well and so we'll see how, we'll see how it's done. So I think that's ...

DEUTSCH: Tell me a little bit about when Results Gym was developed. The Giddings School.

METZGER: The Giddings School. That's a great project. Results ...

DEUTSCH: Results has certainly been successful.

METZGER: ... it certainly has been successful. And it's so marvelous to see that school alive and in a way that really does, I mean, Capitol Hill must be the most fit place (laughs) ...

DEUTSCH: Except for me. I think I'm the only person on Capitol Hill ...

METZGER: I don't belong.

DEUTSCH: You don't? Well, we must be the only two ...

METZGER: Norman's number one. He was the first customer. He's number one customer, member. And you know, but and the Results the Gym issue really comes down to one of those really sticky issues

that people, oh my goodness, it's public space and because of Capitol Hill and the Parking Act of whatever it was, we have the front yards which are, and that's really what the Parking Act means, it's really making parks as opposed to providing parking spaces for cars which of course weren't Victorian at all. But the idea was, and it goes back with the like Central Park and the Great Parks movement of 1850, 60, 70s, 80s, was that we would have linear parks, green space, down in front of our houses, that because we didn't need all this space for streets that had been part of L'Enfant's plan. Which is a long way—people try and get curb cuts and driveways and various things through that parking space and those are always rather contentious issues, but with Results, they wanted to put in a swimming pool on the west end of the building. And that was a place where actually now it's a parking lot. It had been the school, at least in the last 25 years of its time as a school, it had been a playground and but they wanted to extend out into the public space with the playground, with the pool. And that really is sort of one of the tenets of the Historic Preservation Law as it's been interpreted with this Parking Act as "Thou shalt not build in the public space," except as what was allowed in the public space law, the Parking Law, which was the bays. You could extend four feet, that's why we have bays on Capitol Hill so much. And porches, things like that. There was very specific ...

DEUTSCH: But not driveways?

METZGER: But definitely not driveways, and, you know, obviously that was done before there were cars but there were horses and carriages and they were not allowed and even in the early days of the car they were getting tickets for parking, you know, if somebody pulled up sort of in the corner spot by a store, they got tickets. George Butler's memoir talks about getting, his father got a ticket, his father the minister, got a ticket for parking in the public space. So in the 1920s so it's not a new phenomenon. But they wanted to put in a pool there and but of course if you're going to have a pool you need to have something to keep people out of the pool. And so that meant a very large wall.

DEUTSCH: This would be an outdoor pool?

METZGER: It was an outdoor pool. Which I thought. This is another one that I kept thinking, what ...

DEUTSCH: By the thruway? By the freeway?

METZGER: Right by the freeway, number one. Number two, you know, well you and I have both had sons and we, I can't imagine a pool, an outdoor pool, I mean it's just a temptation for any kid with any kind of—

DEUTSCH: Imagination ...

METZGER: ... imagination to, if they weren't going to try and climb in they were going to try and throw anything in there, I mean, you know.

DEUTSCH: Yes.

METZGER: I just thought it was a crazy idea to begin with but laying that aside, we had the issue of going out into public space which the board said, the committee said, "No you can't go out into the public space. You really need to keep that sideline free." And you know, you're going to have to have whatever it is, an eight foot fence, wall, what kind of fence is this, what's going to be attractive, I mean it just seemed like a really bad idea, but for whatever reason the manager of Results had his heart set on this at that location. And it did, and since that had been sort of promised when a lot of people signed up, there were a lot of people in that 3,000 or 3,500 or 4,000 people who were members who really wanted that pool. And so there was this campaign to call the Mayor's office, take out after the HPRB (laughs). I mean that one fortunately the HPRB at least fortunately from my standpoint, the HPRB took the heat on that one. And ...

And they held very firm. I mean I really don't see. And this is another one I actually feel like probably Results is sitting there saying, Oh, thank, God, because it would have been a very expensive proposition and it would have been a nightmare in management.

DEUTSCH: It's hard to imagine it being a pleasant place to go swimming right there.

METZGER: And people were thinking, you know, it was going to be like the Cheverly Pool which is a lovely facility which is only 20 minutes away—

DEUTSCH: which is out in the country

METZGER: ... which is only 20 minutes away. You know, I've had people say, Well we could have taken our grandkids." Well it was going to be a lap pool. You know, it wasn't big enough for people to be sitting out ...

DEUTSCH: No, it was never going to be Cheverly.

METZGER: It was never going to be Cheverly although that's what everybody had in their minds that we'd have Cheverly on the Hill. (Laughs). And I can agree that that would have been lovely.

DEUTSCH: That would be lovely.

METZGER: But it wasn't going to be there for sure. So and the other, of course, the other issue I kept thinking, this is public relations nightmare in the making, which is of course Giddings School was a black

school. Garfield Park at least the passive park part was a black park. The playground part was a white playground so once again we were going to have the children from the projects below the freeway walking past this pool on their way to the Natatorium in the heat of the summer. I thought this is really just, you know—obviously Results is integrated, that has nothing to do with it. But that residual feeling in the neighborhood and you know there were people who remember not being able to play on the white playground.

DEUTSCH: In Garfield Park?

METZGER: Yeah. You know, it just struck me as, oh, we don't need to do this for these, for anybody's sake, we just don't need to go there and open up that, because even though it's not racially segregated, it is obviously economically segregated because you can't, if you can't afford the membership you're not going to be there. And you're going to be trudging past this, on the way to the Natatorium. And so this is one, also, that I'm glad worked out the way it did and you know, the Board was absolutely right and they took a lot of grief. (Laughs) And it just, people I guess are now content to just go and do the other thing ...

DEUTSCH: Ride the exercise bicycles.

METZGER: Ride the exercise bikes and all the other things that they can do and it's, it's fine. So but the public space issues are pretty, can get difficult, difficult.

DEUTSCH: Are there terms on this committee, or do you stay on it till you just can't stand it anymore?

METZGER: (laughs) I don't think there are terms. You are sort of at the, I think you are appointed by the President, nominally (laughs).

DEUTSCH: You serve at the pleasure of the President.

METZGER: You serve at the pleasure of the President or until you can no longer cope with it.

DEUTSCH: Well, you seem like you've withstood the rigors of the post pretty well.

METZGER: (Laughs) Well, I've learned a lot. I've learned a lot and it has been a wonderful experience, not just being able to work with this committee, which you know we have some wonderful, wonderful, very thoughtful people, Robert and Judith and Beth Hannold who's excellent, you know Pat Schauer was wonderful as a resource person. Nancy Witherell who was one of the first, she worked for the city at the time but she oversaw Capitol Hill, she's sort of an advisor whenever I need something like that. We have a bunch of new people now. Shauna Holmes has worked with the federal advisory council on historic

preservation. I mean, it's just a really very knowledgeable committee and so when they get together and can come to a consensus on an issue, I really feel very, you know, that it's a well thought out position. You know, somebody will always be saying, "Now what did we decide, you know, in a case like this, why?" So it's always going back and checking itself about, to be consistent.

DEUTSCH: Does the committee keep extensive written records?

METZGER: No, this is probably one of the faults in that, you're volunteer, just, doing that, there's a limit. I do now, it wasn't a habit at the beginning, but about four or five years ago I started, I would call the staff person and talk and then they would take notes on what the position, the committee's position was. When I would write out some testimony ...

DEUTSCH: It wouldn't be a written report, the report that you would file?

METZGER: No, but now actually somebody about five years, somebody said, "Why don't you write this out for me?" So (laughs), another thing to do. But I thought it's probably wise.

DEUTSCH: And then you can keep a copy.

METZGER: And then I have a copy and he has a copy and so that has worked out very well, to have that copy and we can go back and say what the committee did and why. But that's sort of the minutes of the committee. And then the cases that come, actually come before the HPRB, that are heard as opposed to those that are just done by consent, and usually I or someone from the committee goes and testifies about those and so we've got some written about that, although quite often I don't decide what I'm going to say until I see how the board is, you know, if they've got some questions, I mean I know what the committee has ...

DEUTSCH: You know what your position is ...

METZGER: We know, exactly, but I don't exactly know how to express it until I see maybe what things are troubling the HPRB and so I can tailor my testimony to issues that have come up, things that I'd never would have thought they would have been questioning all of a sudden becomes the major thing you've got to talk about. So I think those are, but the committee is excellent, I have to say. And the Board really appreciates the work of the committee and ...

DEUTSCH: Well, it's really the crux of what the Restoration Society does, I mean it's really where the rubber meets the road.

METZGER: Yeah, that plus the zoning and the city planning elements, sort of the three things that they really, I mean because city planning, the ANCs don't do city planning, it's not really what they're ...

DEUTSCH: It's not what they're for.

METZGER: ... for. I mean they do ABC [Alcohol Beverage Control] and zoning issues fairly well. They can, and some other things. But you know the wide range things. Although occasionally they get into it and they can do it well but they can't, they don't have that institutional memory. And if something happens to Dick Wolf, we won't either (laughs). So I think that's it.

DEUTSCH: Well, this has been interesting, Nancy. Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW