

The Committee of 100

on the Federal City



Celebrating
98 years of planning advocacy
and honoring the winners of the
2021 Vision Awards

October 27, 2021

First Congregational United Church of Christ

945 G St., NW, Washington, D.C.

And by Zoom

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City is grateful for the generous contributions of those who made possible this year's Vision Awards Celebration.

Patrons

Carol Aten
George & Mary Clark
Judy Scott Feldman
Jackie & David Marlin
Laura M. Richards
Kirby Vining

Host Committee

William & Patricia Brown • Richard Busch • Meg Maguire & Dale Ostrander
James Myers • Sheldon Repp • Charles Robertson • Andrea Rosen
James Smailes • de Teel Patterson Tiller • Faith Wheeler & William Hellert
Evelyn & Robert Wrin

2021 Vision Awards Committee

Meg Maguire
de Teel Patterson Tiller
Kirby Vining

C100 Officers & Trustees

Kirby Vining, Chair
Alma Gates, Vice Chair
Erik Hein, Secretary
George R. Clark, Treasurer

Charles Bien
Larry Hargrove
Aidan Jones
Nancy MacWood
Meg Maguire
David Marlin
Beth Purcell
Sheldon Repp

Laura Richards
Andrea Rosen
Marilyn Simon
Jim Smailes
de Teel Patterson Tiller
James Wilcox
Evelyn Wrin

2021 Vision Awards Program

Welcome

Kirby Vining, Chair
Reverend Amanda Hendler-Voss, First Congregational United Church of Christ

Awards

District of Columbia Building Permits Database
Brian Kraft

Crummell School
Empower DC

Park Morton Equity Plan
Park Morton Equity Team & Council @ Park Morton

Abrams Hall Senior Apartments
Walter Reed Assisted Living Project

Transforming Rail South of Union Station
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Ann Hargrove Advocacy Award
DC Grassroots Planning Coalition

Barbara Zartman Award for Planning and Zoning Advocacy
Marilyn Simon, PhD

Lifetime Achievement Award
DC Preservation League — 50th Anniversary

Lifetime Achievement Award
District of Columbia Public Library — 125th Anniversary

Remarks

Richard Reyes-Gavilan
Executive Director, DC Public Library

District of Columbia Building Permits Database
Brian Kraft

The District's Building Permits Database has become an indispensable tool in historic district nominations, individual landmark nominations, maps for the DC Office of Planning, countless books, and school curricula. This database would not have existed without the vision and labor-intensive work of Brian Kraft.

In 2001, Mr. Kraft foresaw the benefits that would accrue from the creation of a DC Building Permit Database of all the building permits issued from 1872-1949. He proposed creating a publicly accessible database to the DC Historic Preservation Office who readily recognized the value of such a database and agreed to provide him with a National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund grant to embark on the project. To assemble the data, he spent several laborious years accessing building information from original records and microfilm of tax assessments, building permits, and notices in the Evening Star. In 2007, he published a user manual, making the database accessible for projects such as the on-going program in Chevy Chase DC that has installed 264 information plaques tailored to individual homes.

As a result, every architectural historian, preservationist, developer, and property owner in Washington, DC is indebted to Mr. Kraft for having made the origins of our building stock readily available.

Accepting the Award

Brian Kraft

Crummell School *EmpowerDC*

Since its founding in 2003, Empower DC has worked with Ivy City residents to document the neighborhood's history and advocate for community improvements. At the heart of this effort has been the Alexander Crummell School, a DC landmark and one of Washington, DC's Most Endangered Places.

Named for abolitionist preacher Reverend Alexander Crummell, the school opened in 1911 to serve the Black children of Ivy City and Trinidad. The school closed in the 1970s and has sat vacant and dilapidated on a two-acre site for decades. After many years of intense community pressure, the city abandoned an unpopular plan for luxury housing on the site and, together with the DC Council, included \$20 million in the DC Government's FY 2022 budget to transform the building into a community center.

While planning for restoration of the building takes place, Empower DC has worked with the DC Government to provide play spaces on the grounds. For the first time in four decades, the Crummell School site is open for community use with a playground, basketball courts and free summer programs for neighborhood children and their families.

Accepting the award

Parisa Norouzi

Sebrena Rhodes

Mya Stuckey

Park Morton Equity Plan
Park Morton Equity Team & Council @ Park Morton

The Park Morton Equity Plan represents a trailblazing approach to public housing redevelopment that treats residents as partners. The plan reflects the work of public housing leader Shonta' High, President of the Park Morton Resident Council, and William Jordan, a former Ward 1 ANC Commissioner and community leader with expertise in development finance.

The Plan represents the needs and desires of residents to stay connected to their neighbors even while experiencing dislocation. It details the history of the unsuccessful New Communities Initiative of 2007, articulates three principles for moving forward and proposes an alternative plan to the DC Housing Authority's proposals. Importantly, the Plan supports a vision for public housing residents to become equity stake partners in public housing redevelopment, creating the conditions for residents to experience material improvement in their economic conditions.

The authors are to be commended both for their leadership and dogged advocacy to insist that the DC Housing Authority and DC Council officials respond to its merits.

Accepting the award

Shonta' High

William Jordan

Abrams Hall Senior Apartments
Walter Reed Assisted Living Project

Walter Reed Assisted Living (WRAL) is the first District-funded project that combines permanent supportive housing and assisted living for seniors in one facility. The 54-unit project is an element within Abrams Hall Senior Apartments, the affordable housing complex overlooking the historic Great Lawn at the former convalescent facility for injured service men and women at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

WRAL is designed to serve as a scalable model for future assisted living facilities that focus on the District of Columbia's most vulnerable seniors. Through the Coordinated Entry system, the DC Department of Human Services will refer residents who have experienced homelessness. Housing Up and Grand Senior Living will provide on-site permanent supportive housing case management and assisted living services. All residents will have their own units and receive meals in an on-site dining room. Arts, recreation, and social activities within the building and throughout The Parks at Walter Reed are designed to appeal to seniors and to integrate all residents within the larger new community.

The development is a joint project of Housing Up and Urban Atlantic.

Accepting the award

Philip Hecht, President and CEO, THC Affordable Housing Inc.

Transforming Rail South of Union Station ***Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation***

Transforming Rail in Virginia, a visionary program to expand rail service in Virginia and into the District of Columbia, removes a major bottleneck in the regional rail system and more effectively connects the northeast and southeast corridors. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), in coordination with Amtrak, CSX, Norfolk Southern, Federal Rail Administration, MARC and VRE, unveiled the plan in 2021 to expand Virginia passenger and freight service by 2040 when rail traffic is expected to more than double.

With bi-partisan support and the backing of Governor Northam, the Virginia General Assembly has funded the \$3.7 billion rail plan to build the new bridge across the Potomac River and to purchase several hundred miles of track and railroad right-of-way from CSX, including right-of-way between Washington and Richmond to support increased passenger service to Richmond. DRPT will oversee the program to ensure control over the flow of passenger traffic without interfering with freight traffic.

Transforming Rail addresses many issues on which the Committee of 100 has testified publicly since 2013 including reducing automobile congestion in DC, separating passenger and freight traffic, greatly expanding passenger/commuter rail operations south of Union Station, enlarging VRE L'Enfant Station, building a new rail bridge upstream from the existing Long Bridge to double the capacity of commuter and passenger rail service across the river, and constructing additional tracks in the Virginia and District corridors.

Accepting the award

Jennifer Mitchell, Director
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Ann Hargrove Advocacy Award
DC Grassroots Planning Coalition

Since 2017, the DC Grassroots Planning Coalition (DCGPC), a project of Empower DC, has organized a sustainable model for change based on providing ordinary residents with tools and resources to advocate for themselves and the confidence that, with effort, they will be heard.

DCGPC has engaged more than 1,200 DC residents to battle against gentrification of communities of color and widespread displacement. The Coalition made a significant positive impact on the DC Comprehensive Plan amendments of 2021 with demands for specific policies and actions for racial equity; land value recapture; and program impact assessments for development projects to ensure racial, economic and environmental justice.

The Coalition has become a major player in planning issues before the Council and the Office of Planning. DCGPC participants dominated the Council hearings on the amendments, extending one hearing into the early morning hours. The first-ever report from the newly created Council Office on Racial Equity (CORE) reiterated many of the same criticisms that DCGPC had made, declaring the Comp Plan to be racially unfair, and laying the groundwork for significant improvements by the Council.

DCGPC's mission goals are taking root around the city. For example, Ward 3 Housing Justice, recently formed to promote deeply affordable housing in Ward 3, is both an outgrowth and an affiliate of Empower DC and the DCGPC.

Accepting the award

Renee Bowser

Reggie Black

Parisa Norouzi

Andrea Rosen

Barbara Zartman Award for Planning and Zoning Advocacy
Marilyn Simon, PhD

Dr. Marilyn Simon is a brilliant zoning analyst and dedicated community activist who understands complex zoning laws in the District of Columbia better than most professionals. Highly regarded by the Zoning Commission (ZC), since 2005 Dr. Simon has been particularly insightful in pointing out that Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) text amendments proposed by the Office of Planning, and specific projects proposed by developers, were based on inaccurate calculations that would accelerate displacement of low-income households and discourage development of new and rehabilitated projects for those intended to benefit from the program. As an advocate of IZ, she has insisted that if affordable housing is the stated goal of the IZ program, affordable housing, not just more development, must be achieved.

This year, on behalf of the Committee of 100's Zoning Subcommittee, Dr. Simon analyzed the proposed IZ Plus program that purportedly would require developers to provide greater affordable housing under certain circumstances. Through a complex set of calculations, she pointed out how the proposal would benefit developers without making much of a dent in the City's affordable housing need, especially at the lowest income levels. The ZC ultimately rescinded its prior approval and circulated a revised notice of proposed rulemaking that incorporated some of her recommendations.

Marilyn Simon's extraordinary skills in zoning analysis, and her long history of advocating for better planning, land use and truly affordable housing in Upper Wisconsin Avenue and throughout the city, continue to provide great benefits for the District of Columbia.

Accepting the award

Dr. Marilyn Simon

Lifetime Achievement Award
DC Preservation League — 50th Anniversary

Washington, D.C.'s unique historic character is one of its greatest assets and a vital component of local quality-of-life, identity, and economic development. For 50 years, the DC Preservation League (DCPL) has been a nationally recognized leader in preserving the complex and diverse character in our Nation's Capital through tireless advocacy, litigation, research, partnerships, and educational programming of the highest caliber.

Founded in 1971 as "Don't Tear It Down," the fledgling organization's first cause was saving the 1899 Old Post Office and Clock Tower on Pennsylvania Avenue from scheduled demolition. Armed with little more than 250 placard-waving activists, the young organization succeeded and established a tradition of grassroots advocacy that continues to this day.

In those early days, issue-by-issue litigation was an important tool to delay demolition. Through prudent use of temporary restraining orders, the group was able to buy time to build consensus to preserve many threatened historically significant places throughout the city. However, this strategy alone was unsustainable, and the organization's leadership set out to establish a protective local legal structure. Legislative victories since 1978 include the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act, touted as one of the strongest historic preservation ordinances in the nation; legislation prohibiting "demolition by neglect;" and the Historic Preservation Tax Credit which became the Historic Homeowner Grant Program.

In 1984, the organization's name changed to the DC Preservation League to reflect a broader interest and an ever-expanding network of the organization's partners and supporters. Over the years DCPL has developed a close and productive relationship with the DC government as well as the National Park Service, the city's largest steward of historic properties and landscapes.

Under the exceptional leadership of Executive Director Rebecca Miller, DCPL has vigorously advocated on behalf of the city's neighborhoods, each with a unique story, historic character, and physical characteristics — a fact too often overshadowed by the city's national and international visibility. In recognition of the DC Preservation League's many achievements on behalf of the city and its citizens, we are pleased to present a 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Accepting the award

Rebecca Miller, Executive Director

Lifetime Achievement Award
District of Columbia Public Library – 125th Anniversary

This 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award celebrates the 125th Anniversary of the District of Columbia Public Library, highlighting its exemplary record of library building stewardship in both renovation of older neighborhood libraries and design excellence in new ones. The recently completed modernization of the historic Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library is particularly noteworthy not only for innovative design but for the robust community engagement that shaped the successful project.

Through the tireless leadership of Theodore Noyes, Editor of The Evening Star, Congress established the DC Public Library in 1896. Today that system boasts the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library plus 25 vital and beloved neighborhood libraries across the city. Over the past 12+ years alone, the system has creatively modernized 22 neighborhood libraries – an astounding average of almost two per year – and additional projects are in the pipeline.

Under the skilled guidance of Richard Reyes-Gavilan, Executive Director of the DC Public Library, and the Board of Library Trustees, modernization of the Central Library was completed in 2020. Architects Mecanoo, a Dutch-based firm, and the District’s Martinez + Johnson (now OTJ Architects), brought extensive experience and creativity to preserving the historic mid-20th century design of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and to transforming both interior and exterior spaces for the new century. The building now features a transparent, welcoming entryway; a sculptured monumental staircase; a large auditorium; a conference center; creative spaces for fabrication, music production and art; a ground level café and patio; a double-height reading room; newly designed special collections space; and a rooftop reading garden.

Community engagement was critical to the project with more than 60 community meetings, on-line user surveys, presentations to stakeholder organizations across the city and establishment of an 18-member Design Advisory Panel that included Susan Haight with the Federation of Friends of DC Public Library and Robin Diener of the MLK Library Friends.

The Committee of 100 is proud to honor the DC Public Library with a Lifetime Achievement Award for its stewardship of the system’s library buildings that over the past 125 years have enriched both personal growth and community life in the District of Columbia.

Accepting the award

Richard Reyes-Gavilan, Executive Director