

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LISTED ON:	
VLR	06/21/2012
NRHP	08/22/2012

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Seay's Chapel Methodist Church

other names/site number VDHR No. 032-0188

### 2. Location

street & number 4916 Shores Road N/A not for publication

city or town Palmyra N/A vicinity

state VA code VA county Fluvanna code 065 zip code 22963

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  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  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  local

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Virginia Department of Historic

#### Resources

Title \_\_\_\_\_ 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

### 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)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
2	2	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

n/a

n/a

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

EDUCATION: School

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Second Gothic Revival,

Carpenters Gothic

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE: fieldstone; CONCRETE

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: STONE: Slate

other:

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**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

Summary Description

Seay's Chapel Methodist Church is located in southern Fluvanna County adjacent to the James River on Shores Road. Rural forested land surrounds the property to the north, east and west with a large open unfenced field located along the southern property line. The 1893 church is one-story in height with outside dimensions of 40 feet long and 30 feet wide. The church replaced an earlier 1832 frame church which had been located approximately two miles to the north of the present building. The church façade is shaded by the Seay Oak, a white oak that predates the church with an estimated age of 200 years. The building is an excellent example of a vernacular country church with Gothic Revival and Carpenter Gothic influences, featuring frame construction, a roof of slate with ornamental wooden brackets under the eaves and along the gables, a rectangular wooden panel design in the front and rear gables and an interior that remains unmodified from its original 1893 configuration. Immediately adjacent to the church on the north is the church cemetery and picnic shelter and behind the church to the west is a modern detached fellowship hall.

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**Narrative Description**

**(See Continuation Sheet)**

**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)

Property is:

- 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1893 – 1902

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1893

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Anderson, James Henry (Builder)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The Period of Significance is 1893 – 1902, encompassing the start and completion of the church's construction.

**Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)**

The historic significance of Seay's Chapel is found in its important architectural value. The church is an architecturally significant example of an unaltered late 19<sup>th</sup> century small frame chapel with Gothic Revival and Carpenter Gothic influences. Such small frame churches were once common in rural Virginia communities serving as a focal point of a community. Of such buildings that remain standing, many are shuttered, having closed when congregations became too small to support the church. Even fewer such church buildings remain unaltered from their original form because as religious congregations grew so grew the need for additional worship and fellowship space often as an attached addition. Seay's Chapel is a rare example of an architecturally significant small frame chapel with Gothic Revival and Carpenter Gothic influences that remains structurally unaltered while continuing to serve the same small rural community as it has since 1893.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

**See Continuation Sheet**

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

**See Continuation Sheet**

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

**See Continuation Sheet**

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Bugg, Jr., Mrs. Thomas Jackson. History of Seay's Chapel Church Shores, Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Charlottesville, Virginia: Mint Printing Company], 1973.

Fluvanna County Old Style Deed Book 10, pp. 97-98 (1830).

Fluvanna County Deed Book 27, p. 96 (1892).

Fluvanna County Deed Book 53, p. 321 (1958).

"History of Seay's Chapel" [Unpublished manuscript in the files of the Fluvanna County Historical Society, Palmyra, Va.]

Holloway, Jerry L. The Churches of Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Richmond, Virginia: Cavalier Press], 1966.

Seay, Andrew Jackson. An unpublished personal journal covering the periods of 1895-1911 in Shores, Fluvanna County, Virginia.

Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission. Historic Resource Identification and Survey of Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Charlottesville, Virginia], December 1993.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other: Fluvanna County Historical Society
- Name of repository: **Va. Dept. of Hist. Resources, Richmond, VA**

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### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 1.964  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>17</u> Zone	<u>267474.7</u> Easting	<u>4180773.9</u> Northing	3	<u>                    </u> Zone	<u>                    </u> Easting	<u>                    </u> Northing
2	<u>                    </u> Zone	<u>                    </u> Easting	<u>                    </u> Northing	4	<u>                    </u> Zone	<u>                    </u> Easting	<u>                    </u> Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

This is the property listed as Fluvanna County Tax Map parcel 57 A 15, which is currently owned by the trustees of Seay's Chapel Methodist Church.

This property (with an additional acre deeded by the Griffin family in 1958, Fluvanna County Deed Book 53 p. 321) is the same land deeded by the Seay family in 1892 to the Methodist Episcopal Church South, listed in Fluvanna County Deed Book 27 p. 96.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The approximately two-acre property lies in an oak grove along the west side of Shores Road (State Route 640). The church is located on the southeast corner of the property facing east. The cemetery and wooden picnic shelter are to the north of the church and the detached fellowship hall is behind the church to the southwest corner of the property. The area north and west around the cemetery and fellowship hall is wooded. The historic boundary encompasses the historic setting and original acreage of the property.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Andrew V. Sorrell  
organization Seay's Chapel Methodist Church date 30 March 2012  
street & number 637 Courthouse Rd. telephone 434-589-8634  
city or town Fluvanna state VA zip code 22963  
e-mail Avsorrell80@gmail.com

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Photolist**

**Name of Property:** Seay's Chapel Methodist Church

**City or Vicinity:** Palmyra

**County:** Fluvanna **State:** Virginia

**Photographer:** Andrew V. Sorrell

**Date Photographed:** June 2005, April 2009, November 2010, August and November 2011 and March 2012

1. **View:** Façade Elevation Facing East -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0001
2. **View:** East (Façade) and North Elevations -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0002
3. **View:** East (Façade) and North Elevations and Cemetery -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0003
4. **View:** North Elevation and Cemetery -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0004
5. **View:** West Elevation (rear) -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0005
6. **View:** South Elevation -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0006
7. **View:** Interior Facing West to Pulpit -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0007
8. **View:** Interior Facing East to Entrance -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0008
9. **View:** Slate Church Sign Adjacent to North Elevation -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0009
10. **View:** Miles-Bugg Fellowship Hall Facing West -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0010
11. **View:** Cemetery and North Elevation -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0011
12. **View:** Picnic Shelter Next to Northern Property Line -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0012
13. **View:** Seay's Chapel Oak Next to East (Façade) Elevation -- VA\_Fluvanna County\_Seay's Chapel Methodist Church\_0013

**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Seay's Chapel United Methodist Church c/o Andrew V. Sorrell, Trustee Chairman

street & number\* 637 Courthouse Rd. telephone 434-589-8634

city or town Palmyra state VA zip code 22963

**\*Note: The church does not receive mail at its physical address, it is received at the home address of the trustee chairman. The above address is the mailing address of the church.**

**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 18 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.

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Detailed Narrative Description

Seay's Chapel Methodist Church is a frame building with Gothic Revival and Carpenter Gothic detailing. The church building was built between 1893 and 1902 on Shores Road situated centrally within the community of Shores. The building replaced an earlier 1832 frame church that had been located two miles to the north in the community of Seven Islands. As the population of the nearby Seven Islands community dwindled after the Civil War, the community of Shores grew, necessitating the need to relocate the church closer to the population it served. The church sits in an oak grove on high ground above the James River. A small cemetery with graves dating from the 1890s is adjacent to the church to the north as is a small modern picnic shelter. The church façade is shaded by the Seay Oak, a 200 year old white oak. To the west behind the church is a modern detached fellowship hall that provides restroom, kitchen and meeting space.

The simple frame chapel is a tangible reminder of the many simple country churches that once served rural Virginia. The building has remained true to the builder's original design and form, and no structural alternations have been made to the church since its construction. The chapel is 40 feet long and 30 feet in width in outside dimensions, with walls of weatherboard painted white. The building is front-gabled, exhibiting cornice returns at the pediment with ornamental brackets under the eaves and along the steep front and rear open gables. The front and rear gables exhibit a rectangular wooden panel design that is evocative of the Carpenter Gothic style. The building features a low foundation of fieldstone piers with concrete block added between piers to enclose the foundation. The roof is of plain-patterned slate which is original to the building. There are three large narrow windows on each side (all original) each having a two-over-two sash. The stationary upper sash of each window opening concludes in a pointed gothic arch. Since the 1960s, the window panes have been colored cathedral glass. Historic images show dark wooden shutters once protected the window openings. The wooden shutters were removed in the late 1950s and stored in a barn on an adjacent property. The barn, with the shutters within, burned in the 1970s. The church plans to replace the wooden shutters as funding permits.

The façade (which faces Shores Road, State Route 640) has two original double-leaf doorways with each opening having a pointed two-light arch transom above in colored cathedral glass. As a protection from the elements, storm doors were added in the 1960s. The northern double-leaf doorway is entered from four concrete steps. A context-sensitive wooden handicap ramp was

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constructed in 2000 to provide easier access to the southern double-leaf doorway. The original 1941 electrical service, installed on the façade of the building between the door openings, was relocated to the northern side elevation in 2008 when the electrical service was upgraded. At the same time, the electrical service was changed from overhead to underground to reduce the power line's visibility. The exterior of the church remains in an excellent state of preservation retaining its historic integrity.

The double doorways lead into the aisles of the sanctuary. The original one-room configuration of the building remains, retaining uncompromised historical integrity. The plain box pews are original and may have been moved from the church's predecessor, the Seven Islands meeting house. Demonstrating hand-craftsmanship, the pews are planed of large heart pine boards and attached with cut nails. The pews are divided by the two aisles into a wide center section flanked by two narrow sections. The 4 ½-inch wide heart pine floorboards are original and darkened from repeated treatments of linseed oil over the years. A portion of the walls and the ceiling are clad in white narrow beaded pine matchboard. The walls are divided by a waist-high chair rail consisting of simple two-inch molding. Below the chair rail is wainscot in which the matchboard is applied vertically. Above the chair rail the walls are clad in plaster painted pale green. The vaulted ceiling is clad with narrow boards running the same direction as the ridge of the roof. The church was originally heated by a large round black wood burning stove located at the center of the building, with a metal stove pipe extending to the ceiling where a brick chimney continued the flue through the ridge of the roof (since removed). Though no longer in use today, two exterior brick chimneys are located on both side elevations, piercing the eaves. The chimney on the southern elevation was added in approximately 1938 and the large wood burning stove was moved from the center of the chapel to the new chimney. The round openings to the chimneys are currently covered with removable decorative metal plates. With the availability of electricity, an oil heater was purchased, replacing the large round wood stove around 1942. Later, around 1958, the other exterior brick chimney was added on the northern side elevation and another oil heater was purchased.

The altar occupies a semi-circular platform about seven inches high, and is cordoned behind a semi-circular balustrade with slender turned balusters, molded hand rail, and robust turned newels at each end. The lectern stands behind the altar on the main platform, but is further elevated by another semi-circular seven-inch platform. The simple pine pulpit furniture is original and was purchased with money raised by lawn parties and box lunches at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. On the lower platform, pews are arranged

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perpendicular to the main body of pews, defining a small choir loft at the northwestern corner of the building. Flanking the lower platform, adjacent the northern wall of the chapel, is a modern piano. Provided as memorials to the charter members of the church in 1960, yellow and green swirled cathedral glass panes replaced the plate-glass panes in the windows and door transoms. Small brass plaques are on each window with the name of the person honored as well as the donor. The cathedral glass panes in the northern side elevation were blown out by a severe thunderstorm in 2003 and were replaced with similar colored (pink and green swirled) cathedral glass panes. The interior of the church remains in an excellent state of preservation retaining its historic integrity.

Adjacent to the church to the north is a contributing historic cemetery containing 132 graves that occupies approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre of land. The earliest marked stones date to 1898. Families buried here include members of the Bugg, Johnson, Minter, Moon, Nixon, and Seay families. The gravestones that date to the late 19th and early 20th centuries are the most ornate, several possessing considerable artistic value. The largest memorials, those of church namesake, Andrew Jackson Seay (d.1911) and A. Ivy Robertson (d. 1900), are more than three feet tall and made of marble with square, stepped bases. Other burials of note include Ensign Elizabeth Irene Seay (d. 1943), believed to be the first commissioned WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) officer killed in the line of duty during World War II, and Mrs. Eleanor Crellin Killey (d. 1851) who, while traveling with her young family on the nearby James River and Kanawha Canal, had the misfortune of drowning one cold December day in 1851. She was buried on the bluffs overlooking the canal and remained there for nearly sixty years until her son, Dr. Phillip Killey of Mercer, West Virginia, had her reinterred in the cemetery at Seay's Chapel in August 1910. Other grave stones take the form of squared slabs, tall and slender tablets with rounded tops, or rectangular obelisks. Some lie flat in the ground and are nearly buried. The cemetery remains open for burial, and although interments are few, several are added each year. A perpetual maintenance fund was established in 1964 which is used to maintain the cemetery to this day.

Between the northern property line and the cemetery is a non-contributing post-and-beam wooden picnic shelter sheathed with asphalt shingles constructed in 1993. Behind the church to the west, is a detached non-contributing, one-story fellowship hall constructed in 2011 after fourteen years of planning and fund raising. The fellowship hall replaced a detached 1993 restroom building (which had replaced a simple privy) and a single-wide office trailer that had been used for Sunday school activities since 1998. The

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fellowship hall is clad in hardiplank siding painted white and sheathed in gray asphalt shingles that mimic the slate on the church. The size, orientation and design of the building, including the pitch of the roof, the dimensions of the tall narrow windows and the ornamental eave brackets, were chosen to compliment and not detract from the historic character of the church and property. The building enters into a main foyer from a double-leaf entry. The foyer contains restrooms and enters into the main assembly space with a kitchen and large serving counter on the southern side. A full basement is under the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and is accessed from an interior stairwell on the northern side of the building.

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Summary Statement of Significance

Seay's Chapel Methodist Church is architecturally significant as an example of a vernacular country church with Gothic Revival and Carpenter Gothic influences constructed of local materials that retains excellent integrity. The church is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture with a period of significance of 1893 - 1902. While still an active religious facility, Seay's Chapel qualifies as an exception to Criteria Consideration A for the church's architectural value. Once common to rural Virginia communities, many such small county churches have been significantly altered from their original configuration, while Seay's Chapel remains true to builder, James Henry Anderson's original design. Significant features of the church include the ornamental wooden brackets under the eaves and along the gables, the rectangular wooden panel design in the front and rear gables, and an interior that remains unmodified from its original 1893 configuration.

Seay's Chapel is one of seven Methodist churches constructed between 1772 and 1893 in Fluvanna County. The last two constructed, Palmyra and Seay's Chapel Methodist, were constructed by the same builder, James Henry Anderson, at approximately the same time. These buildings were mostly constructed in a traditional form with gable front entry, three to four large windows along the sides, and an altar opposite the entry on the interior. The decorative elements and exterior cladding of the buildings would vary according to congregational preference and influence from popular trends. Of the other Methodist churches in Fluvanna County, Seay's Chapel is the best-preserved example of the Gothic Revival church style and the only one that remains unaltered in its original form and site context while continuing to serve its original function as a place of worship.

Historical Background

Seay's Chapel Methodist Church sits in a bucolic rural setting surrounded by woods and farmland. The chapel is in a grove of large oak trees with English boxwoods along the north and south elevations. The façade of the chapel is shaded by the Seay Oak, a magnificent white oak believed to be over 200 years old. The property also contains an informational church sign (of slate), a historic cemetery with multiple examples of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century funerary art, a modern post-and-beam picnic shelter and a detached fellowship hall located behind the chapel to the west.

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The history of Seay's Chapel Methodist Church in Shores, Fluvanna County, Virginia, began with the establishment of Seven Islands as one of twenty-four church classes in the large Columbia Charge of the Methodist Church.<sup>1</sup> The Seven Islands class was deeded two acres of land to construct a meeting house on December 21, 1830, by Adam Skipworth Harrison (1787-1864) and his wife Appelona Pettus Harrison (1789-1860).<sup>2</sup> Church records on file in the Fluvanna Courthouse provide an irregular listing of church members and trustees for Seven Islands starting in 1832 through 1874. Though no longer standing, the frame Seven Islands meeting house was located on the road between the plantations of Thomas Shores, Jr. (1755-1841) to the south and Adam S. Harrison to the north, on a knoll above a spring in a grove of oaks approximately two miles north from the current location of Seay's Chapel. Today all that remains at the site of Seven Islands meeting house are the tumbled remains of the fieldstone piers and a chimney alone in a lonely grove of gnarled oaks.

After the railroad was placed along the towpath of the James River and Kanawha Canal in the 1880s, the community of Shores grew around a mill, store and railroad depot, while the community of Seven Islands declined.<sup>3</sup> Shores provided better access to the railroad and had Middleton Mills (a water powered grist mill) which had been rebuilt after being burned by Union calvary troops at the end of the Civil War. The mill at Seven Islands (built by Thomas Shores, Jr. in 1802) survived the Civil War, but burned from the spark of a passing train one blustery March night in 1895, not to be rebuilt. In order to continue to promote the cause of Christianity, Methodists in the community needed a new home. This new home came when local community leader, Andrew Jackson Seay (1835-1911) and his wife Josephine Bugg Seay (1841-1933) (both buried in the church cemetery), donated land on Shores Road for a new church in Shores. On October 28, 1892, a deed of gift was recorded in the Circuit Court clerk's office of Fluvanna County, providing one acre of land to five trustees for the purpose of promoting the cause of Christianity in the denomination of the Methodist Church, South.<sup>4</sup> This one acre is the present site of Seay's Chapel Methodist Church. The church property was later expanded in 1958 to nearly two acres to accommodate a larger cemetery area to the north and west of the chapel.<sup>5</sup>

When construction of the present church began in 1893, thirty-five members transferred membership from the Seven Islands class.<sup>6</sup> Seay's Chapel was constructed by Captain James Henry Anderson (1835-1918), a local carpenter and Confederate veteran who also constructed Palmyra Methodist Church. After finishing Palmyra Methodist ca. 1890, Captain Anderson started constructing

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Seay's Chapel.<sup>7</sup> According to Captain Anderson's son, Granville Anderson, while constructing Palmyra Methodist Church, Captain Anderson kiln dried the lumber he later used to build Seay's Chapel.<sup>8</sup> While constructing Seay's Chapel, Captain Anderson brought a load of building material to the site two times a week, enlisting local people to assist in hauling the material.<sup>9</sup> All of the slate for the roof was hauled by a team and wagon from the slate mines in Arvonnia in Buckingham County, fording the James River at Shores.<sup>10</sup>

Before Palmyra Methodist made significant 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations to their building (including adding a belfry, basement, attached portico and expanding the pulpit area) there was great similarity, in construction and materials used, between the two chapels.<sup>11</sup> Of the two chapels, Seay's Chapel remains as the best-preserved and least altered example, remaining true to its original architectural form and in the same rural surroundings and context as it was when constructed. It is probable that Seay's Chapel also remains as the only late 19<sup>th</sup> century Carpenter Gothic structure in central Virginia that still exists in its original form, is in an excellent state of preservation, and continues to serve its rural congregation as an active religious facility.

Church services were first held on the property in a one-room schoolhouse which had been located on the property just prior to the church's construction just north of the present chapel. The schoolhouse remained on the property until 1911 when another, larger school was built a mile to the north on Shores Road. While the church was framed, roofed and sheathed by 1895, the building was not completely finished and dedicated until 1902.<sup>12</sup> The congregation worked very hard in those early years to complete the interior (plastering and applying trimwork) and to raise money for furnishing the interior (pulpit furniture, the organ and other furnishings).<sup>13</sup>

Originally, the chapel was lit by two brass oil chandeliers, one of which hung from a long extension rod at the center of the building with five lamps and another on a similar rod over the organ in the northwest corner of the building. Oil lamps were also attached to each of the six windows.<sup>14</sup> A local African-American blacksmith, Mr. Tom Washington, served as the church custodian for many years, taking great pride in providing a fresh bucket of water and in keeping the brass oil lamps shining, filled with oil and lit for prayer meetings every Sunday evening and for other church events.<sup>15</sup> The Shores community received electricity in 1939 and the chapel was electrified in 1941 by several members of the congregation. After receiving electricity, the oil lamps were replaced by simple white globe fixtures that hung from the ceiling.<sup>16</sup> One of the original large brass oil burning lamps is still retained by a church family.

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Seay's Chapel Methodist Church

Fluvanna County , VA

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The bustling days of Shores as a commerce center ended over 55 years ago as modern highways replaced the railroad as the public's primary transportation choice. Now, Seay's Chapel is the last community building at Shores. In 1997 with membership low and Sunday attendance down to three, a special meeting was called to determine if Seay's Chapel should close its doors. Due in large part to how the congregation helped shape the lives of the community members many years ago, the church voted to continue, and grew in membership. Today, the congregation is vibrant and continues to grow. Seay's Chapel provides a special sense of place, history and commitment to the community just as it did when founded in 1893.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Seay's Chapel Methodist Church

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Fluvanna County, VA

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Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Jerry L. Holloway, The Churches of Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Richmond, Virginia: Cavalier Press], 1966.

<sup>2</sup> Fluvanna County Old Style Deed Book 10, Page 97-98 (1830).

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission. Historic Resource Identification and Survey of Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Charlottesville, Virginia], December 1993.

<sup>4</sup> Fluvanna County Deed Book 27, Page 96 (1892).

<sup>5</sup> Fluvanna County Deed Book 53, Page 321 (1958).

<sup>6</sup> Jerry L. Holloway, The Churches of Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Richmond, Virginia: Cavalier Press], 1966.

<sup>7</sup> "History of Seay's Chapel" [Unpublished manuscript in the files of the Fluvanna County Historical Society, Palmyra, Va.]

<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Thomas Jackson Bugg, Jr., History of Seay's Chapel Church Shores, Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Charlottesville, Virginia: Mint Printing Company], 1973.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "History of Seay's Chapel" [Unpublished manuscript in the files of the Fluvanna County Historical Society, Palmyra, Va.]

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Jackson Seay, An unpublished personal journal covering the periods of 1895-1911 in Shores, Fluvanna County, Virginia.

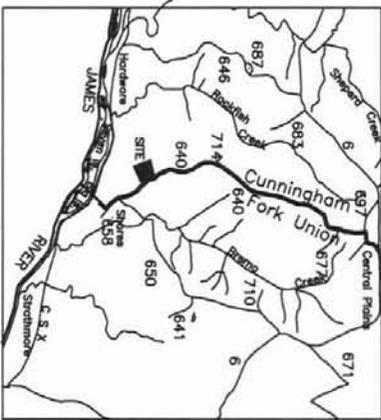
<sup>13</sup> Mrs. Thomas Jackson Bugg, Jr., History of Seay's Chapel Church Shores, Fluvanna County, Virginia. [Charlottesville, Virginia: Mint Printing Company], 1973.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

- General Notes:
1. Coplotted property and adjacent property are shown.
  2. No Wetlands exist on the property.
  3. Eire, Development, Site Coverage:
    - Building 2300 Sq. Ft. (2.6%)
    - Parking 2000 Sq. Ft. (2.4%)
    - Open Space 81,077 Sq. Ft. (95.0%)
  4. East Development, Site Coverage:
    - Building 3900 Sq. Ft. (4.5%)
    - Parking 8100 Sq. Ft. (9.5%)
    - Open Space 73,477 Sq. Ft. (86%)
  5. Building Schedule:
    - Church Bldg. Area = 1200 Sq. Ft.
    - 1200/75=16 parking spaces required including two handicapped spaces.
  6. Topographic information was taken from USGS Quad Map and contours are approximate.
  7. Other utilities may exist on property other than those shown and should be verified by contractor before excavation.
  8. Trees smaller than 12" shall be removed where necessary to provide room for proposed building, unless otherwise noted.



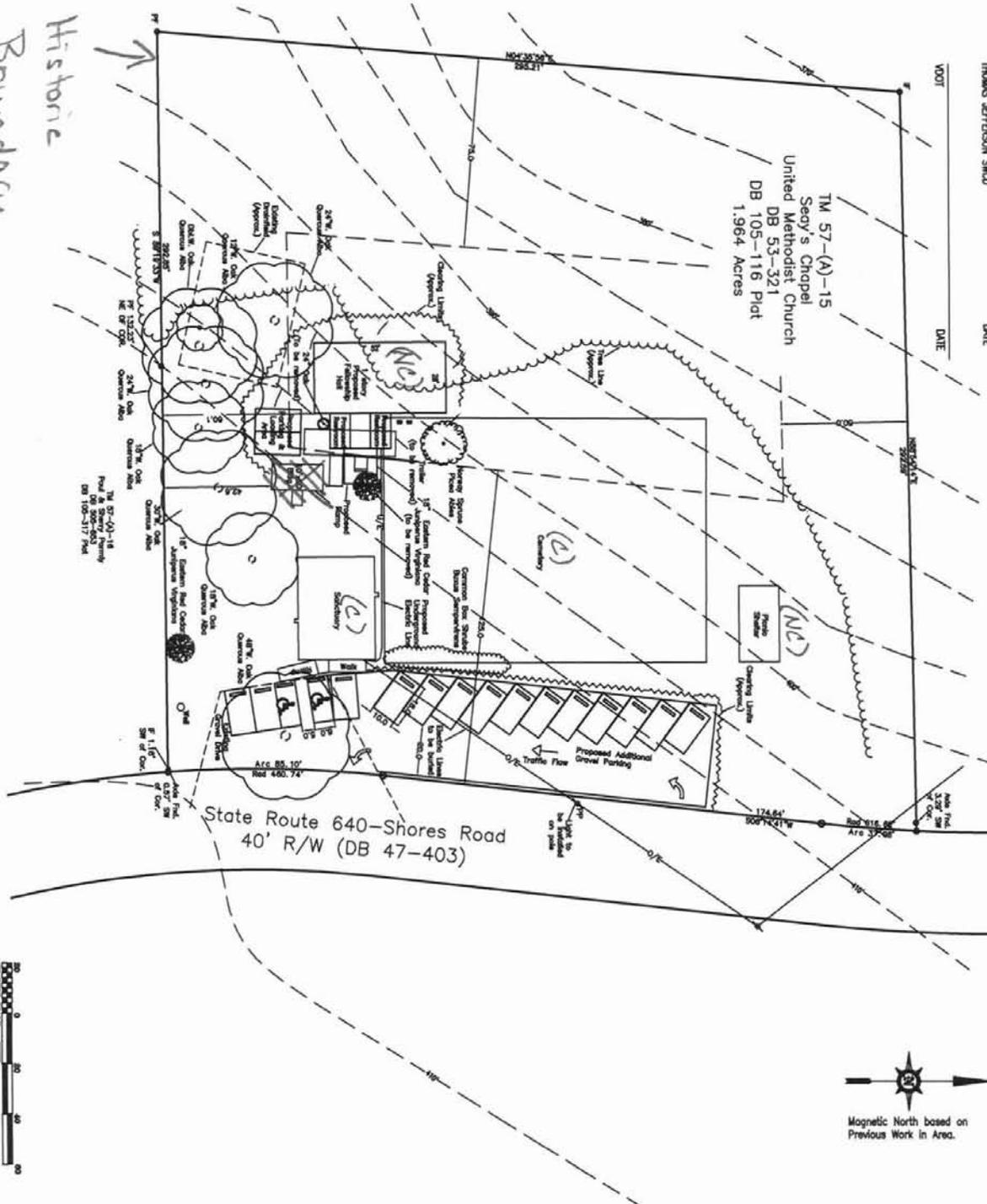
zoned A-1. FLUVANNA COUNTY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING DATE

THOMAS JEFFERSON SINC DATE

VOOT DATE

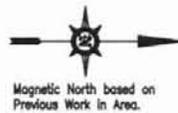
TM 57-(A)-15  
Seay's Chapel  
United Methodist Church  
DB 105-116 Plat  
1.964 Acres

TM 57-(A)-18  
Paul W. Seay, Planning  
DB 105-317 Plat

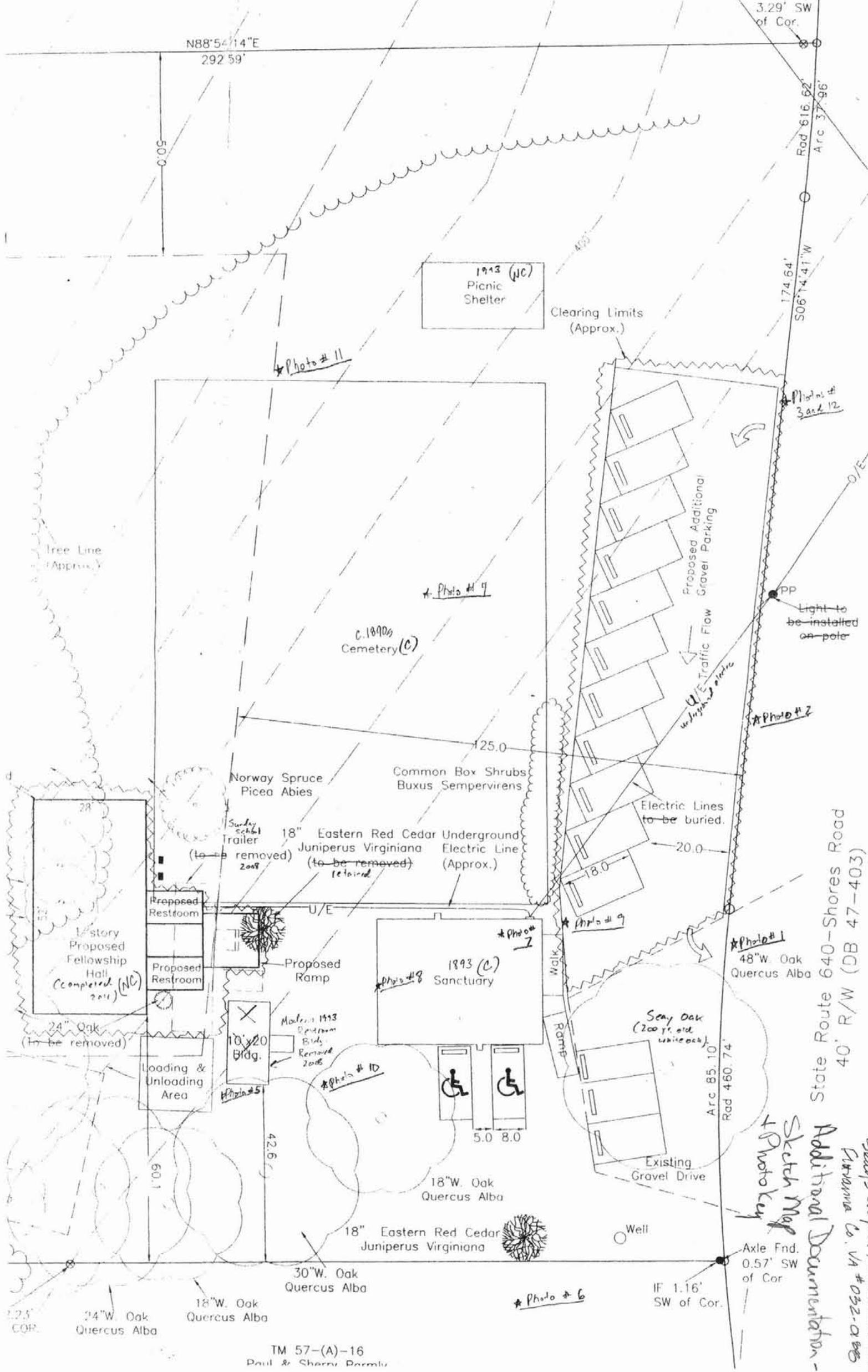


Seay's Chapel Methodist-Ch.  
Fluvanna County, VA  
#032-0188

LARGE  
If Iron Rod Found  
PP Power Pole



Drawing Title <b>MINOR SITE PLAN</b>	Project Title <b>SEAY'S CHAPEL FELLOWSHIP HALL TAX MAP 57 PARCEL 15 CUNNINGHAM DISTRICT, FLUVANNA COUNTY, VA</b>		<b>LUM'S LAND SURVEYS, INC.</b> PALMERA OFFICE CENTER 2-ND FLOOR POST OFFICE BOX 154 PALMERA, VA 22962-0154 PHONE: (434) 688-4886 FAX: (434) 688-4887
Drawing Scale: 1"=20' Drawn By: PYS File Name: 070015-SITEPLAN	Sheet No.: 1 of 1		

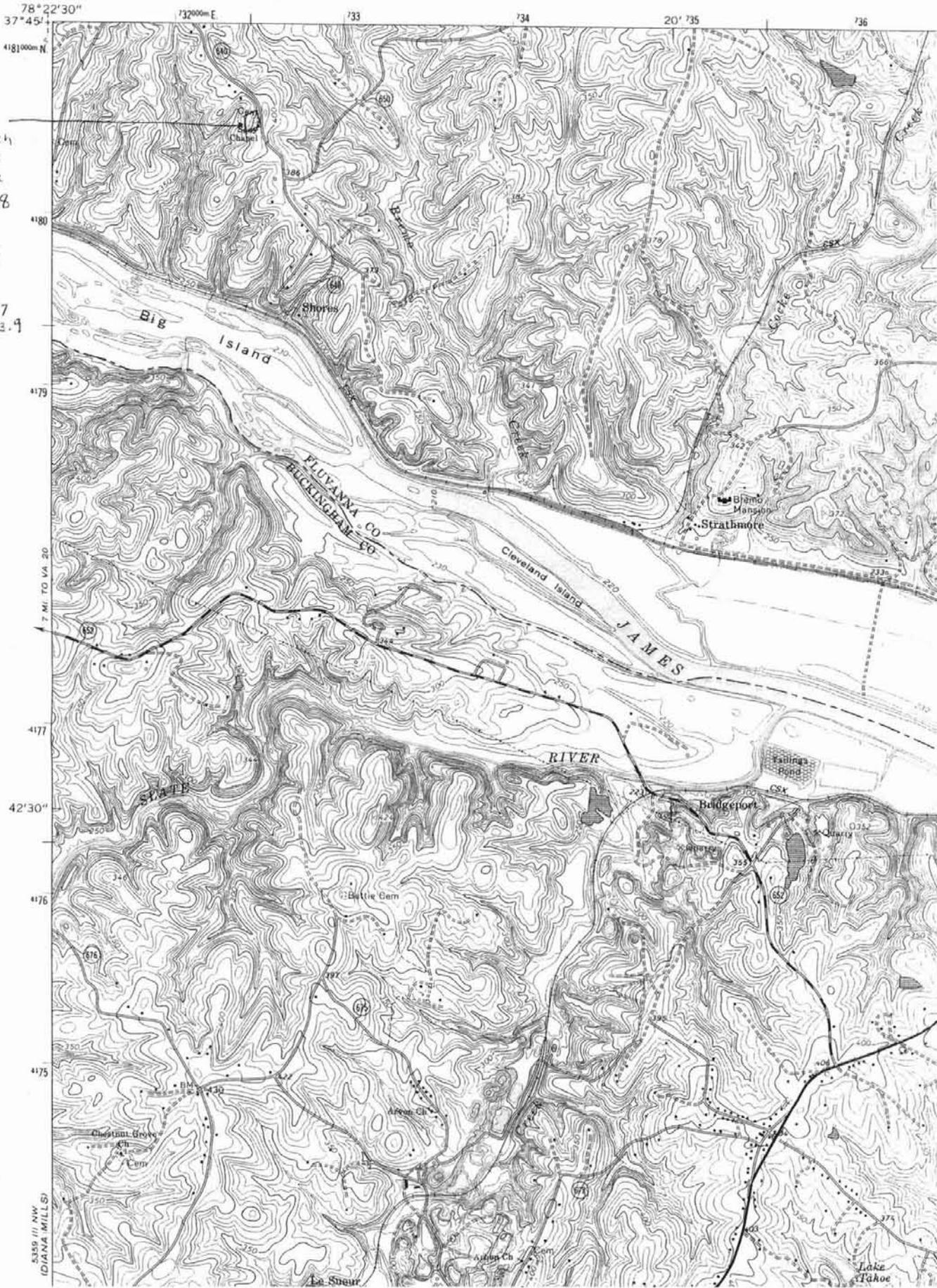


State Route 640-Shores Road  
 40' R/W (DB 47-403)  
 Additional Documentation -  
 Sketch Map  
 + Photo Key  
 Seeps common in VA #052-0188  
 Culpeper Co. VA

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONW  
DIVISION OF

5359 (N SW  
(SCOTTSVILLE)



Seays Chapel  
Methodist Church  
Shores, Buchanan  
County, Virginia  
DHR# 32-0188  
Ardena Quad.  
UTM References:  
Zone 17  
Easting 267474.7  
Northing 4180773.9

5359 (N NW  
(DIANA MILLS)