



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 281-0028

Purpose of Evaluation

Please use the following space to explain briefly why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.

To recognize the historic nature of this former African American school and facilitate listings on Virginia and national historical registers

Are you interested in applying for State and/or Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes X No

Are you interested in receiving more information about DHR's easement program? Yes X No

1. General Property Information

Property name: Pennington Gap School (Appalachian African American Cultural Center)

Property address: 265 Leona St.

City or Town: Pennington Gap, VA

Zip code: 24277

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Lee County

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site Structure Object

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 0.00 Acres (Building Only, 912 square feet)

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban Town X Village Hamlet Rural

Briefly describe the property's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

Building is immediately adjacent to Leona St. in a residential neighborhood. Building is surrounded on all sides by green space with a sidewalk along the road-side.

### 3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Vernacular

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Unknown

If the builder is known, please list here: Unknown (Lee County government)

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1939-1940

#### **Narrative Description:**

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire property, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the architectural style, materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions, remodelings, or other alterations.

The primary structure is the Appalachian African American Cultural Center building. It was originally an African American school building constructed in 1939 or 1940 by the Lee County government and operated as such until 1965. The structure is in good condition composed of a red brick exterior, concrete foundation, metal roof, cinder block construction, hung dry-wall interior, and wooden floor. The building is a simple rectangle that is 24 feet on the northern and southern wall, and 38 feet on the eastern and western walls. The interior has slight remodeling within the past thirty years. There is modern plumbing inside the structure with one bathroom partition. A wooden sign has been added to the southern quarter of the building in 1987, when the structure was reopened as the Appalachian African-American Cultural Center.

Briefly describe any outbuildings or secondary resources (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

None

#### 4. Property's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the property, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The primary significance of this structure is cultural. It was the only primary school for African American children in Lee County, from 1939 or 1940 until 1965 when it closed following state-mandated desegregation and consolidation in Virginia.

In 1939, Rachel Scott, an African American woman from Lee County, sold 2.6 acres of land to the county for \$750 in order to facilitate the construction of the school, which was building a traditional one-room school house style.

In 1987, Ron Carson, the great-grandson of Rachel Scott, assumed ownership of the property and transformed it into the Appalachian African-American Culture Center along with his wife, Jill Carson. Since 1987, it has served as a hub for collecting narratives, artifacts, and ephemera related to the culture and heritage of Black people in Lee County and the wider Appalachian region.

Sources: Appalachian African American Cultural Center Archives. Carson Family History.

**5. Property Ownership** (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local \_\_\_\_\_ Public\State \_\_\_\_\_ Public\Federal \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property** (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Appalachian African-American Historical Cultural & Community Development Center Inc.  
organization: Appalachian African-American Historical Cultural & Community Development Center Inc.  
street & number: 265 Leona St.  
city or town: Pennington Gap state: VA zip code: 24277  
e-mail: ron.carson12@gmail.com telephone: 276-546-5144

Legal Owner's Signature: William Isom Date: 11/20/2020

•• *Signature required for processing all applications.* ••

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: William Isom, Board Chair, Appalachian African American Cultural Center

Daytime Telephone: 423-277-7162

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

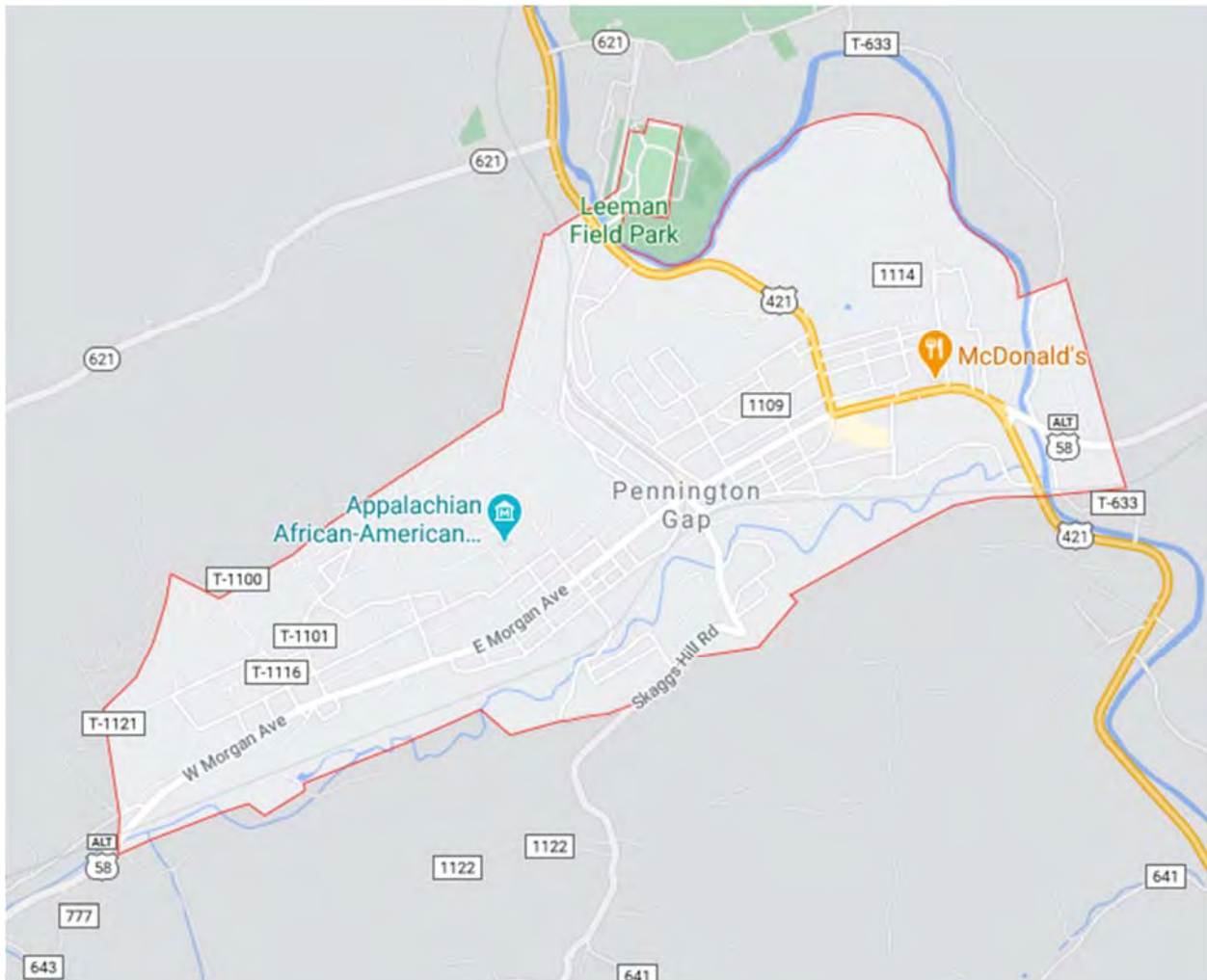
name/title: Elizabeth Catte, Board Member  
organization: Appalachian African-American Cultural Center  
street & number: 26 Hamrick St.  
city or town: Staunton state: VA zip code: 24401  
e-mail: Elizabeth.catte@gmail.com telephone: 865-385-3419

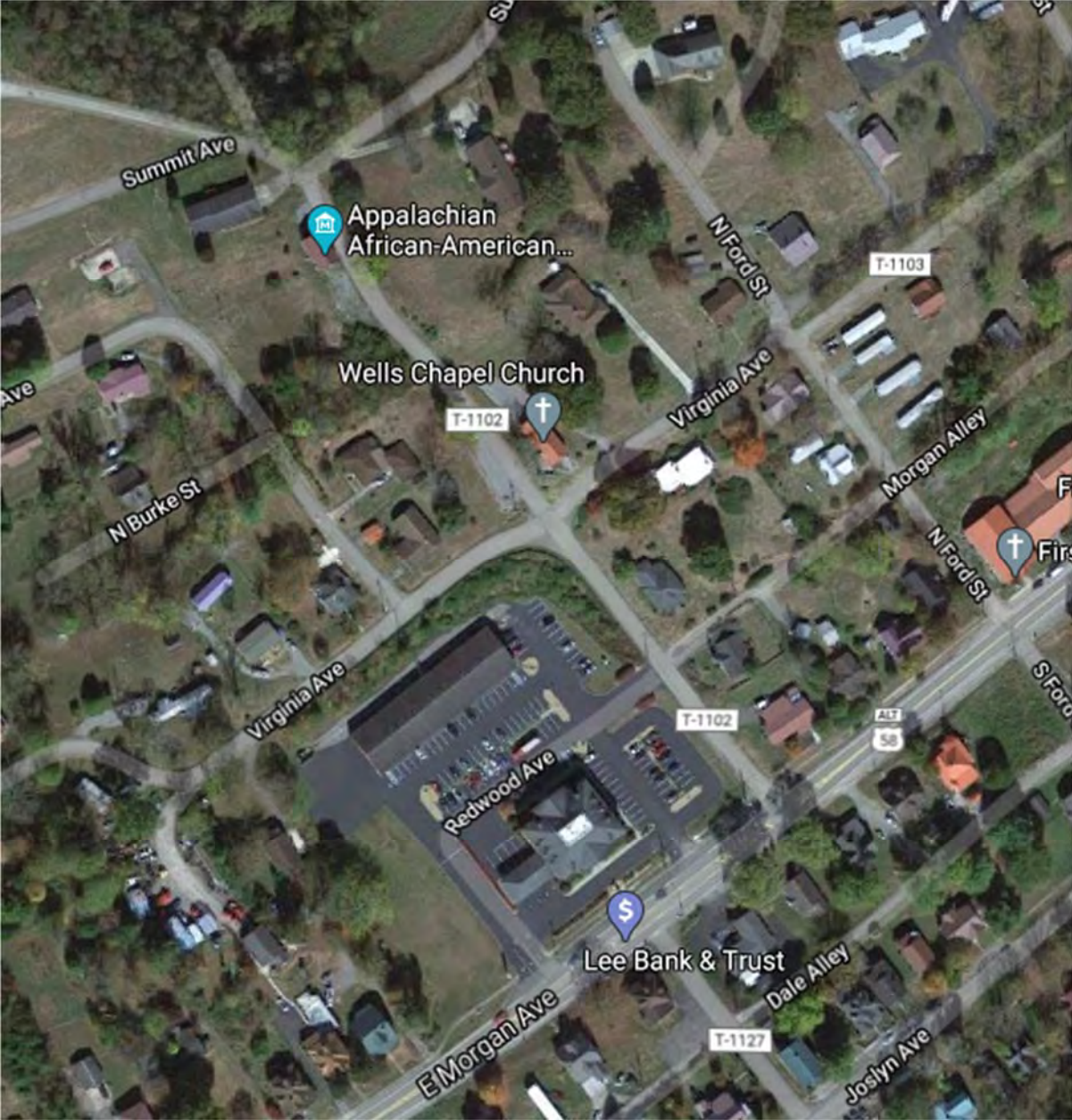
**6. Notification**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator, City Manager, and/or Town Manager

name/title: Dane Poe, County Administrator  
locality: Lee County  
street & number: Lee County Courthouse, Room 111, P.O. Box 367  
city or town: Jonesville state: VA zip code: 24263  
telephone: 276-346-7714

3. **Maps:** A minimum of two maps must accompany your PIF:
- **Location map:** This map shows the exact location of your property. The map can be created using Google Maps, Google Earth, Bing, or other mapping websites. A copy of a road map also may be used as long as the property's exact location and physical address are shown on the map. DHR's Archivist can assist in providing an acceptable location map with boundaries.
  - **Sketch map:** This map shows the locations of all resources on your property, such as the main building; any secondary resources (often referred to as outbuildings); major landscape features such as a stream, formal gardens, driveways, and parking areas, and the road on which the property fronts. The sketch map can be drawn by hand, or an annotated aerial view, tax parcel map or survey map may be used.





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----- Improvement Description -----
      Exterior      Interior      Site
CONSTRUCTION-CINDE  FLOORS-CARPET  STREET-PAVED
EXTERIOR-BRICK      FLOORS-HARDWOOD  UTILITIES-PUB SEWE
FOUNDATION-CONCRET  INTERIOR-SHEET ROC  UTILITIES-PUB WATE
ROOFING-METAL
+-----38-----+
:
:
----- Commercial Valuation -----
:
Cls Grad YEff Description Str/# Size Rate Pct Value :
014 1955 SCHOOL 1.0 912 60.00 .25* 41040 :
Total Market Value 41040 :
:
----- Land Valuation -----
:
M Cls Desc G Size Dpth Rate FV/Pct Value 24:
A 10 COMMERCIAL I 9000.00 9000 9000 :
Total Land Value 9000 :
:
----- Comments -----
:
FRONTS O LEONA.APPALACHIAN AFRICAN-AMERICAN HIS-
TORICAL CULTURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER. :A
CB PIC# 5-33
+-----38-----+
Total Property Value 50000

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Sec	Type	Str/Ht	Description	Area	
A	SCHOOL	1.0	N24E38S24W38	912	
Total Square Feet					
			Cur. Value	Prev. Value	%Inc.
	Land		9000	9000	
	Improvements		41000	41000	
	Total		50000	50000	
Average Price Per Acre					