

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

LISTED:
VLR
03/21/2013
NRHP
05/28/2013

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Christiansburg Downtown Historic District

Other names/site number: DHR File No. 154-5025

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: East Main St. West Main St., North Franklin St., and South Franklin St.

City or town: Christiansburg State: VA County: Montgomery

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

William A. Sasser, Deputy Director 4/3/2013
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: Date

Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>32</u>	<u>19</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	objects
<u>35</u>	<u>22</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 3

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

DOMESTIC / hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE / business

COMMERCE/TRADE / professional

COMMERCE/TRADE / financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE / specialty store

Current Functions

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE / business

COMMERCE/TRADE / professional

COMMERCE/TRADE / financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE / specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE / restaurant

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

MID-19TH CENTURY / Greek Revival

LATE VICTORIAN / Queen Anne

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS / Colonial Revival

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS / Late Gothic Revival

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS / Commercial Style

MODERN MOVEMENT / Moderne

MODERN MOVEMENT / Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; WOOD; STONE; METAL;
SYNTHETICS/ Vinyl

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Christiansburg is the county seat of Montgomery County, located in southwest Virginia. The Christiansburg Downtown Historic District is centered at the town square located at the principal historic intersection of Main Street and Franklin Street. The district consists of thirty-five contributing buildings and nineteen non-contributing buildings (including four outbuildings) in the town's historic commercial core as well as the contributing courthouse square site with two contributing monuments (objects) and three non-contributing objects. The buildings date from 1853 through 2003; all but five were built before 1970. Most of the buildings are one-, two-, or three-story commercial or office buildings representing the Commercial, Art Deco, and Moderne styles. Dating primarily from the 1915-1950 period, details include decorative cornices, decorative masonry work, and pilasters. The two churches that are contributing to the district are typical of their period and are executed in the Greek Revival and Gothic Revival styles. There are seven houses within the district. These tend to have few stylistic references, but often include the asymmetrical massing typical of the Queen Anne style. Although some of the buildings within the district have received alterations such as replacement windows and replacement siding few have been so altered as to render them non-contributing to the district. Similarly, buildings built after 1963 are relatively rare as a whole the district. Thus, as a whole, the district retains a good degree of integrity.

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Narrative Description

The courthouse square is the cultural and historic center of the Christiansburg Downtown Historic District. Laid out in a courthouse square plan, Main and Franklin Streets run northeast-southwest and northwest-southeast meeting at the central town square. Other streets in the downtown's core are laid out in a grid following this orientation. The square is situated on a slight rise. The rolling terrain that is typical of the New River Valley region falls to the north and west and rises to the south and east. The historic commercial, institutional, and residential buildings extend one block to the east of the square on East Main Street and two blocks to the west on West Main Street, two blocks to the north on North Franklin Street, and one-half block to the south on South Franklin Street. The district is near two historic residential National Register-listed districts: South Franklin Street Historic District and East Main Street Historic District.

All but twenty-two of the sixty resources within the historic district are contributing to the historic significance of the district. The buildings in the district are densely arranged. With the exception of the churches and the 1979 courthouse, all of the buildings are set on narrow urban lots and most are situated immediately adjacent to the sidewalk. Many buildings are attached with common party walls and footprints that occupy most of their lot. The detached buildings are found principally near the edges of the district. On the large church lots, there are mature trees and plantings. Elsewhere, there are few plantings except the street trees set in the wide brick-trimmed sidewalks and concrete planter boxes on the sidewalks.

The courthouse square is a defining feature of Christiansburg's town plan and of the historic district. Today, paved roadways and parking areas cut the square into quadrants. Three of the quadrants have small expanses of grass. From 1836 until 1979, the fourth (southeast) quadrant was occupied by the county courthouse. After 1979, the fourth quadrant became an open plaza in front of the 1979 courthouse (which is currently being remodeled into a public safety center). The grassed quadrants have mature plantings, including the Constitution Oak, planted about 1902, and monuments such as the 1883 Confederate Memorial and the 1953 War Memorial. As a whole, the courthouse square is a discernible public open space that is an important remnant of the original town plan.

The earliest buildings within the district are institutional and governmental. These buildings reflect forms and styles that were typical of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. There are three churches within the district, one being the earliest building in the district. Built in 1853, the front-gable brick Greek Revival-style Christiansburg Presbyterian Church stands at 107 W. Main St., (VDHR# 154-0003, NR 1978). Another mid-nineteenth century church is the former Methodist Church at 17 N. Franklin Street dating to 1855. This front-gable masonry building is smaller and simpler than the Presbyterian church; it has been altered with the application of a c.1986 brick exterior. Across the street from the Presbyterian church is the 1909 brick Gothic Revival building of the Main Street Baptist Church at 100 W. Main Street. New sanctuaries were

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added to Main Street Baptist at the rear (southwest) corner in 1963 and in 1972 a large Colonial Revival style sanctuary was built immediately west of the original.

Although the 1836 and 1909 courthouses no longer stand, the Phlegar Building at 4 S. Franklin St. (NR 1989 , VDHR# 154-0007) includes the original 1812 County Clerk's Office building as part of the first floor, making it the earliest remaining government building in the county. The Phelgar Building was significantly remodeled about 1898. Framing the northeast quadrant of the courthouse square is the 1937 Colonial Revival Post Office building.

Like most towns in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Christiansburg's streets were originally mixed with commercial buildings and residences and sometimes buildings serving as both the shop and the home of the owner. Well into the early-twentieth century, the downtown had many houses interspersing its commercial core. By the mid-twentieth century, houses were being replaced with newer and larger commercial buildings and parking lots. Within the historic district are seven buildings originally built at houses; two remain residential. The one-story Curan-Gill House at 117 N. Franklin Street dates to 1853 according to the county's GIS records, but presents a c.1913 exterior. Other examples are the two-story frame Dr. George Anderson House at 16 East Main Street (early 1800s and c.1905, VDHR# 154-0028); the two-story frame Dr. T. H. Clark House dating to c.1860 and 1881 at 26 W. Main St. (VDHR# 154-0020); and the Greek Revival two-story Presbyterian Manse at 111 W. Main St. (VDHR# 154-0015), dating to 1876.

The district's commercial buildings reflect the popular commercial architecture of the early and mid-twentieth century. The buildings are primarily one or two stories in height and most have brick exteriors with either veneer or true masonry construction. There are also two stone veneer buildings and several frame buildings with vinyl or wood siding. While some of the commercial buildings are devoid of stylistic references, there are several examples of the Commercial Style with Art Deco and Moderne styles also being represented.

One of the oldest and best preserved commercial buildings is Rice's Pharmacy/ Shelton & Walters Building at 41 W. Main St. (VDHR# 154-0016) dating to 1915. The 1911 & c.1920 Barnes-Surface Motor Co. Building at 4 W. Main St., (VDHR#154-0025) and the c. 1916 Virginia Inn at 6 W. Main St. (VDHR# 154-0024) are well-preserved three-story brick examples with modest Commercial Style detailing such as paired one-over-one sash windows, multi-light storefront windows, and a dropped denticulated cornice.

The district has an interesting selection of Art Deco and Moderne buildings, which is somewhat unusual for a relatively small town in this region of Virginia. The Proffitt Building at 10-12 W. Main St. (VDHR# 154-0022) features modest Art Deco styling while the nearby First National Bank (VDHR# 154-0021, 20-22 W. Main St.) dates to 1905, but presents an austere 1937 Art Deco-style limestone exterior. The ABC Store at 100 North Franklin Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0017) was built in 1954 and has an Art Moderne facade.

Other mid-twentieth century buildings, like the unadorned c. 1945 brick building at 111 North Franklin Street, are far more simple in design. The 1958 Leggett's Department Store building at 30 W. Main St. features simple Modernist details.

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The Christiansburg Downtown Historic District encompasses a cohesive collection of commercial, institutional/governmental, and residential buildings from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Although some of the buildings have been altered with replacement windows, modern canopies, replacement storefront doors and windows (often aluminum and plate glass), and replacement siding (vinyl), the district retains a good degree of integrity. Buildings built after 1963 are relatively rare in the district, although a few historic buildings have had late twentieth-century facade materials applied to them. These facades include brick and vinyl siding. Buildings with facades from after 1963 are non-contributing to the district as their historic features have been obscured. Examples are the large First National Bank at the northwest corner of the courthouse square, which dates to 1937 but was completely remodeled in 1968, and the yellow-brick 1979 Montgomery County Courthouse, which has recently been replaced by a newly constructed county courthouse adjacent to the southeast edge of the district at 55 East Main Street. The new courthouse was opened in November 2012. The 1979 building is scheduled to be remodeled to create a public safety center.

Inventory

The inventory list for the Christiansburg Downtown Historic District is organized alphabetically by street name. All buildings are listed numerically by street address number. Each property is noted as Contributing or Non-contributing to the historic district based on its architectural integrity and age (in relation to the period of significance). The inventory list is based upon survey work undertaken by Sherry Joines Wyatt in 2012. The historical information within the list is found in *Christiansburg, Virginia: Small Town America at its Finest* (Roy Kanode), oral interviews with Christiansburg natives Bob Shelton and Bob Poff (by Sherry Joines Wyatt, 2012), and Sanborn maps unless otherwise noted.

NORTH FRANKLIN STREET, East Side

3 N. Franklin St., Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0001), c.1950, Contributing Building.

This one-story Commercial Style brick veneer building is ornamented with a soldier-course outlined sign panel and has a recessed entry. The storefront has been altered with T-111 infill, multi-light windows, and a wood-shingled canopy. The building was home to Walker's Grocery (Walker Linkous) after World War II.

5-7 N. Franklin St., Cox Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0002), 1966, **Non-contributing Building**.

This two-story building features modest Modernist styling with a stack-bond veneer facade, metal casement windows in the upper level and three entries with single aluminum and glass doors and plate glass windows of different sizes. The building was built for barber Stewart Cox whose shop was in the building. Also located here was Watson's Jewelry and Shull's Cleaners.

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9 N. Franklin St., Bank of Christiansburg drive-through booth (VDHR# 154-5025-0003), c. 1980, **Non-contributing Building.**

This one-story building with side-gable asphalt-shingle roof has a brick teller booth at the south end and three lanes of drive-through service (teller and ATM) with the ATM being housed in a brick booth near the north end. The teller booth ceased operation in 2012 after acquisition by Wells Fargo. The building has Colonial Revival details including quoins, square columns, and a wide cornice.

11 N. Franklin St., L & N Dry Cleaning Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0004), c.1945, **Contributing Building.**

This two-story Commercial Style concrete block building has a brick veneer facade ornamented with yellow brickwork around the first and second floor entry doors and flanking multi-light metal shop windows. The upper floor also has multi-light metal windows. The building is capped by yellow tile coping. The awning has been removed. African Americans Wallace B. Lester, Tom Lester, and John Mont Nowlin opened L & N Dry Cleaning and Pressing Shop in 1920 and moved their business to this location in 1945.

17 N. Franklin St., Methodist Church (VDHR# 154-5025-0005 / 154-0009), 1855, 1975, and c.1986, **Non-contributing Building.**

This two-story brick building was built in the Greek Revival style with a front-facing pediment, central entry, and four facade pilasters. The building was altered upon its conversion to a school in 1888 and even further when it became a commercial building (a grocery and Page Meat Market from 1911-1930, and Hardy Palmer's Second Hand Store from about 1940 until about 1980). The interior was again remodeled into offices in 1975 and Carl McNeil put new brick veneer on the exterior in 1986.

Outbuilding, c.1990, **Non-contributing Building**

This one-story side-gable outbuilding has T-111 siding, double-leaf entry, asphalt shingle roof, concrete block pier foundation and two small two-light windows. The building is probably a prefabricated building.

103 N. Franklin St., S. G. Wimmer & Son Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0006), c.1940, **Contributing Building.**

Probably built as part of S. G. Wimmer & Son Feed and Seed store, this one-story concrete block Commercial Style building has side pilasters and a brick veneer facade with replacement multi-light windows and a replacement door with transom and sidelights. The side windows are original multi-light metal. The building has tile coping. A lower one-story rear wing extends to the north and has garage bays. This building is thought to have been the farm machinery showroom and warehouse.

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107 North Franklin St., S. G. Wimmer & Son Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0007), c. 1940,
Contributing Building

This two-story concrete block Commercial Style building has side pilasters and a common bond brick facade with corbeled cornice. The two storefronts are separated by a pilaster and feature recessed single entries (one open and one enclosed transom) and plate glass windows with transoms. The windows of the second floor are one-over-one replacement sash. S. G. Wimmer & Son Feed and Seed store was located here.

111 North Franklin Street. IXL Machine Works Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0008), c.1918,
Non-contributing Building.

This two-story building is constructed of rock-faced concrete blocks (visible on sides) the facade is covered by vinyl siding and has a single entry with asphalt-shingled canopy and replacement one-over-one sash windows on both floors. The building was likely built for IXL Machine Works tire repair shop after their building was destroyed in a 1918 fire. Harkrader Service Station was located here from 1933-1945.

117 N. Franklin St., Curan-Gill House (VDHR# 154-5025-0009), c.1853 and c.1913,
Contributing Building.

This one-story house has two front-facing gables with gable returns and a glass-enclosed porch between the gables. The windows are two-over-two sash with segmental arch heads. The roof is standing seam metal. The history of the house is unclear, but it may have been built c.1853 by James. C. Curran who sold the property to C. Margaret Taylor in 1869. Charles Samuel Gill bought it in 1913 and may have made the alterations at that time. The house seems to appear on the 1907 Sanborn as a gable ell frame dwelling. On the 1926 Sanborn, it had been veneered and had an additional front gable ell on south end of facade.

123 North Franklin Street, Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0010), c.1925,
Contributing Building.

This two-story Commercial Style building is constructed of rock-faced concrete blocks. It has three storefronts with recessed entries. The northernmost has a double-leaf entry with transom and transomed four-light windows. The middle storefront is a single transomed entry with transomed four-light windows. The southernmost storefront has plate glass windows, enclosed transoms, and a double-leaf door. The one-over-one sash windows of the upper floor are in disrepair and presently covered by sheet metal to offer weather protection. Archie, Hugh, and Will Johnson operated a restaurant here in the 1920s and T. H. Sowers Odorless Dry Cleaners opened here in 1929. Kittinger Piano Company began operations in 1950.

125-127 North Franklin Street, Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0011), c. 1930, **Non-contributing Building.**

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This two-story front-gable building has been altered with vinyl siding and one-over-one replacement windows. The property now houses apartments. This building is thought to have once housed McKenzie's Garage.

129 North Franklin Street, House (VDHR# 154-5025-0012), c. 1930, Contributing.

This one-story house two gabled ells, vinyl siding, nine-over-nine sash and fixed multi-light windows, and replacement porch columns. The house appears on the 1944 Sanborn map without the southern gabled ell.

NORTH FRANKLIN STREET, West Side

50 N. Franklin St. (irregular numbering), First National Bank (VDHR# 154-5025-0013), 1937 and 1968, **Non-contributing Building.**

This two-story building is sheathed in exposed aggregate concrete with pilasters and features a copper mansard roof. Smaller mansard roofs cover the entries on the south and east sides as well as the drive-through teller bays on the west side. A larger roof covers the one-story ATM booth located at the southeast corner. The building was originally constructed as the Harrison-Hancock Hardware store. Historic photographs show a brick building with pilasters. The building was altered in 1968 when it became First National Bank.

16 North Franklin Street, Christiansburg Vance Hardware (VDHR# 154-5025-0014), 1967, **Non-contributing Building.**

This one-story common bond brick building appears to have been altered (probably c.1977) with a slightly recessed facade with a pent roof and brick piers. The slightly projecting corner pilasters or piers appear to have also been added to the building at this time along with the brick drive-through canopy. The recessed storefront has multi-light fixed windows. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation. Built for Christiansburg Vance Hardware, the building was later occupied by First National Exchange Bank and then by the Medicine Shoppe, which closed in 2010.

26 North Franklin Street, Kentucky Fried Chicken Restaurant (VDHR# 154-5025-0015), c.1965, **Non-contributing Building**

This narrow one-story building was originally built as a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant and now houses Subway. It is sheathed in vinyl siding, has plate glass windows, and rests on a poured stuccoed foundation. The single entry doors are on either side.

46 North Franklin Street, National Bank of Blacksburg (VDHR# 154-5025-0016), c. 2003, **Non-contributing Building.**

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This is a one-story brick veneer building with front-gable roof, lower gabled entry portico, and nine-light fixed windows. The gable ends are sheathed in synthetic stucco. A side-gable canopy extends from the south side covering the drive-through teller bays.

100 North Franklin Street, ABC Store (VDHR# 154-5025-0017), 1954, Contributing.

This one-story brick building is a rare example of an Art Moderne building in Christiansburg and features a stucco upper facade with stuccoed fluted pilasters and star ornamentation. The bulkheads are sheathed in green granite. Between the two recessed single entries are curved glass block corner walls with plate glass windows between. The building was built by well-known local contractor Morris C. Miller.

118 North Franklin Street, House (VDHR# 154-5025-0018), c.1910, Contributing Building.

This one-and-a-half-story front gable house has a wrap-around porch with turned posts. The rear portion of the building has gabled wing on the southwest corner and several other additions. The building has a metal roof, is sheathed in vinyl siding, and has six-over-six sash windows, and a foundation covered with metal in a rock-faced block pattern.

SOUTH FRANKLIN STREET, West Side

4 S. Franklin St., Old Clerk's Office / Phlegar Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0019 / 154-0007, National Register, 1989) 1812 and c.1898, Contributing Building.

This two-story stretcher-bond brick building has six bays (four windows and two doors) on its first floor facade. The upper floor is three bays. The building incorporates the one-story two-room Montgomery County Clerk of Court Office built in 1812 in its front lower section. The second floor, double-porch, and rear section were added around 1898. The building features a pressed metal cornice on the front section, which has an attic space once ventilated by segmental arch windows (now enclosed) making it two-and-a-half stories. To the rear (east) the roofline steps down. Most of the windows in the building are two-over-two sash with segmental arch heads. The Eastlake style porch is supported by turned posts with decorative brackets and features turned balusters and a spindle work frieze. The interior in 1986 featured two rooms in the front section with evidence of several rear (east) windows or doors. The rooms had modern paneling and dropped ceilings, but late-nineteenth elements such as the large open-stringer stair and door and window trim were intact at this time. The building was sold by the county in 1858. A number of important legal figures had their offices in the building including future Secretary of the Navy William Ballard Preston and future Virginia Supreme Court Justice Waller Staples. Judge Archer Phlegar purchased the building in 1897 and made the c.1898 additions. Montgomery County reacquired the building in 1973.

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16 S. Franklin St., Taylor Office Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0020), c.1870, Contributing Building

This two-story brick building features soldier-course sign panels near the cornice, one-over-one sash windows in the upper floor, and large first floor windows with multi-light transoms. The central entry has a small classical portico with Corinthian columns and bracketed cornice. The building served as office space for a number of attorneys including: James C. Taylor, Walter M. Pierce, John R. Johnson, Redmond I. Roop, and Valentine M. Sowder. The county purchased the property in 1971 and it presently houses the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office.

EAST MAIN STREET, South Side

Intersection of Main and Franklin Streets, Courthouse Square (VDHR# 154-5025-0021), ca. 1792 and 1979, Contributing Site.

The courthouse square is located at the intersection of Main and Franklin Streets and is situated on a slight rise. Modern roadways and parking areas cut the square into quadrants, three with small expanses of grass and the fourth forming the plaza in front of the 1979 courthouse. Despite alterations, the open space within the square retains the basic form as it appears on the earliest town map (1806) and continues to be an important part of Christiansburg's history and character. The grassed quadrants have mature plantings, including monuments such as the 1883 Confederate Memorial and the 1953 War Memorial. Also on the square is the Constitution Oak. This pin oak was one of forty-five saplings from Canada that were given as gifts to delegates of the 1901-1902 Constitutional Convention in Richmond. The tree symbolized the end of military rule that had come with the Reconstruction era and was planted by Confederate Veterans. Although the exact date of planting is not known, Arthur O. Sullivan, Montgomery County Treasurer and a wounded Confederate veteran was responsible for planting the oak on the square. Sullivan and Robert Trigg Mosby cared for the tree during its early life. By 1959, it was one of only twenty-six original trees still alive. The tree was nearly lost to road widening in 1960, but a group of ladies rallied to save it. The tree is currently in a state of declining health.

1909 Courthouse Eagle, 1909 (VDHR# 154-5025-0053) **Non-contributing Object**

This eagle sculpture once capped the clock tower dome of the 1909 Montgomery County Courthouse. The sculpture is made of hollow metal and was manufactured in Lynchburg. A similar eagle sits atop the former Roanoke County Courthouse in Salem, which was designed by the same architect, H. H. Huggins.

1 E. Main St., Montgomery County Courthouse (VDHR# 154-5025-0022), 1976-1979, **Non-contributing Building.**

This four-story yellow/tan brick veneer building has plate glass windows in bronze-colored metal frames. The first story windows are double-height. Each set of windows, which are arranged in a 2-2-7-2-2 pattern, are recessed. The brickwork between the window sets gives the building the

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effect of pilasters. The building's central entry faces an open plaza to the west and is set within a bank of 14 windows and features a metal signboard over the double doors.

15 East Main Street, Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0023), c.1957, Contributing Building

Built about 1957 to replace an earlier building destroyed by fire in 1956, this one-story brick and concrete block building has a false front of vertical aluminum and an aluminum awning. The plate glass and aluminum storefront has two recessed entries. Harmon's Dress Shop was housed here from 1957 until 1965. Angle Florist has occupied the building since 1984.

21 East Main Street, Smith Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0024), 1957, Contributing Building

Built in 1957 to replace an earlier building destroyed by fire in 1956, this two-story concrete block building has simple Modernist styling with cream-colored tile blocks and a band of metal casement windows with transoms in the upper story. Brick walls extend beyond this facade at each corner framing it as well as the lower level with its two recessed entries and aluminum and glass storefront.

23 East Main Street, Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0025), 1900, Contributing Building

This small one-story yellow brick Commercial Style building has modest decorative brickwork including tapered caps at the tops of the brick corner pilasters, basket-weave design brick bands framing the sign panel, and decorative brick cornice. The original transom has been enclosed with metal, above an aluminum canopy. The storefront is aluminum and plate glass with a central entry. The building housed several different drug stores from 1941 until after 1966 with names such as Handy Drug Store and Brown's Drug Store.

EAST MAIN STREET, North Side

Northeast quadrant of Courthouse Square, Confederate Memorial 1883 (VDHR# 154-5025-0052), Contributing Object

This fifteen-foot tall granite monument consists of a tiered square base, inscribed on three sides, rising to an obelisk. It is situated in the northeastern quadrant of the courthouse square and was dedicated by the ladies of the Memorial Association in 1883. An iron fence originally surrounded the Constitution Oak and the monument.

2 East Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0026/ 154-0027, National Register 1991) Christiansburg Post Office, 1937, Contributing Building

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Built in 1937, this Colonial Revival-style building is one story with five bays. The central entry bay features a blind arch with eagle motif over the double doors flanked by fluted pilasters and denticulated lintel. Windows in the building are twelve-over-twelve sash. The building's cornice has dentils and is surmounted by the standing seam metal roof topped by a cupola with louvered arches, pilasters, and a flat roof. The interior of the building is well-preserved and features a mural entitled *The Great Road* painted in 1938 by Works Progress Administration artist John DeGroot.

4 East Main Street, Bank of Christiansburg (VDHR# 154-5025-0027), c.1963, Contributing Building

Built in 1963-1964 to replace the two-story c.1855 bank, this Colonial Revival building faces the town square (west) and is one story with a higher central pedimented section and lower flanking wings. The building is brick veneer with stone facade. On the facade are large six-light aluminum windows with segmental-arch twelve-over-twelve windows elsewhere. The recessed entry features stone molding and a lintel carried by stone consoles. A wide stone cornice encircles the building and the corners have stone quoins.

10 East Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0028), S. G. Wimmer Building, 1948, Contributing Building

This two-story common bond brick Commercial Style office and commercial building was designed by Armistead Rust and built by Leighton Gearheart. It originally housed three retail stores and 28 offices. Perdue Hardware opened in 1949 and remained at this location until 1960. Other tenants included R. L. Wohlford Co. shoe store in 1949, Epperly's Dress & Beauty Shop in 1948, W. J. Shelburne Real Estate and Insurance from 1948-1963, and V & O Beauty Shop between 1953-1955. The building now houses the Christiansburg Police Department. The building's facade, which is painted brick, is three bays separated by paired pilasters. There are two recessed entries in the center and west bays. The windows are fixed single-light wooden replacements with top molding. Molded sign panels separate the upper and lower levels.

16 East Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0029 / 154-0028), Dr. George Anderson House, c.1800 and c.1890, Contributing Building

This house has been remodeled a number of times, but may retain the early nineteenth century Dr. George Anderson House in its core. Most of the building is likely from the late-nineteenth century and has asymmetrical Queen Anne massing. The property was purchased by Hubbard P. Smith in 1886. He operated the H.P. Smith Tin Shop. The house was bought in 1934 by S. C. Richardson, who established his funeral home business here; the business began in 1870. Richardson and later Richardson-Horne and now Horne Funeral Home remained here until 1988. The building is now offices. The two-story, L-plan, frame building has a front-gable polygonal western bay. The building is sheathed in vinyl siding with one-over-one replacement windows and a partially-enclosed one-story porch. The entry has sidelights and transom.

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WEST MAIN STREET, North Side

Northwest quadrant of Courthouse Square, Bicentennial Monument, 1976 (VDHR# 154-5025-0055), **Non-contributing Object**

Made from stone taken from a Virginia-Tennessee Railroad bridge abutment, this small memorial is an upright rectangular piece of roughly dressed stone about two feet tall carrying a bronze plaque. It rests on a low rectangular base of the same stone.

Northwest quadrant of Courthouse Square, Christiansburg Bicentennial Marker, 1992 (VDHR# 154-5025-0056), **Non-contributing Object**

This small granite marker with slanted face reads "Christiansburg Bicentennial Time Capsule, 1992-2042.

13 W. Main St., Thompson-Hagan Drug Store (VDHR# 154-5025-0040), 1959 and 2012, **Non-contributing Building**

This two-story concrete block building has been recently remodeled with new fixed windows and faux brickwork created from a stucco product. The building has a double-leaf entry and one section of the lower story facade is recessed. Built by the Nixon estate, this building was occupied by Thompson-Hagan Drug from 1959 until 1986 (see below for company history).

17 W. Main St., Thompson-Hagan Drug Store (VDHR# 154-5025-0041), 1897 and 2012, **Non-contributing Building**

This building was built in 1897 for the Thompson-Hagan Drug Store, which was founded in 1890 by John Hamilton Thompson, Ed Hagan, and Lynn Sheltman. Dr. R. L. Lucas purchased sole interest in the store in 1946. Dr. Nelson Ridinger purchased the business in 1977 and owned it until its closing in 1996. The store operated at this location, then at 13 W. Main Street and finally in Old Town Mall. A fixture of Christiansburg history itself, the drugstore also maintained an informal museum of old medicine shop memorabilia, rock specimens, and photographs. Many of these objects were donated to the Montgomery Museum in Christiansburg in 1985. Like its next door neighbor, this two-story masonry building has been altered recently with the addition of a new stucco facade in a brick pattern. The replacement windows are fixed and the entry is slightly recessed.

19 W. Main St., Old Town Mall (VDHR# 154-5025-0042), 1954, **Non-contributing Building**

Built after a destructive fire in 1954, this building was rebuilt by Valley Associates for owner Samuel H. Nixon from plans by Dan Wickline. The building housed Rose's 5, 10, and 25-cent store until 1978. It later housed the Ben Franklin Store. Sam H. Nixon, Jr. remodeled the building into Old Town Mall in 1986. The interior features an open central atrium with storefronts. The exterior has modern cement panels covering the original pink-colored

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cement/aggregate panels of the upper story. The lower story has a recessed asymmetrical entry and exposed steel framing.

29 W. Main St., Zirkle Building, (VDHR# 154-5025-0043) 1910, Contributing Building
Connected by doorways to the atrium of Old Town Mall next door, this building has asymmetrically placed cement panels over the eastern section of its upper facade to visually connect it with Old Town Mall. The owner plans to remove the cement panels in the near future. The traditional storefront is a replacement built c. 2000, but the quoins are original to the building as is the placement of the paired windows (center window featuring a keystone) on the upper floor. The building is painted brick veneer with brick quoins and dropped, molded cornice with dentils. The building was built by Morris Miller for Marion W. Zirkle's clothing store in 1910. Other tenants have been Noel Hardware Store and the U-Save-It store.

35-37 W. Main St., Cromer Furniture Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0044), c. 1920, Contributing Building

A furniture store was located in this building for many years beginning with the Lawrence Furniture Company 1911-1917, followed by Kenley Furniture 1917-1925 and Cromer Furniture 1925-1985. Cromer Furniture was owned by Archie E. and Adeline Cromer. Elmer and Nannie Keith, and J. William Pepper. Archie E. Cromer, Sr. began working at Lawrence Furniture in 1914; his son Archie E. Cromer, Jr. operated the business until its close in 1985. The date of the building is unknown, but it is probably early twentieth-century. The facade, however, dates to the mid-twentieth century and appears in a 1966 photograph in the D. D. Lester Collection at the Montgomery Museum in Christiansburg. The Palace Theater was located on the second floor of this building in the 1930s. The building has a Modernist facade with a blank upper story of brick veneer. The 1966 photo show large script signs in this space. The plate glass storefront has an aluminum canopy. The 1966 photo shows a single entry (now #35); the entry at #37 has been added since then. Other details include corner brick pilasters and concrete coping.

41 W. Main St., Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0045 / 154-0016), 1915, Contributing Building

Built by Morris C. Miller in 1915, the building is constructed over "Snidow's Spring." Rice's Pharmacy occupied the building from 1916-1919; it was home to Miller Drug (operated by Dr. Robert L. Miller) until 1933. After a fire destroyed their earlier building, the Shelton & Walters men's clothing store moved to this site in 1945 and remained here until closing in 2002. The two-story painted brick Commercial Style building has a recessed central entry under a modern wood shingled canopy. The upper story has paired one-over-one windows with segmental arch heads below recessed brick panels. The building is capped by a pressed tin cornice with large brackets.

45 West Main Street, Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0046), 1957, Contributing Building

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Built by Morris C. Miller after a 1957 fire, this one-story brick veneer building has an aluminum and plate glass storefront with a double-leaf entry and concrete coping. Cato's opened here in 1958.

49 W. Main St., Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0047), 1940, **Non-contributing Building**

The history of this building is somewhat unclear, but it was likely constructed around 1940 and has had the addition of cedar shake shingles. The building has a modern canopy with standing seam metal roof. The storefront is aluminum and plate glass. The building housed the Palace Café from the 1940s until the late 1960s.

53 W. Main St., Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0048), 1954, Contributing Building

This one-story common-bond brick building has two entries, serving two separate businesses. The western storefront is recessed, but the eastern storefront has been infilled with brick and fitted with replacement windows and doors. The building has two recessed sign panels and concrete coping. The western storefront was a modern copper canopy. The building was originally occupied by Dickey Grocery (1954-1963) and Music House (1954-1985).

107 W. Main St., Christiansburg Presbyterian Church, (VDHR# 154-5025-0049 / 154-0003, National Register, 1978), 1853, Contributing Building

Built in 1853, the Greek Revival church was constructed by James E. Crush with James and Samuel Hickok; all of Fincastle. It is believed that David Deyerle made and laid the bricks for the stretcher bond brick building.¹ It has a low-pitched, front-facing hip roof with a prominent front-gable pediment. The central pediment covers the recessed entry with central double door. Paired square double-height piers support the pediment and are matched by the pilasters at the corners of the facade. Double-height brick panels flank the entry bay. The building's cornice is wide and plain. A four-tier steeple with shuttered belfry, paired pilasters, and pointed octagonal roof surmounts the building.

111 W. Main St., Presbyterian Manse (VDHR# 154-5025-0050 / 154-0015), 1876, Contributing Building

This two-story hip-roof house is a late example of the Greek Revival style. It has weatherboard siding and six-over-six double-hung windows. The central entry has an oval light door with sidelights and transom. The windows and door on the first floor are surmounted by flat peaked

¹ Michael Pulice, *Nineteenth Century Brick Architecture in the Roanoke Valley and Beyond: Discovering the True Legacies of the Deyerle Builders*, (Roanoke: Historical Society of Western Virginia, 2011), 104-5.

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surrounds. The hip-roof porch is supported by Ionic columns. There is a one-story wing on the east end of the building. This lot was used for many years as a hitching yard for the congregation. The manse was constructed in 1876 and was used as the pastor's home until 1969. The building is now called the Kinnaird-Smith Building in honor of two past ministers.

195 W. Main St., Commercial Building/House (VDHR# 154-5025-0051 / 154-0014), c.1843 and c.1882 and 1980, Contributing Building

This two-story Queen Anne building features asymmetrical massing: a polygonal tower with flared, pointed metal roof, bowed eastern facade bay with broad front gable roof, and a one-story bay window on the west elevation. Although altered with the addition of cast stone and Masonite siding, the building retains a number of Queen Anne and Eastlake details including stained glass-framed upper sash in the tower, truss-work frieze with ornate brackets, a bracketed bay window on the west elevation, and an ornate front gable with beadboard and an elaborate truss-work design around a large center rosette. The building rests on a brick veneer and stuccoed foundation and has a standing seam metal roof. The storefront includes three modern glass entry doors and plate glass windows. The house is thought to contain as its core, the c.1843 house built by cabinet-maker/undertaker Christian Snidow. The property was inherited by Alice Dunklee in 1882 who operated a millinery shop here. Lester's Foto Shop (owned by Doug D. Lester, III) operated in the building from 1963 until 1988.

WEST MAIN STREET, North Side

Southwest quadrant of Courthouse Square, War Memorial 1953 (VDHR# 154-5025-0054)
Contributing Object

This tripartite monument made of Georgia granite has modest Art Moderne styling and gives tribute to men killed in World War I, World War II and the Korean War. Erected by Montgomery County American Legion Post No. 59, the memorial was dedicated on May 31, 1953. The memorial originally carried 105 names, although more were added later. It was placed beside a large tree that was removed in 1975.

4 W. Main St., Barnes-Surface Motor Co. (VDHR# 154-5025-0030 / 154-0025), 1911 and c.1920, Contributing Building

This three-story common bond brick Commercial Style building is four bays wide with paired one-over-one sash windows in the upper floors and multi-light storefront windows with a central single entry. The building has a dropped denticulated cornice. The building was originally two stories with the third floor added about 1920. It has recently had paint removed revealing the original brick and the original painted signs. Built as a Ford dealership in 1911 by Morris C. Miller for Sidney Sheltman, the building retains the original interior ramps that led to vehicle storage on the upper floors. The ramps were accessed from South Franklin Street, but today there are only single entries on that side. The building housed the dealership until 1945; it was the Farm Supply Center 1945-1958; and Bill Aldridge operated a furniture store here from 1962 until 2002.

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6 W. Main St., Virginia Inn Hotel (VDHR# 154-5025-0031 / 154-0024), c.1915 and c.1920,
Contributing Building

The Virginia Inn was opened by Fred Grant in this Commercial Style building built by Morris C. Miller around 1915. The common bond brick building was originally two stories, but expanded to three stories around 1920 at the same time as 4 W. Main Street. A hotel operated here under various management until about 1969. Additionally, the Western Union office, a coffee shop, a dress shop, and beauty shop also operated here. Bill Aldridge purchased the building and expanded his furniture store here in 1969. The building is similar to its eastern neighbor with dropped denticulated cornice, paired one-over-one sash windows, and plate glass storefront with central entry.

10-12 W. Main St., Proffitt Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0032 / 154-0022), 1933, Contributing Building

This two-story yellow brick building features modest Art Deco styling in the finial-like stone caps atop the pilasters that separate the facade into two bays on the upper level. The pilasters are ornamented with flat Art Deco inverted ziggarat motifs and rise from a stone and soldier-course brick cornice above the storefront. Between the pilasters are recessed panels with brick laid in a diamond pattern. Above the transomed one-over-one sash windows is a small cornice band featuring a triangular design. The storefront is a moder replacement with cornice, transoms, decorative cutwork on the pilasters and window surrounds, and a recessed entry. The building was built by A. P. Snead for W. K. and S. G Proffitt. Miller Drug was the first tenant in the building and remained here, under various management until 1980. The building also housed Farmers Supply Company, Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Co., W. J. Shelburne Real Estate and Insurance, Western Auto and other tenants at various times.

Outbuilding, c.2005, **Non-contributing Building**

This is a one-story brick veneer building with hip roof, double-leaf entry, and one-over-one windows with transoms.

Garage, c.1965, **Non-contributing Building**

This is a one-story concrete block garage with flat roof and single garage bay.

20 W. Main St., Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0033), 1916, Contributing Building
Built in 1916, this two-story brick building appears to have a brick veneer facade that was added in the mid-twentieth century. The metal casement windows in the upper level also date from this period. The storefront is a modern replacement with bracketed cornice, transom, and recessed entry. The building housed the William L. Pierce Insurance Agency on the second floor from 1916 until after 1975. The 1921 Sanborn shows a farm supplies business on the first floor and in

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1932, Kroger Grocery moved into the building and remained until the company built a new supermarket building at the western boundary of the district in 1957.

22 W. Main St., First National Bank (VDHR# 154-5025-0034 / 154-0021), 1905 and 1937, Contributing Building

A Mr. Gray of Blacksburg constructed the original Neoclassical building for the First National Bank in 1905. The bank was remodeled in 1937 with an austere Art Deco-style limestone exterior featuring a slightly recessed center bay that rises higher at the roofline. A stepped low-relief motif marks the location of the central entry. Windows are one-over-one sash on the upper floor. The original storefront has been removed and the building is mothballed with a lattice security gate. The bank operated here until 1968 and the building was later occupied by Wall's Jewelry.

26 W. Main St., Dr. T. H. Clarke House, (VDHR# 154-5025-0035 / 154-0020) c.1860 and 1881, Contributing Building

This house was built about 1860, probably for tailor William Davis and his wife Euphemia Baylor Davis. William Davis, Jr. and his wife Etta acquired the property in 1874 and added a porch in 1881. The polygonal bay likely dates from the same period. Etta Davis operated a boarding house here in the 1890s. Dr. William Lloyd had his office and home here beginning about 1932 and Dr. Thomas Clarke's office and home were here from 1938 until 1986. The office was located in the left side of the building. The house is a side-gable two-story building with a polygonal ell in the western bay of the facade. The small entry porch has brackets at the cornice, dropped finials in the center of the porch lintel arches, and square supports with molding and plinth blocks. The entry has a transom. The building is sheathed in vinyl siding with one-over-one replacement windows and standing seam metal roof.

Garage, c.1965, **Non-contributing Building**

This is a front-gable, two-bay, concrete block garage.

30 W. Main St., Leggett's Department Store (VDHR# 154-5025-0036), 1958, Contributing Building

This large, one-story building was built by Morris C. Miller for Leggett's Department Store and has simple Modernist details including an upper facade of white brick set in vertical panels separated by stacked brick bands over an impressive full-width aluminum canopy. The storefront is aluminum and plate glass framed by green granite. The expansive recessed entry is has two sets of double-leaf doors. The building was unique in Christiansburg for having roof-top parking accessible from the rear of the building. Leggett's (later Belk's) closed this store in 1988 and reopened in the newly constructed mall.

48 W. Main St., Medical Arts Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0037), c.1990, **Non-contributing Building**

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This brick veneer building has a one-story front section with an angled corner entry and diagonally-laid brick sign panels. The storefront is plate glass. At the rear (south) of the building is a two-and-a-half story Colonial Revival wing with standing seam roof, gabled dormers, eight-over-eight windows, quoins, and pedimented central entry bay.

100 W. Main St., Main Street Baptist Church (VDHR# 154-5025-0038 / 154-0017), 1909 and 1972, Contributing Building

An off-shoot of Cambria Baptist Church, Main Street Baptist was formed in 1907 and this Gothic Revival-style church was built in 1908-1909. The church was expanded to the rear in 1929 and a larger sanctuary was added at the rear (southwest) corner of the original in 1963. A third sanctuary addition was added in 1972 to the west of the 1963 addition. The 1909 section of the building is brick with a cross gable roof with pointed arch windows, buttresses, and a crenelated corner entry tower with pointed arch doors and pointed arch belfry openings. The two-story brick-veneer 1963 section extends from the rear of the original building to the west. The 1972 sanctuary is separated from the 1909 section by the setback of the 1963 building and gives the appearance of a free-standing building. It is Colonial Revival, with a pedimented entry portico ornamented by a garland design and Corinthian columns. The brick veneer building has arched window heads, wide frieze, and a stepped steeple with multi-light round window surmounted by a frame section featuring Palladian windows and pilasters topped by an octagonal pointed roof. The congregation moved to Peppers Ferry Road in 2011 and the building is currently for sale.

106 W. Main St., Ellet House (VDHR# 154-5025-0039), c.1930, Contributing Building

This two-story side-gable brick veneer house has six-over-six windows (three on the upper floor and four on the lower) and a central entry with sidelights. The partial-width Craftsman-style porch is supported by battered brick piers. The house has an end chimney and a standing seam metal roof. The 1921 Sanborn shows the original nineteenth-century house that sat adjacent to the street; the 1944 map shows the current building built by the Dr. Robert Ellett family about 1930. Dr. Ellett's daughter Sadie ran a kindergarten in the house.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1853 - 1963

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Miller, Morris

Works Progress Administration

Hickock, Samuel M. and James W.

Crush, James E.

Deyerle, David

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Montgomery County is located in the New River Valley area of southwest Virginia. Christiansburg, the county seat, was established in 1792. Christiansburg is laid out in a courthouse square plan with Main Street and Cross Street (now Franklin Street) intersecting at a public square. The Christiansburg Downtown Historic District encompasses the historic governmental, institutional, and commercial core of the town along with its town square and associated monuments. The collection of historic properties within the district is illustrative of towns that served as the seat of both government and commerce in the region from the late-nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries. The historic district encompasses sixty resources, of which all but twenty-two are contributing to the historic significance of the district.

The district is locally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A for commerce and community planning and development as well as Criterion C for architecture. Architecturally, the district's buildings represent the range of styles that were commonly constructed regionally during the period of significance and feature typical architectural details, such as parapets, storefronts, and decorative sign panels of the Commercial Style. Less common are the modest Art Deco details such as low-relief motifs. Though the earliest courthouses no longer stand, the historic monuments and 1937 WPA-built Post Office distinguish the town square. The period of significance is from 1853 with the construction of the Christiansburg Presbyterian church, the earliest intact resource in the district, and continues to 1963, the traditional fifty-year cutoff for properties that continued to have significance. Christiansburg remained a commercial hub in Montgomery County through the late twentieth century and is still the county seat. The historic district's collection of buildings retains its historic integrity with limited construction after the period of significance and alterations to individual historic buildings on the whole being those that do not significantly change the building's size, form, or facade.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Commerce and Community Planning and Development Contexts

After the formation of Wythe County from the western portion of Montgomery County in 1790, the county court was first moved to James Craig's house and tavern at Hans Meadow near modern-day downtown Christiansburg. Subsequently Craig gave title for 130 acres of land as "a place for erecting the public buildings for the County of Montgomery." Additional land may have been acquired from Samuel Kirby and Christina Crewey. A survey of the new town was made on May 21, 1790, and the name of Christiansburg first appears in records of the Virginia General Assembly on November 10, 1792. Most historians believe that the town was named for

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Colonel William Christian (1743—1786), an early settler in the New River Valley who became a Justice of Montgomery County in 1779 and was killed in a skirmish with Indians in Indiana in 1786.²

Christiansburg is laid out with two streets intersecting at a public courthouse square. Main Street runs roughly east to west and Franklin Street (originally called Cross Street) runs roughly north to south. The situation of the public square on a slight rise gave it prominence, while creeks to the east and west, fed by numerous springs in the vicinity, provided the water needed for people and livestock. Not surprisingly, the courthouse was the principal building in the new town. After several years of temporary quarters, it is thought that the Davis brothers built a new brick courthouse in the center of the public square in 1808. This construction gave the town a “Lancaster plan,” a reference to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Towns planned with regular gridded streets and public squares (used for a variety of purposes) were commonly built in Pennsylvania during the eighteenth century following the Philadelphia model. While there is no evidence that Christiansburg's Trustees set out to copy either the Philadelphia or Lancaster plans, they almost certainly would have had access to knowledge of these places. The earliest known Christiansburg town map (probably from 1806) shows no building or other designation in the center of the square, but the square itself is clearly demarcated. Christiansburg's town square is important as a rare example of the courthouse square plan in Southwest Virginia despite the alterations that have occurred within the square over time.³

The courthouse-centered Lancaster plan was relatively short lived in Christiansburg. The 1808 courthouse was rebuilt in c.1815. In 1836, a new courthouse was built on the southeast quadrant of the square and the older building was removed, no doubt as a practical device to improve traffic flow through the square. The form of the town square today is a clear remnant of the form as it was defined in 1836 and as such is a key component of Christiansburg's character and history. The 1836 courthouse was replaced on the same site in 1909, but was razed in 1979 when a new courthouse was constructed on the adjacent lot to the east.⁴

The growth of Christiansburg was relatively slow during the 1790s and the first decade of the 1800s. The laying out and reworking of the lots and streets continued for several years and lots were still being sold by the town trustees as late as 1827. The French prince Louis Phillippe visited Christiansburg on April 21, 1791, and wrote that it was “a tiny village of about ten houses.” This description seems to have been more or less accurate over the next decade. In 1793, five homeowners were licensed to operate ordinaries; much of their business likely came

² Lindon, Mary Elizabeth, ed., *Virginia's Montgomery County*, (Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center, 2009), 239-242.

³ Lindon, 242-243.

⁴ Lindon, 242-243.

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during the monthly court dates. Henry Edmundson's tavern, for example, opened in 1807 and offered accommodations, breakfast and dinner, as well as recreation in the form of gin and toddies and dancing.⁵

The Alleghany Turnpike was built between Salem and Christiansburg in 1806-1809, creating an important market route. Christiansburg became an increasingly large trade center. By 1835, the population of Christiansburg was 335 (230 white, 105 African American) and the town had forty-five houses, two common schools, five stores, three benevolent societies, two tan yards, two saddlers, three boot and shoe factories, four tailors, four hatters, one cabinetmaker, four tin workers, five attorneys, and three physicians.⁶

The 1850 Census found nineteen merchants in Montgomery County with nine of these being in Christiansburg: Lewis Amiss, William Campbell, Charles B. Gardner, Robert Gardner, Jacob H. Guggenheimer, Jeremiah Kyle, Hamilton W. Shields, William Wade, and William Wade, Jr. By 1860, the population had grown to 739 (454 white, 40 free African American, 245 enslaved African American). Edward Beyer's 1855 painting and Lewis Miller's sketches of the town from the 1850s indicate that development was confined to Main Street and Franklin Street and included a number of detached two-story frame and log buildings.⁷

The county seat became the center for salesmen and travelers of all types after the completion of the railroad through Montgomery County and the completion of a depot at Cambria (about a mile east of downtown Christiansburg) in 1854. The prosperity brought by the railroad resulted in the establishment of many new businesses, including the Bank of the Valley in a two-story brick building facing the northeastern quadrant of the town square in 1853.⁸

In Christiansburg and throughout the South, the 1860s and 1870s were a difficult period. The poverty and difficult transportation that came with the Civil War forced the closure of many businesses, including the Bank of the Valley in 1866. An editorial in the *Montgomery Messenger* in 1870 described Christiansburg in no uncertain terms: "Our county seat can never be anything else than a muddy dirty-street, one-house, dog-howling hamlet."⁹

Christiansburg's population declined slowly from 864 in 1870 to 659 in 1900. The population decline did not correspond to a decline in business, however, and by the 1880s business in town was booming. Fostered by national and regional trends towards reliance on purchased goods, improved roads, and prosperous farmers, Christiansburg hosted four wagon lots (or camping areas) to serve the numerous travelers conducting trade and court business.

⁵ Lindon, 243, 248, 384.

⁶ Lindon, 249.

⁷ Lindon, 252, 387.

⁸ Lindon, 249. 386-388.

⁹ Kanode, 10.

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Gray's map of 1877 shows that most of the buildings in the town were still clustered along Main Street and Franklin Street. Large homes and institutional buildings occupied elevated sites around the town center.¹⁰

Hill's 1897-1898 Business Directory described Christiansburg as "a growing and thriving town of 1,000 population, surrounded by a rich country." The directory listed the following firms doing business in Christiansburg:

Agricultural Implement Dealers: I. Sheltman; Spindle & Childress; Tallant, Hancock & Co.; J.C. Yost; A.J. Zink; and S.M. Zink

Bank: Bank of Christiansburg (Charles I. Wade, Cashier)

Barber: Wm. R. Leftwich

Blacksmiths: J.R. Fisher; Marrow & Woolwine

Booksellers & Stationers: Johnson & Hagan

Druggists: Robt. E. Hickok and Thompson & Hagan

Dry Goods: Aaron Graham; Johnston & Mosby; Kohen Bros; S. Sheltman, and J.W. Walters & Bro.

Fertilizer Dealers: Spindle & Childress and J.C. Yost

Furniture Dealers: Hickok & Bro. and Tallant & Co.

Hotel: Judkins House

General Merchants: J.B. Clark; R.E. Hickok; Johnston & Graham; McLain & Ott; S. Sheltman; and Spindle & Childress

Grocers: J.B. Clark & Co., Robert E. Hickok, Johnson & Mosby, and Aaron Graham (wholesale)

Hardware: Tallant, Hancock & Company

Millinery: Miss S.M. Smith

Photographer: J.H. Jewell

Seeds: Spindle & Childress

Stoves and Tinware: A.P. Tallant

Undertakers: Hickok & Bro. and Tallant & Co.

Watchmaker and Jeweler: H.D. Walters

Illustrating the economic recovery in the town during the last two decades of the nineteenth century is the chartering of the Bank of Christiansburg in 1888. The institution opened in the former Bank of the Valley building on the town square; its first president was Judge Archer A. Phlegar with founding directors Crockett Pierce, Rice Charlton and J. H. Johnson.¹¹ Another important long-operating business founded around this time was the Thompson-Hagan Drug Store, which was established in 1890 by John Hamilton Thompson, Ed Hagan, and Lynn Sheltman.¹²

¹⁰ Lindon, 265.

¹¹ Lindon, 392, 394.

¹² Kanode, 192.

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Morris C. Miller grew up in Christiansburg during the 1880s and 1890s and provides detail about life during that time. He recalled that nearly every family owned a cow and the public well located on the square was still a primary water source for domestic and fire use. The well continued to be used until the 1930s. As late as about 1900, there was no water works or sewer system in town.¹³

The flourishing business community in Christiansburg continued to grow in the first decade of the twentieth century, aided by regionally expanding railroads. The *Montgomery County, Virginia, Jamestown Exposition Souvenir* was produced in 1907 and found that “in the last ten years this town has almost trebled in population and property values. It has two banks, electric lights, good streets, a number of stores, churches of several denominations, good schools with modern buildings, lawyers, doctors and skilled workmen of every trade.” One of the banks was the Bank of Christiansburg and the other, the First National Bank, was founded in 1905. The firm erected a new building at 22 West Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0034 / 154-0021) in that year. Attorney M. Howard Tompkins was president, Charles R. Colhoun, cashier, and George W. Walters was assistant cashier. Thomas Leonard Watson's description in his 1907 *Mineral Resources of Virginia* illustrates that Christiansburg was also home to a number of small industrial concerns as well as banks and stores. He noted a flour mill, planing mill, lumberyard, a machine shop, and a cannery. These industries were primarily located on the edges of the town outside of the district boundary, but often within a few blocks of the town square.¹⁴

Christiansburg's population leaped upward between 1900 and 1910 (659 to 1,568) and continued to grow steadily during the first four decades of the twentieth century: 1,641 in 1920; 1,970 in 1930; and 2,291 in 1940. A 1928 business directory shows that Christiansburg had eight grocers, six general stores, five dry goods stores, two drugstores, two hardware/lumber companies, two feed and seed stores, two jewelers, a furniture store, the Virginia Inn (built at 6 W. Main St. c.1916), the Busy Bee restaurant, The First National Bank (VDHR# 154-0016), and many other businesses. S. G. Wimmer & Son's feed, seed, and hardware store opened in 1934. The firm occupied buildings at 103 and 107 North Franklin Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0006 and 154-5025-0007).¹⁵

The rise of the automobile during the 1910s and 1920s can easily be seen in Christiansburg. In 1928, there were twelve filling stations, auto service businesses, and car dealerships in town. This was due in part to the completion of the important Lee Highway (U.S. 11/Main Street) through town in 1926. One of the auto-related businesses was the Barnes-Surface Motor Company which opened at 4 W. Main St. (VDHR# 154-0025) in 1911.¹⁶

¹³ Lindon, 266-267.

¹⁴ Lindon, 396, 406.

¹⁵ Kanode, 28 and Lindon, 401.

¹⁶ Lindon, 403-404.

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By 1929, R. L. Humbert found in his *Industrial Survey: Montgomery County and City of Radford* forty-three retail and wholesale businesses employing 131 people in Christiansburg. Industry continued to be active with a grist mill, two canneries, the Blue Ridge Overall Company, Banner Cola Corporation, and Southern Dairies. Humbert noted that the forty-two merchants in Christiansburg topped the county's business volume with \$1,444,500 in 1928, followed by Blacksburg's thirty-four merchants with \$874,000.¹⁷

During the early twentieth century there was an increase in specialization with hardware, jewelry, dry goods, and other specialty shops competing with the ubiquitous general store. This trend was followed in the 1920s by the arrival of national chain stores. The Kroger grocery store, for example, was a regional chain with a store established at 20 West Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0033) in 1932. In 1957, the company built a modern, free-standing supermarket with a large parking lot at the western edge of the district (112 West Main Street).¹⁸

The population of Christiansburg grew rapidly between 1940 and 1960, especially during the 1950s, to reach 3,653 in 1960. Continuing to follow national trends, large department stores and office/commercial buildings were built downtown including the 1958 Leggett's Building at 30 W. Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0036) and the 1948 S. G. Wimmer Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0028) at 10 East Main Street, which housed three retail stores and twenty-eight offices. Tenants included Perdue Hardware (opened 1949), Ralph Wohlford Co. shoes (1949), and Epperly's Dress & Beauty Shop (1948). More modest in scale is the one-story brick building constructed at 45 W. Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0046) after a 1957 fire; Cato's opened here in 1958. In 1964, the towns of Cambria and Christiansburg merged, adding a significant number of people to Christiansburg. The population was 7,857 in 1970.¹⁹

Business volume grew even more rapidly than the population. In 1951, Christiansburg and Cambria together generated over eight million dollars in retail sales, an increase of more than six million dollars since 1929. This increase was due in part to rise of the automobile and the improvement in road conditions. Christiansburg reaped the benefit of these improvements to become an even larger trading center with shoppers from the rural areas of Montgomery County as well as neighboring counties. A circa 1953 Chamber of Commerce booster brochure argued that Christiansburg and Cambria together had a trading area of 50,000 people.²⁰

¹⁷ Lindon, 402.

¹⁸ Kanode, 204 and 196-197; and D. D. Lester Photograph Collection, Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center.

¹⁹ Kanode, 28.

²⁰ Lindon, 407-408.

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Between 1965 and 1975 Christiansburg and Blacksburg came to dominate the county's commercial activity to the near exclusion of other areas. Christiansburg's first shopping center, Hill's Plaza, opened on October 15, 1969. It was located on Roanoke Street (U.S. 11) about a mile east of downtown. The closure of the large stores in downtown began with Rose's in 1977. Leggett's closed their downtown store in 1988 and moved to the newly constructed New River Valley Mall. In an effort to compete, the former Rose's building was converted into Old Town Mall, a mini-mall, in 1985. In 2012, the Christiansburg Downtown Historic District is far from the commercial prowess of its heyday, but downtown offers a relatively stable commercial environment made up primarily of office space mixed with small businesses and restaurants.²¹

Architecture

The Christiansburg Downtown Historic District has a good collection of commercial buildings ranging in age from the late-nineteenth century through the 1960s. Buildings in the historic district are typically of masonry construction (both brick and concrete block) or brick veneer over frame construction as was common throughout Montgomery County and beyond during the early and mid-twentieth century. The majority of these buildings tend to be modestly executed versions of popular national styles, most often the Commercial Style with features such as parapets, recessed storefronts, transoms, and occasionally decorative brick-trimmed sign panels. The c.1915 Rice's Pharmacy / Shelton & Walters Building at 41 W. Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0045 / 154-0016), for example, is among the oldest and best preserved commercial buildings in the district. The two-story painted-brick Commercial Style building has segmental-arch window heads and a pressed tin cornice with large brackets. Another early Commercial Style example is the Barnes-Surface Motor Company Building at 4 W. Main St., (VDHR# 154-5025-0030 / 154-0025) built in 1911 featuring multi-light storefront windows and a dropped denticulated cornice. A later example is the large S. G. Wimmer Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0028) built in 1948 at 10 East Main Street. The building features paired pilasters and decorative sign panels. Later and even more modest are several one-story brick veneer buildings built in the late 1950s. The building at 45 West Main Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0046) is a representative example with an aluminum and plate glass storefront.

A few commercial buildings in the district also represent the Art Deco, Moderne, and Modern styles that are less commonly seen in Montgomery County and display well-executed details, sometimes using the less common materials of stone and formed concrete. A well-preserved two-story example is the yellow brick Proffitt Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0032 / 154-0022) built at 10-12 W. Main Street in 1933. Art Deco motifs include flat Art Deco inverted ziggurats, recessed panels with brick laid in a diamond pattern, and a small cornice band featuring a triangular design. Much more austere is the First National Bank Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0034 / 154-0021) built in 1905 and remodeled in 1937. The smooth limestone facade features a slightly recessed center bay that rises higher at the roofline. A stepped low-relief motif marks the location of the central entry.

The one-story brick ABC Store at 100 North Franklin Street (VDHR# 154-5025-0017) was built in 1954 and is a rare example of an Art Moderne building in Christiansburg and

²¹ Lindon, 411-413.

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features a stucco upper facade with stuccoed fluted pilasters and star ornamentation; green granite bulkheads; and curved glass block corners between the two recessed entries.

Buildings with Modernist stylistic influences include the Smith Commercial Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0024) at 21 E. Main Street with cream-colored tile blocks, a band of metal casement windows, and extending brick end walls framing the facade. Much larger is the 1958 Leggett's Department Store (VDHR# 154-5025-0036) at 30 W. Main Street. The simple Modernist details include an upper facade of white brick set in vertical panels separated by stacked brick bands over an aluminum and plate glass storefront framed by green granite. The storefront is protected by an impressive full-width aluminum canopy.

There are three churches in the district. The two earliest are Greek Revival-style brick buildings constructed in 1853 and 1855. The latter, the Methodist Church (VDHR# 154-5025-0005 / 154-0009) is non-contributing due to the addition of a later brick exterior. The Christiansburg Presbyterian Church (VDHR# 154-5025-0049 / 154-0003), however, is very well preserved. Located at 107 W. Main St., the church has a low-pitched, front-facing hip roof with a prominent front-gable pediment; wide, plain cornice; double-height pilasters; and a four-tier steeple. The architecture of Main Street Baptist Church at 100 W. Main St. (VDHR# 154-5025-0038 / 154-0017) reflects its later construction date of 1909. The original section of the church is Gothic Revival with a cross-gable roof, pointed arch windows, buttresses, and a crenelated corner entry tower with pointed arch doors and pointed arch belfry openings. The building has two mid-twentieth century additions including a large Colonial Revival-style sanctuary.

Christiansburg's place as county seat means that the downtown holds a number of governmental buildings. Among the most architecturally notable of these is the Christiansburg Post Office (VDHR# 154-5025-0026/ 154-0027) built in 1937. The well-preserved building was built by the Works Progress Administration and retains an interior mural entitled *The Great Road* painted in 1938 by WPA artist John DeGroot. The exterior of the one-story post office is Colonial Revival with a central blind arch with eagle motif, fluted pilasters, dentils, and louvered cupola. The post office faces the town square, which is home to important monuments such as the 1883 Confederate Memorial, the 1953 War Memorial, and the Constitution Oak planted about 1902. Nearby is the Old Clerk's Office / Phlegar Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0019 / 154-0007), a c.1898 building containing the 1812 Montgomery County Clerk's office in its lower level. The building as it appears today is dominated by a double-tier Queen Anne style porch with turned posts, decorative brackets, turned balusters, and a spindle work frieze. Next door is the Taylor Office Building (VDHR# 154-5025-0020), which served as office space for a number of attorneys. Built about 1870, the two-story brick building has a small classical portico with Corinthian columns and bracketed cornice

The houses within the district tend to carry few stylistic details, reflecting instead their period of construction with relatively unadorned forms. The one-story Curan-Gill House (VDHR# 154-5025-0009) at 117 N. Franklin St. may date to c.1853, but largely dates to a c.1913 remodeling with two front-facing gables with gable returns and a glass-enclosed porch between the gables. Architectural details are limited to segmental arch heads. Similarly, the two-story Dr. T. H. Clarke House (VDHR# 154-5025-0035 / 154-0020) dates primarily from an 1881 remodeling with a polygonal bay and small Queen Anne-style entry porch with brackets and dropped finials. The two-story hip-roof weatherboard-sheathed Presbyterian Manse (VDHR# 154-5025-0050 / 154-0015) at 111 W. Main St. was built in 1876 and is the most ornate house in the district. It is a late rendition of the Greek Revival style with peaked surrounds and the hip-

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roofed porch is supported by Ionic columns. The latest house in the district is the two-story brick-veneer Ellet House (VDHR# 154-5025-0039) built about 1930. Its modest Craftsman style references include the partial-width porch supported by battered brick piers.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

D. D. Lester Photograph Collection. Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center, Christiansburg, Virginia.

Kanode, Roy. *Christiansburg, Virginia: small town America at its finest*, 2005.

Lindon, Mary Elizabeth, ed. *Virginia's Montgomery County*, Christiansburg: Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center, 2009.

Pulice, Michael J. *Nineteenth-Century Brick Architecture in the Roanoke Valley and Beyond: Discovering the True Legacies of the Deyerle Builders*. Historical Society of Western Virginia, 2011.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

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Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): VDHR # 154-5025

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property approximately 19.844 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

X NAD 1927 or ___ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 17 Easting: 552620 Northing: 4109160

2. Zone: 17 Easting: 552360 Northing: 4108860

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3. Zone: 17	Easting: 552180	Northing: 4109040
4. Zone: 17	Easting : 552180	Northing: 4109310
5. Zone: 17	Easting : 552100	Northing: 4109400
6. Zone: 17	Easting : 552260	Northing: 4109540

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Christiansburg Downtown Historic District is shown as a solid line on the accompanying map labeled “Christiansburg Downtown Historic District National Register Historic District, Montgomery County, Virginia,” at a scale of 1:200.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Christiansburg Downtown Historic District encompasses the greatest concentration of pre-1963 contributing resources within their appropriate historic settings. Most boundary lines follow roads and property lines, however, some portions of the larger lots are excluded to avoid including large tracts without historic resources.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Sherry Joines Wyatt
organization: _____
street & number: 102 Junkin St.
city or town: Christiansburg state: VA zip code: 24073
e-mail: sherryjwyatt@gmail.com
telephone: (540) 392-8268
date: November 28, 2012

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

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- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

The following information is common to all photographs:

Name of Property: Christiansburg Downtown Historic District

City or Vicinity: Christiansburg

County: Montgomery County State: Virginia

Photographer: Sherry Joines Wyatt

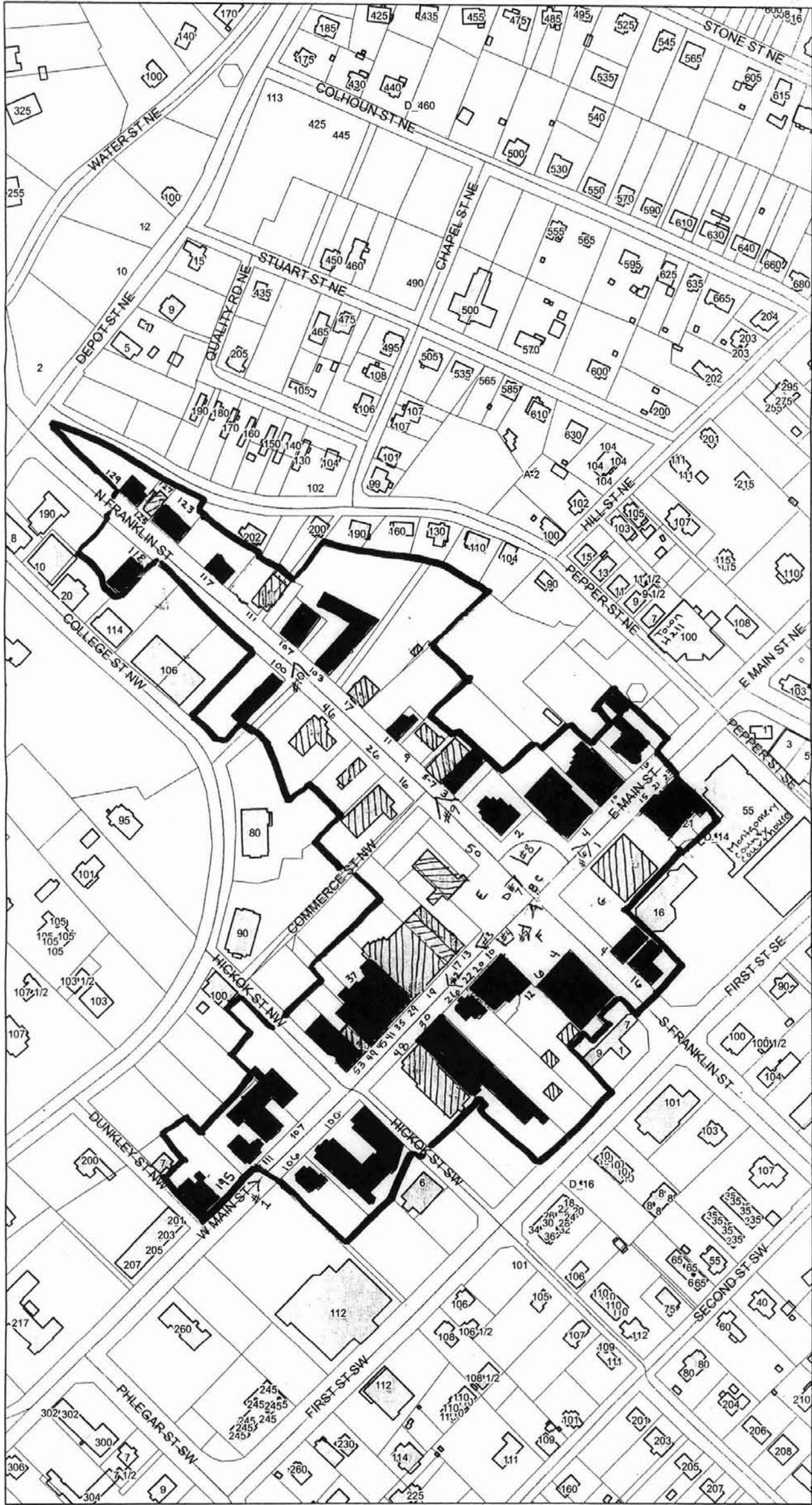
Date Photographed: October 10 and October 31, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera

- #1 Looking East from 111 West Main Street
- #2 Looking West from 26 West Main Street
- #3 Looking West from 13 West Main Street
- #4 Looking West from 10 West Main Street
- #5 Looking Southeast, Courthouse Square; 1979 Courthouse in background
- #6 Looking East from 4 East Main Street
- #7 Looking Northeast, Courthouse Square; Post Office at left; Constitution Oak at right
- #8 Looking Southwest, Courthouse Square; Confederate Memorial and Constitution Oak
- #9 Looking North from 3 North Franklin Street
- #10 Looking North from 107 North Franklin Street

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

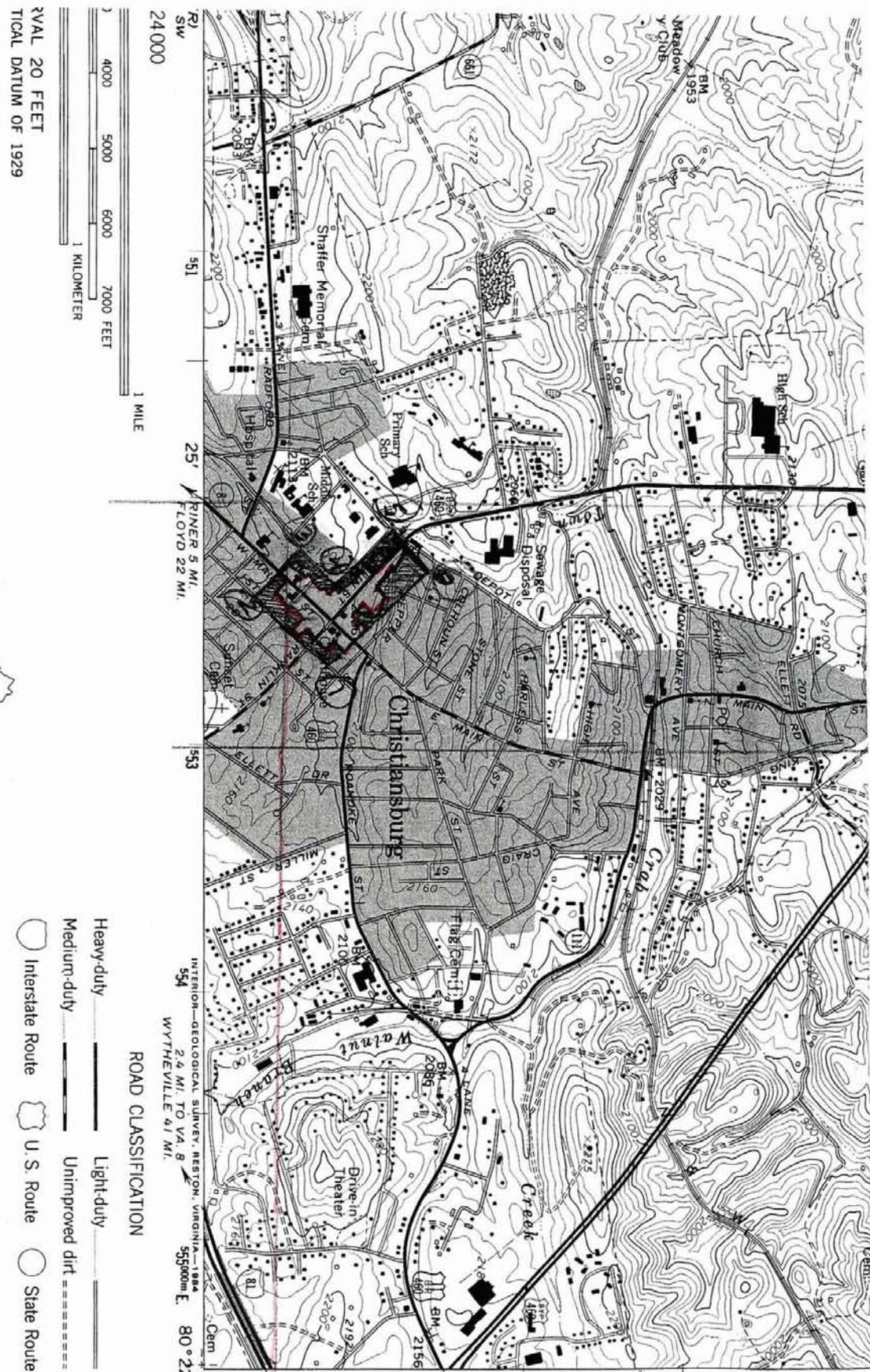
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Christiansburg Downtown National Register Historic District,
Christiansburg, Montgomery County, Virginia

Christiansburg Downtown Historic District - Christiansburg, Montgomery County, VA

- KEY:
- National Register Boundary
 - Town Boundary
 - Contributing
 - Contributing
 - Noncontributing
 - Photo View
 - A) Courthouse Square [Contributing site]
 - B) Constitution Oak [Part of Square]
 - C) Confederate Memorial [Contributing]
 - D) 1976 Bicentennial Monument [Non-contributing]
 - E) 1992 Town Bicentennial Marker [Non-contributing]
 - F) War Memorial [Contributing]
 - G) 1909 Courthouse Eagle [Non-contributing]



- ROAD CLASSIFICATION**
- Heavy-duty
 - Medium-duty
 - Interstate Route
 - U. S. Route
 - State Route
 - Light-duty
 - Unimproved dirt

BLACKSBURG, VA.

37080-84-TF-024

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Blacksburg
Parrish H. D.
Montgomery County, VA

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SHAWSVILLE 7 MI.
SALEM 27 MI.

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4109 040
552 360
4108 860
4109 160
552 620

4109 310
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DENVER, COLORADO 80225,
CHARLOTTEVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST