

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Highland Park Public School  
other names/site number DHR File No. 127-355

2. Location

street & number 2928 Second Avenue N/A  not for publication  
city, town Richmond N/A  vicinity  
state Virginia code VA county Richmond code 760 zip code 23220  
(city)

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Ray C. Miller  
Signature of certifying official  
Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Oct 9, 1991  
Date

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

National Park Service Certification

hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other. (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
education: school

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

domestic: multiple dwelling

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

late 19th and 20th century revivals:  
Mission/Spanish Colonial Revivalfoundation stuccowalls brickroof terra cottaother wood

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

The Highland Park Public School building is a two-story brick and stucco structure on a raised basement, and is topped by hipped roofs clad with terra cotta tiles. Mediterranean Revival in style, the building consists of an original 1909 section, and subsequent additions dating from 1913, 1921, and 1929. These additions adhere to the same stylistic design and use of materials employed for the original structure. Highland Park Public School stands at the corner of Brookland Park Boulevard and Second Avenue in the Highland Park neighborhood of the city of Richmond. The original section of the building and its additions were designed by the local architect Charles M. Robinson (1867-1932) who served as the Richmond School Board architect from 1909 to 1930.

**ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS**

Highland Park Public School was built to the north of the 1909 Richmond city boundaries, in the Henrico County community of Highland Park, which was a rapidly-growing Richmond suburb in the early twentieth century. The school's date of initial construction in 1909, and the dates of its additions, 1913, 1921, and 1929, span a period during which an active public school building program was underway in the city of Richmond. This program was begun under the tenure of Dr. J. A. C. Chandler, who served as Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools from 1909 to 1919. The construction history of Highland Park Public School also coincides with the years that Charles M. Robinson held the position of Richmond School Board architect from 1909 to 1930. Robinson designed Highland Park Public School's original 1909 section and its additions. By using the stylistic approach and materials that he had employed in the original section for the school's additions, Robinson gave the structure a cohesive appearance. Robinson designed other Mediterranean Revival style school buildings in Richmond, including Ginter Park School on Chamberlayne Avenue, which was built in 1914, and Albert H. Hill Junior High School at the corner of Patterson Avenue and Roseneath Road, which was constructed in 1926. Both of these buildings, like Highland Park Public School, were built of tan brick and were capped with terra cotta tile roofs. Robinson was also responsible for various building designs and site plans for several colleges and universities in Virginia.

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The oldest section of Highland Park Public School consists of two roughly square, two-story classroom blocks topped with low hipped roofs and joined by a two-story hyphen with a gable roof. This central section is dominated by the main entrance, which consists of two openings with double doors cut through the raised basement. Over the doors and above the raised basement springs a round arch of brick. Above the entrance three round-arched doorways, fitted with multi-pane double doors and fan lights, open out onto a balcony. On the front facade, which faces east, the classroom blocks have nine-over-two wooden sash windows. These are grouped in sets of three, with two sets on each floor in each of the two classroom blocks. The raised basement contains shallow segmental-arched six-light windows. On the side elevations of this section there are paired nine-over-two wooden sash windows, with four pairs of windows on each floor. As on the east facade, the windows are vertically aligned, and the spaces between the windows on the first floor and those on the second floor are covered with stucco. This treatment creates a vertical emphasis that balances the horizontal quality of the building's low hipped roofs and its prominent raised basement.

In 1913 an addition to Highland Park Public School was constructed to house an auditorium. This wing has oversize double-hung sash windows, combined into groups of three and topped by transoms, that open into the double-height interior space. The auditorium features a plaster coved ceiling, and terminates in a west wing constructed in 1921 and enlarged in 1929. This section, along with the auditorium addition, conform to the handling of architectural motifs employed in the original 1909 portion, including the use of a raised stucco basement, tan brick walls, and low hipped roofs covered with terra cotta tiles. The west wing displays the same fenestration treatment as the original section of the building, with windows arranged in pairs or in groups of four or five and stucco covering the spaces between the first-floor windows and the second-floor windows. The west wing windows have six-over-six, double-hung wooden sash. This wing was constructed to contain additional classrooms, and the interior arrangement is reflected in the bands of four or five adjoining windows. On the interior, there are arched openings between the stairhalls and the corridors, and the primary stairs are outfitted with wrought-iron rails and balusters.

Highland Park Public School is situated at a prominent site in the Highland Park neighborhood, which is largely residential, although there is some nearby commercial development. The school was built at a major intersection in the Highland Park community, at a point about three-quarters of a mile east of the town's business section. It is on a lot with angled north and east boundaries, that run along Brookland Park Boulevard and Second Avenue, respectively. The original section of the school fronts a yard in the point of the triangular shape created by the angled boundaries. Parking areas surround the rest of the structure. In its period of construction, the building is in keeping with most of the other structures in the area. While

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it is representative of the size and scale of Richmond public schools built between 1909 and 1930, it also exhibits one of the more successful architectural designs for those schools.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Paul L. Weaver, Historic Property Associates, St. Augustine, FL, "Historic Schools of Multiple Property Form Outline," n.d., Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files, [1]; Highland Park Public School cornerstone inscription (east facade). The inscription reads: "1909," "Trustees: George W. Bahlke, Chairman, John W. Burrell, Paul Redd, M.D., Chas. M. Robinson, Architect."

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

architecture

education

Period of Significance

1909-1929

Significant Dates

1909, 1913,

1921, 1929

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

architect: Robinson, Charles M.

builder: Jno. Amrhein & Bros.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Built in 1909 to serve the Henrico County Community of Highland Park, the date of initial construction of Highland Park Public School and the dates of its additions span an era of active public school development in Richmond that lasted from 1909 to 1930. The building was in use as the Highland Park community's school from 1909 until 1914, when Highland Park was annexed by the city of Richmond. Thereafter Highland Park Public School served as one of Richmond's northern neighborhood schools until the 1970s when it ceased to function as a school, and the structure thereby represents approximately sixty years of the evolution of Richmond's public education system. Highland Park Public School is also important as an example of the work of Charles M. Robinson (1867-1932), a regionally significant architect who served as Richmond School Board architect from 1909 to 1930. Robinson designed twenty school buildings and additions to schools for the city of Richmond during these years. He also produced building designs and site plans for several of Virginia's colleges and universities.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

The original section of Highland Park Public School was constructed in 1909 by Charles M. Robinson, to serve the Henrico County community of Highland Park. This town was a northern suburb of Richmond that experienced rapid growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Highland Park Public School was built on a prominent site at a major intersection about three-quarters of a mile east of the community's commercial center. In the year of its construction Dr. J. A. C. Chandler was appointed Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools. Dr. Chandler found the city's school system to be inadequate when he took office, with many classes meeting in buildings that were not designed as schools. He instituted an ambitious construction program, and in 1909 he named Charles M. Robinson to the post of Public School Architect, to oversee the design and erection of new school buildings. During the next twenty years, 36 school buildings were constructed or annexed by the city of

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Richmond.<sup>1</sup> In 1914, Highland Park Public School was acquired by the city through the annexation of the Henrico County community that it had served for five years. At that time both elementary and high school students were instructed in the school, although its high school department was small.<sup>2</sup> In 1913 the building was enlarged by the addition of a double-height auditorium. Highland Park Public School stopped serving high school students at the end of the 1914-15 school year, when these students were transferred to John Marshall High School. The enrollment for that year had consisted of 27 high school pupils and 509 elementary students.<sup>3</sup> Further expansion of Highland Park Public School was necessary in 1921 and 1929, as the neighborhood around the school grew. Charles Robinson designed the additions, which contained classrooms. He carried out the new work in the Mediterranean Revival style of the original section and the previous addition, matching materials and stylistic motifs to those used earlier. A versatile architect, Robinson had already designed several schools in various styles for the city of Richmond. Among these were buildings in the Mediterranean Revival style, such as Albert N. Hill Junior High School at Patterson Avenue and Roseneath Road, constructed in 1926, and Ginter Park School on Chamberlayne Avenue, built in 1914.

During the 1930-31 school year, Highland Park Public School's enrollment numbered 881 pupils. By the 1937-38 school year this figure had dropped to 733 students.<sup>4</sup> In 1958, students from the Helen Dickinson School were transferred to Highland Park Public School when their school was closed. The Highland Park Public School building ceased its period of service as a school in the 1970s.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Paul L. Weaver, *Historic Property Associates, St. Augustine, FL, "Historic Schools of Multiple Property Form Outline,"* n.d., Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files, [1].

<sup>2</sup> William H. Deierhoi, "Sketches of the Richmond Public Schools," (1961; updated by Dr. Sam P. Sentelle, 1974), typescript, Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files, n.p.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., n.p.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., n.p.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

- Deierhor, William H. "Sketches of the Richmond Public Schools." 1961; updated by Dr. Sam P. Sentelle, 1974. Typescript, Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files.
- Harnsberger, Douglas. "Historic Preservation Certification Application" for Highland Park Public School. August 1988. Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Preliminary Information Request" for Highland Park Public School. 21 April 1988. Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files.
- Meagher, Margaret. Education in Richmond. Richmond, VA: n.pub., 1939.
- Weaver, Paul L., Historic Property Associates, St. Augustine, FL. "Historic Schools of Multiple Property Form Outline." N.d. Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files.
- Wells, John. Letter to Douglas Harnsberger. 5 May 1988. Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files.
- \_\_\_\_\_. [Essay on career of architect Charles M. Robinson]. Typescript, n.d., Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources files.

See continuation sheet

**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

**Specify repository:**

Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources  
221 Governor St., Richmond, VA

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property 2.6 acres

**UTM References**

A 18 2816350 4160600  
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

D         

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Beginning at a rod marking the southwest corner of Second Ave. and E. Brookland Park Blvd. thence run south 31° 46' 44" west, along the westerly line of Second Ave. for 468.44' to a stone on the northerly line of Custer St.; thence run north 75° 46' 49" west along said northerly line of Custer St. for 189.33' to a nail on the easterly line of an alley 15' wide; thence run north 15° 16' 07" east along the easterly line of said alley for

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the entire city lot that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Susan E. Smead and Douglas Harnsberger, AIA, architectural historians  
 organization consultant/Davis & Harnsberger Assoc. date August 27, 1991  
 street & number 406 Harris Rd./3601 Hawthorne Ave. telephone 804-979-1910/329-7214  
 city or town Charlottesville/Richmond state VA zip code 22903/23222

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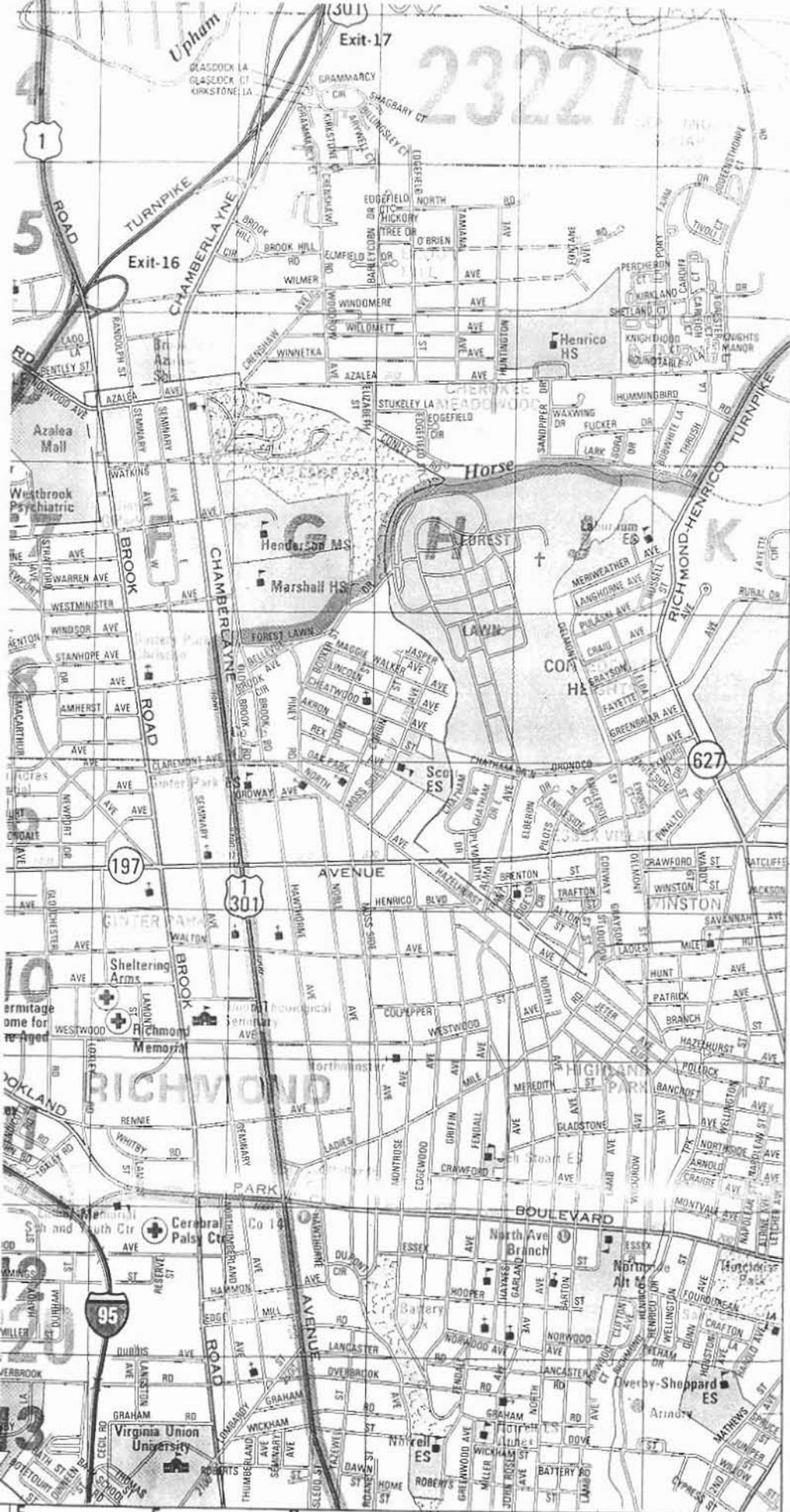
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Verbal Boundary Description, con.

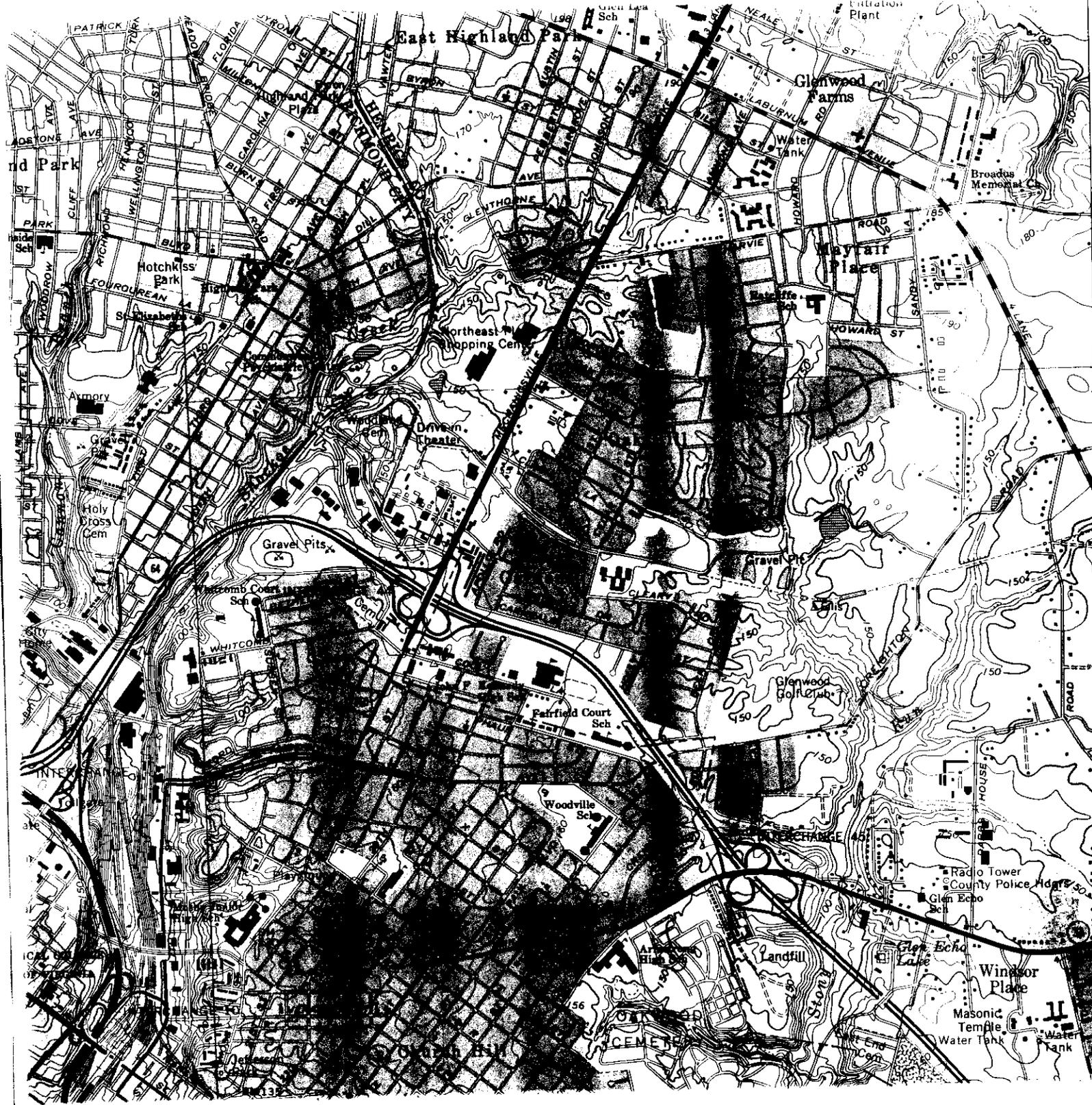
188.19' to a rod on the northerly line of an alley 14.91' wide; thence run north 75° 30' 35" west along the northerly line of said alley for 25.00' to a rod; thence run north 15° 17' 34" east for 218.49' to a rod on the southerly line of East Brookland Park Blvd.; thence run south 82° 19' 01" east along the southerly line of East Brookland Park Blvd. for 350.40' to the point of the beginning.



E 77°27'30" Joins Map 20

2,310,000 FT

77°25'00"



4161

HIGHLAND PARK  
PUBLIC SCHOOL  
UTM REFERENCE  
18|206350|4160600

4160

(SEVEN PINES)  
5559 III SE

1.1 MI. TO VA. 33

4158

32'30"

2.9 MI. TO SPRINGS  
WEST POINT 34 MI.