VLR Listed: 3/20/2025
NRHP Listed: 5/19/2025

NPS Form 10-900 OMB Control No. 1024-0018
expiration date 03/31/2026

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: 37th Street Cottages Historic District
Other names/site number: DHR ID 134-6044
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 201, 203, 205 37th Street
City or town: Virginia Beach State: VA County: Independent City
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ **national** ___ **statewide** X **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X **A** ___ **B** X **C** ___ **D**

Julie V. Langan 3/27/2025

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ 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.)

Private:	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	
District	X
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
7	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
7	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC: single dwelling
DOMESTIC: hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC: hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/ Bungalow/ Craftsman

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD: Shingle; METAL: Aluminum; TERRA COTTA; CONCRETE; ASPHALT; BRICK; SYNTHETICS: Vinyl

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is an 0.6-acre urban district in Virginia Beach, Virginia. It is located in the northern end of the highly developed portion of the city and is primarily surrounded by modern development and high-rise hotels. The district is situated between Atlantic and Pacific Avenues approximately a half of a mile away south of the Cavalier Hotel (DHR ID 134-0503, NRHP 14000239) and one block west of the oceanfront. The historic district is composed of three residential properties and their four secondary dwellings and sheds, totaling seven contributing resources. The cottages are all excellent local representations of Craftsman-style dwellings, constructed in either the Bungalow or American Foursquare form. Surrounded by hotels and modern commercial development, the district is a rare surviving early twentieth century streetscape that is representative of Virginia Beach's early development patterns and architectural character. The district and its contributing resources retain integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Setting:

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is an urban district of approximately 0.6 acres located in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The district is situated in a highly developed area focused on vacation rentals and tourism along the city's oceanfront. It is composed of three residential properties bounded by 37th Street to the south, Atlantic Avenue to the east, 37 ½ Street to the north, and a commercial property to the west. The district's residential cottages are setback from the street and include rear yards and secondary resources. Typical landscape features within the district include parking lots, driveways, decorative landscaping with bushes, and other plantings with a very mature holly tree located behind 201. The backyards of the three primary resources create a court-like setting for the secondary resources with all of their entrances facing the primary resources. It is surrounded by hotels and commercial development and is situated between Atlantic and Pacific Avenues and one block west of the oceanfront.

Narrative Description:

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is set in a highly developed area of Virginia Beach, Virginia and includes three residential cottages located at 201, 203, and 205 37th Street. These three cottages and their outbuildings make up a rare surviving collection of historic residential architecture in the Virginia Beach resort area, which is primarily comprised of modern hotels, commercial development, and condominiums.[1] This district is reminiscent of Virginia Beach's past as a town consisting of hundreds of cottages within a few blocks of the oceanfront. The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is linked to the Virginia Beach Development Company's acquisition and development of a sizeable tract of land along the oceanfront in 1900.[2] The district, and Virginia Beach generally, first appears on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps in 1928 as part of the Norfolk area map. The three cottages within the district occupy most of the block and are depicted on the 1928 map with minor setbacks, rectangular lots stretching from 37th Street to 37 ½ Street, and small rear yards, all of which survive today. In addition to the cottages, each property includes a secondary resource used for additional residential space and areas for parking.

During the early twentieth century, Virginia Beach was a small town where members of high society from Richmond, Norfolk, and other Hampton Roads cities would spend their summers.[3]

[1] The Virginia Beach resort area discussed in this narrative is largely based on today's Virginia Beach Resort Area, which is an area that has always been heavily rentals/hotels with residential and seasonal dwellings located within the first two blocks west of the oceanfront. The areas further west of this defined area includes more traditional residential development.
[2] "Deed Virginia Beach Development Company to John D. Gordon and Charles G. Hume."
[3] Virginia Beach Public Library, *The Beach: A History of Virginia Beach, Virginia* (Virginia Beach: Department of Public Libraries, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 2006).

The twenties and thirties were a time of boom and bust, but Virginia Beach managed to remain largely unaffected by the Great Depression. During World War II, an increased military presence created immediate housing needs for soldiers and their families. Cottages were subdivided into smaller apartments and secondary dwellings were constructed or garages renovated to meet the housing demands. The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is representative of this trend. For example, the owners of 201 and 203 37th Street constructed secondary dwellings at the rear of the parcels. The owners of 205 37th Street, which became known as Briarwood Cottage, built a small, one-room secondary dwelling. The construction of these additional spaces expanded the profitability of the properties, allowed for multigenerational living, and preserved the owner-occupied or family-operated rental industry of the district for decades.

The first primary resource within the district is a two-story Craftsman Bungalow located at 201 37th Street (134-6044-0001). The cottage has a side-gable roof with composition shingles, and its exterior walls are clad with asbestos siding. It features Craftsman-style details such as exposed rafter tails, a large gabled dormer, and wood six-over-one double-hung windows. Perhaps the most distinguishable feature of this cottage is its porch. The wooden porch wraps around the house on the eastern side, providing a view of the ocean, and features square posts accented with semicircular brackets. According to land tax records, this property was built in 1913 and valued at $500 at the time of construction.[4] Like the other cottages, a secondary dwelling provides the property with additional residential space. The two-story secondary dwelling has a front gable roof and exterior walls clad with concrete block, terracotta tiles, and vinyl siding. In addition to a small yard, the property includes a paved parking lot north of the secondary dwelling.

203 37th Street (134-6044-0003) retains the design and form evident in the 1928 Sanborn map, although the siding and windows have been updated with non-historic materials. [5] The dwelling is a two-story Craftsman Bungalow with a large central shed dormer and a single-story screened-in porch extending beyond the eastern exterior wall. This cottage was also constructed in 1913 and was valued at $500 at the time of construction.[6] During the 1940s and 1950s, 203 37th Street was also used as a rental property, resulting in its division into two apartments.[7] This division is visible on the exterior through a partition wall on the porch that divides the two entrances. This property also includes a two-story, side-gable secondary dwelling with asphalt shingles, asbestos siding, and vinyl windows. Substantial decorative plantings surround the primary dwelling, and the rear portion of the parcel includes a small yard surrounding the secondary dwelling and a gravel parking lot.

Known as Briarwood Cottage, 205 37th Street (134-6055-0002) was utilized as a rental property as early as 1927, according to local newspaper advertisements. This two-and-a-half-story,

[4] "Princess Anne County Land Records 1914."
[5] "Insurance Maps of Norfolk Virginia Volume Four."
[6] "Princess Anne County Land Records 1914."
[7] "Various Articles."

Craftsman-style American Foursquare dwelling is clad with wood shingles and includes exposed rafter tails, large central dormers, and a full-width enclosed porch on the façade. The cottage is internally divided, with one or more apartments on each floor, and in the raised basement. Its historic use as a rental property is a function that was typical of Virginia Beach in the first half of the 20th century. The house was constructed between February and August 1920, according to land tax records and the deed between E.L. Sylvester, Horace Geyer, Josh Garrison Jr., Lester R. Graves, and A.B. Broughton Jr.[8] Additional residential space is located within a secondary one-story, side gable dwelling clad with wood shingles. The property also includes a one-story, front gable shed, a driveway, and a small yard.

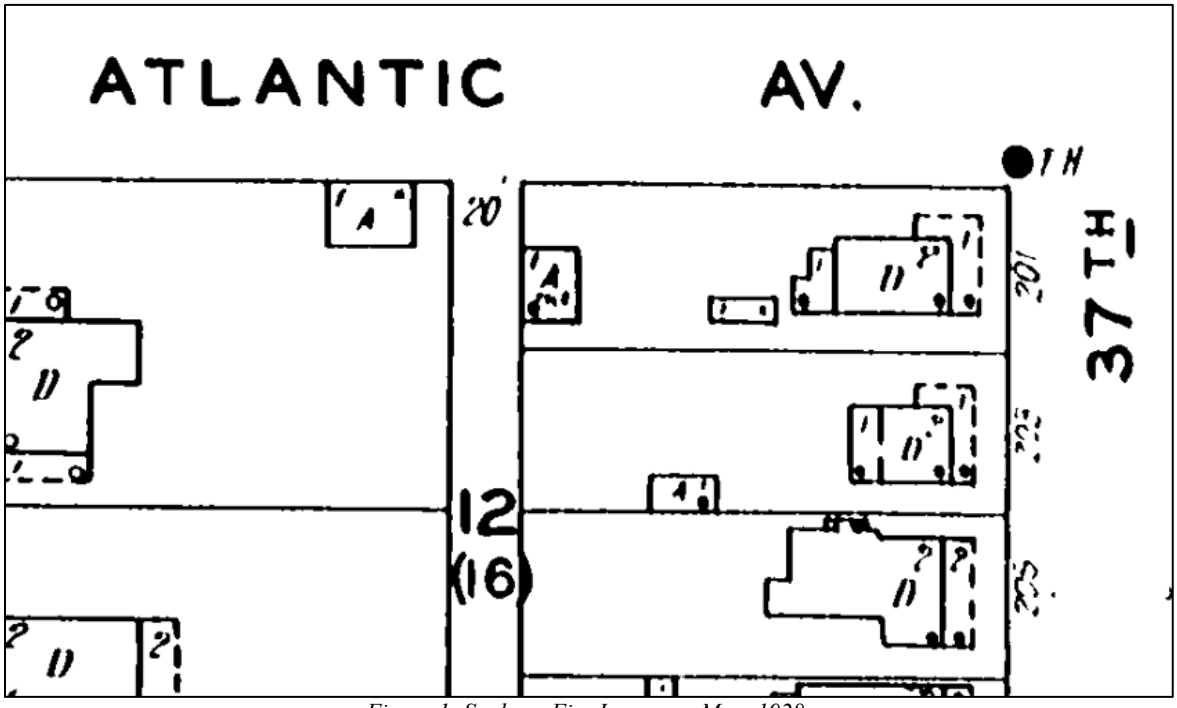


Figure 1: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1928.

[8] "Princess Anne County Land Records 1921."

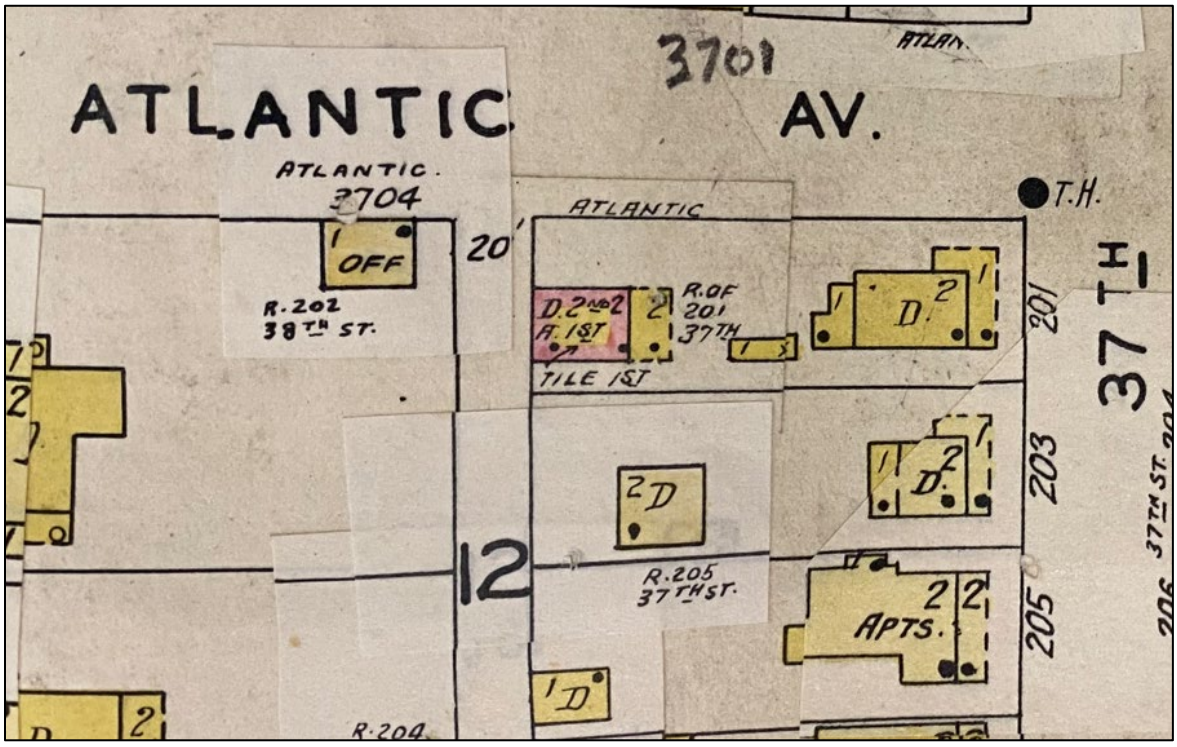


Figure 2: Sanborn Map, 1928 revised 1962.

Figure 3: Virginia Beach Historic Aerial Viewer, 1958. The 1954 aerial is a much lower resolution when zoomed into the 37th Street properties; however, it appears based on shadows that all resources were extant by 1954. Boundary of the historic district is drawn in red.

Historically, the Virginia Beach resort area developed to include residential cottages and small-scale motels throughout the first two blocks along the oceanfront. Today, most of the residential cottages have been replaced by non-historic commercial buildings and high-rise hotels, while others have been replaced by large, non-historic vacation homes and rentals. In addition to the three historic cottages within the 37th Street Cottages Historic District, only nine other remaining cottages have been identified in this area of the hundreds that once composed the resort area. These additional nine cottages are spread throughout the resort area from 36th Street to 11th Street. Three of the cottages are located between 24th and 23rd Streets but are interspersed with recent development, and four of the cottages are clustered together along 11th Street and Pacific Avenue, creating the only other identified grouping of historic-age cottages in the resort area. The remaining cottages are typically one- to two-stories, and three of the cottages include secondary dwellings on their properties, similar to those seen within the 37th Street Cottages Historic District. Most feature common replacement materials such as replacement windows, doors, and siding. At least two of the cottages are now used for commercial restaurant and café spaces.

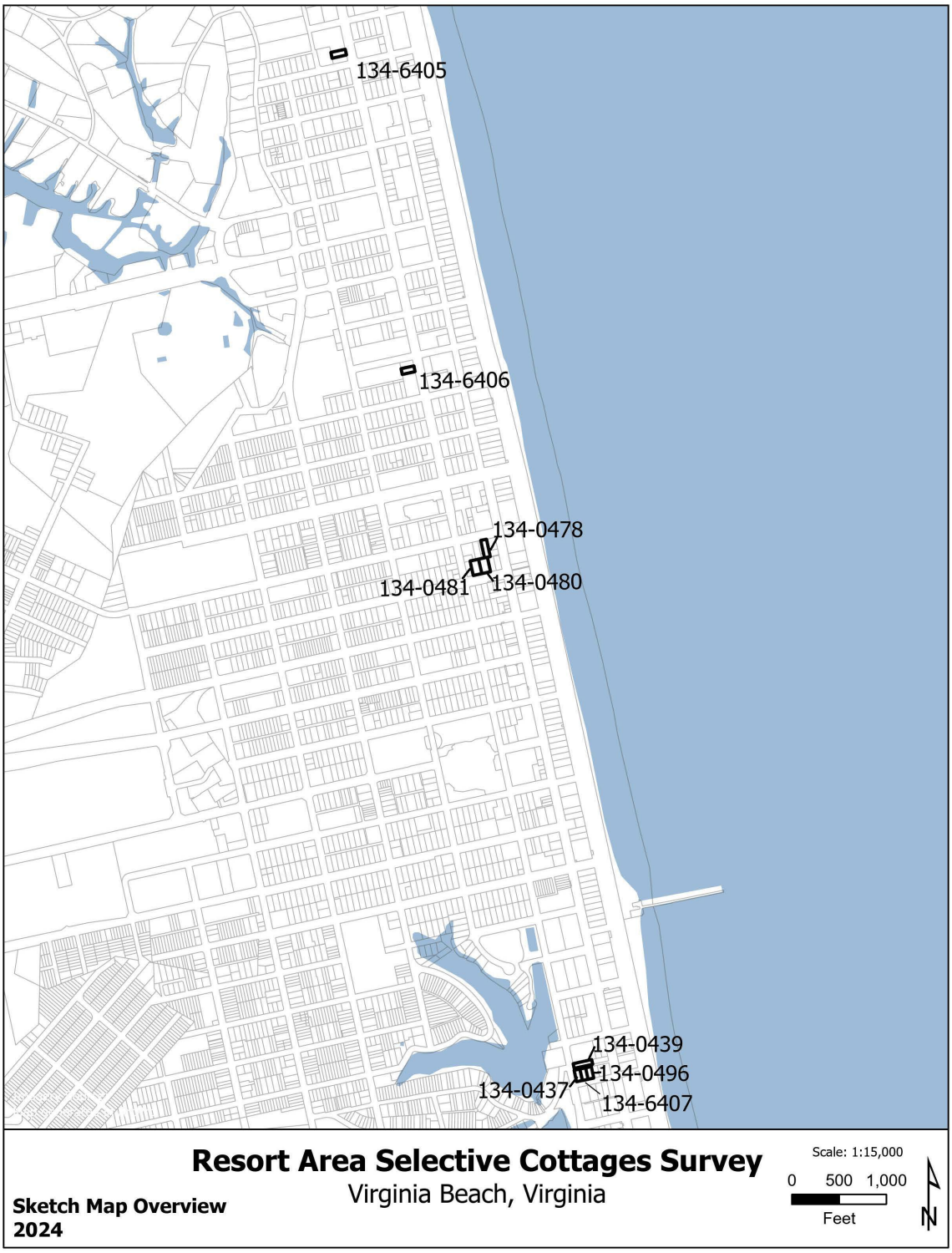


Figure 4: Map of the selective cottages survey completed for the City of Virginia Beach, September 2024. All properties shown on this map are located south of the 37th Street Cottages Historic District (not visible on map extent).

Integrity Analysis:

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, setting, and association. The properties are situated in their historic locations on the three easternmost parcels of 37th Street, one block from the ocean, thus retaining their integrity of **location**. The area immediately surrounding the cottages has shifted from residential cottages and small-scale motels to non-historic, non-descript commercial and high-rise hotels. The 37th Street Cottages Historic District, however, is a rare surviving example of the former residential streetscapes that once comprised most of the oceanfront resort area. Based on the 1928 Sanborn Map, approximately 230 resources labeled as dwellings, cottages, apartments, or boarding houses were located throughout the resort area on partially or fully developed blocks. Today, only 12 historic cottages have been identified as extant in this area, or roughly 5% of those present in 1928, three of which are the 37th Street Cottages. Of these 12 cottages, two stand alone on redeveloped blocks and the remaining are located in three clusters spread between partially or mostly intact blocks, including the block that contains the 37th Street Cottages. The relationships between the primary and secondary resources are a well-preserved example of an early-to-mid-twentieth-century rental community. The immediate area surrounding the cottages has transitioned from the residential rentals common during the district's period of significance, but the cottages have maintained their historic character. Though compact, the relationship between the residential lots and resources, the grassy lawns, mature plantings and trees, and the combination of pedestrian and automobile-oriented properties has resulted in a well-preserved **setting** associated with the district's historic areas and period of significance.

The massing, arrangement, proportions, and early twentieth-century Craftsman details reflect the historic **design** of the cottages. The district also retains a high degree of material integrity. Material alterations are largely limited to windows and exterior doors and roof materials, which have been subject to harsh environmental conditions and major storm events. Aluminum siding covers the historic weatherboard on at least one of the cottages, while wavy asbestos shingle cladding was added to one of the cottages likely within the historic period. The secondary resources on each of the properties also retain the majority of their historic interior and exterior materials, reflective of their early-to-mid-twentieth-century construction. The construction techniques, design elements, and materials that characterize the district preserve the early twentieth-century **workmanship** associated with the construction of early twentieth-century cottages in Virginia Beach. Overall, the **location, setting, design, materials**, and **workmanship** convey the historic **feeling** of an early twentieth-century residential block and **association** with the development of Virginia Beach as a burgeoning resort community from the early 1900s through the mid-twentieth century.

Inventory Description:

The attached inventory is the result of a reconnaissance-level survey of the 37th Street Cottages Historic District conducted in June 2023. Surveyors documented all resources within the district, including significant secondary resources. The 2023 survey resulted in the identification of seven resources, all of which are contributing.

Each entry in the inventory below provides the primary and secondary resource, the resource type (building, site, structure, or object), number of stories, architectural style, approximate construction date, and contributing or non-contributing status organized by street name and DHR ID number in boldface (i.e., -0001) as shown in italics in the inventory below. The last four numbers of the DHR ID number are used to key inventoried resources to the attached Sketch Map. Resources within the 37th Street Cottages Historic District are considered contributing if they were constructed during the district's period of significance 1913-1954, are associated with the district's area(s) of significance, and retain architectural integrity. Alterations to contributing resources were evaluated based on the overall impact on the character-defining features of the building individually and the district as a whole.

A detailed architectural description and surveyor assessment for each resource has also been prepared in conjunction with this nomination and can be accessed via the Virginia Department of Historic Resources architectural survey archives and/or the Virginia Cultural Resource Information System (V-CRIS).

Historic District Inventory

201 37th Street 134-6044-0001
Primary Resource: **Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Craftsman, Form: Bungalow, ca. 1913**

Contributing *Total:* 1

This cottage is a three-bay, two-story, wood-frame, craftsman bungalow. It has a side-gabled roof with composite shingles, exposed rafter tails, and a massive central, front-gabled dormer. The walls are clad with asbestos siding. The front wrap-around porch has brick stairs, wooden decking, and square posts. The building rests on a brick foundation. It has a mixture of wood six-over-one double-hung sash windows and, on the dormer, one-over-one fixed windows. The interior of the main apartment has two floors with an attic and is mostly carpeted with tiled kitchen and bathrooms. The tile in the kitchen is black and white and laid out in a checkerboard pattern. The other bathrooms are tiled with varying patterns and mosaic tile. It has simple trim and tall baseboards. The walls are primarily covered with wallpaper and the living room has a chair rail. The doors are a combination of wood doors with five horizontal panels and flush wood doors.

Secondary Resource: **Secondary Dwelling (Building), ca. 1913, 1958[9]**

Contributing *Total:* 1

This building is a three-bay, two-story, wood-frame vernacular dwelling. It has a front gabled roof with asphalt shingles. Its exterior walls have a mixture of concrete blocks, terra-cotta tiles, and vinyl siding. The building's windows consist of a mixture of vinyl one-over-one double-hung sash and vinyl sliding windows. It has multiple entrances and porches with two of these being second-floor entrances accessed by wooden stairs. The other two entrances are on the first floor with one being recessed.

203 37th Street 134-6044-0003

Primary Resource: **Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Vernacular, Form: Bungalow, ca. 1913**

Contributing *Total:* 1

This cottage is a four-bay, two-story, wood-frame, vernacular bungalow. It has a side-gabled roof with composite shingles, a large central shed dormer, and an eastern gable end chimney The walls are clad in vinyl siding. The building sits on a brick foundation. On the first floor, there is a screened-in wood porch that extends beyond the plane of the building to the east. On the façade, wooden stairs provide access to two entrances, separated by a partition wall, that access each apartment. The screen doors that enter the porch are identical and have late Victorian ornamentation with turned posts, and intricate latticework. The windows on this building consist of a mixture of vinyl one-over-one double-hung sash and, on the dormer, fixed single-pane. On the interior, this building has two floors with each floor being a separate apartment. The interior of the main apartment is mostly carpeted with the kitchen and bathrooms being tiled. The tile in the kitchen is black and white and laid out in a checkerboard pattern. The other bathrooms are tiled with varying patterns and mosaic tile. The walls are paneled and there is simple trim and crown molding. The main bedroom has a white, wood-paneled wall and the living room has a chair rail. The doors are wood with two panels, and the top panel is much taller than the lower one. The rear apartment is also carpeted with tile in the bathrooms and kitchen, but its walls are all covered with natural wood panels.

[9] The construction dates for this secondary resource were determined using available Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and historic aerials. This garage is present on the 1928 Sanborn Map, the earliest for this area, and is estimated to have been constructed around the same time as the primary dwelling, c.1913. According to oral tradition, this garage was expanded in the 1940s to provide additional residential space; however, the next available aerial or map that is clear enough to discern this change is a 1958 aerial photograph. The building in the 1958 aerial appears to match the enlarged building footprint shown in the 1962 Sanborn Map. It is possible that the building was enlarged prior to 1958; however, the 1954 aerial photograph is not clear enough to determine whether this alteration had occurred by that time.

Secondary Resource: **Secondary Dwelling (Building), ca. 1954**

Contributing *Total:* 1

This building is a three-bay, two-story, wood-frame, vernacular dwelling. It has a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. It has a concrete block foundation, and the walls are clad with asbestos siding. Its windows are primarily vinyl six-over-six double-hung sash windows with fixed wooden shutters. It has a wood door with four panes of glass located on the eastern corner of the facade accessed by a brick stoop.

205 37th Street 134-6044-0002

Primary Resource: **Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Craftsman, Form: American Foursquare, ca. 1920**

Contributing *Total:* 1

This cottage is a four-bay, two-and-a-half-story, wood-frame, Craftsman-style American foursquare. It has a hipped roof with composite shingles, exposed rafter tails, and a large central shed dormer on the façade. The walls are clad with wood shingles, and a wood belt course wraps around the building between the floors. The building sits on a raised brick foundation. The façade of the building has a full-height, full-width enclosed porch. The entrance to this porch consists of a set of concrete stairs covered in green carpeting and a wooden door with a large glass pane. On the western side of the door, there are three sidelights with two narrow lights on top of a short, squat window. Above the door, there is a transom window. It has a side entry porch with concrete stairs and a hipped roof. The windows are primarily vinyl sliding windows with the dormer featuring three wood six-over-six double-hung sash windows. On its interior, the cottage has two primary floors with a basement and an attic. Each of these floors is a separate apartment. The interior of this cottage primarily has carpeted floors with the bathrooms and kitchen being tiled. The tile in the kitchen is black and white and laid out in a checkerboard pattern. The other bathrooms are tiled with varying patterns and mosaic tile. The trim is simple and period specific, with tall baseboards and crown molding throughout the house. The interior doors are wood and have five horizontal panels.

Secondary Resource: **Shed (Building), ca. 1920** **Contributing** *Total:* 1

This building is a two-bay, one-story, wood-frame vernacular shed. It has a front gabled roof clad with asphalt shingles; the eaves are ornamented with gardening lattice. Its windows are wood single-pane fixed windows with fixed wooden shutters. The exterior walls are clad with wood shingles. The door is a six-paneled wooden door located in the center of the facade.

Secondary Resource: **Secondary Dwelling (Building), ca. 1954**

Contributing *Total:* 1

This building is a two-bay, one-story, vernacular wood-frame dwelling. It has a side-gabled roof covered with standing seam metal and has an exterior brick chimney on its northeastern corner. The walls are clad with painted wood shingles. The windows are wood six-over-six double-hung sash and the façade's window has fixed wooden shutters. The door is a wooden six-panel door with a screen door with decorative elements.

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 grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_RECREATION_____
_ARCHITECTURE___
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Period of Significance
_1913-1954_____
_____
_____

Significant Dates
_N/A_____
_____
_____

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
_N/A_____
_____
_____

Cultural Affiliation
_N/A_____
_____
_____

Architect/Builder
_Unknown_____
_____
_____

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Recreation and Criterion C for Architecture. This row of Craftsman style dwellings constructed between 1913-1928 is a rare surviving collection of the early twentieth century beach cottages that were once the most prominent building type in the Virginia Beach resort area. The 37th Street cottages are also representative of the early twentieth century dwellings constructed primarily as vacation homes or specifically for use as vacation rentals. During the 1940s and 1950s, the cottages were subdivided into apartments and a secondary dwelling or duplex was added to each of the properties, initially to address housing shortages created by increased military presence in Virginia Beach during World War II. Following the war, these units were leased to long- and short-term tenants and continued the tradition of family-owned and operated cottage rentals through the late twentieth-century. Beginning in 1980, Melvin and Jimmie Koch, the owners of the Cutty Sark Motel (historically the Crest Kitchenette Motel) located on the south side of 37th Street, purchased each of the three 37th Street Cottages as their family estates put them up for sale in an effort to preserve the family-friendly atmosphere of the block. In each instance, the former owners sold the cottages to the Kochs well-below market value, demonstrating the desire to preserve the character and charm of old Virginia Beach, which, by the latter part of the twentieth century was rapidly being lost to high-rise development. The vast majority of single-family residential architecture in the beach resort area has been demolished over the last four decades, making the 37th Street Cottages Historic District a rare example of the resort town's early development. The district has a period of significance beginning in 1913, when the first cottages were constructed, and ending in 1954, by which time all of the extant resources in the district had been constructed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Virginia Beach resort area, which has been broadly defined as the area south of 40th Street, north of Rudee's Inlet, and within the first two blocks of the Oceanfront including Atlantic and Pacific Avenues, was first developed in the 1880s.[10] In 1882, the Virginia Beach Railroad and Improvement Company acquired 1,500 acres and five miles of oceanfront from Marshall Parks, who had purchased eleven farms in the area during the middle of the nineteenth century. When it was purchased, this 1,500-acre swath of land was still a part of Princess Anne County, which was composed of rural, agricultural communities, including freedmen communities that

[10] The resort area defined in this narrative is largely based on today's "Resort Area" in Virginia Beach. This area has historically been largely composed of rentals/hotels and residential/seasonal dwellings located within the first two blocks west of the oceanfront. The area further west of this defined space consists of more traditional residential development.

developed following the Civil War.[11] By the late 1880s, residents of Norfolk, Richmond, and Lynchburg began to purchase lots and construct large oceanfront cottages along Atlantic Avenue.[12] Upon completion of the railroad that connected Virginia Beach to Norfolk, the "area between the ocean and pines" drew visitors from Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, as well as other northeast locations.[13] The only remaining oceanfront cottage constructed during this period is the de Witt Cottage (DHR ID 134-0066, NRHP 88000748), which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

Early seaside resorts in the United States were largely located in the northeast, with the most prominent located in Newport, Rhode Island, Nahant, Massachusetts, and Cape May and Long Branch, New Jersey. The resort era of the northeast began gaining traction during the early-nineteenth century, and during the pre-Civil War period these were exclusively destinations for the upper-class elite.[14] Resort destinations, such as that of Newport, Rhode Island, often began their growth as vacation destinations through the construction of tourist attractions and fashionable hotels. In Newport, this occurred with the construction of desirable hotels along Bellevue Avenue in 1830. Then, as Newport grew, the area saw an increase in the construction of newer and larger hotels, as well as the construction of private summer cottages. More and more wealthy New Englanders chose to construct their own summer cottages in Newport, some deciding to purchase lots while they were staying at nearby hotels.[15] The cottages constructed in Newport proved to be much more grand, in scale and architectural style, than the term "cottage" often implies.[16] This increase not only in hotels, but in private cottages encouraged the development of the town's infrastructure, which in turn promoted additional construction and attracting more visitors. [17] A similar pattern of development occurred in the 19th century in Nahant, Massachusetts with the construction of the Nahant Hotel in 1823 and the subsequent construction of cottages for summer residents.[18]

As these resorts grew, they came to feature combinations of hotels, summer cottages, villas, promenades, piers, amusement parks, and other amenities to provide the wealthy with exclusive places of respite and enjoyment outside of the city.[19] As the century progressed, other seaside

[11]Andrew Kahrl, "Sunbelt by the Sea: Governing Race and Nature in a Twentieth-Century Coastal Metropolis," *Journal of Urban History* 38 no. 3 (March 26, 2012): 491; Amy Waters Yarsinske, *Virginia Beach: Jewel Resort of the Atlantic* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 1998): 10.
[12]McLane and Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)," 4-5.
[13] Debra A. McLane and Kristin H. Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)," Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register of Historic Places, 2021, 4-5.
[14] Thomas Weiss, "Tourism in America before World War II," *The Journal of Economic History* 64, no. 2 (2004), 298-299.
[15] Catherine W. Zipf, "Women as Architecture Patrons in Gilded Age Newport, Rhode Island," SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012—, http://sah-archipedia.org/essays/RI-01-ART01. Accessed October 22, 2024.
[16] Zipf, "Women as Architecture Patrons in Gilded Age Newport, Rhode Island."
[17] Zipf, "Women as Architecture Patrons in Gilded Age Newport, Rhode Island."
[18] Keith N. Morgan, "Nahant," SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012—, http://sah-archipedia.org/essays/MA-01-0005-0002. Accessed October 22, 2024.
[19] Robert Lewis, "Seaside Holiday Resorts in the United States and Britain: A Review," *Urban History Yearbook* 7 (1980), 44.

resorts were developed, such as Coney Island in New York. Following the Civil War, transportation was improved with the construction of new rail lines, making the seaside resorts more easily accessible and beginning a shift in the resorts from exclusive retreats for the upper class to destinations of working- and middle-class vacationers and day-trippers. This transition continued as hotel capacities increased and additional attractions were developed.[20] Nahant, Massachusetts experienced this shift by the mid-nineteenth century when middle-class and working-class visitors and seasonal residents began frequenting the resort area, bringing a wave of middle-class cottage architecture development that was then largely destroyed by a fire in 1925.[21] The change in class-interest in the northeastern seaside resorts may have contributed to wealthy northeasterners traveling by steamboat, and then by rail, to the newly developing Virginia Beach resort area.

The arrival of prominent, wealthy residents and vacationers prompted the development of a high-end resort town that offered amenities such as golf, tennis, horseback riding, and musical concerts. Similar to the seaside resorts in the northeast, development in Virginia Beach began with the construction of a hotel, known originally as the Virginia Beach Hotel and later as the Princess Anne Hotel, and a pavilion that opened in the early 1880s.[22] By 1888, Virginia Beach's first boardwalk was completed. The wooden boardwalk was set atop a log bulkhead from 12th to 16th streets, and provided a promenade for early morning and later afternoon strolls along the beach. By this time, lots adjacent to the Princess Anne Hotel were subdivided and prominent citizens built the first private cottages in the resort area.[23] Seaside Park was created in 1906 and the Virginia Beach Casino opened on June 1, 1912. Sport hunting was also a popular activity among the vacationing elite, attracting visitors and investors from Northern cities. More than 100 hunt clubs were established in the county by 1920. These clubs drew elite clientele such as top military officials, and even a few United States Presidents such as Benjamin Harrison, William Howard Taft, and Grover Cleveland.[24]

By the 1890s, the Norfolk and Virginia Beach Railroad (NVBRR) had become part of the Norfolk & Southern Railway system, which advertised Virginia Summer Resorts in its annual vacation booklet. By 1904, the Norfolk & Southern Railroad Co. had completed an electrified railroad loop from Norfolk to Virginia Beach and a return leg via Cape Henry, which opened Virginia Beach to expansion. By 1916, the NVBRR carried 16 electric passenger trains to Virginia Beach from Norfolk daily. These trains were instrumental in bringing visitors to the beach, and to the development of the resort area prior to the popularization of the automobile.[25]

The turn of the twentieth century marked a pivotal shift in the development of Virginia Beach. All property that had been owned by the railway was sold to the Virginia Beach Development

[20] Weiss, "Tourism in America before World War II," 302-303.
[21] Morgan, "Nahant".
[22] Virginia Beach Public Library, *The Beach: A History of Virginia Beach, Virginia*, Third Edition (Virginia Beach: Department of Public Libraries, City of Virginia Beach, Virginia, 2006), 83-84.
[23] Virginia Beach Public Library, *The Beach,* 85.
[24] McLane and Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)," 4-6; Marcus Pollard, "The Cavalier Hotel," National Register Nomination, December 2013.
[25] McLane and Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)," 6-7.

Company in 1900. The company had a new plat of the city drawn and saw to the next phase of the city's development. Lots sold to individual real estate developers came with deed restrictions and covenants that required the developers to see to it that homes were tied into sanitary sewer systems.[26] In 1906, the Virginia General Assembly granted formal incorporation to the Town of Virginia Beach, making it possible for the municipality to provide improved infrastructure such as roads, water, and sewer systems that the Virginia Beach Development Company required.[27] In addition to infrastructure improvements, new access points to the resort area were added including the construction of Virginia Beach Boulevard in 1921, which provided the only direct, concrete roadway between Norfolk and Virginia Beach. The year 1925 saw the opening of a water pipeline from Norfolk to Virginia Beach, which alleviated the city's water supply limitations, and brought city lights along Atlantic Avenue and the city's first fire station. Finally, in 1928 the Virginia Beach Walkway Corporation was formed by business owners and citizens of Virginia Beach to fund a concrete boardwalk, which stretched from 5th Street to 35th Street and replaced the aging wood boardwalk. All of these improvements in such a short time period quickly elevated Virginia Beach to the status of resort town and brought rapid development of the ocean front area.[28]

In addition to ensuring that all of the properties developed in the resort area would be tied to the town's new infrastructure and sanitary services, the Virginia Beach Company also included racial covenants in their transactions. The first covenant issued in the deed of sale to John Gordon and Charles Hume, Norfolk-based real estate developers responsible for the initial procurement of the 37th Street properties, stated: "That the said lot and buildings that may be erected thereon shall never be sold, rented or let to any person of Negro descent."[29] The Virginia Beach oceanfront remained racially segregated well into the 1960s. In addition to racial covenants and restrictions like the one described above, which were common in real estate development practices of the early twentieth century, resort accommodations and amenities were available only to White visitors. Hotel staff and performers, and any African Americans who worked in the resort area were prohibited from being on the beach until late at night, "when the last steam train had whisked Norfolkians away and overnight guests had retired to their quarters."[30] This segregation of African American employees was essentially codified in 1938 when the town of Virginia Beach created an ordinance requiring all hotel and domestic workers to be photographed, finger-printed, and registered with the police. The net result was that any African American on the beach, but not at work, was essentially a criminal; this also had the effect of preventing African Americans from Norfolk from visiting the resorts.[31]

As a result of the restrictions prohibiting them from enjoying the Virginia Beach oceanfront resort, African American residents and vacationers sought out other areas of the oceanfront and

[26]Deed of sale, Virginia Beach Development Company to John Gordon & Charles Hume, 27 May 1912.
[27]McLane and Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)," 7.
[28]Marcus Pollard, "The Cavalier Hotel," National Register Nomination, December 2013; Amy Yarsinske, *Virginia Beach: A History of Virginia's Golden Shore* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2017), 131.
[29]Deed of sale, Virginia Beach Development Company to John Gordon & Charles Hume, 27 May 1912.
[30] Kahrl, "Sunbelt by the Sea," 491-92; Souther, "Twixt ocean and pines," 38.
[31] Kahrl, "Sunbelt by the Sea," 491-92.

the Chesapeake Bay for waterfront respite and leisure activities where they created their own thriving resort communities.[32] One of the most notable was the Seaview Beach and Amusement Park in Princess Anne County, which opened on Shore Drive in 1945. This African American-only resort was developed and owned by a group of twenty-one African American businessmen who combined their resources to create their own elite resort. Two years after opening, Seaview Beach and Amusement Park was described by *Life Magazine* as "Virginia's best-known Negro resort" and a "gathering place for Norfolk's Negro elite."[33] Other African American beach and amusement resort areas opened in Hampton Roads throughout the early twentieth century including Little Bay and Plantation Beaches in Norfolk, Ocean Breeze, and City Beach in Princess Anne County, Sunset Lake in Chesapeake, and Bay Shore Beach in Hampton. This trend of African American-only beach and amusement resort areas opening in response to segregationist policies was also seen throughout the wider Chesapeake Bay region with the creation of African American resort beaches such as Highland Beach, Venice Beach, Carr's Beach, and Sparrow's Beach in Maryland, as well as in other southern states with resorts such as Manhattan Beach, American Beach, and Bethune Beach in Florida.[34]

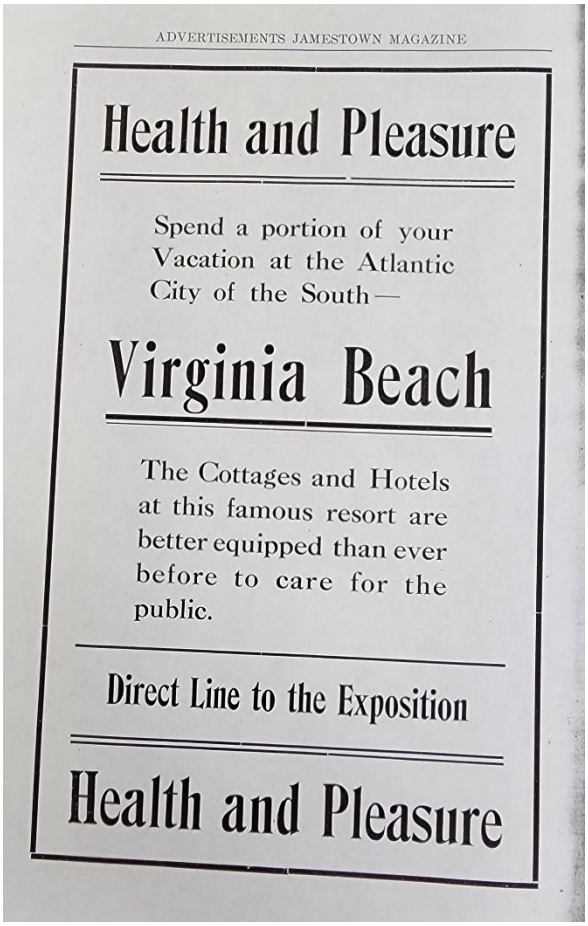
African Americans and other minorities were not allowed to enjoy the oceanfront resort, but were commonly employed in the area's restaurants, hotels, and houses as servers, housekeeping staff, and caregivers.[35] The significant reliance on African American workers within the resort area, combined with the restrictions that kept them from living there, resulted in significant impacts within the historically African American communities in Princess Anne County. Since the end of the Civil War, large numbers of African Americans owned land in the County, finding success through the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, as well as coastal activities. However, with the establishment and eventual boom of Virginia Beach as an oceanfront resort, many of these formerly agrarian African American communities transitioned into more densely populated areas that provided housing for those who worked in the resort industries at the beach.[36] One of

[32]For more information on African American resort areas see: Sherry DiBari, "Seaview Beach and Amusement Park: An African-American Gem on Virginia's Chesapeake Bay," 2017, https://seaviewbeach.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/sdibari-seaviewbeach-final.pdf (access 24 June 2023).
[33] Sherry DiBari, "Seaview Beach and Amusement Park: An African-American Gem on Virginia's Chesapeake Bay," Research Paper prepared for the Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission (September 2017): 1, 16.
[34] CJ Blair, "When Private Beaches Served as a Refuge for the Chesapeake Bay's Black Elite," Smithsonian Magazine (July 7, 2023). Accessed July 12, 2023. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/when-private-beaches-served-as-a-refuge-for-the-chesapeake-bays-black-elite-180982296/; Matt Soergel, "Manhattan Beach, a resort for African-Americans, once flourished in Hanna Park dunes," *The Florida Times-Union* (May 4, 2018), accessed July 14, 2023, https://www.jacksonville.com/story/lifestyle/2018/05/04/manhattan-beach-resort-for-african-americans-once-flourished-in-hanna-park-dunes/12308191007/; Danielle Dorsey, "Wading Through History at American Beach, Florida's First Black Beach Resort," Thrillist (September 28, 2020), accessed July 14, 2023, https://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/american-beach-florida-history; Casmira Harrison, "Once bastion for blacks, Bethune Beach named historic site," *The Daytona Beach News-Journal* (May 20, 2017), accessed July 14, 2023, https://www.news-journalonline.com/story/news/local/volusia/2017/05/19/once-bastion-for-blacks-bethune-beach-named-historic-site/20829852007/.
[35]McLane and Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)," 7.
[36] Kahrl, "Sunbelt by the Sea," 491

the most well-known examples is the Seatack community, which shifted from an agriculturally based community of subsistence farmers and laborers to blue collar resort industry workers.[37]

As town improvements and amenities continued to increase, so too did development. During the early twentieth century, private developers followed suit with the first wave of development that brought about the "Cottage Line" along the oceanfront and purchased land to construct additional summer cottages and small hotels.[38] Gordon & Hume acquired a total of twelve lots from the Virginia Beach Development Company for a total of $2000 in August 1910. The developers both hailed from prominent Norfolk families and used their combined capital to invest in the expansion of the new Town of Virginia Beach. The firm primarily developed lots within one block of the oceanfront (rather than the earlier beachfront lots). Over the next few years, the pair constructed several cottages that they leased to beachgoers. With the loss of the Princess Anne Hotel in 1907 and the later construction of the Cavalier Hotel in 1927, these summer cottages filled some of the need for accommodating tourists and beachgoers. Advertisements boasted their convenient location one-block from the beach, as well as their proximity to the new rifle range (established to train National Guardsmen and militia in the wake of World War I) and other amenities.[39] Around this same time, new amenities such as the Virginia Beach casino, dance halls, and bathhouses were constructed at the beach. Virginia Beach utilized these new amenities and leisure activities to market itself as a desirable beach resort destination. In addition to highlighting these various activities, the town, and private owners looking for renters, boasted the various quality cottages and hotels as places of respite to enjoy the beach's offerings.[40] This successful marketing continued to draw new residents and tourists alike, and contributed to the continued development of the area.

[37] Kahrl, "Sunbelt by the Sea," 491; Elizabeth Spach, "Accidental City Race and the 1963 Virginia Beach Merger," Undergraduate Thesis, University of Virginia (2018), 14.
[38] Yarsinske, *Virginia Beach: Jewel Resort of the Atlantic*, 19.
[39] Various advertisements, *Ledger-Star*, 1912.
[40] "Health and Pleasure," Advertisements, *Jamestown Magazine* (1907). Virginia Beach Public Library.


ADVERTISEMENTS JAMESTOWN MAGAZINE

Health and Pleasure

Spend a portion of your Vacation at the Atlantic City of the South—

Virginia Beach

The Cottages and Hotels at this famous resort are better equipped than ever before to care for the public.

Direct Line to the Exposition

Health and Pleasure

Figure 5: "Health and Pleasure," Advertisements, *Jamestown Magazine* (1907). *Courtesy of Virginia Beach Public Library.*

Other areas in what is today Virginia Beach also sought to capitalize on the increasing interest in seaside destinations. In the late nineteenth century, the Cape Henry Park and Land Company sought to develop the Cape Henry area into a summer resort; however, many of the cottage lots remained unsold until after the railroad was completed in 1902.[41] By the 1910s, the Cape Henry resort area included "a handful of hotels, a couple dozen private cottages, and the very successful Cape Henry Casino (also known as O'Keefe's Casino)."[42] Like the Virginia Beach Resort Area, these private cottages housed year-round residents and served as rentals for seasonal tourists. However, due to the "isolated geography of the Cape, the presence of government agencies, and the emergence of Fort Story," the Cape Henry resort never fulfilled the desired development plan and remained isolated from the rapid growth of the Virginia Beach Resort Area to the south.[43]

[41] WSP USA Inc., "Intensive Documentation, Building 713, Cape Henry Community. Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia Beach, Virginia," report for Department of the Navy Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Mid-Atlantic (April 2023), page 5.
[42] WSP USA Inc., "Intensive Documentation," page 5.
[43] WSP USA Inc., "Intensive Documentation," page 5.

As conflicts related to World War I were heating up in Europe, the United States began to establish greater military presence in the Hampton Roads area. In 1912, a 300-acre site south of Rudee's Inlet was selected for the rifle range described above, which served as a training center for marksmanship and military skills. The United States Army established Fort Story in 1914 in Princess Anne County overlooking the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay where it meets the Atlantic Ocean.[44] This was a strategically critical location for military occupation for the protection of the Bay's assets and Washington D.C., and for Hampton Roads existing military infrastructure. While most development came to a halt once America entered World War I in 1917, this increase in military presence prior to the war prompted increased housing needs and a new cohort of resort visitors.

In addition to developing a number of their own resort cottage rentals, Gordon & Hume also sold off several of the lots they originally purchased from the Virginia Beach Development Company, likely to replenish their investment coffers. From 1912-1913, Gordon & Hume sold all three lots in the 37th Street Cottages Historic District for $400 to $500. The primary cottage dwellings were then constructed between 1913 and 1920, and served as both primary residences, owner-occupied rentals, and vacation rentals throughout the entirety of the twentieth century.

The first two sales were 201 and 203 37th Street, both of which were purchased by Norfolk-based contractors in 1912. Edgar E. Chapman, a prominent local brick mason and his wife Cornelia purchased the property at 201 37th Street (DHR ID 134-6044-0001). The property was perhaps the prime purchase among the three, as it was located at the corner of Atlantic Avenue and 37th Street, just across the street from the oceanfront. The couple constructed a Craftsman style bungalow and garage by 1913 and made the house their residence through 1950. According to the 1930 census, the family lived at the property with their adult children and grandchildren, perhaps due to hardships brought on by the Great Depression. Based on oral tradition, the Chapmans expanded the rear garage building in the 1940s to add apartment rentals, and aerial photographs confirm that this expansion was completed by 1958.[45] The new apartments were leased to military personnel and their families who were stationed at Virginia Beach military facilities, including the nearby commandeered Cavalier Hotel, during World War II. In 1950, Cornelia, widowed, sold the property to Richmond couple, Travis T. and Margaret Crotts. The Crotts family leased the property to both year-round, and vacation tenants.[46]

George M. Baker, a house painter, and his wife Grace T. Baker purchased the lot at 203 37th Street (DHR ID 134-6044-0003) from Gordon & Hume in 1912. They, too, constructed their Craftsman bungalow by 1913, and made the house their residence for the rest of their lives. In 1939, their son sold the property to Leo V. Kernan. Like the property at 201, the owners of 203

[44]McLane and Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)," 7-9.
[45] Though the garage may have been expanded before 1958, the 1958 aerial photograph is currently the earliest available record of the expansion being complete. The available 1954 aerial is not clear enough to discern whether or not the expansion had been completed by that time.
[46]Deed of Sale, Gordon & Hume to E. E. Chapman, July 1912, City of Virginia Beach; Land Tax Records, City of Virginia Beach, 1914; 1930 United State Census, accessed via Ancestry.com; Deed of Sale, Cornelia R. Chapman to Travis T. and Margaret Crotts, 14 September 1950; Oral History Interview with Mrs. Jimmie Koch by author in June 2023; Various Newspaper Advertisements for Lease, 1953-1958.

took advantage of the lot size and demand for housing and beach rentals, and constructed a duplex at the rear of the property in the 1940s.[47] Similarly, the duplex was first rented to military personnel and their families during World War II, and continued to function as a year-round or vacation rental through the twentieth century.[48]

In 1913, Gordon & Hume also sold the lot at 205 37th Street (DHR ID 134-6044-0002) to Mars Lewis. According to tax records, Lewis did not construct the two-story American foursquare cottage until at least 1920. From 1920-1925, the cottage was owned by a group of families, each with partial ownership rights, indicating that the property likely served as a vacation home for the owners rather than as a permanent residence. In 1925, May J. Ryland purchased the cottage, and resided there until at least 1930. During her ownership of the property, she sublet an apartment to Cary and Sue Weston and their daughter, Cary Sue. Beginning in 1927, Ms. Ryland also began advertising units for lease in the "Briarwood Cottage." After Ms. Ryland sold the property, the house continued to carry the name Briarwood Cottage for many years. In 1930, Briarwood Cottage was advertised as available for rent under the management of Mrs. L. W. Miller and Mrs. J. N. (Bertha) Phillips. The Briarwood Cottage was advertised as "close to new hotels, beach clubs, and surf," in local newspapers, and attracted vacationing socialites from Norfolk and Williamsburg.[49]

The post-World War II period in Virginia Beach's history was its largest period of growth and development. Not only had the war brought an influx of temporary military personnel for the duration of the war, but it also brought permanent growth to the area through the construction of new military installations such as Oceana Air Station (later the Naval Air Station Oceana); the Fleet Air Defense Training Center, Dam Neck (officially named Atlantic Fleet Combat Training Center), and The Amphibious Training Command, Little Creek (later the Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek).[50] In 1952, the City of Virginia Beach was chartered, and in 1963 it merged with Princess Anne County to create a 310-square mile independent city. Around this time, the city also became known as the "World's Largest Resort City," a nod to both the physical size, population growth, and vacation destination that defined the city. The newly formed government undertook considerable public improvements to accommodate growth and development, attracting renewed attention to the resort area. Tourists had been encouraged to stay home during the war due to the housing shortage caused by the inundation of military personnel and their families, but during the post-war period, Virginia Beach quickly began reengaging with marketing the city as a resort destination.[51] The city's focus on marketing was so strong that when choosing a name for the newly formed city, Virginia Beach was ultimately selected over

[47] Aerial photographs confirm that this building was constructed by 1954.
[48]Deed of Sale, Gordon & Hume to Grace T. Baker, 25 July 1912; Land Tax Records, City of Virginia Beach, 1914; Oral History with Mrs. Jimmie Koch by author in June 2023; Various Newspaper Advertisements for Lease, 1953-1958.
[49]Deed of Sale, Gordon & Hume to Mars Lewis, 28 February 1913; Land Tax Records, City of Virginia Beach, 1921; Advertisement, *Ledger-Star,* 05 August 1939; Society Pages, *Ledger-Star*, 18 Nov 1933; Society Pages. Society Pages, *The Virginian-Pilot*, 12 Aug 1932.
[50] Virginia Beach Public Library, *The Beach*, 100-101.
[51] Virginia Beach Public Library, *The Beach*, 97.

Princess Anne due to the "substantial sums of money had been spent in advertising the beach as a summer resort for tourists."[52]

Outside of the resort area, large swaths of land that had formerly served as rural agricultural land in the county was developed into suburban residential neighborhoods. These new residential neighborhoods followed national development trends, prompted by access to the GI Bill and other federal funding, and a lasting military presence that supported the local economy in southeast Virginia long after the end of World War II. During this period, the automobile also became much more widely available to the average middle-class consumer, making suburbanization, road-trips, and vacation travel more accessible to the American public. During the period from the 1950s to the 1970s, numerous motor inns and drive-up motels with parking lots were constructed within the resort area to accommodate these new travelers and increased number of visitors. In many cases, these new hotels resulted in the loss of beachfront cottages. This first wave of redevelopment in the Virginia Beach resort area has now too largely been lost to redevelopment as well, with only a few surviving mid-twentieth century motels.[53]

By the early 1980s, redevelopment pressure in the Virginia Beach resort area was already impacting the residential and small hotel character of the resort area. Around this time, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin and Jimmie Koch began purchasing the cottages along the north side of 37th Street, saving them from demolition and/or redevelopment. The couple owned the Cutty Sark Motel (Crest Kitchenette Motel, DHR ID 134-5866, NRHP MP100008323) on the south side of 37th Street, which they had operated since 1977. Mel Koch joined the United States Navy right out of high school. During his first duty station in Jacksonville, Florida he met Jimmie. The two married and soon relocated to Virginia Beach where Mel served as a mechanic and maintenance officer for the Red Rippers fighter squadron stationed at Oceana. Mel rose quickly through the ranks of the Navy, eventually retiring as Lieutenant Commander with 25 years of service. In addition to raising their family in Virginia Beach, Jimmie also worked outside the home in the hotel and tourism industry. Jimmie managed the opening of the first high rise hotel in Virginia Beach, the six-story Windjammer. Jimmie was an active community member, serving as a Board Member for the Chamber of Commerce for 18 years, and as a member of the Board of Building Code Appeals for 22 years. As a hotel manager, she welcomed many dignitaries to the beach, but those that were among the most memorable include: the Blue Angels, soldiers from Fort Eustis taking their last liberty before shipping out to Vietnam, and the first U.S. prisoners of war released from Vietnam. Upon Mel's retirement from the Navy, the couple traveled the world, staying in small, family owned-and-operated hotels. The character and atmosphere of these places led them to purchase the Cutty Sark Motel when it became available. The two purchased the "small, 14-unit mid-century motel with unique iconic architecture" and "worked hard all summer" to create memorable experiences for vacationing families.[54]

[52] Kahrl, "Sunbelt by the Sea," 495.
[53] McLane and Kirchen, "Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955-1970)."
[54] Oral History with Mrs. Jimmie Koch by author, June 2023; Jimmie Koch, "Lt Cdr Melvin Koch and Mrs. Jimmie Koch," written memoir provided to author, June 2023; Kristen Kirchen, Crest Kitchenette Motel National Register Nomination, September 2022.

In 1980, when the cottage at 201 37th Street was threatened by real estate developers hoping to construct a night club to serve their hotel guests, the Kochs mission to save the 37th Street cottages began. Initially, they purchased 201 37th Street in order to stop the night club development to preserve the quiet, family-oriented block of the oceanfront. They quickly learned, however, that the cottages could serve as an expansion of their existing business. According to Mrs. Koch, as the families outgrew the motel units, they began renting the larger cottage apartments, allowing families that had been visiting their establishment for years to visit repeatedly.[55] Under the ownership and management of the Kochs, the cottages have been preserved despite widespread demolition throughout the resort area. Aerial imagery from the mid-1950s to the early 1990s demonstrates the loss of Virginia Beach's historic cottage character, which altered the architectural landscape from one-to-two story cottages and motels to high-rise chain hotels. This trend of redevelopment has continued as land value pressure has continued to increase in recent decades. The efforts by the Kochs to maintain neighborhood character have resulted in the preservation of the 37th Street Cottages Historic District's early Virginia Beach streetscape.

Criterion A: Recreation

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is locally significant under **Criterion A** in the area of **Recreation** as a rare surviving remnant of an early twentieth century beach cottage streetscape representative of the early leisure and vacation culture that contributed to the development of what is now Virginia's most populous city. The district is also representative of the expansion of an elites-only destination to the rising middle class made possible by advancements in transportation such as the electric train and automobile, as well as the increase in higher-rate white collar employment opportunities and the standardization of the five-day work week.

Beaches first became a destination for respite and healing as early as the mid-eighteenth century in western cultures, and by the mid-nineteenth century, had become a place for escape from the city.[56] While the earliest and largest cottages at the oceanfront were constructed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the first quarter of the twentieth century saw the construction of numerous, smaller scale bungalows and foursquares up and down the town. These cottages represented increased services and infrastructure, as well as increased access to leisure time and an expanding population with expendable income. The smaller beach cottage rentals offered a different experience from the oceanfront hotels, and allowed for longer term stays and more comfortable accommodations.

The district also represents a trend in expansion or addition of secondary dwellings on oceanfront properties during the mid-twentieth century to accommodate short and long-term rentals. Initially, these secondary dwellings served a much-needed housing shortage during World War II

[55]Oral History with Mrs. Jimmie Koch by author, June 2023; Jimmie Koch, "Lt Cdr Melvin Koch and Mrs. Jimmie Koch," written memoir provided to author, June 2023.
[56]Daniela Blei, "Inventing the Beach: The Unnatural History of a Natural Place," Smithsonian Magazine, 23 June 2016, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/inventing-beach-unnatural-history-natural-place-180959538/ (accessed 26 June 2023).

and also provided a place for military families to visit during the war. At the war's end, these units provided additional space for vacation rentals throughout the remainder of the twentieth century, and in the case of the 37th Street Cottages Historic District, created rear court-like areas for visitors to enjoy. Two other early cottage streetscapes with a similar court-like feel remain in the Virginia Beach resort area near 24th Street and 11th Street. The 11th Street properties are most comparable to the 37th Street Cottages Historic District as they retain early twentieth century residential character and feeling.

The mid-twentieth century growth and development of Virginia Beach ushered in the decline and ultimate demise of the summer cottage in the resort area. Motor inns and drive-up motels began replacing many cottages during the 1950s to 1970s, and many more were lost to development pressures and the construction of commercial buildings and high-rise hotels. The 37th Street Cottages Historic District's retention of its historic cottages, secondary buildings, and court-like areas are a rare vestige of the early Virginia Beach resort area and the recreational activities it marketed as one of only a few remaining early twentieth century cottage streetscapes in the city.

Criterion C: Architecture

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District is also locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture as a rare surviving collection of early twentieth century Craftsman style beach cottages. The flurry of construction activity in the Virginia Beach resort area during the first quarter of the twentieth century followed national trends in architectural styles and form. Among the most common styles for the period was the Craftsman style, which was expressed primarily in the bungalow and American foursquare forms. The Craftsman style was one of the most common architectural expressions for smaller homes in the United States from 1905 to 1940 (approximately) and early postcards from the period illustrate the full extent of the style's popularity at the Virginia Beach oceanfront by the 1930s.

The Craftsman style was associated with the American Arts and Crafts movement, which "sought to restore dignity, joy, and beauty to the life of the common man."[57] The use of the style for the resort area's beach cottages therefore became a physical expression of the movement and an embodiment of a cultural shift that placed greater importance on leisure, personal fulfillment, and relaxation for a larger consumer base. While it is unclear whether the houses in the 37th Street Cottages Historic District were kit-home construction, the popularization of Craftsman bungalows and foursquares house plans by companies like Sears and Aladdin made the style more accessible to middle class Americans. Though simplified, each of the cottages in the 37th Street Cottages Historic District features characteristics of the Craftsman style such as larger dormer windows, wide porches, and exposed rafters. Other features have been hidden by modern materials, but remain extant such as wood siding, wood windows and doors, and interior hardware and trim. As one of only a few remaining historic streetscapes with excellent examples of the once ubiquitous Craftsman style cottage, the 37th Street Cottages Historic District is

[57]Chris Novelli, Melina Bezirdjian, Calder Loth, and Lena Sweeten McDonald, *Classic Commonwealth: Virginia Architecture from the Colonial Era to 1940,* https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf_files/Classic_Commonwealth_Style_Guide.pdf.

eligible for listing under Criterion C for Architecture as a significant and distinguishable collection of buildings that "embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction," in the Virginia Beach resort area.

Figure 6: Historic postcard illustrates the once prominent beach cottage in the Resort Area. The red boundary highlights the 37th Street Cottages. (Date unknown).

Figure 7: The 37th Street Cottages Historic District pictured in the postcard above (Figure 4). (Date unknown).

Figure 8: City of Virginia Beach Historic Aerial Imagery, ca. 1958, shows the residential character and development pattern of the first two blocks of the oceanfront prior to late twentieth century re-development.

Figure 9: City of Virginia Beach aerial imagery, ca. 1994, shows the extent of redevelopment by the late twentieth century. The 37th Street Cottages were by this time already rare surviving resources.

Figure 10: City of Virginia Beach aerial imagery, ca. 2022, shows the current built environment, demonstrating the loss of historic beach cottages.

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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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

__X__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
__X__ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _Virginia Department of Historic Resources; Virginia Beach Public Library; Virginia Beach Planning and Community Development

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _DHR ID# 134-6044_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _0.6 acres_

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 36.515522 Longitude: -75.584869

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The 37th Street Cottages Historic District includes 0.6-acres and is bounded by the existing property lines of 201, 203, and 205 37th Street. Beginning at the corner of 37th Street and Atlantic Avenue, the boundary stretches west to the southwestern corner of 205 37th Street's parcel and from there extends north, in a straight line, to 37th ½ Street. The boundary then extends east to the corner of 37 ½ Street and Atlantic Avenue and south to the corner of 37th and Atlantic. In addition to this boundary description, the true and correct boundary of the historic district has been provided on the associated sketch and location maps. This boundary

includes the known historic setting and resources associated with the 37th Street Cottages Historic District.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the 37th Street Cottages Historic District represents the extent of the last remaining collection of early twentieth-century residential beach cottages between Atlantic and Pacific Avenue north of 24th Street. The boundary reflects a rare surviving residential streetscape representative of the resort area's early development. The boundary was determined using existing and historic parcel lines for 201, 203, and 205 37th Street, as well as historic mapping and aerial imagery. The historic mapping demonstrates the continued integrity of the setting of the district and shows that surrounding parcels have changed drastically. The district's historic setting and all known associated historic resources have been included within the historic boundary.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: _Kayla Halberg, Project Manager; Jack Galle, Intern; Erica Howard, GIS Specialist; Ashlen Stump, Preservation Project Manager; Marcus Pollard, Researcher____
organization: _Commonwealth Preservation Group_____
street & number: _536 W 35th Street _____
city or town: _Norfolk_____ state: _VA_____ zip code:_23602_____
e-mail: _admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com_____
telephone: _757-923-1900_____
date: _October 2024_____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: 37th Street Cottages Historic District

City or Vicinity: Virginia Beach

County: N/A State: VA

Photographer: Kayla Halberg (KH); Katie Paulson (KP)

Date Photographed: June 8, 2023 and October 4, 2024
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo Number of 12	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
1	View of 201 37th Street	N	10/2024	KP
2	View of 203 37th Street	N	10/2024	KP
3	View of 205 37th Street	N	10/2024	KP
4	Oblique of Cottages and Streetscape	NW	10/2024	KP
5	View of 201's Secondary Dwelling	SW	10/2024	KP
6	View of 201's Secondary Dwelling	NE	10/2024	KP
7	Oblique of 203's Secondary Dwelling	NE	06/2023	KH
8	Oblique of 203's and 205's Secondary Dwellings.	E	10/2024	KP
9	View of 205's Secondary Resources.	N	10/2024	KP
10	205's Secondary Dwelling	N	06/2023	KH
11	205's Secondary Dwelling	W	10/2024	KP
12	Dining Room 205	NE	10/2024	KP
13	205 Basement Entrance	NW	10/2024	KP
14	205 Second Story Porch	W	06/2023	KH
15	201 Kitchen	N	06/2023	KP
16	201 Living Room	SE	10/2024	KP

17	201 Upstairs Living Area	S	10/2024	KP
18	201 Bedroom	N	10/2024	KP
19	203 Left Living Room	W	06/2023	KP
20	203 Rear Apartment Living Area	NE	10/2024	KP
21	203 Rear Apartment Kitchen	NW	10/2024	KP

Embedded Images Log:

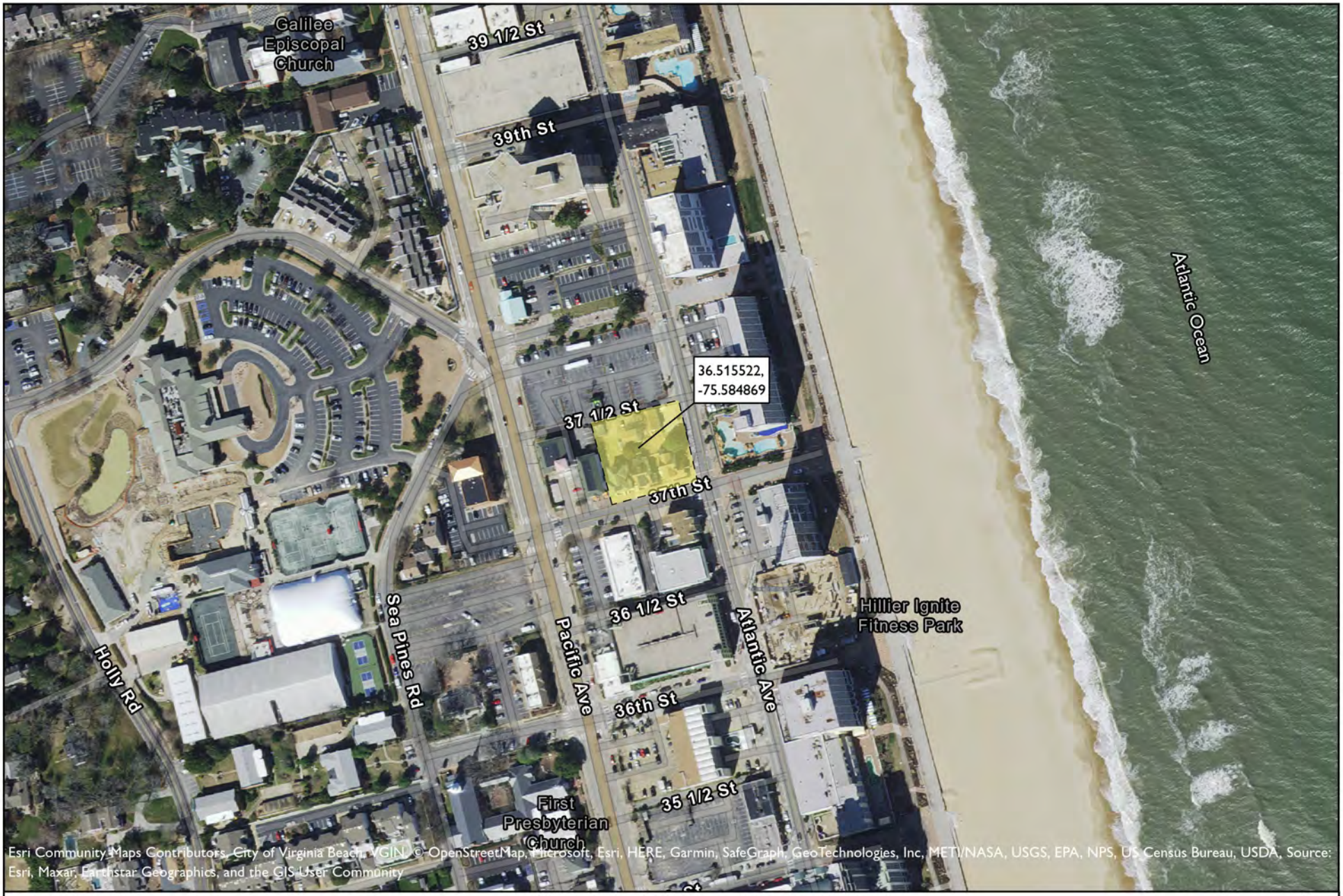
Figure No.	Caption	Page No.
1	Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1928	7
2	Sanborn Map, 1928 revised 1962.	7
3	Virginia Beach Historic Aerial Viewer, 1958. The 1954 aerial is a much lower resolution when zoomed into the 37th Street properties; however, it appears based on shadows that all resources were extant by 1954. Boundary of the historic district is drawn in red.	8
4	Map of the selective cottages survey completed for the City of Virginia Beach, September 2024. All properties shown on this map are located south of the 37th Street Cottages Historic District (not visible on map extent).	9
5	"Health and Pleasure," Advertisements, *Jamestown Magazine* (1907). Courtesy of Virginia Beach Public Library.	23
6	Historic postcard illustrates the once prominent beach cottage in the Resort Area. The red boundary highlights the 37th Street Cottages. (Date unknown).	29
7	The 37th Street Cottages Historic District pictured in the postcard above (Figure 4). (Date unknown).	29
8	City of Virginia Beach Historic Aerial Imagery, ca. 1958, shows the residential character and development pattern of the first two blocks of the oceanfront prior to late twentieth century re-development.	30
9	City of Virginia Beach aerial imagery, ca. 1994, shows the extent of redevelopment by the late twentieth century. The 37th Street Cottages were by this time already rare surviving resources.	31
10	City of Virginia Beach aerial imagery, ca. 2022, shows the current built environment, demonstrating the loss of historic beach cottages.	32

37th Street Cottages Historic District | City of Virginia Beach, VA
Name of Property | County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



Location Map

37th Street Cottage Historic District

201-205 37th Street

Virginia Beach, VA

DHR ID# 134-6044

0 300

Feet

N

Sketch Map

37th Street Cottage Historic District

201-205 37th Street

Virginia Beach, VA

DHR ID# 134-6044

0 50

Feet

N

Photo Key

1 Photo Direction & Number

NRN Boundary

37th Street Cottage Historic District

201-205 37th Street

Virginia Beach, VA

DHR ID# 134-6044

0 50

Feet

N