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PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

The Preliminary Information Form (PIF) constitutes an application for preliminary consideration of a property for eligibility for the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The PIF is **not** the same as a nomination to the Registers, but is a means for evaluating the **eligibility** of a property for listing. The PIF is evaluated by Department of Historic Resources (DHR) staff and the State Review Board (SRB) based on information available at the time of preparation. Recommendations are subject to change if additional information becomes available. DHR and SRB recommendations regarding the property's eligibility will be provided to the property owner in writing.

Before Preparing a PIF

Contact **DHR's Archivist** for assistance in obtaining any information DHR may have on file about your property, such as a previous architectural survey record or eligibility evaluation. You are welcome to use this information in preparing your PIF. Contact **DHR's Archivist** by phone at (804) 482-6102, or by email at Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov.

Staff at one of DHR's three Regional offices also are available to answer questions you may have as you begin preparing your PIF. Locations and contact information for each office is at <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/about-dhr/regional-preservation-offices/>. (You also are welcome to ask DHR's Archivist for the contact information.)

Preparing a PIF

A PIF consists of three equally important parts:

1. **Form:** Complete the attached form to the best of your ability, using your own research about the property to be evaluated as well as any information that DHR has provided. Remember that DHR's Regional staff also are available to assist you. The form may be completed using Microsoft Word software, typed, or hand-written. If using MS Word, send the electronic file via CD, email, ftp, or other file sharing means to **DHR's Archivist**.
Your PIF will not be evaluated if it is missing the property owner's signature and/or contact information for the person submitting the form (if different from the property owner)
2. **Photos:** Provide color digital images (JPGs are preferred) of your property's exterior and major interior spaces, with emphasis on architectural features instead of furnishings. Digital photos typically include views of the main building from all sides, as well as important ornamental and/or functional details; any outbuildings or secondary resources; and the property's general setting. Also provide one set of photo prints on 4" x 6" glossy photo paper. Digital images can be submitted on CD, USB drive, or other file sharing means. Contact **DHR's Archivist** if you need assistance working with digital images. For further guidance on how to take photos, please refer to DHR's [Architectural Survey Guidelines](#).
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. If you need assistance, **DHR's Archivist** can provide you an example of an acceptable location map that shows 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.

Submitting a PIF

Once you have completed the PIF, submit it to **DHR's Archivist** at the mailing address at the top of this page or via email at Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov. The PIF will be forwarded to the Regional staff member who will review your PIF and will answer any questions you may have about the evaluation process. Do not include materials for other DHR programs, such as easements or tax credits, with your PIF.

Note: All submitted materials become the property of DHR and will be retained in our permanent Archive. In addition, the materials will be posted on DHR's public website for a period of time during the evaluation process.

Thank you for taking the time to prepare and submit a Preliminary Information Form to DHR!



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) _____

1. General Property Information

Property name: Summerseat (Linneaus H. James House)

Property address: 20829 Chesterfield Ave

City or Town: Ettrick

Zip code: 23803

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Chesterfield Co.

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

Building X

Site _____

Structure _____

Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 2.2 acres total

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban _____ Suburban X Town _____ Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural _____

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

Summerseat is located on the east side of Chesterfield Avenue. It is located at street grade on the entirety of a flat, roughly-shaped block, set back somewhat from Chesterfield Avenue, which it faces from the northeast. There is no surviving landscaping. Second Street is located to the north, Granger Street to the west, Chesterfield Avenue to the south, and James Street is located to the east. The property to the south is occupied by Ettrick Elementary School. To the west and north are commercial lots, and to the east is the former Upper Ettrick neighborhood, now an area of expansion and parking for Virginia State University.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Greek Revival

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: _____

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1860

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.

The site consists of a roughly rectangular block of 2.2 acres that is flat and level with the surrounding streets. The block is made up of as many as 13 independent lots that were consolidated in recent years under the ownership of Virginia State University. The block itself is a portion of a larger 7.24-acre triangular tract that fit "between and in the junction of the Hickory and Woodpecker roads" in the nineteenth century [David Adams from heirs of Benjamin Boisseau, Chesterfield County Deed Book 41, 1854]. The triangular nature of this original tract affects the shape of the properties in the vicinity to this day.

The house occupies what was a smaller tract at the block's south corner. It originally stood alone, set back 50' from Chesterfield Avenue, which it faces from the northeast. It was later flanked by buildings on each side. The lot has no landscaping other than mowed grass and a small gravel parking area accessed off James Street. There are no outbuildings.

The original section of the house consists of a single-cell formal room on a raised brick basement. This kind of small, architecturally distinguished building is sometimes identified as a "raised cottage," but there is no evidence that that term was used in this area at that time. The building makes use of details on the interior and exterior associated with the Italianate style that was promulgated by pattern books published in the mid-nineteenth century.

The main floor of the traditionally framed building is sheathed with weatherboard with plain corner boards. It rests on a high English basement laid in six-course American bond. The building is covered with a shallow, pyramidal, standing-seam metal roof edged by a full denticular cornice containing a built-in gutter. The three-bay principal front features a central four-panel doorway with a four-light transom and very narrow sidelights that extend to the top of the transom. The plain molded door panels have scalloped corners on the exterior. Large six-over-six sash windows fill almost all of the remainder of the south front with only two feet between the openings and the corners of the building. A plain batten door, hung to swing outwards in the late nineteenth century, provides entry to the basement at the center of the south wall. It is 19th-century in date but has been incorrectly hung with the battens to the exterior. The door is flanked by small six-over-six sash windows.

A single six-over-six sash is placed in the center of the east end wall. An early four-panel door near the south end of the wall features glass upper panels. The west end is unpierced and a brick interior end chimney rises above the west end wall. The doors and windows have narrow, square wood trim.

A three-bay porch extends across the south front supported on two brick piers at the exterior corners on the basement level. The porch is furnished with a plain box cornice supported on four slender square columns with molded capitals and square bases. The shafts were provided with lark's tongue chamfers at the corners and incised with matching semi-circular concave insets at the center of each face. The railing is formed of a slender molded rail with infill of rectangular-section verticals connected by diagonally placed wood struts in a "Chinese" pattern. A centrally placed wood stair with a matching railing climbs from the ground to the central porch bay. The hipped roof is covered with flat-seam metal roofing and built-in gutters.

A shed-roofed wing extends at each floor across the north (rear) wall. This section appears to have been built as a shed porch which was enclosed in the early twentieth century. The end wall are framed with mid-twentieth century members covered on the exterior with a layer of brick veneer. The rear wall is covered with modern weatherboard. The basement level features squat modern six-over-six sash windows, with brick sills. The upper floor has weatherboard matching the main section and modern sash window frames with square trim on the east and west end walls. These windows, which contain reused nineteenth-century sashes, are shifted slightly off-center toward the north wall, while the modern basement windows on the floor below are centrally placed. A modern door at the west end of the wall gives access to the basement level. The door has four panels with a row of small glass panels.

On the interior, the main room on the upper floor has the high ceiling and robust, Italianate trim appropriate for a formal room. A central door on the north matches the other openings but has no transom or sidelights. It is filled with a four-panel door with molded inner face and a flush panel with beaded side edges on the rear. A patch in the plaster shows the former location of a window on the north matching the eastern window on the south front.

The molded baseboard, molded door and window trim, and plastered walls and ceiling are original. An interior chimney on the west side is missing its mantel. It has a very shallow brick hearth. According to the VDHR survey of 1973, it retained an original wood mantel with wide molded pilasters, a tall plain frieze, and a coal insert. Evidence in the brickwork shows that the coal insert was likely original to the building. The room is floored with regular tongue-and-groove flooring that appears to be original. An open stair rises from the basement along the east wall. It is surrounded by what appears to be an original plain board railing with molded tops on the corner newel posts.

The rear shed room has been gutted of interior finishes and displays circular sawn true 2" x 4" studs and built-up corner posts and plates. The ghost of original weatherboards and corresponding nail holes can be seen on both sides of the central doorway on the north side of the back wall of the main room. It seems to have begun as a porch and to later have been enclosed with two windows facing to the north, now gone. The room has a modern floor which is one step up from the main room, although the door trim and the door extend to the main room floor. A narrow tongue-and-groove floor is visible below.

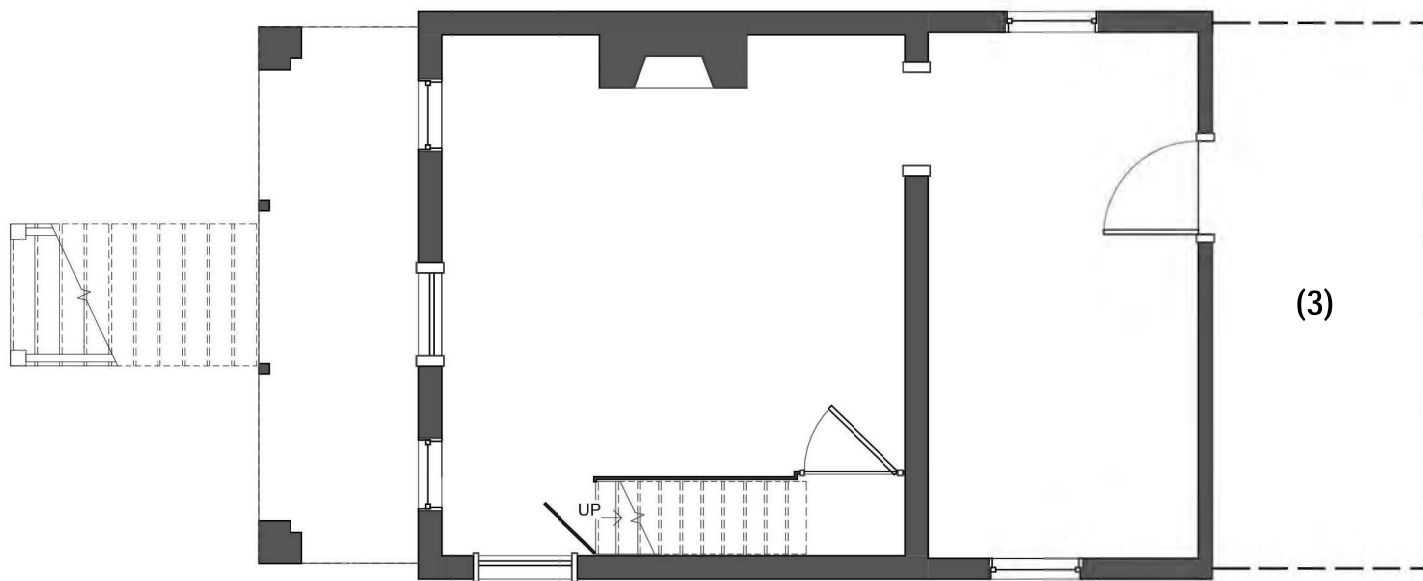
The basement room in the main section has a brick floor laid in Portland cement mortar, plaster walls and ceiling, and original wood architrave trim with a square outer element at the doors and windows. The stair on the east wall rises within a vertical beaded board wall of early date. The door to the stair appears to be an early addition: it has five panels contrasting the four panels elsewhere. A closet is located under the stair and is closed with a four-panel door with molded flat panels on the front and flush beaded panels on the back that matches the rear door on the main floor. Most of the doors have iron rim locks with porcelain knobs, except the north door near the west end of the wall, which gives access to the north shed. As mentioned above, the front door is closed with a nineteenth-century batten door opening to the exterior. Hinge mortices show that the original door opened to the interior. It seems likely that the original door might have been a four-panel door like that at the rear opening on the upper floor. The chimney on the west wall incorporates a conventional fireplace with a coal

insert and an original period mantel with a high frieze and wide molded pilasters that is consonant with the Italianate style of design.

The basement room in the rear shed has been finished with modern T-111 siding over modern replacement studs. The ceiling, however, is of narrow tongue-and-groove boards, which could indicate a porch ceiling. The modern window trim has a square profile not unlike the original trim in the main basement room.

In a bullet list, include any outbuildings or secondary resources or major landscape features (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

- No outbuildings or secondary resources exist.

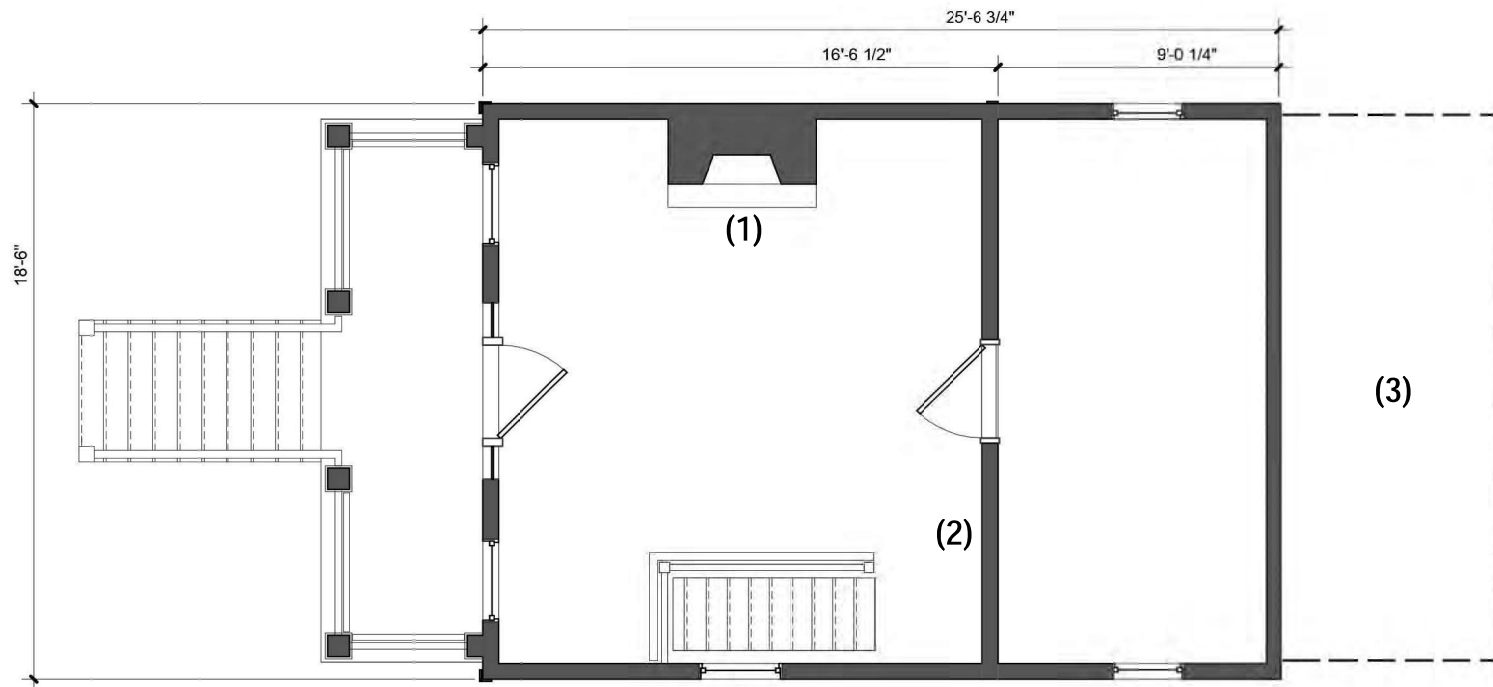


(3) Demolished shed seen in 1973 photos

SCALE: 1' - 0" = 1/4"



Plan Ground Floor, Summerseat, Ettrick, Chesterfield County VA



- (1) Mantelpiece missing at Main Floor
- (2) Infilled window location
- (3) Demolished shed seen in 1973 photos

SCALE: 1' - 0" = 1/4"



Plan Main Floor, Summerseat, Ettrick, Chesterfield County VA

4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.

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

Significance

Summerseat is a distinctive building in the village of Ettrick with its unusual raised English basement and well-detailed Italianate front porch. Summerseat seems to have been built in 1860 by a local carpenter, Linneaus James, to serve as his own home. The house, which consisted of a single room on each of the two floors, was clearly supplemented by wings and outbuildings in order to be usable as something other than an office or summer villa. The house may have been used as an itinerant court in the second quarter of the twentieth century by the local Justice of the Peace, who judged minor offenses. His courts were held in other local buildings, including a restaurant. There is no evidence that the building was used as a jail, which was not normally associated with the routine activities of a justice of the peace.

The building is potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C, in that the building is associated with events that have made significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history and that Summerseat embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Early Settlement

Ettrick is located near the site of a seventeenth-century Native American village, one of four occupied by the Appomattox group of the Powhatan paramount chiefdom. Initial contact by English settlers was made in 1608; by 1646, trading operations had begun in earnest between the English and Native Americans. The village location at the falls of the Appomattox River was the gateway to trade. However, in 1676, as part of an escalating war against the Indians by Nathaniel Bacon and his rebel followers, the village was destroyed (Davenport 1979:3–9).

Unfortunately, Ettrick's colonial-period origins are difficult to trace. Because early records of Henrico County, of which Chesterfield was a part until 1749, have been destroyed, it is difficult to trace the entire history of the Ettrick area. George Archer Sr. (c162-1675) an indentured servant who arrived c1630, received a patent to 250 acres upstream and adjacent to the old [Indian] town land in 1663. Archer's descendants held over a thousand acres on the south side of the falls [Nell Nugent, *Cavalier and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, 1723-1800*, Richmond VA: Dietz Press, 1935].

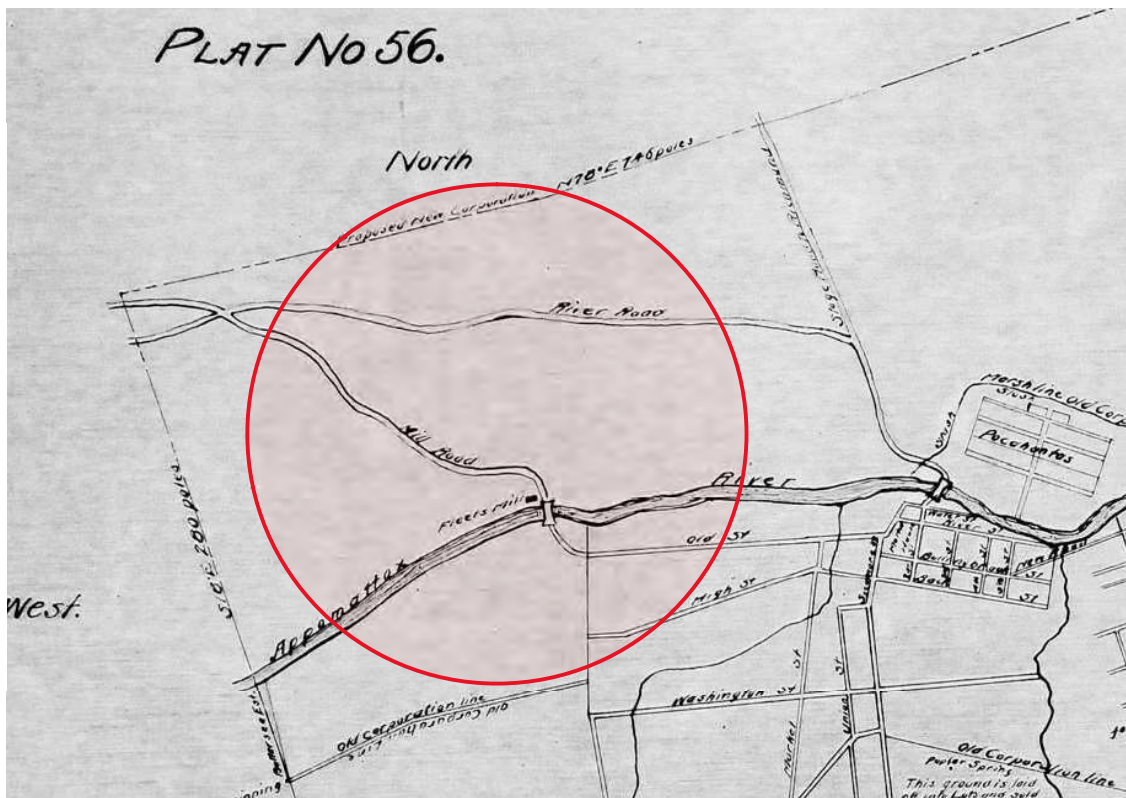
River crossing at the falls was made possible by a ford at the top of the falls that connected with a route to the southwest called the Mill Road [Will of George Archer Jr., Henrico County, 1739]. Mill Road shows up running diagonally across the Ettricks Mill tract on a plat of Petersburg in 1815 [Plat of Proposed Corporate Limits, Petersburg, 1815, Petersburg City, Clerks Office]. At that time, it joined a route labelled River Road which ran east-west along the north side of the river. These early roads are represented at this time by present-day River Road, in the same position, and Chesterfield Avenue, rerouted to its current north-south position.

By the mid-eighteenth century, three Chesterfield County plantations, Matoax on the west (now Virginia State University's Agricultural Farm), Ettrick Banks at the center, and Fleets Hill on the east (the current site of VSU), encompassed the land on which Ettrick would be established (Bethany Davenport, Ettrick, Virginia:

Historical Survey of an American Village, Master's Thesis, 1979:15-16, 19). Matoax, a 1,862-acre plantation was the seat of the Tabb and Randolph families in the mid-to-late eighteenth century. It was sold by the Randolph heirs in 1796 [Beckett and Downing, 1996:5 and O'Dell 1983:49]. A portion of it was the location of the Matoaca textile mills during the mid-to-late nineteenth century and another portion is now the location of Virginia State University's agricultural program.

The Ettrick Banks tract was purchased from the Archers by Neil Buchanan, Jr. (1738-1793), a Scottish merchant based in Glasgow. Buchanan was a junior member of one of the most successful Scottish families engaged in the tobacco trade in Virginia and Maryland. He appears to have arrived in Petersburg as a minor partner and representative of the firm of Buchanan, Hastie, and Co., organized in 1763. He and his wife Mary, a member of the prominent Gay family of Henrico, lived at Ettrick Banks after their marriage in 1763. By 1771, with eight stores in Virginia and three in North Carolina, they were the fifth largest importer of tobacco in Glasgow. The firm went bankrupt in 1777 due to losses caused by the American Revolution, and Buchanan sided with the revolutionaries and stayed in Virginia [Jacob M. Price, Buchanan and Simson, 1759-1763: A Different Kind of Glasgow Firm Trading to the Chesapeake, *William and Mary Quarterly* 40:1 (Jan. 1983)]. He named his farm after the section of Scotland described in the folksong "Ettrick Banks," popularized by Scottish poet Robert Burns.

Fleet's Hill, the site of the campus Virginia State University, was mentioned as early as 1675 by name in the Act of March 7, 1675, as a potential site for "a fort or place of defense" at the falls under the command of Major Peter Jones [P. H. Drewry, Fort Henry, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3:1 (Jan. 1923). Fleet's Hill was later acquired by the Griffin family, who built a large brick house there in 1834 that became the first building of Virginia State University [Toppin, *Loyal Sons and Daughters*, 1992].



Plat of Proposed Corporate Limits, Petersburg 1815 [Petersburg Clerks Office]. Ettrick is today located above the square labelled Fleet's Mill. The Mill Road was later replaced by Chesterfield Avenue.

The Falls of the Appomattox

Petersburg, located to the south of the falls, had emerged as an important commercial center in Virginia by the second half of the eighteenth century,. The waters of the Appomattox River provided an important source of power; as a result, several grain mills were established in the area (O'Dell 1983:49). Jones's Mill opened on the south side of the falls in 1728. As the land to the south and west was settled with tobacco plantations, the section of the river above the falls was cleared and developed beginning in 1745. A second mill on the south side was developed at Prides Mill. Industrial development on the north side of the falls was kicked off by the opening of Campbells or Fleet's Mill, Wheeler's Mill, and Ellicott's Mill at the "Narrow Falls" at the top of the falls. Campbell's Bridge was constructed in the same year to give access to the grain mills. In 1804 Fleets Hill was designated as a flour inspection station. At that time Fleets Hill was the plantation seat of Francis Tabb (Beckett and Downing 1996:5; O'Dell 1983:49).

Beginning in 1795, the Upper Appomattox Company developed a canal around the falls. As completed in 1816, this project included mill races, locks, and the North Canal (1791), a millrace that provided power to mills on the north side of the river. Water to the North Canal and the corresponding South Canal on the opposite side of the river was supplied by small dams that were replaced by a single dam across the river in 1816 [North Battersea Historic District Nomination, 2005].

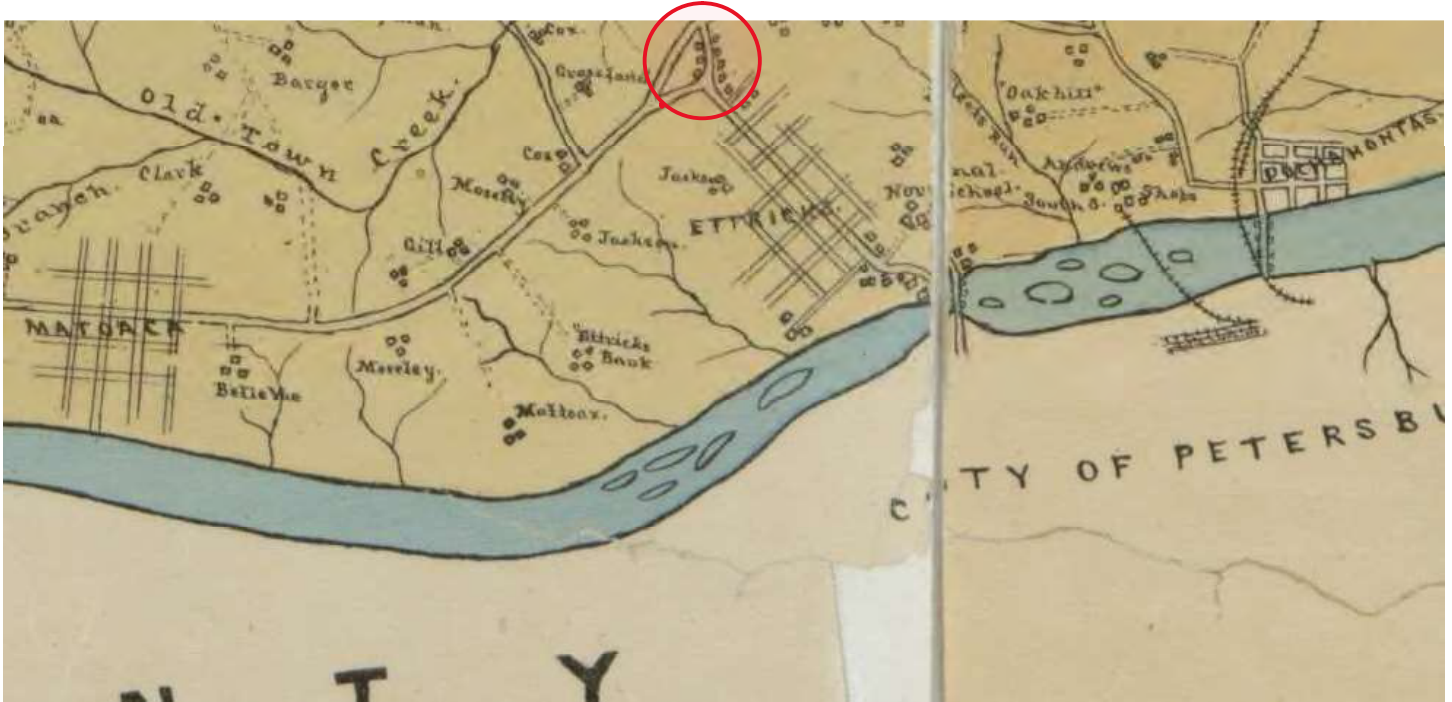
The type of milling at the falls diversified from grain milling in the early nineteenth century. Opening of access by rail to cotton crops spurred the construction of cotton mills. By 1810, there were five cotton mills in operation. Industrial expansion was led by two entrepreneurs, Jabez Smith and Benjamin Boisseau. Boisseau had acquired the Fleet's Hill Farm and Fleet's Mill, while Smith purchased Ettrick Banks. The two farms were divided along the route of what is now Chesterfield Avenue. Jabez Smith and his partner Edward Stokes acquired the Campbell or Fleet's Mills. The industrial facilities along the north side of the river included, in addition to merchant grain mills, a distillery and a cottonseed mill.

In 1836 two industrial operations were incorporated: Ettrick Manufacturing Co. (a cotton mill) and Fleet's Manufacturing Company (a machine shop and foundry) opened by Benjamin Boisseau. Jabez Smith sold his tract known as Ettrick Banks, "with its mill privileges and water power" to the Ettrick Manufacturing Co. Smith served on the boards of both companies. Smith and Boisseau together sold a half-acre of land and its association mill privileges (access to water power) to the Fleet's Manufacturing Company to build a machine shop and foundry in exchange for shares of stock. Jabez Smith opened the Ettrick Manufacturing Company on a 35-acre site west of the bridge to process cotton from bale to cloth. The Ettrick Mill was served by its own canal to the west of Ettrick. It remained in operation until 1907. The Ettrick Mill was later primarily engaged in the dyeing of silk.

Jabez Smith funded inventor Francis Follett to develop the first industrial processing of cottonseed oil, patented in 1834. Follet and Jabez Smith formed a partnership to construct and operate a cottonseed oil mill in 1831. The mill was located on land belonging to Benjamin Boisseau. By 1833, Follet and Smith had three cottonseed oil mills, which consisted of pestles and haircloth-lined mortars powered by horses. In 1838, Benjamin Boisseau leased the Oil Mill at Fleets to David Adams and his partner D. Wilson Bragg in return for \$400 and an annual lease payment of \$600. The lease also mentions Boisseau's nearby sawmill.

The Village of Ettricks (also Ettrick), now known as Lower Ettrick, emerged c1830 as an irregular grid of streets on the bluff above the Ettrick Mills. The neighborhood is located on the blocks formed by Main, Light, Totty, Pannill, Court, and Jackson streets to the west side of Chesterfield Avenue. It housed mill workers in small double and single frame tenements characterized by units about sixteen feet square. It was related to

similar worker neighborhoods on the south side of the river. Main Street ran parallel to the river and gave access to the mills. Most residents of Ettrick were white, as African-Americans were not employed in manufacturing as much as the tobacco and transportation businesses. [Davenport 1979:37 and O'Dell 1983:50].



Detail, J. E. LaPrade, Chesterfield County Map, 1888 [Library of Congress]. Summerseat is likely the lower of the three houses shown in the triangular tract at the top center of the map

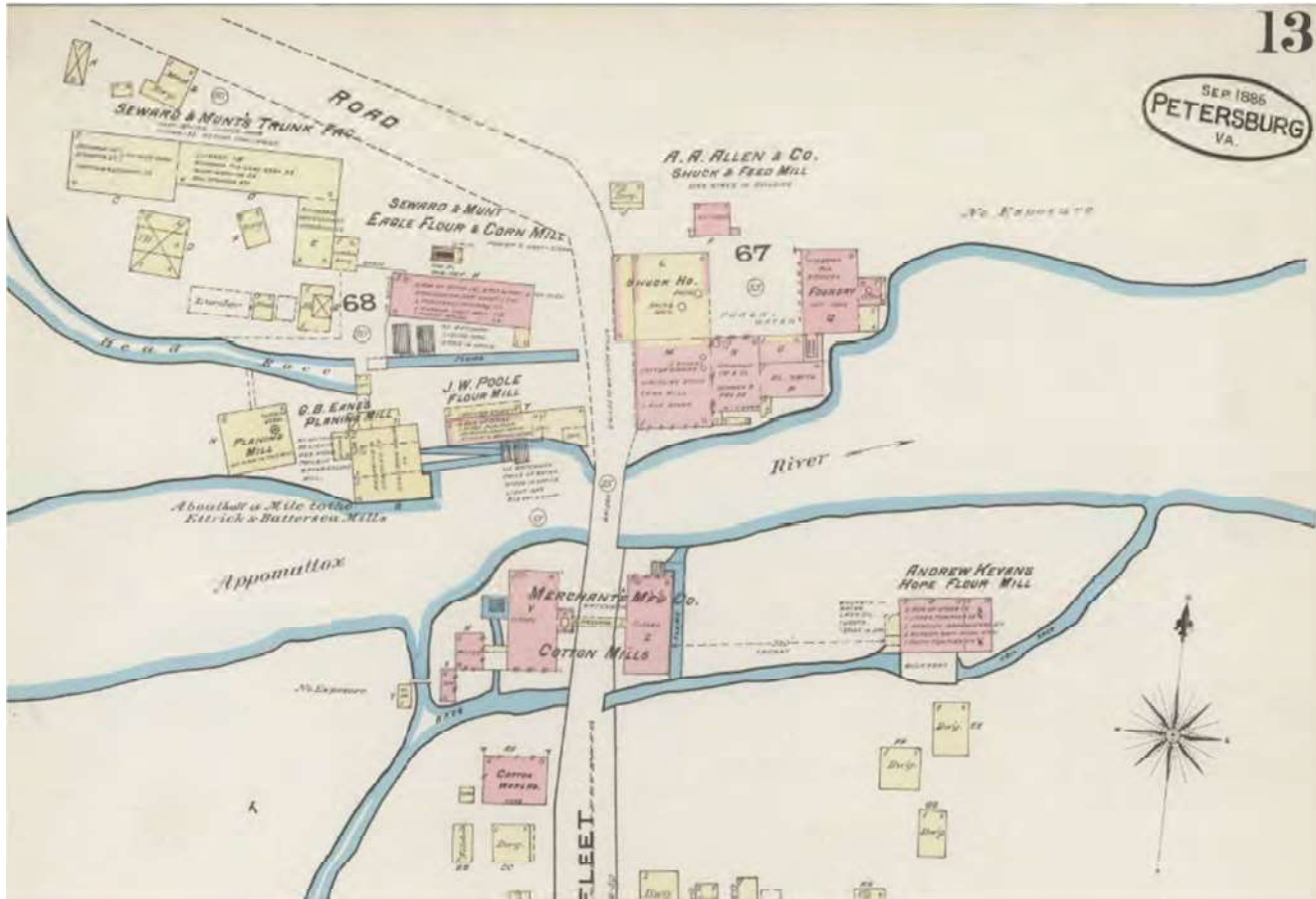
Ettrick

Despite the growing commercial activity near the village, its commercial and industrial development was slow. However, by 1830, the village began to take shape and was formed along what are now Main, Light, Totty, Pannill, Court, and Jackson streets (Davenport 1979:37). Workers, primarily white, employed at the local flour and cotton mills as well as tobacco warehouses settled in the area. Mill companies constructed one- and one-half-story double tenements that were rented to workers. More financially able employees built their own homes, which tended to be “frame, one-room-plan gable-roofed structures measuring about sixteen feet square.” Most of Ettrick’s existing nineteenth-century houses were subsequently expanded and altered (O’Dell 1983:50).

During the antebellum period, the area around Ettrick continued to thrive commercially with the production of cotton seed oil and the completion of the Weldon Railroad Line, which ran from Petersburg into northern North Carolina ensuring a dependable supply of cotton for the factories along the Appomattox River (Wyatt 1937:17). In 1836, two major businesses at Ettrick received corporate charters from the state legislature: Ettrick Manufacturing Company and Fleet’s Manufacturing Company. Benjamin Boisseau was the major shareholder in Fleet’s Manufacturing Company (Davenport 1979:40–42).

By the eve of the Civil War, the community of Ettrick boasted 830 residents, the majority of whom were employed as laborers or artisans. The village supported four grocery stores, a carpentry shop, a distillery and three churches. The majority of people resided within the block now formed by Chesterfield Avenue and Main, Light, and Pannill streets; The area known as New Town, though growing, had fewer residents (O’Dell 1983:50).

By 1885, the mills on the north side of the river included A.A. Allen Shuck and Feed Mill and an adjacent foundry in the location of the historic Fleet's Mill. These were located east of bridge. The J.W. Poole Flour Mill, G.B. Eane's Planing Mill, the nearby Eagle Flour and Corn Mill, built of brick, and Seward and Munt's frame trunk factory were located west of the bridge. All, except the trunk factory, were water-powered, supplied by the North Canal. Half a mile to the west stood the Ettrick Manufacturing Company's Cotton Mills. Further to the west was the industrial cotton milling complex at Matoaca Mills.



Detail, Sanborn Map, 1885, showing the milling operations on both sides of the falls with Ettrick located to the north of the river.

By 1891, most milling operations had not changed but the historic brick mill housing the A.A. Allen Shuck and Corn Mill and Foundry had been redeveloped and combined with the former Merchants Cotton Mills, also brick, on the opposite side of the river to form the silk manufacturing plant of the John N. Stearns and Co. silk dying factory. By 1910, all of the mills were closed.

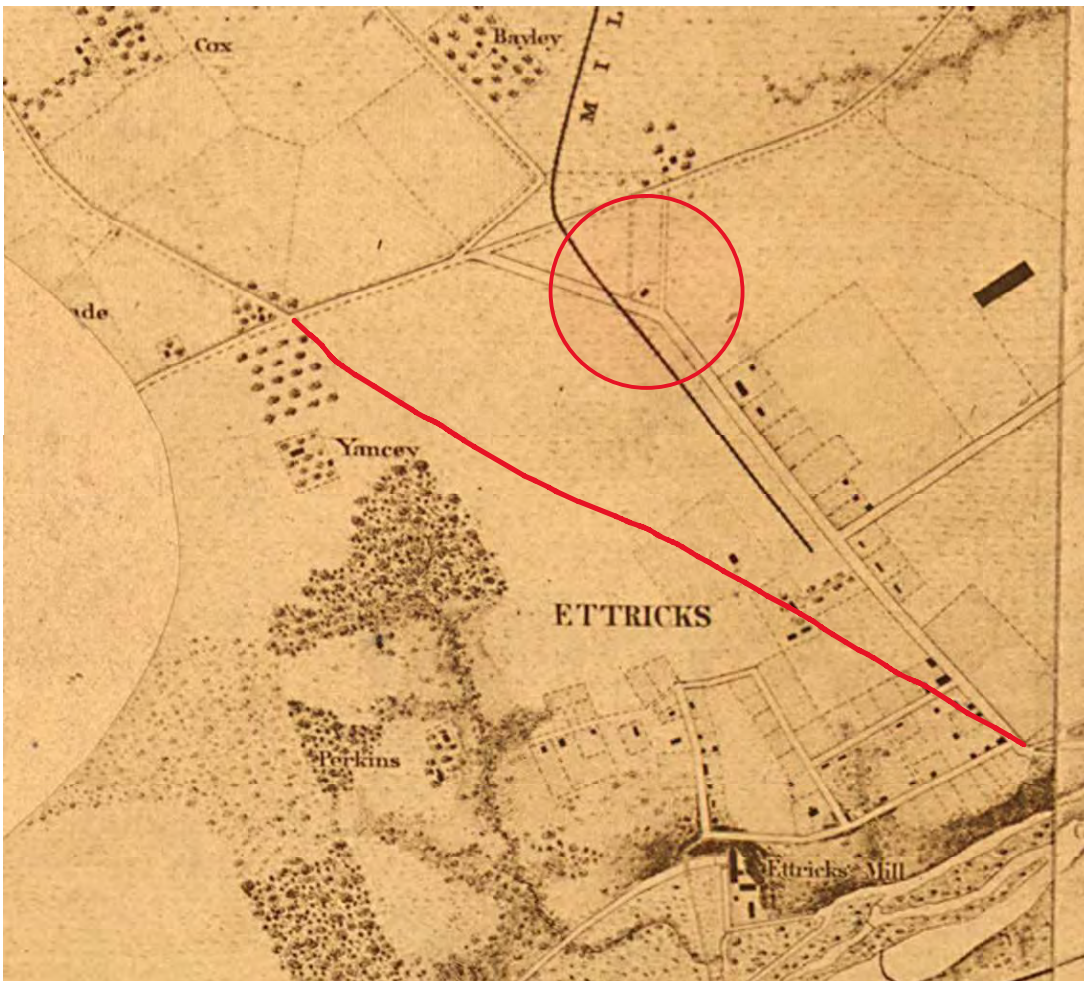
The decline of industry at the Falls of the Appomattox in the late nineteenth-century resulted from a depressed economy, competition from other regions, the silting up of the harbor, and changes in industrial technology. Ettrick was much more vulnerable than Petersburg and suffered from lack of growth. The founding of Virginia State University of Fleet's Hill adjacent to Ettrick in 1882 was a welcome spur to growth.

•Upper Ettrick

The future site of Summerseat was part of a suburb developed in the 1850s on the Fleet's Hill property. At his death in 1845, Benjamin Boisseau left the 245-acre Fleet's Farm and the Fleet's Manufacturing Company to his

son Benjamin Boisseau, Jr. Benjamin Boisseau Jr. died in 1852 without a will, forcing division of his property by the Chesterfield Court. Boisseau's brother William P. Boisseau had a 101 acres section of "Fleet's Farm" laid out in lots, a suburb known as the "Boisseau Plan," "New Town," and, later, as "Upper Ettrick."

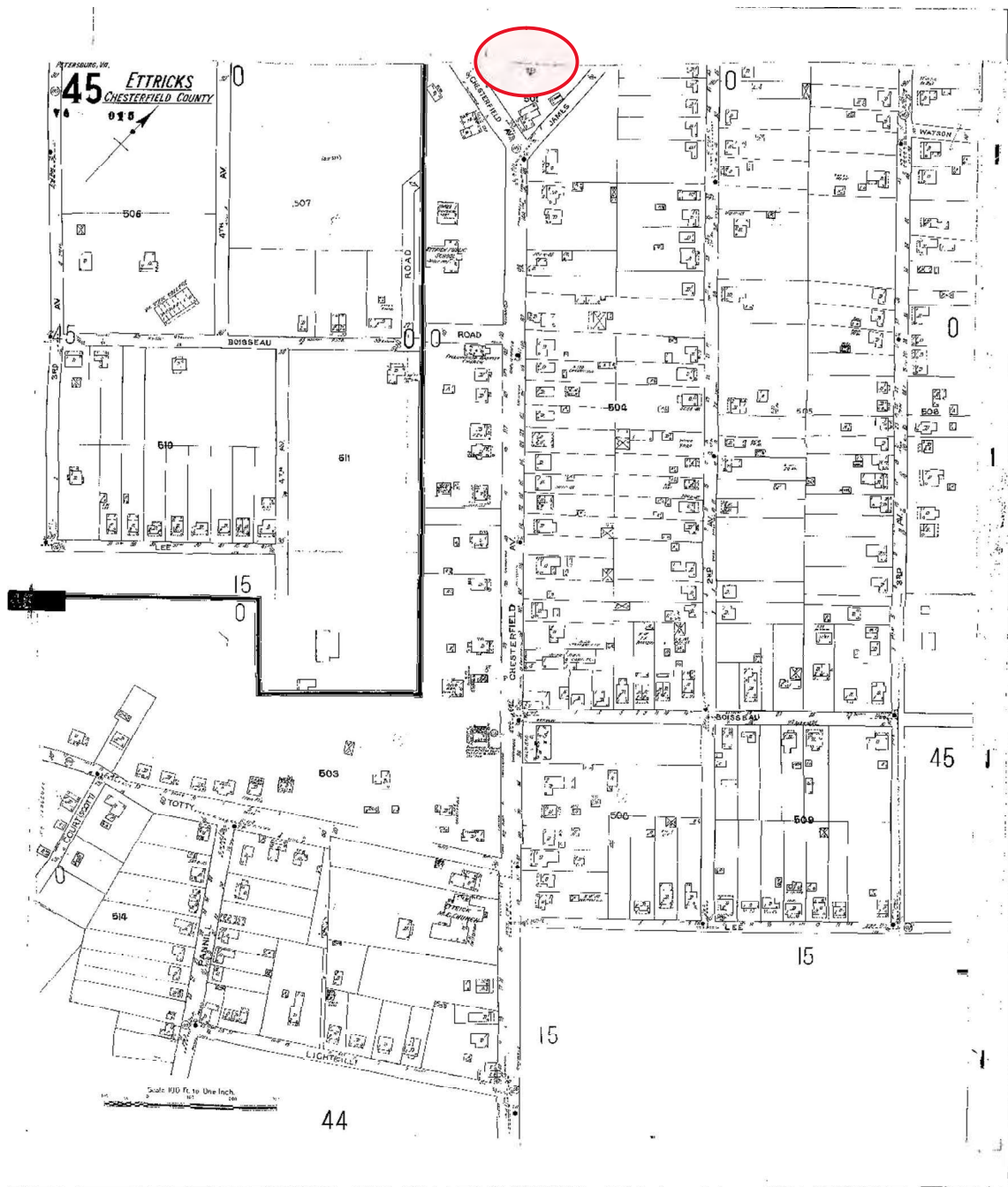
A 7.24-acre tract, the future site of Summerseat, at the rural intersection of Hickory and Woodpecker Roads, was auctioned to David and Elizabeth Adams of Petersburg. Adams, who had purchased the cottonseed mill from Boisseau in 1838, was identified as a manufacturer in the 1860 census. Adams paid the purchase price of \$193.65 and took possession of the tract in 1854. Adams, who was active in politics as a member of the Whig Party in the 1840s, was one of the managers responsible for honoring Henry Clay at Jarrett's Hotel in 1844. He lived in Petersburg with his wife, and four children in 1850 and owned real estate valued at \$5,000 [John Salmon 2016].



Detail, Nathaniel Michler, Map of the siege of Petersburg, 1864-5 [Library of Congress]. The original route of the Mill Road on the plat of 1816 is shown in red. The beginnings of the suburb of Upper Ettrick are shown along Chesterfield Avenue to the southeast

In 1854, William P. Boisseau (Benjamin Jr.'s brother) platted 101 acres of Fleet's Farm into a housing development known as the "New Town" or "Boisseau Plan." The section was located on the east side of Chesterfield St. Lots in the neighborhood faced First Street (now Chesterfield), Second, Third and Fourth Avenues between River Road and Boisseau Streets. The neighborhood, later known as Upper Ettrick, was developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and included Italianate, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival dwellings, as well as bungalows. Other than the buildings fronting on Chesterfield Avenue, all of the

properties, except a few isolated houses and commercial buildings, were acquired and the buildings demolished for use in the expansion of Virginia State University.



Sanborn Map, 1015-1950, Lower Ettrick is seen at the bottom left and the streets of Upper Ettrick to the right. Summerseat is partially cut off at the top center.

Summerseat

The triangular block of lots at the head of Chesterfield Avenue began to break down into separate residential tracts. David Adams subdivided his tract into nine or more lots. Several of those lots were transferred to George R. Johnson and his wife Jane Eliza between 1855 and 1857. As a result of another lawsuit, George R. Johnson

purchased a half-acre parcel in the fork of what were then called the “Woodpecker & Hickory Roads.” In 1859, Johnson sold the lot in question to Linneaus H. James, a carpenter, along with a second adjacent lot identified as being at the intersection of “River Road & Woodpecker Road” for a total of three acres. James, then in his late 20s, was not a wealthy man. At the time of the 1860 census, he was living in the household of John B. Spratly, another carpenter, and had neither personal property nor real estate.

James appears to have built the house known as Summerseat in 1860 (it is not clear when the name was applied to the house or for what reason). Land Tax books show no buildings or other improvements on the lots in 1859 and 1860. “New buildings” valued at \$700 show up in 1861. The value stayed the same until 1871, when the value increased to \$1,200, due to “improvements added,” as noted by the commissioner of the revenue. It declined in 1872 to \$1,100 and then rose to \$1,800 in 1876, in both cases without any comment or explanation [John Salmon, History of Summerseat, typescript, 2016]. James appears to have added the diagonal street named James Street that borders the property at this time. A narrow alley is shown on the opposite side of the tract in the Michler Map of 1865.

The house at Summerseat is likely shows up on the Gilmer Confederate Engineer’s Map of 1863 as a structure in the bend of the road. It is clearly represented on the Michler Map of the Siege of Petersburg in 1864-65 in the fork of the road leading northwest from Campbell’s Bridge and the River Road. The house stood by itself, but was not far from a series of houses along the east side of the road. A very detailed map of the area made by US Army Cartographers shows the house as a rectangle suggesting a rear addition, which might help account for the relatively high property improvement value. The nearly doubled value in 1871 may represent construction of the second house closer to the corner of James and Chesterfield.

Based on its elegant form and very small scale, the James may have used the house as a kind of villa or summer home, or even an office, possibly prompting the name “Summerseat” on the part of the James’ or some later owner. It may have also served as an advertisement for his capability as a designer and builder. The numerous changes in value may represent additions and subtractions from the house and its associated outbuildings. Later maps do not show a lot of enlargements to the building in the nineteenth century and physical evidence in the brick and framing on the rear suggest that there may not have been a rear wing or lean-to until the twentieth century.

In 1880 Linneaus James bought an adjacent lot on River Road to the north. At this point, James was a widower who lived alone, still employed as a carpenter. The lot that contained the house now known as Summerseat held buildings valued at \$1,800. James’ new lot had improvements valued at \$200. James died before October 24, 1899, when his property was divided into lots. The values for the Summerseat tract stayed the same until 1900-01, when James’ heirs sold both lots,

On May 24, 1901, the James heirs sold the Summerseat lot, described as the southwest part of the Linneaus James property to a plumbing contractor named George W. James who was born in Chesterfield in 1859. The buildings on the Summerseat lot were valued at \$600 in 1901 [Chesterfield County Land Book 1901]. In 1900, he lived with his wife Lucie Madra, (married in 1882), and their two daughters. In 1910, James, who had remarried, was a “rumper,” or slaughterhouse worker responsible for removing cow hides from the rump. He died on November 19, 1912.

James owned three tracts in 1902, all in Ettrick, including one with \$500 in buildings on Pannill Street. Another was the Summerseat lot, with buildings worth \$600. A third was close to the Summerseat lot and contained no buildings, the building having burned. After George James died in 1922, his widow, Susanna, and their children sold the Summerseat tract to Mary J. Beene and her husband J. D. Beene. The value of the buildings on the tract

was still \$600. The Beenes conveyed the tract in 1924 to Bettie M. Meunier, whose husband, Joseph, was a laborer employed at a foundry, the post office, and a stone yard [Salmon 2016].

The Meuniers conveyed the western portion of the tract to their son, Leo S. Meunier (1905-1981) and his wife Lola D. Meunier, in 1927 and they sold the remainder to them in 1945. Leo Meunier was a cement worker in 1931 and lived at 160 Chesterfield Avenue next door to his mother at 156 Chesterfield Avenue. A cement worker and contractor, he resided at 160 Chesterfield Avenue in Ettrick, while his mother lived next door at 156 Chesterfield Avenue.

A local justice of the peace, said by some to be Judge John W. Snead, held court at the house at times in the summer months. This use of the building for petty court proceedings was confirmed by the recollection of the Rev. James Blankenship, who was born in Ettrick in 1930 and lived there until 1955. He remembered court hearings being held during that period at Summerseat, as well as in an upper room of the Hilltop Barbeque restaurant and in the fire station, both located on Chesterfield Avenue in Ettrick (Blankenship 2011). The courtroom occupied the upper floor, while the basement was thought by some to have accommodated a jail (VHLC survey form). This suggested use of the building in the form of a heavy iron bar door. Although Blankenship recalled court hearings being held at Summerseat, he could not confirm the building's use as a jail.

Justices of the Peace

Virginia's system of justice at the county level was administered from the earliest days by self-perpetuating groups of justices of the peace. As time passed the rural-based system became outdated. The revised constitution of 1830 gave the General Assembly the power to determine the jurisdiction of the justices. In the Constitution of 1850, the system was regulated: each county was divided into districts with four justices elected and paid for four-year terms from among the residents of the district. During Reconstruction, professional county judges were mandated, justices of the peace were relegated to petty trials for minor offences and civil claims under \$100. In 1902 the justices were returned to prominence, although subject to criticism for their lack of training and their avarice, since their income came from charging fees for service. Virginia once again restricted the powers of the justices in 1936 by creating the role of a trial justice or county judge appointed by the circuit court judge. They could issue search warrants and summons, administer oaths, perform marriages, admit to bail, and commit to jail, among other duties and powers [WRF II, "The Justice of the Peace in Virginia: A Neglected Aspect of the Judiciary", *Virginia Law Review* 52:1 (Jan. 1966) 151]. According to one study "The justices [in the period before 1973] act on an individual basis and may hold their court anywhere they choose. Some justices hear cases in their homes, some at their place of business, and some in special offices" [Krista Unterzuber, *Justices of the peace and magistrates in Virginia and West Virginia*, thesis, University of Richmond, 1977]. The Justices of the Peace were eliminated by the legislature in 1973 and replaced by a system of judicially appointed magistrates.

The context of the judicial function of the building during the twentieth century would have dated from before 1973, when the judicial function of justices of the peace was ended by the legislature and when Summerseat opened as an antique store called "the Olde Jaile". It seems most likely that the use of Summerseat as a justice of the peace court room dates from a limited period sometime in the mid-twentieth century. The name of the property, "Summerseat" is unlikely to be related to the use as a "seat" of justice. It also seems very unlikely, due to the types of activities permitted to Justices and Trial Judges at that time, that the basement was used to hold miscreants. An oral history interview with the Rev. James Blankenship of Ettrick, who remembered the upper floor of the building in use for court hearings, as well as the fire station and the upper room at the Hilltop Barbecue restaurant Blankenship, 2011 quoted in VDHR Survey form evaluation committee notes. As judged by the committee "the property also has potential for government significance [in addition to architectural significance under Criterion C], but more research is needed to confirm the building's use as a court and jail.

In 1973, Leo and Lola Meunier sold the tract to William W. Hawkins and his wife, Mary Hawkins worked until 1972 as assistant business manager at the Federal Reformatory in Petersburg. He opened the “Village Jaile Shoppe” in the house the next year, as a retirement project, and operated the antiques store until illness caused him to end the business in 2003. At his death in 2008, Summerseat his widow, Mary H. Hawkins continued to own the property. She finally sold the house to the Visitors of Virginia State University in 2012. Virginia State University began acquiring property in the Upper Ettrick area at about the same time, demolishing the houses on the lots along Second and Third Streets. The house known as Summerseat was identified by the community as a historic building worthy of preservation.

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

- *Acts and Joint Resolutions (Amending the Constitution) of the General Assembly of the State of Virginia; Session Which Commenced at the State Capitol on Wednesday, January 11, 1922.* Richmond: David Bottom, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1922.
- *Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia Passed at the Session of 1835-36.* Richmond, VA: Thomas Ritchie, Printer to the Commonwealth, 1836.
- Auditor of Public Accounts. Land Tax Books. Chesterfield County. 1856-1922. Microfilm. Library of Virginia (LVA). Richmond, Virginia.
- Beckett, Anne S. and Charles M. Downing, *Additional Phase I Architectural Survey of Portions of the Village of Ettrick, Chesterfield County, Virginia.* William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research, Williamsburg, Virginia. Submitted to Chesterfield County Planning Department, Chesterfield, Virginia, 1996.
- Blankenship, Reverend James. Interviewed by David Lewes, October 20, 2011. Oral history recorded as part of mitigation for Virginia State University Multipurpose Center project.
- Bruce, Kathleen. *Virginia Iron Manufacture in the Slave Era.* New York: The Century Company, 1930; reprint, New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1968.
- Chesterfield County. Deed, Plat, and Will Books, Microfilm. LVA. Richmond, Virginia.
- Davenport, Bethany, Master's thesis. *Ettrick, Virginia: Historical Survey of an American Village.* Master's thesis, Department of History, Virginia State College, 1979.
- Fischer, Meredith, “Final Sale: Owner to auction items, close venerable Ettrick shop,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Aug. 8, 2003.
- _____. “Memories, antiques for sale- Husband, wife watch treasures auctioned off,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 10, 2003.
- O'Dell, Jeffrey M., Oral History/Interview, Interview with William Hawkins 2/20/80.
- _____. Chesterfield County: *Early Architecture and Historic Sites.* Chesterfield, VA: Chesterfield County Planning Department, 1983.
- Petersburg City Directories.
- Salmon, John S. History of Summerseat, 20829 Chesterfield Ave., South Chesterfield, Virginia, typescript, 2016.
- Scott, James G., and Edward A. Wyatt IV. *Petersburg's Story: A History.* Petersburg, VA: Titmus Optical Company, 1960.
- U.S. Census. 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920. Schedule of Inhabitants. Virginia. Chesterfield County. Microfilm. LVA.
- Unterzuber, Krista, *Justices of the Peace and Magistrates in Virginia and West Virginia*, Thesis, University of Richmond, 1977.

- Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Survey File 020-5231 (also 020-5002-0146). Summerseat, 20829 Chesterfield Avenue, Ettrick, Chesterfield County. Intensive Level Survey Form. December 6, 2011.
- Wyatt, Edward A., IV, Rise of Industry in Antebellum Petersburg. *William and Mary Quarterly*, 2d. ser., 17(1):1–36 (1937).
- WRF II, “The Justice of the Peace in Virginia: A Neglected Aspect of the Judiciary”, *Virginia Law Review* 52:1 (Jan. 1966) 151.

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

Private: _____ Public\Local _____ Public\State X 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.)

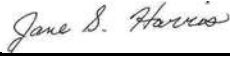
name/title: Jane S. Harris

organization: Virginia State University

street & number: 1 Hayden Street

city or town: Petersburg state: VA zip code: 23086

e-mail: jsharris@vsu.edu telephone: 804 524-6239

Legal Owner's Signature: 
 Date: 8/29/23

Digitally signed by Jane Harris
 DN: cn=Jane Harris, o, ou, email=jsharris@vsu.edu, c=US
 Date: 2023.08.29 20:04:24 -04'00'

• • *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: Jane S. Harris

Daytime Telephone: 804 524-6239

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

name/title: Gibson Worsham

organization: Glavé & Holmes Architecture

street & number: 2101 E. Main St.

city or town: Richmond state: VA zip code: 23223

e-mail: gworsham@glaveandholmes.com telephone: 804 649-9303

Date: 7/12/2023

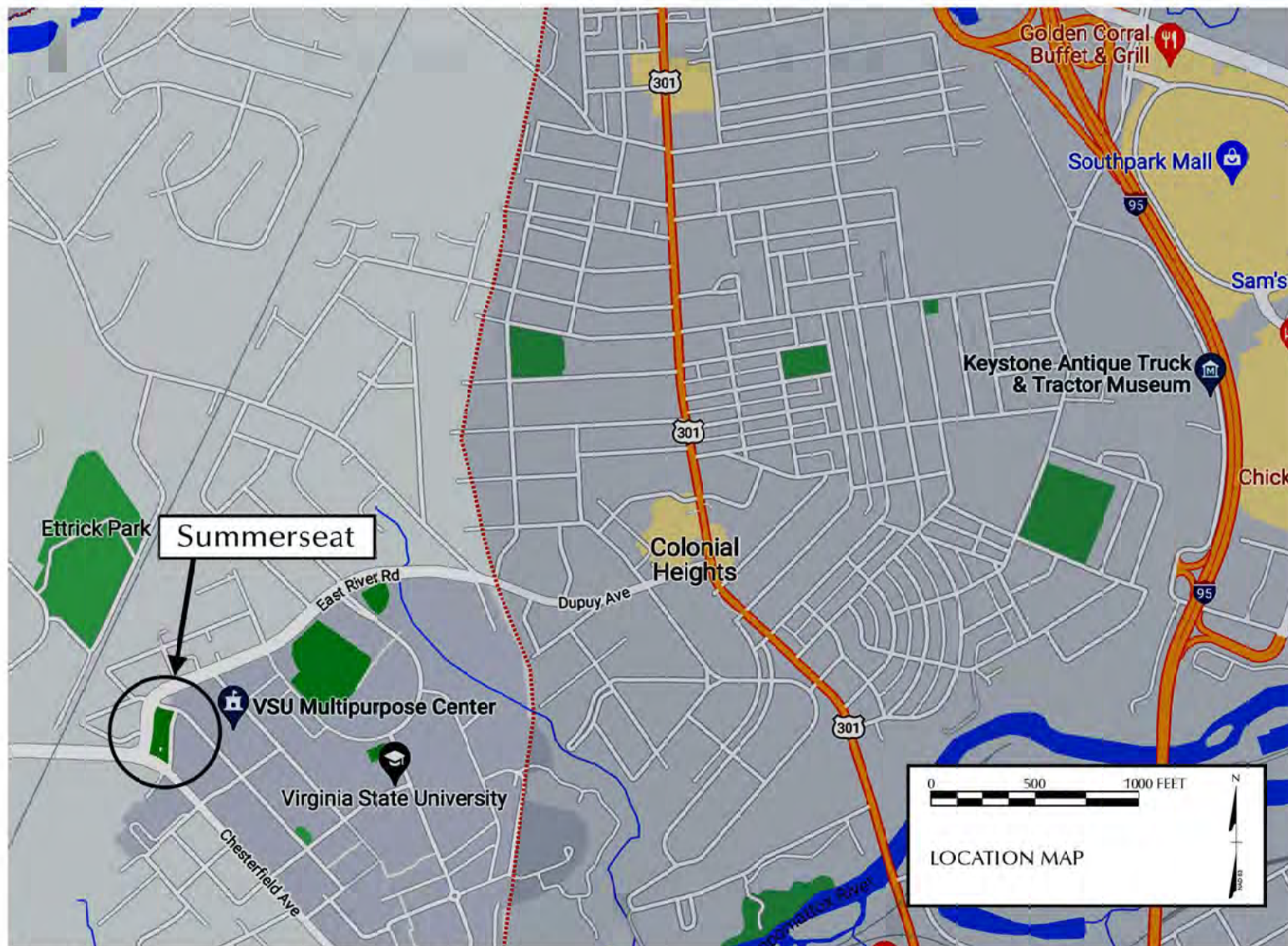
PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!



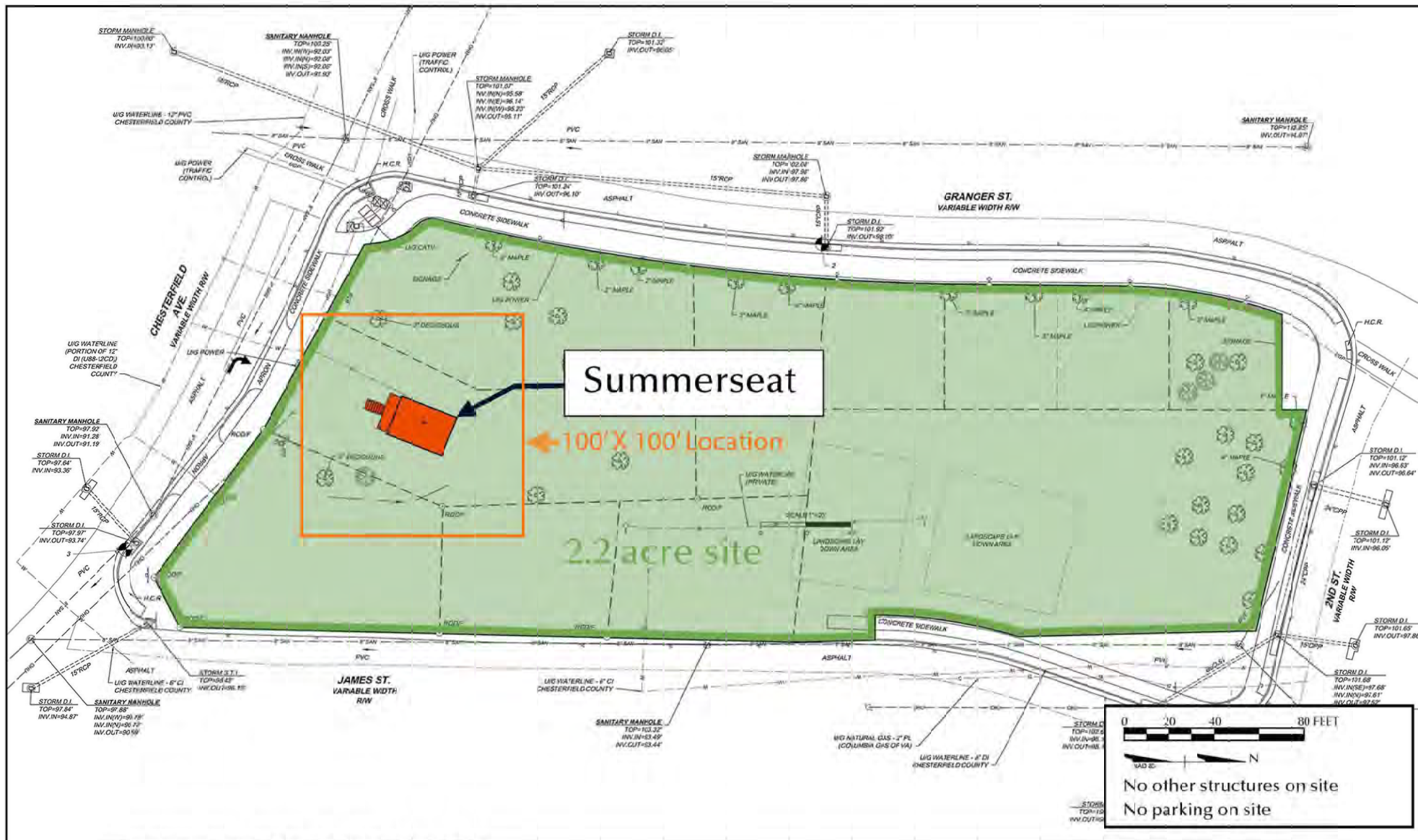
Summerseat (Linneaus H. James House)
Chesterfield County, Petersburg Quad
DHR ID: 020-5231

Created By: D. Bascone 10/12/2023
Sources: VDH 2023, ESRI 2023, VDOT 2023, VGIN 2023
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DHR VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES



Map, Summerseat, Petersburg, Virginia



Site Plan, Summerseat, Petersburg, Virginia



View from Southeast



South Elevation



East Elevation



North Elevation



West Elevation



Main Floor South Elevation



Main Floor West Elevation



Main Floor North Elevation



Main Floor East Elevation



Ground Floor South Elevation



Ground Floor West Elevation



Ground Floor North Elevation



Ground Floor East Elevation



Detail of Front Porch