

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Columbia Hydroelectric Station

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Riverside Park - Riverside Drive and Duck River

N/A not for publication

city, town Columbia

N/A vicinity

state Tennessee

code TN

county Maury

code 119

zip code 38402

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> sites
<u>2</u>	<u> </u> structures
	<u> </u> objects
	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Pre-TVA Hydroelectric Development in TN, 1901 - 1933

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Debra T. Bryan
Signature of certifying official Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Tennessee Historical Commission

Date

12/18/89

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Entered in the
National Register

Albany Bryan
Signature of the Keeper

2/9/90
Date of Action

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
INDUSTRY: energy facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK, CONCRETE

roof WOOD

other N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Columbia Hydroelectric Station is located across the Duck River, in Riverside Park, Riverside Drive, in Columbia, the county seat of Maury County, Tennessee (population 51,095). The inactive, yet maintained, site is located in a municipal park, providing recreational facilities and opportunities for fishing at the base of the dam.

The site's original appearance has changed little from its date of construction in 1925. Like its sisters in Marshall and Bedford County, it was designed by the Nashville engineering firm of Freeland, Roberts and Co., and built by the well-known Nashville construction firm, Foster & Creighton, for the Southern Cities Corporation, a privately owned public utility company based in Chattanooga. According to Tennessee Electric Power Company documents:

The substructure is of reinforced concrete. The superstructure skeleton [is] reinforced concrete with brick panels, including brick chimney for stove heat. The building is approximately 46 ft. X 30 ft. 6 in. [sic] Thirteen inch brick walls 20 feet high, with 2 foot [sic] parapet walls. Four inch reinforced concrete slab roof supported on reinforced concrete dams. [sic] Inside walls painted white with green wainscot [sic] up to window sill level. Floors painted with grey concrete paint.¹

The dam is described as being 263 feet long, with a forty-three foot wing on the east bank of the Duck River. Its average width is twenty feet, and has a curved crest with a sloping spillway and reverse curve toe, a fish ladder, and a "V" shaped trash boom that projects out of the upstream side of the plant. The powerhouse contained two 570 horsepower vertical Francis-type turbines manufactured by the James Leffel Company. These turbines were restrained by Woodward oil pressure governors and were directly connected to vertical 400 kw Westinghouse synchronous generators. The plant operated until 1961 when the generating equipment was sold for scrap.

¹"Preliminary Survey Generating Stations Southern Cities Power Company, Columbia Dam" circa 1930, part of TVA's unprocessed TEPCO collection.

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By 1915 the Francis-type of water wheel had "replaced all other wheels of the pressure-and-reaction type in important new installations. Indeed, the Leffel version of the Francis type sold well through 1922, and was adaptable "'to any head of water from the lowest to the highest.'"² The metal shed holding the plant's electrical transmission devices and accompanying the transformers stands today near the dam. A dispatcher could telephone instruction personnel to operate circuit breakers and generators that were miles away. Perhaps the best examples of this trend is found adjacent to the Columbia hydro site on the Duck River in Maury County, and at Walter Hill, in Rutherford County, on the Stone's River.

Today the dam is extant, as is the brick powerhouse and its concrete foundation, and the walkway to the powerhouse. While the station has remained dormant for nearly thirty years, there has been recent commercial interest in the hydrostation as evidenced by applications for Federal Energy Regulatory Commission permit to reopen this site for electrical production.

The brick powerhouse has nine rectangularly shaped, six over six windows. The powerhouse door has three smaller windows in a triptych arrangement that allows for the entry of oversized equipment, and when closed gives the metal-framed-door lights a horizontal appearance. A ventilation hood stands on the wooden/composite roof of the power house, as do the remnants of a small steel transmission line tower. A chain link fence impedes entry to the walkway, lined with steel safety fences, most likely the result of an effort to provide for the security of the site in more recent times. The V-shaped trash boom, fishladder, spillway, and dam footings are also still intact. Its contemporary appearance varies little from its original countenance.

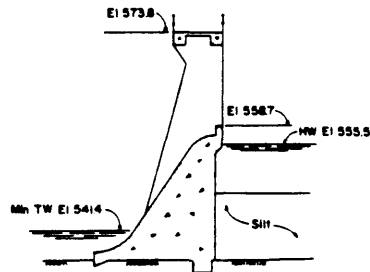
² "Feasibility Report - Columbia Dam," pp.1-2, and; Hunter, Industrial Power, pp. 374, 392-393..

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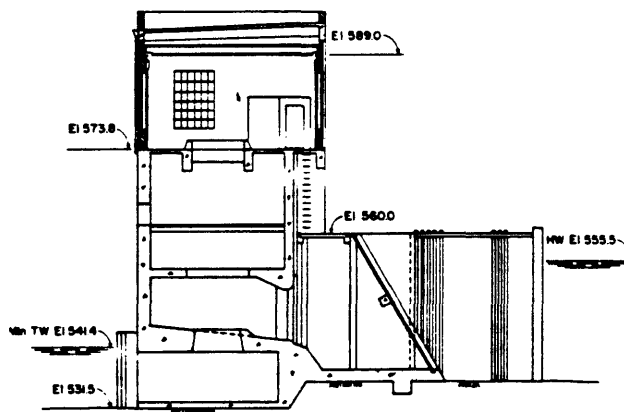
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Columbia Hydroelectric Station



SECTION A-A
0 10 20 Feet



SECTION B-B
0 10 20 Feet

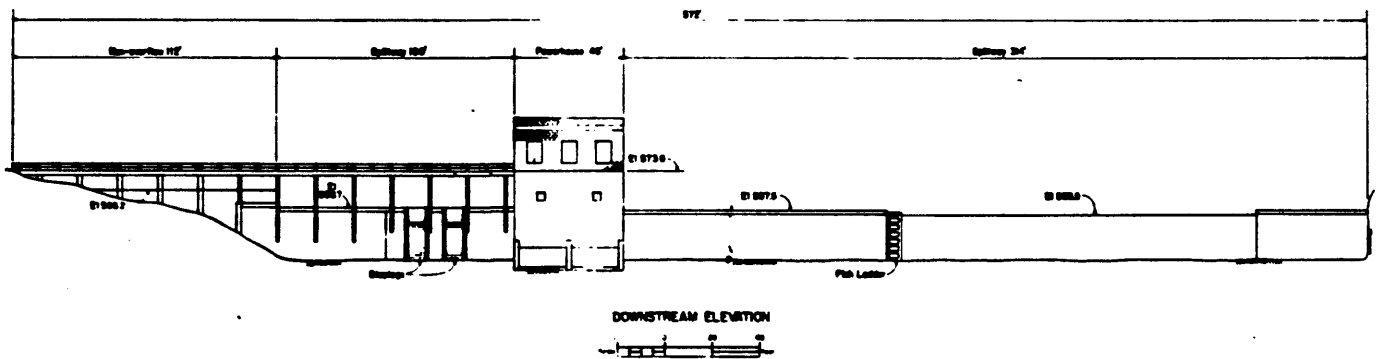
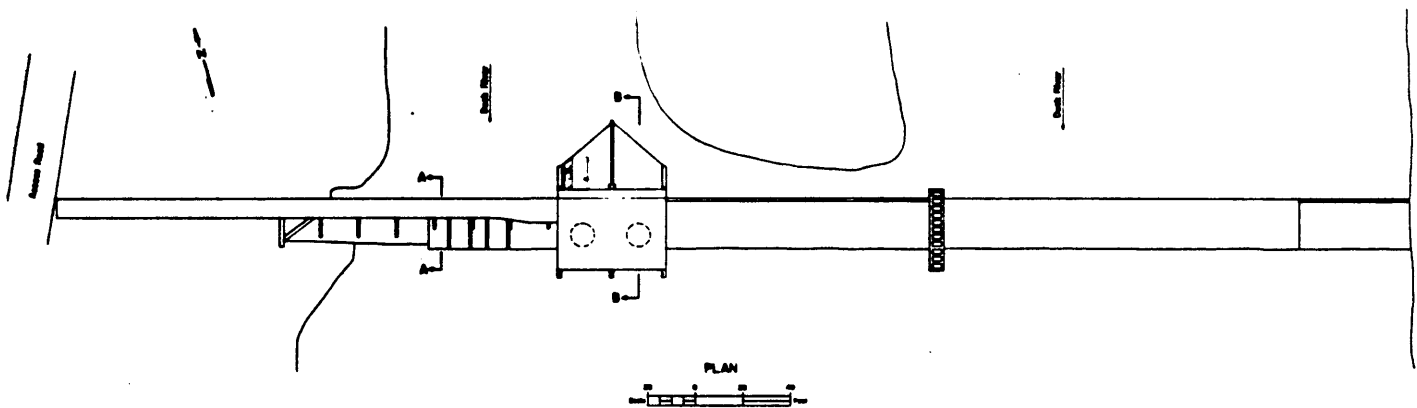
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Columbia Hydroelectric Station

PLAN AND ELEVATION



8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1925 - 1933

Significant Dates

1925

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Freeland Roberts & Co., Engineers

Foster & Creighton, Builders

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Columbia Hydroelectric Station is significant under criterion A in Commerce for its significance to the State of Tennessee because it reflects the kind of smaller-scale, private-sector venture in capitalist hydroelectric engineering projects typical of the time of its construction on the smaller rivers in Tennessee. The Columbia Hydroelectric Station also represents a change in commerce, the business of trading goods, services, and commodities, and the gradual introduction of electrical power into everyday life. Additionally, the site is also significant under criterion A in Community Planning and Development because it provided stimulation to extend the city limits, plan for future electric needs, erect electric street lights, traffic lights, and power industry such as the phosphate extraction and refinement business in Maury County.

Constructed in 1925 the Columbia Hydroelectric Station is also significant to the State of Tennessee under criterion C for its engineering significance. Comparable with two other extant sites, all designed and built in the 1920s by the same two Nashville industrial engineering and construction firms, for the same public utilities firm. It operated for thirty-six years from 1925 to 1961, with only minor changes in generating machinery. The Columbia Hydroelectric Station retains its dam, powerhouse and many of its secondary elements and the site's integrity has not been so compromised that it prohibits the interest of current entrepreneurs in the feasibility of refurbishing the site for contemporary electrical power production. The Columbia Hydroelectric Station meets the registration requirements for Pre-TVA Hydroelectric Power Generating Facilities as set forth in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for Pre-TVA Hydroelectric Development in Tennessee, 1901-1933.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Crouch, A. W. and C. R. Matlock. "small Hydro Plants Passing Into History.: Electro Topics, vol. XVII, no. 1 (Jan. - Feb. 1934).

Preliminary Survey Generating Stations. Southern Cities Power Company. Jo Conn Guild Collection, TVA, Natural REsources Division.

System Control News. No. 57, January 1, 1973 and No. 59, March 1, 1973

Tennessee Valley Authority, Office of Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources. Small Hydro Program Feasibility Reports. Technical Report Series, WSDB Report No. WR28 - 510 - 133, February 1982.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	6
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4	9	8	6	6	0
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3	9	4	1	1	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Columbia, TN 57SE

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the Columbia Hydroelectric Station include the footprints of the dam and powerhouse. See attached map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries are sufficient to protect the historic integrity of the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

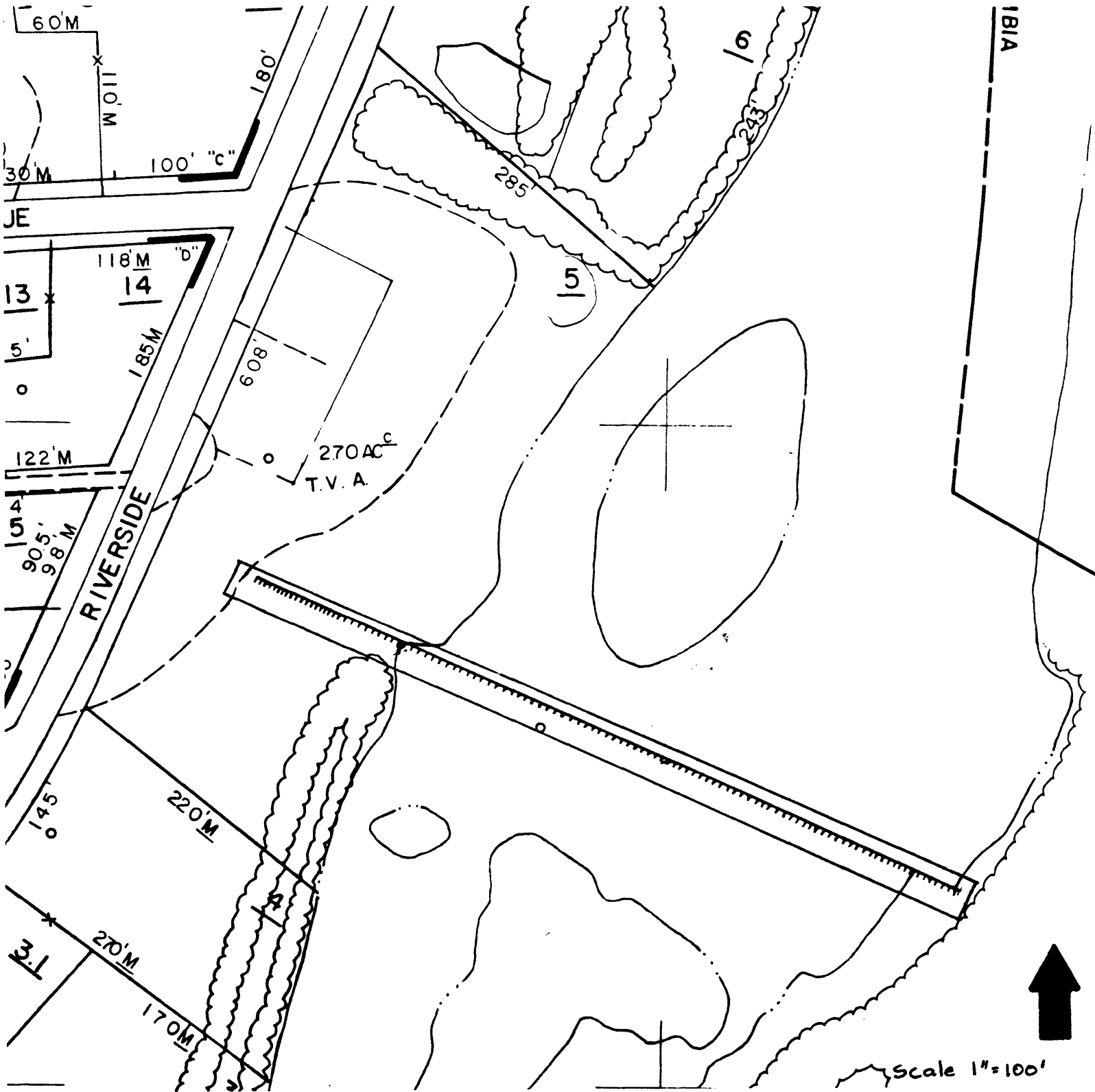
name/title James B. Jones, Jr. Historic Preservation Specialist
organization Tennessee Historical Commission date September 1989
street & number 701 Broadway telephone (615)742-6718
city or town Nashville state Tennessee zip code 37243-0442

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Columbia Hydroelectric Station



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Section number Photos **Page** 1 The Columbia Hydroelectric Station

Columbia Hydroelectric Station
Riverside Park, Riverside Drive
Columbia, Maury County, Tennessee
Photo By: James B. Jones, Jr.
Date: March 1989
Neg: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

View of Columbia powerhouse and walkway. Looking west.

#1 of 5

View of Columbia powerhouse, forebays, windows, transmission tower, ventilation device, walkway, concrete transmission tower supports, and "V"-shaped trashboom. Looking south.

#2 of 5

View of Columbia powerhouse showing concrete foundation, brick superstructure, walkway, fishladder and dam spillway. Looking west.

#3 of 5

View illustrating relationship of trash boom and powerhouse. Looking southwest.

#4 of 5

Showing relationship to dam, walkway, and powerhouse. Fishladder visible just beyond powerhouse foundation. Looking West.

#5 of 5