

YLR 12/18/08
NRHP 2/25/09

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name South Chappell Street Car Barn
other names/site number VHDR No. 123-5421

2. Location

street & number 124 South Chappell Street not for publication N/A
city or town Petersburg vicinity _____
state VA code VA county Independent City code 730 zip code 23803

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 _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] _____ Date 1/14/09
Signature of certifying official
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, 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

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

- X building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings (2, 2), sites (0, 0), structures (0, 0), objects (0, 0), Total (2, 2)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Transportation Sub: Rail-related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Transportation Sub: Road-related (vehicular)

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
roof Slate
walls Brick
other N/A

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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)

- X 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.
X 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 a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Transportation

Period of Significance 1903-1936

Significant Dates 1903

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 1.2339 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing									
1	18	284075	4	122975	2	3	3	3	4	4	4

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title Ashley Neville & John Salmon
organization Ashley Neville, LLC date 9/11/2008
street & number 112 Thompson Street, B-1 telephone 804-798-2124
city or town Ashland state VA zip code 23005

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Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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Property Owner

=====

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

name Richard C. Eley, Jr.
street & number 124 S. Chappell Street telephone _____
city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23803

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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. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the 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 National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**South Chappell Street Car Barn
Petersburg, Virginia**

Section 7 Page 1

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The South Chappell Street Car Barn is a handsome brick building that was constructed between 1899 and 1903 to house and repair the streetcars that served the city of Petersburg. Located in the western part of the city, the one-story; sixteen-bay long building has a monitor roof that provided ample light to the interior. The steel truss roof is exposed on the interior. After its conversion to a facility to repair electrical transformers, an industrial crane, an oven, and a cooling pit were added in the western end of the building. Of the three additional buildings standing on the lot, only one was constructed during the period of significance. A one-story frame building, now sheathed with corrugated metal, occupies the northwest corner of the lot and first appears on the 1921-1934 Sanborn Insurance Company map of the area. It was originally used for storage. Other noncontributing buildings on the lot are a one-story metal garage, and a small one-story concrete-block utility building.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The South Chappell Street Car Barn stands at the intersection of South Chappell and Rome Streets west of the downtown commercial area of Petersburg in a largely residential neighborhood. This handsome, nicely detailed, brick building is sited on the northwestern corner of the lot, which is now enclosed with a chain link fence. At the western end of the lot are a one-story frame building sheathed with corrugated metal, a one-story, four-bay metal building, and a small concrete-block building with a concrete roof. Also located on the lot adjacent to the car barn to the north are the remains of a brick coal bin. The area between the car barn and service buildings is a paved parking lot.

The former streetcar barn, built between 1899 and 1903, is a sixteen-bay-long rectangular-shaped building constructed of brick laid in four-course American bond. It has a slate-covered gable roof crowned with a monitor roof lined with wooden windows that pivot open. The eastern end of the main roof is gable-on-hip roof, with multiple-light windows in the gable end, while the western end is pedimented. The building has a corbelled brick cornice topped by cornices sheathed with galvanized metal. Two tall chimneys pierce the roof at the western end.

The streetcars originally entered through the eastern end of the building, which had a row of doors to accommodate the tracks and the streetcars. All but the southern bay door have been enclosed with brick, probably dating from the time when the car barn was converted to a transformer repair shop. The existing door in the southern bay is a sliding door with four sections of multiple lights above panels. A row of multiple-light metal transom windows runs across the top of the eastern wall. The center section of the western end wall appears to have been altered and infilled with brick but it continues the same bond pattern. A new door was created on this end that cuts through the top of the cornice. This also probably occurred when the building was converted to a transformer repair shop. The center bay is flanked on each side by recessed bays with two windows in each bay. The two south windows have been infilled on the interior and a third window has been converted to a pedestrian door with the upper sash serving as a transom.

The sides of the building are highlighted by recessed bays separated by pilasters with corbelling at the top of each bay. The second and third bays on the western end of the building have paired nine-over-nine-light, double-hung, wooden sash windows. The remainder of the side bays have short, single, nine-light, wooden windows that pivot

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open. All windows are topped with triple-header segmental arches and have granite sills. The first bay on each side at the western end of the building originally contained paneled, double-leaf, wooden doors. Only the north door survives today.

The interior is utilitarian in character and survives relatively intact from its use first as a streetcar barn and later use by Virginia Electric & Power Company (VEPCO, now known as Dominion) to repair transformers. The steel truss roof is exposed on the interior, and VEPCO added supports on the western end as well as the large industrial crane. The brick walls are exposed on the interior and the floor is concrete. The monitor roof provides ample natural light. The building is divided roughly in half width-wise by a partition wall of horizontal boards. The building is divided lengthwise in the western end by a modern stud-and-plywood wall and a concrete-block wall in the eastern end. These walls create small rooms in the northern third of the building for offices, bathrooms, and work areas.

After VEPCO quit the transportation business in Petersburg in 1959, it converted this building to the production of transformers and many of the changes date to this period. On the exterior the large door openings on the eastern end were enclosed as were several single windows. On the north side, air conditioning units were inserted in many of the bays below the windows. On the interior, the floor was lowered on the western end and tracks were inserted that allowed the transformers to be moved outside on steel platforms. The crane that moved the transformers is still in place. An oven room was built in the southwest corner of the building and a pit was created for a cooling bath for the transformers.

Street car barns are generally large, brick or masonry buildings with a rectangular footprint. The exterior can be very plain and strictly utilitarian or have decorative elements such as corbelled cornices or towers. They almost always have multiple windows to provide ample light and ventilation having been constructed before the advent of air conditioning. Because these buildings housed street cars, the interior was usually a large open space with smaller work areas or stations in the ends or along the exterior walls. Unlike the earlier streetcar barn in Petersburg, which consisted of two one-story, long, rectangular frame buildings, the South Chappell Street Car Barn is a handsome, well-detailed brick building. The 1903 Sanborn Insurance Company map shows it as a large undifferentiated space except at the west end. A machine shop was located in the northwest corner with the remainder of the west end devoted to a repair shop. The earlier car barns were demolished in 1897. No other extant street car barns have been identified in Petersburg.

There are three additional buildings on the lot and the remnants of a brick foundation. The three outbuildings are located at the western end of the lot facing each other. Located northwest of the main building and facing west is a small, square, single-bay, concrete-block building with a slightly pitched, single-slab concrete roof. It appears to have been used for flammable storage and was built after 1934. Facing this building is another post-1934 east-facing, four-bay, steel-frame building sheathed with metal with a standing-seam-metal roof. Each bay of the facade has a pair of doors. The interior has no permanent partition walls. Both of these buildings are noncontributing. The third building is located north of these two buildings and faces south. It first appears on the 1921-1934 Sanborn Insurance Company map of Petersburg for the storage of supplies. It is a one-story, gable-roof building on a stone foundation with a skin of corrugated metal. The roof is also sheathed with metal. A partition wall of horizontal boards creates a room that occupies the western third of the building and housed an oven associated with rebuilding transformers.

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**South Chappell Street Car Barn
Petersburg, Virginia**

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The South Chappell Street Car Barn, located at 124 South Chappell Street in Petersburg, was probably constructed between 1899 and 1903 by either the South Side Railway and Development Company or its successor, the Virginia Passenger and Power Company, to store and repair streetcars. George Beadle created the city's first streetcar system and founded the Petersburg Street Railway Company in 1883 with horse-drawn passenger cars. In 1888, Beadle expanded the line west from South Chappell Street to the Central State Lunatic Asylum and incorporated the Petersburg and Asylum Railway Company. He sold his interest in the Petersburg Street Railway to the company in 1891, just before the lines were electrified, but remained as general manager until he left Petersburg about 1897. The city's streetcar system provided central-city workers with transportation to suburban jobs, and also encouraged the construction of residential neighborhoods along the line.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

The South Chappell Street Car Barn is eligible for listing at the local level of significance in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (Transportation) because of its association with the history of transportation in Petersburg. The sole surviving such structure in the city, the car barn is a tangible reminder of the transportation system that encouraged the construction of residential suburbs and contributed to the decline of central-city neighborhoods. The car barn is also eligible for listing under Criterion C (Architecture) as a locally significant example of a streetcar barn and repair shop. It is a notable example of a utilitarian purpose-built building that retains the integrity of its historic location, association, setting, feeling, design, materials, and workmanship. The period of significance extends from 1903, the date by which the car barn was constructed, to 1936, when its function changed to a bus-service facility.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

George Beadle, who designed and constructed Petersburg's first streetcar system, was born in Cheshire, Connecticut, in 1838, a son of Philander and Adeline Beadle. The family moved to Syracuse, New York, about 1840. George Beadle appeared in the 1860 U.S. Census as a "boatman," as did his father, who was also a grain dealer and "forwarder," or shipping agent. During the Civil War, he served as a private in Company F, 7th New York Heavy Artillery. Organized in Albany, New York, as the 113th New York Infantry Regiment and mustered into service on August 18, 1862, the regiment served in the defenses of Washington, D.C., and was reassigned to heavy artillery duty there. On May 15, 1864, the unit was ordered into the field to join the Army of the Potomac, then engaged in battles around Spotsylvania Court House, in Virginia. As the army maneuvered south toward Richmond and Petersburg, the artillery unit fought in the battles of North Anna River, Totopotomoy Creek, Cold Harbor, and the first attacks on Petersburg. On June 16, on the second of two days of futile Union assaults on the city's eastern defensive works, Beadle was taken prisoner. Confederate authorities sent him south, to the notorious prisoner-of-war stockade, Camp Sumter, at Andersonville, Georgia. He and the other surviving prisoners were released at the end of the war, and Beadle was mustered out in Baltimore, Maryland, on June 16, 1865.¹

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Beadle returned to Syracuse and by 1870 was a “land speculator” with land worth \$20,000 and personal property worth \$5,000—considerable prosperity for the time. The 1880 census reported him as the “inventor of fare box for streetcar.” When he created the fare box is not known, but presumably it was between 1870 and 1880, probably while working for his father, who manufactured fare boxes and charge gates. Fare boxes removed the temptation to pocket the fares from the streetcar conductor, and soon were in widespread use. George Beadle inherited the company from his father, who died on December 27, 1881. The next year, Beadle sold the factory to W. S. Wales, who organized the Wales Manufacturing Company in 1883 and continued to make fare boxes as well as other streetcar-related products.²

Beadle moved to Petersburg from Syracuse in October 1882. Although the reasons for his decision are not known, he would have seen Petersburg during the early days of his captivity in June 1864; perhaps he liked what he saw despite the circumstances and later discovered a business opportunity there. Whatever his reasons, on November 3, 1882, he persuaded the Petersburg City Council to permit him to build a streetcar line, the city’s first. He began acquiring property, including a lot at the southeastern corner of the intersection of Second and River Streets, where he constructed car barns and an office building. From there, the streetcar line eventually ran west down the middle of River Street two blocks, then south on Rock Street (on the western side of the City Market) to Old Street, west half a block to North Sycamore Street, south three blocks to Washington Street, west about ten blocks to South Chappell Street, and then two and a half blocks south to a point between Rome and Farmer Streets, at the entrance to West End Park, near which new houses were under construction. Beadle began laying track on January 30, 1883. Because this was the first streetcar line in Petersburg, the process did not go smoothly, and many residents questioned the wisdom of the project. Once the line opened on September 12, however, it proved popular. Later, the line was extended from the intersection of Washington and Sycamore Streets south on Sycamore to Oak Street near present-day Central Park (Poplar Lawn), southwest on Oak to Halifax Street, and southwest on Halifax Street to the intersection with Mistletoe or Hickory Street.³

The streetcars were horse-drawn—the first successful electric streetcar was not introduced until 1888, in Richmond. Petersburg’s first streetcars arrived on April 2, 1883, second-hand cars from the bankrupt Norfolk and Brambleton Railroad. They were two 12-foot-long enclosed cars and a three-bench open car. On August 2, six new 12-foot, 5-window enclosed cars arrived, having been constructed by the J. M. Jones Company of Schenectady, New York, and costing \$815 each. They were finished in cherry, chestnut, and maple.⁴

In 1887, Beadle and his associates pursued the incorporation of a new company to extend the streetcar line west to the Central State Lunatic Asylum. The Virginia General Assembly enacted the legislation on January 24, 1888, incorporating the Petersburg and Asylum Railway Company. Beadle, Daniel W. Lassiter, John Mann, Walter S. Phillips, T. S. Bolling, J. Edward Mogler, and Thomas F. Rives formed the first board of directors. The new line ran from the southern terminus of the existing line at South Chappell and Rome Streets, west on Rome Street to Atlantic Street, south a block to Dupuy Street, and then west on Dupuy Street to the granite quarries on the land belonging to the asylum, on the western edge of Petersburg in Dinwiddie County.⁵

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The new company quickly organized itself on February 1, 1888, and took out a mortgage with the Farmers Loan and Trust Company of New York. On February 14, E. W. Mollier was elected chairman of the board. Beadle was elected president, treasurer, general solicitor, general manager, general superintendent, and general passenger and ticket agent. In a report filed four years later, the company noted that the line was 3.37 miles long from Petersburg to the asylum. During the year that ended June 30, 1892, the company ran four cars on the line, which included two wooden trestles, and reported a net income of \$2,969.47. In 1892, the Asylum line and the Petersburg Street Railway line were both electrified.⁶

At the end of 1891, Beadle sold his interest in the Petersburg Street Railway to the company but remained as president and manager. The sale included the three-mile-long route, the lot at Second and River Streets with "street car stables and sheds," horses, mules, tools, equipment, and "ten closed passenger cars and three open passenger cars." Beadle and his wife, Mary E. Beadle, gradually divested themselves of their assorted real estate holdings during the next five years.⁷

Beadle resided at several locations while he lived in Petersburg, including at 57 Bollingbrook Street, about two blocks south of the company offices, car barns, and stables. Later in the 1880s, he resided on Cox Road, in northwestern Petersburg near the Central Lunatic Asylum, then in the 1890s until 1896 he lived "in Dinwiddie County." The next year, he sold his Petersburg business interests and real estate and moved back to Syracuse, where he remained active in business as a real estate broker. In 1911, he optioned and then sold for \$183,000 the land on which the United States Courthouse and Post Office building was soon constructed. The deal was considered so remarkable and the sum so enormous that a photograph of the check for the full amount was published in the *Syracuse Herald* on May 2, 1911. By the 1920 census, at age eighty-two, Beadle had finally retired. He died on July 6, 1924, at the age of eighty-six. Beadle was remembered in his obituary as a "pioneer in building," having constructed many commercial buildings and houses. The obituary added:

George Beadle once put up an entire city block of houses in the Burnet-Lodi sector [of Syracuse]. He built in all parts of the city. In his 50s he took over and ran the street railways of Petersburg, Va., holding down the job until he was 62. He owned the system there.⁸

The system that Beadle had pioneered in Petersburg, meanwhile, was undergoing a series of bankruptcies, reorganizations, and forced sales. Electrification had not proceeded smoothly, the electrical equipment broke down and had to be replaced, and by the mid-1890s the Petersburg Street Railway was in debt to the electric company as well as to various employees. As a result of several lawsuits against the streetcar company, on February 12, 1896, it was sold at auction, and the high bidders were Edward C. White and Lloyd Nash, who incorporated themselves as the Petersburg Electric Railway Company. The old barns and office building at Second and River Streets were demolished in 1897 and the R. Portner Brewing Company beer-bottling and storage building erected in their place. In 1898, debts and lawsuits brought about another auction sale of the streetcar company, and the Virginia Traction Company bought the line. Its offices were located at 14 North Sycamore Street. In 1899, the South Side Railway and Development Company acquired the capital stock of the Virginia Traction Company and, "desirous of adding considerable improvements to the existing property," mortgaged the property to the Richmond Trust and Safe

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Deposit Company. Bonds were issued to finance the expansion. Because the electrical equipment was in need of overhauling, the line reverted temporarily to horsepower for a few months. On May 17, 1899, R. H. Wallace sold to the South Side Railway and Development Company the lots at the intersection of South Chappell and Rome Streets on which the South Chappell Street Car Barn now stands. Construction probably began on the car barn shortly thereafter.⁹

In 1901, the Virginia Passenger and Power Company was incorporated and acquired the South Side Railway and Development Company. The new company soon went into receivership, but not before completing in 1903 the South Chappell Street Car Barn, if it had not been finished earlier. In 1903, the car barn first appeared on a Sanborn Insurance Company map. It was constructed to shelter the streetcars as they underwent repair and maintenance.¹⁰

The car barn is a sixteen-bay-long rectangular-shaped building constructed of brick laid in four-course American bond, with a slate-covered gable roof topped with a clerestory or monitor lined with wooden windows. Two tall chimneys pierce the roof at the western end, which is pedimented. The building has a corbelled brick cornice topped by cornices sheathed with galvanized metal. For a utilitarian building, the car barn is unusually well-detailed, perhaps intended to reflect civic pride as well as the aspirations of the company at the time of construction.

The Virginia Passenger and Power Company went into receivership in 1904. In 1909, the newly formed Virginia Railway and Power Company (owned primarily by Frank Jay Gould, the son of financial speculator Jay Gould) acquired the VP&P. The new company purchased several other transit and power companies in Richmond and Norfolk. In 1925, a New York syndicate led by Stone and Webster, Inc., an engineering and consulting company, bought the VR&P Company and changed its name to the Virginia Electric and Power Company (VEPCO). Streetcar service expanded greatly under VEPCO, and the cars were upgraded.¹¹

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were eras in which "streetcar suburbs" of residential communities grew along the transit lines. Workingmen and businessmen could live in supposedly healthier suburban residential developments and commute easily to downtown offices and factories by streetcar. Likewise, the car lines enabled those who lived in the central cities to get to workplaces established in the suburbs. Gradually, the open space adjoining cities such as Petersburg and Richmond was transformed into suburban residential neighborhoods.¹²

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, for example, the Poplar Lawn (now Central Park) suburb grew partly in response the streetcar system's growth and improvements made by the city. When the streetcar line was extended down Sycamore Street to the vicinity of the park, development increased because people no longer had to walk to work but could commute via streetcar. The popularity of the park, in addition to increasing residential development, led the city to make improvements to the park. As a result, there was a development boom in the area beginning in the 1880s and again in the 1910s. By the 1940s, after buses replaced the streetcars, the area was fully built out.¹³

In contrast, an older, more centrally located neighborhood declined as the streetcar system enabled residents to move from the city proper to the suburbs. South Market Street, which had long been a prestigious address and was replete with handsome Greek Revival-style dwellings, lost middle-class occupants to the new streetcar

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suburbs in the 1890s. Wealthier residents followed suit, leading eventually to a period of neglect and the demolition of several architecturally significant dwellings.¹⁴

Petersburg's streetcar system, like those of other cities, was promoted to attract business and commercial growth as well as for the development of new neighborhoods. The Petersburg Chamber of Commerce published an illustrated book in 1894 that extolled the city's many progressive features, including its streetcar lines, which served both downtown businesses and suburban communities. The lines consisted of "an electric line traversing the principal thoroughfares in the city proper . . . and a steam dummy line running out to the suburbs." The electric line "begins at the wharves and railroad depots and runs to West End Park" via the main urban streets. The dummy line was an extension of the electric line, running out to the Central Lunatic Asylum, the granite quarries, and to a favorite summer resort known as "Granite Grove," and also connects with the Norfolk & Western R.R. about a mile beyond the resort. . . . Just beyond its terminus is the village of MATOACA, of 1000 population, largely employed in the cotton mills there. It is about five miles from Petersburg, and it is the intention of the . . . line to extend to it very soon.¹⁵

Shortly after 1902, the Seaboard Airline Railway—one of the three principal railroads that connected in Petersburg—issued a promotional booklet that touted the importance of the city's streetcar system to the community. "The streetcar service in this city," according to the booklet, "consists of about twenty miles of road and cars are dispatched to all parts every few minutes, affording conveniences not surpassed by any other city of similar population in the country. The company also has a line running to Ferndale Park, thee and one-half miles from the city line."¹⁶

Each of the booklet's photographs that showed streetscapes (not merely building facades) also showed streetcar tracks. The parks and the lines attracted new residential development as encouraged by the publishers of such booklets. In the 1910s, however, the streetcar systems were challenged not only by the private automobile and paved roads, but also by passenger-carrying automobiles and buses called "jitneys" from the slang term for a nickel. According to an article that appeared in the *New York Times* on January 31, 1915, enterprising individuals in Houston, Texas, had originated the jitney car, and its use had spread throughout the West and was coming East. The transit companies fought a losing battle against the new mode of public transportation. VEPCO's streetcar revenue dropped, for example, from \$290,000 in 1923 to \$85,000 in 1931, and the company reduced service as a result. By the mid-1930s, the streetcar was doomed.¹⁷

VEPCO had yielded to progress in Petersburg beginning in 1932, when it began substituting buses for streetcars on one of the lines. The trend continued, and on June 6, 1936, the last streetcar runs were made on the old Washington Street and Halifax Street lines. At the South Chappell Street Car Barn, the rails that led inside from South Chappell Street were taken up, and buses were stored inside the building, which housed the transportation department and dispatcher's office. One of the old streetcar bodies was converted into a service station and office near the gasoline pump. VEPCO relinquished its transit operations in 1959 and focused on power generation thereafter.¹⁸

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After 1959, VEPCO used the former car barn to repair electric transformers, and added an industrial crane, an oven, and cooling pit. Presumably during the same period, an oven was also inserted into the nearby storage building. VEPCO also maintained offices for the area in the building and maintained service vehicles there. In 1983, VEPCO sold the car barn to the owners of REBCO Engine City, which sells wholesale car parts and continues to own the building today.¹⁹

The South Chappell Street Car Barn appears to be the sole surviving structure in Petersburg associated with the streetcar system in its heyday. The only other known car barns, which stood at the corner of Second and River Streets, were demolished in 1897.²⁰

The South Chappell Street Car Barn is a nicely detailed, brick industrial building in a residential area of mostly frame houses and continues the long Petersburg tradition of siting commercial and industrial buildings in residential areas. The monitor roof, pedimented western elevation with tall chimneys, and recessed window bays along each side add substantially to the character of the building. Although this building was constructed for the utilitarian purpose of housing and repairing streetcars, its materials and architectural details create a building that has been able to incorporate change while retaining its significance and integrity.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries for this property include all of tax parcel number 029060005 as shown on the attached City of Petersburg tax map.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This tax parcel lot encompasses all the land that historically was associated with the South Chappell Street Car Barn.

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END NOTES

¹ Walter J. Beadle, *Samuel Beadle Family* (Wilmington, Del.: N.p., 1970), 236, 240–241; U.S. Census, 1860, Onondaga County, Syracuse, New York, and “George Beadle” in *American Civil War Soldiers*, at www.Ancestry.com, accessed June 26, 2008; George Beadle service record and regimental history, at *Civil War Soldiers and Sailors*, National Park Service Web site, at www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/, accessed June 26, 2008.

² U.S. Census, 1870 and 1880, Onondaga County, Syracuse, New York, at www.Ancestry.com, accessed June 26, 2008; Beadle, Samuel Beadle, 236; Dwight H. Bruce, ed., *Memorial History of Syracuse, N.Y.: From Its Settlement to the Present Time* (Syracuse, N.Y.: H. P. Smith and Co., 1891), 669.

³ William D. Henderson, *Gilded Age City: Politics, Life, and Labor in Petersburg, Virginia, 1874–1889* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1980), 131–132.

⁴ Harold E. Cox, *All-Time [Streetcar] Roster, Richmond, Virginia, [and] Petersburg, Virginia* (Forty Fort, Pa.: Harold E. Cox, 1990), 16.

⁵ *Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia During the Session of 1887–8* (Richmond: J. H. O’ Bannon, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1888), 37–38.

⁶ Petersburg City, Hustings Court, Deed Book 50, 1888, Reel 91, pp. 265–269, deed of mortgage written Feb. 1, 1888, and recorded June 26, 1888, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia (LVA); *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Railroad Commissioner of the State of Virginia* (Richmond: J. H. O’ Bannon, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1893), 488–492; Cox, *All-Time [Streetcar] Roster*, 16–17.

⁷ Petersburg City, Hustings Court, Deed Book 56, 1893–1894, Reel 96, pp. 439–440, deed written Dec. 31, 1891, and recorded Nov. 29, 1893, LVA. Deeds for other property owned by Beadle and his wife are recorded in Deed Books 53, 54, and 56.

⁸ *Chataigne’s Petersburg Directory* (Petersburg, Va.: Webb and Fitzgerald, 1887, 1890, 1892, 1894, 1896), 1886–1887, p. 90; 1888–1889, pp. 97; 1889–1890, p. 81; 1891–1892, p. 109; 1893–1894, p. 78; 1895–1896, p. 124; *The Syracuse Directory*, 1908, p. 686; *Syracuse Herald*, May 2, 1911, and U.S. Census, 1910 and 1920, Onondaga County, Syracuse, New York, at www.Ancestry.com, accessed June 26, 2008; *Syracuse Herald*, July 7, 1924, at www.Ancestry.com, accessed June 26, 2008.

⁹ Cox, *All-Time [Streetcar] Roster*, 17; Petersburg City, Hustings Court, Deed Book 58, 1894–1895, Reel 95, pp. 489–491, deed written Feb. 20, 1896, and recorded Feb. 21, 1896, LVA; Sanborn Insurance Company, Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, Virginia, 1897, LVA; Petersburg City, Hustings Court, Deed Book 61, 1898–1899, Reel 100, pp. 279–280, deed written Nov. 11, 1898, and recorded Nov. 14, 1898, LVA; Petersburg City, Hustings Court, Deed Book 62, 1899–1900, Reel 100, pp. 56–58, deed written June 19, 1899, and recorded June 24, 1899, LVA; *ibid.*, 372–387, deed of mortgage written July 1, 1899, and recorded Oct. 28, 1899, LVA; *ibid.*, 233–234, deed from Wallace to South Side Railway and Development Company, written May 17, 1899, and recorded Sept. 13, 1899.

¹⁰ Dominion Resources, Inc., Business Information, Profile, and History, at www.companies.jrank.org/pages/1252/Dominion-Resources-Inc, accessed June 28, 2008; Sanborn Insurance Company, Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, Virginia, 1903, LVA.

¹¹ Dominion Resources, Inc., Business Information, Profile, and History, at www.companies.jrank.org/pages/1252/Dominion-Resources-Inc, accessed June 28, 2008.

¹² Henderson, *Gilded Age City*, 297.

¹³ Poplar Lawn Historic District, File 123-0094, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Feb. 26, 1979, and Poplar Lawn Historic District Boundary Expansion, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Aug. 2005, Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), Richmond, Va.

¹⁴ South Market Street Historic District, File 123-108, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Apr. 30, 1991, DHR.

¹⁵ Petersburg Chamber of Commerce, *The City of Petersburg, Va.* (Petersburg, Va.: George W. Englehardt, 1894), 24.

¹⁶ Seaboard Air Line Railway, *Petersburg, Virginia: “The Cockade City,” Its Industries, Commerce and Finance* (Portsmouth, Va.: Industrial Department of the Seaboard Air Line Railway, n.d.), 6.

¹⁷ *New York Times*, Jan. 15, 1915; Dominion Resources, Inc., Business Information, Profile, and History, at www.companies.jrank.org/pages/1252/Dominion-Resources-Inc, accessed June 28, 2008.

¹⁸ *Petersburg Progress Index*, June 5, 1936; Dominion Resources, Inc., Business Information, Profile, and History, at www.companies.jrank.org/pages/1252/Dominion-Resources-Inc, accessed June 28, 2008; James G. Scott and Edward A. Wyatt, *Petersburg’s Story: A History* (Petersburg: Titmus Optical Co., 1960), 316.

¹⁹ Deed dated Sept. 15, 1983, recorded and filed in Petersburg, Hustings Court, Clerk’s Office, Petersburg, Va.

²⁰ The Sanborn Insurance Company maps, ca. 1885–1930s, in the Library of Virginia do not identify any other buildings as streetcar barns, and no other such structures have been identified the DSS system at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

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The photographs for the South Chappell Street Car Barn, Petersburg, Virginia were taken by Ashley Neville, November 4, 2008. The negatives are on file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

1. South and east elevations, view to the west
2. East end, view to the southwest
3. West end, view to the northeast
4. West and south elevations, view to the northeast
5. Interior, view to the west
6. Interior, west end with industrial crane, view to the east
7. Interior, west end with industrial crane, view to the west
8. Storage Building, view to the northwest

South Chappell Street Car Barn
124 S. Chappell St.
Petersburg, VA
Nominated Boundaries

CITY OF PETERSBURG



SCALE 1" = 100'



MAP 29