



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 113-5041

1. General Property Information

Property name: Rosenwald-Felts School

Property address: 105 Rosenwald Felts Drive

City or Town: City of Galax

Zip code: 24333

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

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

Building x Site _____ Structure _____ Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 7.0

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban _____ Suburban _____ Town x Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural _____

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

From VCRIS: PVA survey, January 2019

The East Galax School is located at the terminus of Rosenwald Felts Drive. There is a large paved parking lot adjacent to the building and playground equipment on the site. The surrounding area is primarily residential in character and developed with small houses on large lots. Located to the south, on Calloway Street, is the Galax Cemetery. The survey did not identify any secondary resources associated with this property.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): No style

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

If the builder is known, please list here: Unknown

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1926; 1957

Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):

Briefly describe the property's general characteristics, 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 materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

Adapted from VCRIS: PVA survey, January 2019

The East Galax School is a one-story two-part masonry building. The original (c. 1926) section has a metal-clad side-gable roof, brickmasonry exterior, and large replacement windows set within the original openings. The large addition (c. 1957) is rectangular in form and wraps around the east, south and north sides of the original building, leaving only the west elevation of the original building fully exposed. The addition has a flat roof, brickmasonry exterior, and large window openings with applied shutters. On the south elevation there are two deeply recessed door openings including the principal entrance with multi-light folding doors and overhead transom. These are accessed via a wooden ramp and deck. The building remains in good condition.

4. Property's History and Significance

Adapted from VCRIS: PVA survey, January 2019

The ca. 1926-27 Rosenwald-Felts School (East Galax School) is associated with the Rosenwald Schools in VA Multiple Property Document (MPD). Constructed within the MPD's period of significance as an example of the Rosenwald Fund's design called a "two-teacher east or west-facing school," it reflects the areas of significance for this resource type. The school appears to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as presented in the Rosenwald Schools of Virginia MPD (012-5041). As per the registration requirements in the MPD, funding from the school came from both the African American community and the Julius Rosenwald Fund and was built from a standardized plan.

The total cost for construction of the school was \$4,500 with \$500 from the local African American community, matched by \$700 by the Rosenwald Fund, \$2,650 from public funds, and \$650 from White donors (primarily Thomas Felts).

According to local genealogist Janet Hill, the Felts name in association with the school comes from Thomas Lafayette Felts (1868-1937) a co-owner of the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency and was a prominent citizen of Galax who donated the land where the Rosenwald School was built. He also donated \$500 towards the building costs.

According to an unpublished local history provided to Preservation Virginia:

Realizing that this step was just the beginning, Mr. Felts suggested that the Rosenwald Foundation of New York City be asked to support the effort. Mr. William Gershwin, representative for the Rosenwald Fund and state supervisor of Negro Schools, was contacted.

After many months, the superintendent, Mr. J. Lee Cox, Councilmen Mr. Charles P. Warren, Mr. Emmett Cox and Mr. Shelby Vass, Sr., were informed by Mr. Gershwin that the Rosenwald Foundation would finance the school erection. Rev. Calup Carson, Mr. William Martin, Mr. Rich Garrett, were chosen the first trustees. Mr. James Isom, Independence, Virginia, called together the parents of this community and the first Parent Teachers Association was organized. This association launched many programs and activities to raise funds for the new school.

Finally, March 1926, a two-room school, named Rosenwald Felts, was opened for student attendance. Mr. James Isom, Independence, Virginia, was selected to be the first principal. Teaching with him was Miss Alberta Clark. Approximately seventy-five students from Galax and Oldtown, Virginia, were enrolled. Principals and teachers following were: Mrs. Sears, Miss Nowlin, Mrs. Josie Early, Mrs. Odessa Davies, Miss Pace, Miss Wotten, Mr. Anderson, Miss Bowan, Mr. Hart, Mr. George Speller, Mr. Booker, Mrs. Dixon, Mrs. Seay, Mr. Hensile Millner, Mr. Forte, Mr. Henderson, Mr. John Beamer, Mr. Robert Early and Mrs. Lillie Bradley. 1968-69 faculty: Mr. J. G. Williams, Principal; Miss Volyn Dykes, Mrs. O'Leta Goins and Mr. Theodore Gibbs. The Rosenwald-Felts Elementary School was closed in 1969 and the new Rosenwald-Felts Kindergarten was opened in 1973.

The former school appears to have been constructed of masonry, a departure from the frame construction typical of Rosenwald schools. Further, according to the Fisk database this is the only known Rosenwald school in Carroll County. However, the building appears to be heavily altered, with removal of the front section and the construction of a large addition on the front of the building. Due to these alterations, it no longer maintains its integrity of feeling, design, and materials and is recommended not eligible for listing on the state and national registers as a Rosenwald school. However, preliminary research indicates this school continued to be used as a school and should additional research indicate continued associations with education and African American history in Carroll County, the site could have potential eligibility for listing on the state and national registers. As such, additional research is recommended to assess the overall history, including date of the addition, and significance of this property.

Rosenwald Schools of Virginia Multiple Property Document (MPD)


Rosenwald schools are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (Education, Ethnic History – African American, and Criterion C (Architecture) with a period of significance from 1917 to 1932. Under Criterion A Rosenwald schools are eligible for their association with the Rosenwald School Building Fund, which constituted an important avenue for the advancement of African-American education during much of the first half of the twentieth century. The Julius Rosenwald Fund contributed to the construction of 664 schools, 18 teachers' homes and vocational buildings in Virginia. The school buildings reflect not only one of the most ambitious school building projects ever undertaken, but they symbolize the African-American struggle for educational opportunities in the segregated South. They are also eligible under Ethnic Historic - African American for their association with the development of important centers for African American communities and often set the standards for the neighborhood in regard to architecture, sanitation, and maintenance. Under Criterion C they are eligible in the area of Architecture. Rosenwald schools reflect innovations in educational architectural design and set the standard for school construction for years to come. One of the greatest contributions of the Julius Rosenwald Fund was the development of floor plans and construction specifications for a variety of schools. These plans and specifications ensured every community a quality school. The designs commissioned by the Rosenwald School Building fund revolutionized rural school architecture. See the *Rosenwald Schools in VA MPD* for additional information.

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

Private: _____ Public\Local x 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: Barry N. Moore, City Manager
organization: City of Galax
street & number: 111 E. Grayson St.
city or town: Galax state: VA zip code: 24333
e-mail: bmoore@galaxva.com telephone: 276-236-5773

Legal Owner's Signature: 
Date: 12-12-22

•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••

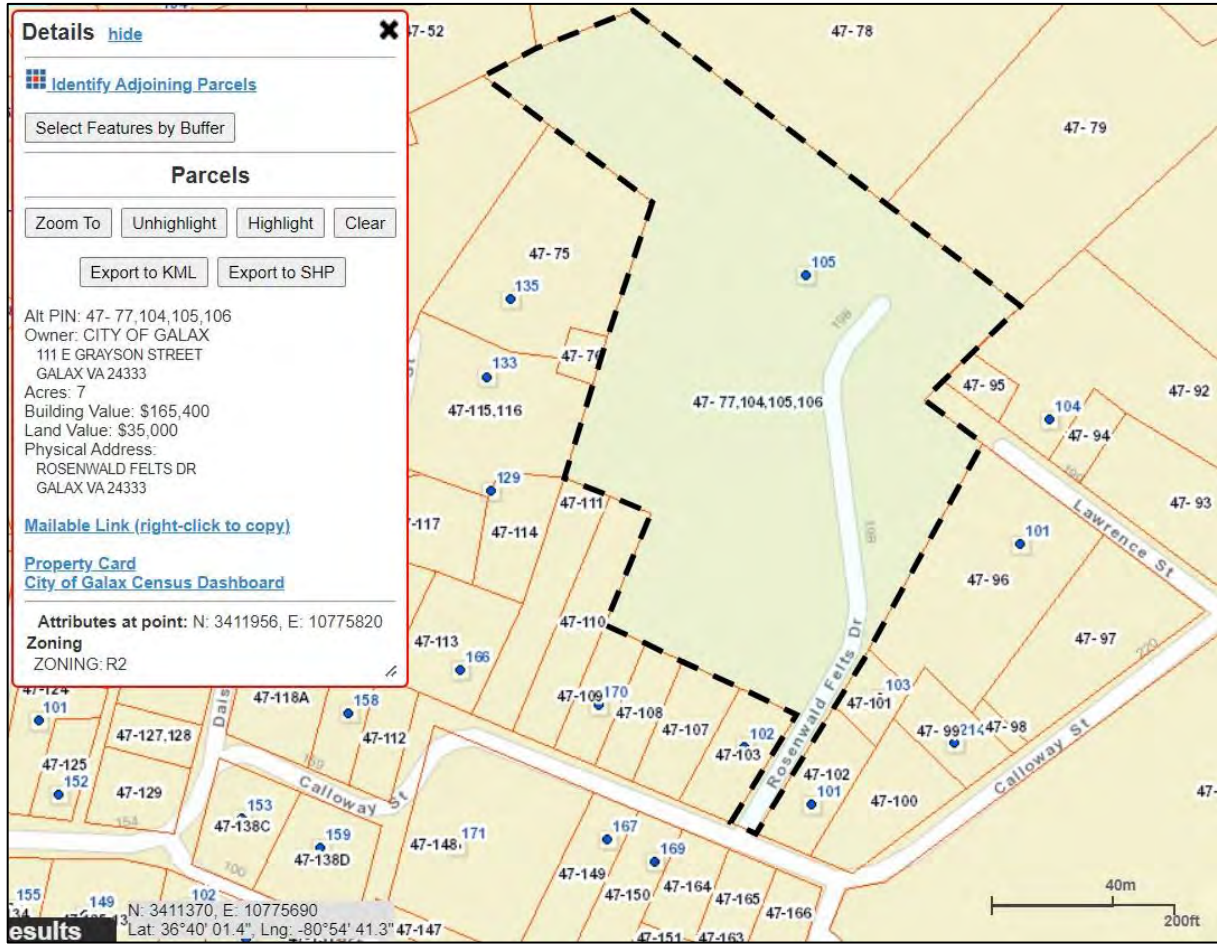
In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Barry N. Moore
Daytime Telephone: 276-236-5773

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

name/title: Mike Pulice
organization: DHR Western Region
street & number: _____
city or town: Salem state: VA zip code: _____
e-mail: michael.pulice@dhr.virginia.gov telephone: 540-387-5443
Date: December 12, 2022















D FELTS
Y CENTER

NO
TRESPASSING

NO TRESPASSING
DURING HEAD START
HOURS 7am-4pm
OR AFTER DARK



NO
PARKING
EXCEPT
FOR
OFFICIAL
VEHICLES

NO
PARKING
EXCEPT
FOR
OFFICIAL
VEHICLES

