



**PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

*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)** 004-0055

**1. General Information**

District name(s): Amelia Court House Historic District

Main Streets and/or Routes: Goodes Bridge Road, Court Street, Church Street, Virginia Street, Washington Street, Amelia Street, N. Five Forks Road, Dunn Road

City or Town: Amelia Court House

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

**2. Physical Aspects**

Acreage: approximately 50 acres

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Suburban \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_ Village X Hamlet \_\_\_\_\_ Rural \_\_\_\_\_

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

The proposed Amelia Court House Historic District is located within the village of Amelia Court House, the county seat of Amelia County. The approximately 50-acre district centers around the Amelia Courthouse, and encompasses the village's governmental, commercial, religious, and educational resources. The topography is relatively flat, and the primary streets are Court and Church streets and Dunn Road, which run east-west. The main cross streets, running north-south to form a grid, are Virginia, Washington, and Amelia (which becomes N. Five Forks Road/S.R. 38 between Church Street and Dunn Road) streets. The Norfolk & Southern rail line bounds the district at the north end. Goodes Bridge Road (U.S. 360) bisects the northern end of the district, between Court Street and the rail line. The courthouse and its associated square function as the primary organizing elements of the proposed historic district. Commercial and religious buildings are arranged around the courthouse square. A former tobacco warehouse stands at the east end of the district. A cluster of industrial commercial buildings line the rail corridor, while the Hindle School campus occupies the southern end of the district.

### 3. Architectural/Physical Description

Architectural Style(s): Commercial Style, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival

If any individual properties within the district were designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Cooper Lai, Charles Robinson

If any builders or developers are known, please list here: D.P. Bass, Lee & Parrish

Date(s) of construction (can be approximate): ca. 1850-2023

Are there any known threats to this district? N/A

#### **Narrative Description:**

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire historic district, such as building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district, as well as typical updates, additions, remodelings, or other alterations that characterize the district.

The proposed Amelia Court House Historic District comprises the historic governmental, commercial, industrial, religious, and educational resources in the village of Amelia Court House. The proposed district comprises approximately sixty-five buildings that appear to date from the mid-nineteenth century to 2023 and occupies roughly six blocks centered on courthouse square. The village developed as the seat of Amelia County following the construction of the county courthouse in 1793. Replacement courthouses were erected within the village in 1850 and again in 1924. Construction of the Richmond & Danville Railroad in 1851 further stimulated development around the courthouse and rail line. Professional offices, stores, churches, a bank, and a hotel were constructed in the surrounding blocks.

The focal point of the district is the 1924 Amelia County Courthouse (004-001), a two-story brick building designed in the Colonial Revival style with a full-height Doric portico and a Neo-classical pediment. Nearby stands the 1907 circuit court clerk's office, a one-story buff-brick building with a restrained version of the 1850's courthouse's portico supported by square brick columns.

Commercial buildings line the railroad tracks and front Washington and Court Streets. These are primarily one- or two-story brick buildings dating from the early twentieth century, along with several frame dwellings adapted for office use. Although some storefronts and windows have been altered, most of the buildings retain their historic forms and character. The ca. 1910 H.O. Marshall building at 16436 Court Street, is a good example of the Main Street Commercial style featuring a cast-iron storefront, decorative metal cornice, and pressed metal façade. The Philip P. Boepple Building at 9127 Washington Street is a 1920s brick bank with a full-height Doric portico and a modillioned cornice. As the automobile gained popularity in the early twentieth century, commercial development expanded along Goodes Bridge Road (U.S. Route 360) with the construction of service stations. The buildings at 16401 and 9251 Goodes Bridge Road are typical of early service stations with their porte-cocheres and central front entrances flanked by display windows.

Industrial activity in the district is represented by the ca. 1889 Imperial Tobacco Company building (004-0017), a two-story, stone tobacco warehouse featuring a slate roof with a square monitor. The masonry commercial buildings along the railroad tracks exhibit a more industrial character, featuring garage bay openings on their primary facades, steel-sash windows, and minimal ornamental detailing.

An educational complex anchors the southern end of the district, including the 1908 Hindle School (004-0015) and 1925 Amelia High School. Both are red brick examples of the Colonial Revival style

with hipped roofs, window banks, and arched entrances. The complex also includes two mid-twentieth-century resources: an agriculture and shop building (1939) and War Memorial Gym (1955).

Five religious buildings contribute to the district's historic character. These include mid- to late-nineteenth century chapels and early-twentieth-century churches constructed by Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist congregations. The 1888 Christ Episcopal Church at 16401 Court Street is a modest interpretation of the Gothic Revival style, while the 1911 Trinity United Methodist Church and 1914 Amelia Presbyterian Church are larger brick examples of the style with pointed-arch windows and entrance towers with pyramidal roofs. Amelia Cemetery is located adjacent to the Presbyterian church. The 1923 Amelia Baptist Church exemplifies the Colonial Revival style with its redbrick construction, white trim, and full-height Doric portico.

Overall, the district retains a large concentration of historic resources that reflect the governmental, commercial, industrial, educational, and religious development of Amelia Court House from the mid-nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century.

Discuss the district's general setting and/or streetscapes, including current property uses (and historic uses if different), such as industrial, residential, commercial, religious, etc. For rural historic districts, please include a description of land uses.

The proposed Amelia Court House Historic District encompasses governmental, commercial, industrial, religious, and educational buildings organized around the Amelia County Courthouse. Amelia Court House is the county seat of Amelia County, which is located approximately forty miles southeast of Richmond in Southside Virginia. The district is generally laid out in a grid pattern, with the former Richmond & Danville Railroad tracks extending along the northern boundary. The Amelia County Courthouse is set back from Court Street by a landscaped public square. Commercial and religious buildings lining Virginia, Court, and Washington Streets are generally sited at grade with no setbacks and front directly onto public sidewalks and curbs. At the southern end of the district, the Hindle School campus comprises several educational buildings with manicured yards and an athletic field.

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

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the district, such as when it was established, how it developed over time, and significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.) Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

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

##### Statement of Significance

The Amelia Court House Historic District appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A for politics/government, commerce, and Criterion C for architecture. The period of significance extends from ca. 1850, representing the construction of the district's earliest extant resource and the arrival of the railroad, through ca. 1970, encompassing the completion of its mid-twentieth century development. Amelia Court House exemplifies a Southside Virginia courthouse village that developed around the county courthouse and grew significantly with the arrival of the Richmond & Danville Railroad in the mid-nineteenth century. Architecturally, the district is dominated by the Main Street Commercial and Colonial Revival styles, with examples of Gothic Revival and Modern styles interspersed.

##### Historical Background

In 1735, Amelia County was created from portions of Prince George County and Brunswick County after local citizens petitioned the Virginia House of Burgesses the previous year. Several decades later, Prince Edward County (1754) and Nottoway County (1789) were formed from Amelia County. Located in the Piedmont region of the Commonwealth, the county's rich and varied soils supported a predominantly agricultural economy. Tobacco historically served as the primary cash crop, as was typical throughout Southside Virginia. During the twentieth century, farmers diversified their production as tobacco cultivation declined, and corn and wheat eventually surpassed tobacco in production. Mining also played an important role in the county's economy, particularly the extraction of mica, which was produced almost exclusively in Amelia County. The Appomattox River forms the county's northern boundary and, together with smaller tributaries, served as an early transportation route for distribution of tobacco, mica, and other goods prior to the arrival of the railroad.

Amelia County's first courthouse was located on land owned by Colonel Benjamin Harrison. The county seat was relocated twice during the eighteenth century. In 1789, when the county's boundaries changed significantly with the formation of Nottoway County, the county seat was again moved, this time near Pincham's Cool Spring at the geographical center of the county, in what would become Amelia Court House. In 1792, the new courthouse was complete and stood near the site of the present courthouse.<sup>1</sup>

A small village gradually began to form around the courthouse in the first half of the nineteenth century. Joseph Martin's *Gazetteer of 1835* records the presence of a post office, county buildings, several dwelling houses, mechanics, and a tavern in Amelia Court House. The population totaled forty at that time.<sup>2</sup> Around 1849, Richmond & Danville Railroad company president, Lewis E. Harvie began plotting the construction of the railroad through Amelia Court House. Unfortunately, the courthouse obstructed the path of the railroad tracks. Harvie donated a two-acre parcel south of the existing courthouse for a new courthouse to be erected. Construction of the new courthouse began in

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<sup>1</sup> William H. Gaines, Jr., "Courthouses of Amelia and Dinwiddie Counties," (*Virginia Cavalcade*, Winter 1969), p. 17-28.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Martin, *A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia, and the District of Columbia*, (Charlottesville, VA: Joseph Martin and Moseley & Tompkins Printers, 1835), p. 69.

1849. The new courthouse was a brick structure dominated by a full-height Doric portico. Harvie also sold 1,800 acres of his land around the courthouse for development of the village.<sup>3</sup> In 1951, the introduction of the railroad, which connected Amelia Court House directly to Richmond, ushered in a period of growth for Amelia County. Newer and larger tobacco, agricultural, and lumber markets became accessible to Amelia County farmers and businesses as the village became the county's commercial and shipping center. The railroad also offered passenger service to county residents for both business and leisure.<sup>4</sup> Around this time, a Methodist chapel was also constructed within the community. The Ann Augusta Chapel (9002 Factory Street) functioned as a chapel for approximately fifteen years until it was sold and converted into a private residence in 1863.<sup>5</sup>

During the Civil War, Amelia Court House saw little direct military activity, although the courthouse square was used by local militia units.<sup>6</sup> After the war, the village continued to grow as new businesses and religious institutions were established to serve both local residents and the surrounding rural community. The Methodist congregation organized Trinity United Methodist Church in the second quarter of the nineteenth century; earlier churches, constructed in mid-nineteenth century preceded the present 1911 building at the corner of Washington and Church streets. In 1847, the Amelia Presbyterian Church congregation formed and erected a church on Dunn Road. The current brick church building, constructed in 1914, replaced the earlier building, while the adjacent cemetery dates to the mid-nineteenth century and contains burial sites for prominent county residents, including military veterans, a U.S. congressman, and a Nobel Peace Prize nominee. Christ Episcopal Church formed in 1881, and its chapel, completed and consecrated in 1888, remains extant on the corner of Court and Amelia streets.<sup>7</sup>

As Virginia's public school system expanded in the early twentieth century, the need for a modern school in Amelia County became apparent. In 1908, David Hindle, who had recently moved to the county from Illinois, joined forces with prominent local resident Dr. Southall II to advocate for improved educational facilities. Their efforts resulted in the construction of a new school building, which opened for the 1910 school year.<sup>8</sup> In 1925, Amelia High School was constructed across Washington Street from the 1910 building, expanding the county's educational facilities and separating the high school and elementary school students. An athletic field, known as "Hindle Field," opened in January 1926. Additional facilities followed, including an agricultural and shop building in 1939 and War Memorial Gym in 1955. These facilities were used exclusively by White students until integration began in 1965, and the first Black student graduated from Amelia High School. Full integration did not occur until 1969, and the school's name changed to Amelia County High School.<sup>9</sup>

Commercial growth continued from the turn-of-the-twentieth century into the 1920s. One- and two-story brick stores were erected around the courthouse and along the rail line. According to a history report authored by Mary Frances Rand in 1922, there were seven stores, two banks, a large hotel, and two tobacco warehouses within the village. The banks were the Amelia County Bank and the Farmers' Merchants Banks.<sup>10</sup> The Imperial Tobacco Company built and occupied one of the tobacco warehouses, which remains standing at 9015 N. Five Forks Road. Over time, businesses including the *Amelia Gazette*, a tomato and vegetable canning enterprise, a dairy processing plant, and various

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<sup>3</sup> "Amelia's Courthouse Square in Historical Perspective," (*Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, March 2021), pp. 1, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Kathleen Halverson Hadfield, et al, *Historical Notes on Amelia County, Virginia*, (Amelia, VA: Amelia County Historical Society, 1982), p. 203.

<sup>5</sup> J.R. Fishburne and Tucker H. Hill, "Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory: Ann Augusta Chapel," (Richmond, Virginia: Department of Historic Resources, 1967).

<sup>6</sup> "Amelia's Courthouse Square in Historical Perspective," (*Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, March 2021), pp. 1, 3.

<sup>7</sup> "Amelia's Historic County Seat," (*Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, July 2024), p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> "The Hindle Building's Early Students," (*Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, January 2023), p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> "Amelia's Historic County Seat," (*Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, July 2024), p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in "An Amelia History, 100 Years Ago," (*Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, September 2022), p. 3.

automobile repair businesses operated out of the building.<sup>11</sup> By 1921, the hazardous and cramped conditions in the 1849 courthouse had made the need for a new facility increasingly urgent. Finally in 1924, county voters approved a bond issue to build a new courthouse. Designed by Petersburg architect Cooper Lai, the building reflects the Colonial Revival style favored in early-twentieth century governmental architecture.<sup>12</sup>

Automobile use increased in the 1920s and 1930s, and traffic along Goodes Bridge Road (U.S. Route 360) and N. Five Forks Road (SR 38) spurred the construction of service stations, automobile repair shops, and small commercial buildings reflecting mid-century architectural forms. These automobile-oriented businesses complemented the traditional brick and frame commercial core along Court and Washington streets, illustrating the village's adaptation to evolving transportation patterns following the decline of the railroad. By 1940, bus and freight traffic were common as well, while the last regularly scheduled train ran in 1957, and the depot was demolished in 1975. The rail line, acquired by the Southern Railway Company (later the Norfolk Southern), remains an active branch line.

## Bibliography

“Amelia’s Courthouse Square in Historical Perspective.” *Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, March 2021.

“Amelia’s Historic County Seat.” *Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, July 2024.

Fishburne, J.R. and Tucker H. Hill. “Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory: Ann Augusta Chapel.” Richmond, Virginia: Department of Historic Resources, 1967.

Gaines, William H., Jr. “Courthouses of Amelia and Dinwiddie Counties” *Virginia Cavalcade*, Winter 1969.

Hadfield, Kathleen Halverson et al. *Historical Notes on Amelia County, Virginia*. Amelia, VA: Amelia County Historical Society, 1982.

Martin, Joseph Martin. *A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia, and the District of Columbia*. Charlottesville, VA: Joseph Martin and Moseley & Tompkins Printers, 1835.

Peters, John O. *Virginia’s Historic Courthouses*. University Press of Virginia, 1995.

“The Hindle Building’s Early Students.” *Amelia County Historical Society Newsletter*, January 2023.

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<sup>11</sup> “Amelia’s Historic County Seat,” p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> John O. Peters, *Virginia’s Historic Courthouses*, (University Press of Virginia, 1995), p. 204.

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

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

**6. Applicant/Sponsor** (Individual and/or organization sponsoring preparation of the PIF, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Austin Mitchell, Director of Community Development

organization: Amelia County

street & number: 16360 Dunn Street, Suite 101

city or town: Amelia state: VA zip code: 23002

e-mail: austin.mitchell@ameliacova.com telephone: 804-561-3039

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form if other than applicant/sponsor listed above)

name/title: Katie Gutshall/Kate Kronau

organization: Hill Studio

street & number: 120 Campbell Avenue SW

city or town: Roanoke state: VA zip code: 24011

e-mail: kgutshall@hillstudio.com/kkronau@hillstudio.com telephone: (540) 342-5263

Date: April 6, 2026

**7. Notification**

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

name/title: Austin Mitchell, Director of Community Development

locality: Amelia County

street & number: 16360 Dunn Street, Suite 101

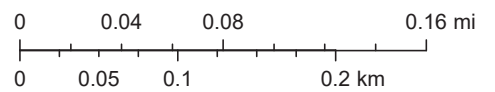
city or town: Amelia state: VA zip code: 23002


telephone: 804-561-3039



3/24/2026

1:6,019



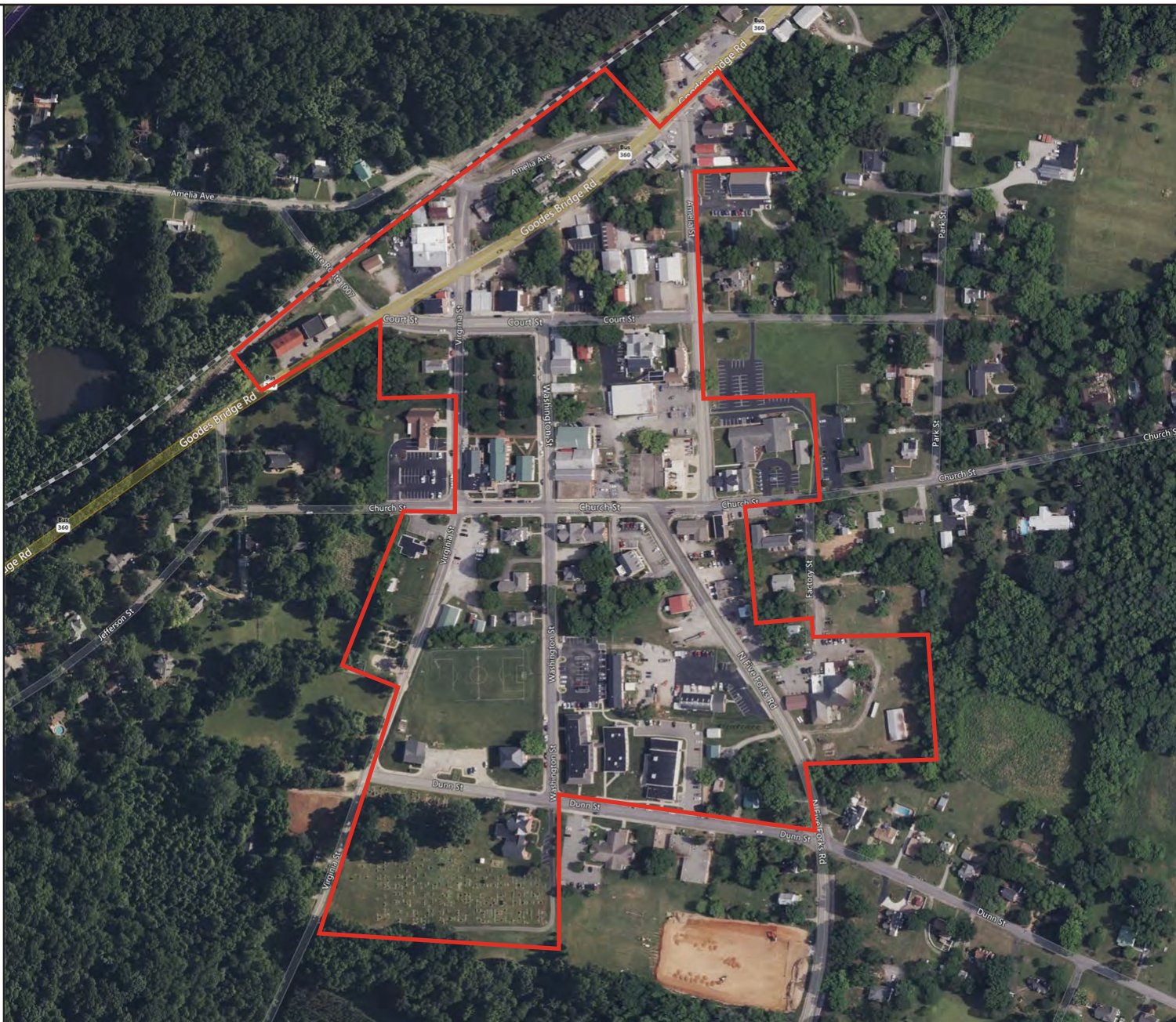
 Amelia Court House  
Historic District PIF



**Legend**



Amelia Court House Historic District  
PIF



Feet

0 100 200 300 400  
1:6,000 / 1"=500 Feet

**Title: Amelia Court House Historic District DHR File No. 004-0055**

**Date: 3/24/2026**

*DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.*

*Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.*































