OMB No. 1024-0018

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 Swainsboro Light and Water Plant
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Bounded by East Moring and South Coleman streets and the Norfolk Southern Railway.
city, town Swainsboro ( ) **vicinity of**
county Emanuel **code** 107
state Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 30401

( ) **not for publication**

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

( ) **private**
(X) **public-local**
( ) **public-state**
( ) **public-federal**

Category of Property:

(X) **building(s)**
( ) **district**
( ) **site**
( ) **structure**
( ) **object**

Number of Resources within Property:	**Contributing**	**Noncontributing**
buildings	3	1
sites	0	0
structures	3	0
objects	0	0
total	6	1

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A
Name of previous listing: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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 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 the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Richard Cloues — 8-31-04

Signature of certifying official — Date

For W. Ray Luce
Historic Preservation Division Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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 or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

(✓) entered in the National Register — Edson H. Beall — 10/27/04

( ) determined eligible for the National Register

( ) determined not eligible for the National Register

( ) removed from the National Register

( ) other, explain:

( ) see continuation sheet

for Keeper of the National Register — Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Industry/Processing/Extraction: waterworks, energy facility

Current Functions:

Vacant/Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Other: early 20th-century industrial building

Materials:

foundation	Concrete
walls	Brick
roof	Asphalt
other	Metal

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Swainsboro Light and Water Plant is located two blocks east of the courthouse square on the east side of Swainsboro in Emanuel County, Georgia. When it was completed in 1922, the light and water plant was located in an active industrial area at the intersection of the Wadley and Southern Railroad and the Georgia and Florida Railroad. Depots, warehouses, and later a Sinclair oil storage facility surrounded the light and power plant. The utility complex is composed of a one-story brick power plant and the adjacent water plant with its well house, reservoir, water tank, pump house, and chlorine storage tank. The power plant is located in roughly the center of the triangular-shaped parcel. The water plant is located along the southwest boundary formed by South Coleman Street.

The **power plant**, completed in 1922, is a rectangular-shaped brick building with arches above the doors and window openings. The corbelled cornice is among the building's few decorative elements. Some of the historic openings have been filled with brick and a nonhistoric loading dock entrance was established on the east side. The two-room interior contained two coal-powered boilers in the north room and that produced steam for the dynamo in the south room. The dynamo produced electricity to operate the pumps and also provided power to city residents. None of the power equipment remains.

The water plant was a direct pressure system that pumped water directly into city mains and also a gravity system that relied on an elevated tank for water pressure. Water was drawn from a deep well (800 feet) over which a small brick **well house** was built between 1922 and 1931. Water drawn from the well was pumped into the 200,000-gallon concrete **reservoir**, which was built in 1921. Water was then pumped into the 65,000-gallon elevated **water tank**, from which it was sent to the city's distributing mains. Built in 1921, the 110-foot tower features a riveted steel tank supported by steel

trestle legs. Between 1926 and 1931, a one-story brick **pump house** was built below the water tank. The pumping equipment remains intact. A small, round **concrete chlorine storage** tank was built between the reservoir and the well house after 1931.

A small, metal **shed** was constructed on the east side of the pump house. The shed, which was built within the last fifty years, does not contribute to the significance of the light and water plant.

8. Statement of Significance

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

( ) nationally ( ) statewide (X) locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

(X) **A** ( ) **B** (X) **C** ( ) **D**

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): (X) N/A

( ) **A** ( ) **B** ( ) **C** ( ) **D** ( ) **E** ( ) **F** ( ) **G**

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Engineering
Politics/Government

Period of Significance:

1921 –1954

Significant Dates:

1921-1922 – Power plant built.
1922 – Water tank, reservoir built, and well house built.
1922-1931 – Pump house and chlorine storage tank.
1927 –City of Swainsboro sold power plant to Georgia Southern Power Company.

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

J. B. McCrary Engineering Company

Statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Swainsboro Light and Water Plant is significant in the area of engineering because it is an excellent example of an early 20th-century municipal utilities complex in rural Georgia. The light and water plant retains all the elements that represent its dual purpose of providing both electricity and water to residents of Swainsboro. These include the power plant building where the electricity was generated that powered the water plant and supplied the city with electricity. The water plant used electricity to pump water from its deep well into a reservoir and then to its elevated water tank. The elevated water tank provided the city with sufficient pressure as the water was sent through the mains and distributed throughout Swainsboro. Other municipalities in rural Georgia built similar utility complexes. In 1922, Thomasville built a brick power plant on the south side of downtown that supplied the city with power until the 1960s. The city pumping station on west side of Valdosta was first built in 1894. It included two dynamos, two pumps and a one-million-gallon reservoir.

The Swainsboro Light and Water Plant is significant in the area of politics and government because it represents the efforts of a municipal government in rural Georgia to provide electricity and water for its residents. Construction of the light and water plant was a major undertaking that required governmental leadership, citizen participation, and revenue in the form of bond issues. Small municipal power plants were common in Georgia until the consolidation of the power industry and the development of a regional system of hydroelectric dams in the 1920s and 1930s.

National Register Criteria

A— The Swainsboro Light and Water Plant is significant in the area of politics and government because it represents the efforts of a municipal government in rural Georgia to provide electricity and water for its residents.

C— The Swainsboro Light and Water Plant is significant in the area of engineering because it is an excellent example of an early 20th-cenuty municipal utilities complex in rural Georgia.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1921 with the construction of the power plant and ends in 1954 when the water plant last functioned during the historic period.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The Swainsboro Light and Power Plant includes six contributing resources: the power plant (one contributing building), water tank (one contributing structure), reservoir (one contributing structure,

well house (one contributing building), pump house (one contributing building), and the chlorine storage tank (one contributing structure). A small metal shed that located adjacent to the pump house is the only noncontributing resource associated with the light and power plant. The shed is less than 50 years of age.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

As early as 1907, the *Swainsboro Forest-Blade* called for the construction of a municipal water works to end the city's reliance on privately owned wells. By February 1919, the city determined to build a water plant because current systems could not provide sufficient pressure for the county courthouse. The next month, the Swainsboro City Council voted to hold an election for water and sewer bonds. In April 1919, voters approved the sale of bonds to fund a waterworks and a sewerage system with 128 voting in favor and 22 against the proposal. City voters went to polls in 1920 and overwhelmingly (130 to 5) approved the issuance of $75,000 bonds to build a combined light and water plant that would include a "modern brick building" with the "very latest and best machinery." The *Swainsboro Forest-Blade* editor observed:

> Swainsboro has long since outgrown the proportions of a village or crossroads town, where a few holes in the ground and a few nearby swamps and branches were all sufficient for water and sewerage accommodations, and the people have at last come to a realization of the necessity for making improvements and keeping pace with the progress of other towns . . ."

The city selected the Atlanta firm J. B. McCrary Engineering to build the power and light plant. McCrary built many small electric and water plants in Georgia towns, including Abbeville, Arlington, Ashburn, Austell, Bowden, Bremen, Buena Vista, Canon, Anton, Collins, Cuthbert, Edison, Greenville, Hampton, Hartwell, Lavonia, Lumpkin, Lyons, Millen, Ocilla, Reynolds, Shellman, Tallapoosa, Toccoa, and Unadilla. McCrary also owned the Estatoah Hyrdo Plant and distribution system in North Georgia, which it probably built. The firm also operated under the name J. B. McCrary Land and Water Company.

In 1921, the city completed construction of the new brick power plant, a 65,000-gallon elevated water tank, a 200,000-gallon concrete reservoir, and sewer and water mains throughout the Swainsboro. National Water Supply Company of Birmingham, Alabama completed a 800-foot well that was later covered by a small brick well house. A concrete chlorine storage tank was completed adjacent to the reservoir. Between 1926 and 1931, a brick pump house was built beneath the elevated water tank The *Forest-Blade* observed "that in the way of public improvements, Swainsboro has made greater advances in the last twelve months than any small city of our knowledge . . ."

The power plant's coal-fired boilers produced steam to power the two dynamos that supplied

electricity to operate the pumps and also provided power to city residents. In 1926, Georgia Southern Power Company purchased the power plant. By 1947, Georgia power line crews used the building as a place to meet and store supplies. In 1987, the Georgia Power Company sold the property to the city of Swainsboro, which plans to rehabilitate the municipal utilities complex into a water and power museum.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Nail, Robin B. Historic District Information Form. Swainsboro Steam Plant. On file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia, 2002.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) **N/A**

( ) **preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
( ) **preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued:
( ) **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:

(X) **State historic preservation office**
( ) **Other State Agency**
( ) **Federal agency**
( ) **Local government**
( ) **University**
( ) **Other, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre.

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 375040 Northing 3607140

Verbal Boundary Description

The historic district boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map, which is drawn to scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property and all of the intact resources historically associated with the Swainsboro Light and Power Plant.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Steven Moffson, Architectural Historian
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
mailing address 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** July 15, 2004
e-mail steven_moffson@dnr.state.ga.us

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)( ) not applicable

name/title Robin B. Nail, Preservation Planner
organization Heart of Georgia-Altamaha Regional Development Center
mailing address 331 West parker Street
city or town Baxley **state** Georgia **zip code** 31513
telephone (912) 367-3648
e-mail N/A

( ) **property owner**
( ) **consultant**
(X) **regional development center preservation planner**
( ) **other:**

Property Owner or Contact Information

name (property owner or contact person) Al Lawson, Jr., City Administrator
organization (if applicable) City of Swainsboro
mailing address P.O. Box 600
city or town Swainsboro **state** Georgia **zip code** 30401
e-mail (optional) N/A

Name of Property: Swainsboro Light and Water Plant
City or Vicinity: Swainsboro
County: Emanuel
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: January 2003

Description of Photograph(s):

Number of photographs: 18

1. From left: power plant, pump house, and water tank, photographer facing southeast.

2. From left: water tank, reservoir, and power plant, photographer facing north.

3. From left: power plant, reservoir, water tank, and pump house, photographer facing south.

4. Power plant, photographer facing southeast.

5. Power plant, detail with cornerstone, photographer facing north.

6. From left: well house (roof), water tank, and power plant, photographer facing northwest.

7. Power plant, photographer facing north.

8. Power plant, photographer facing north.

9. From left: well house, chlorine storage tank, reservoir, and power plant, photographer facing southeast.

10. Power plant, interior, west room, photographer facing northwest.

11. Power plant, interior, west room, photographer facing northeast.

12. Power plant, interior, east room, photographer facing north.

13. From left: water tank reservoir, chlorine storage tank, power plant, and well house, photographer facing north.

14. From left: chlorine storage tank, reservoir, water tank, pump house, and power plant, photographer facing west.

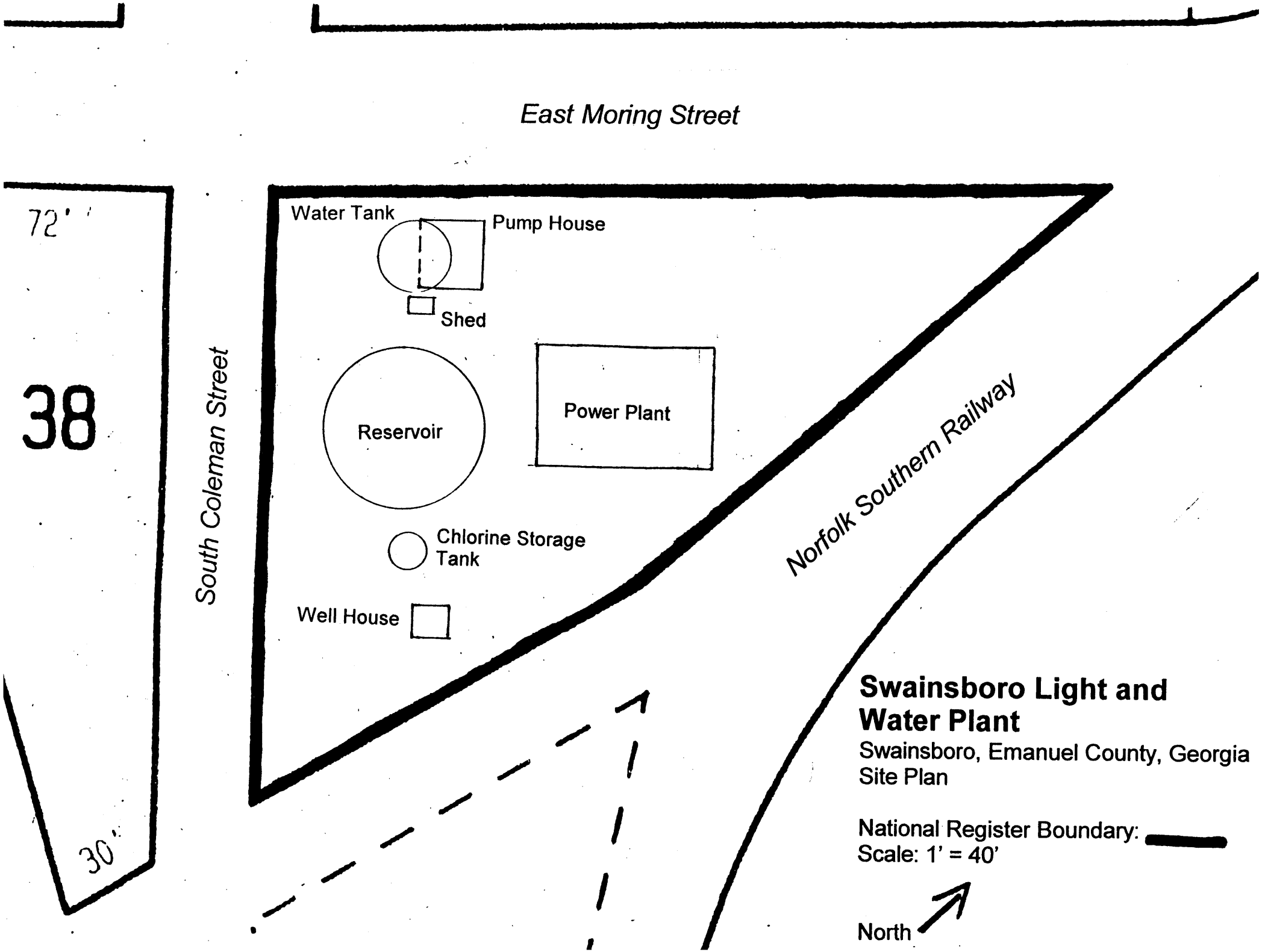
15. From left: reservoir, chlorine storage tank, and well house. photographer facing southeast.

16. From left: water tank, reservoir, and power plant, photographer facing northeast.

17. Shed (left), pump house, and legs supporting the water tank, photographer facing west.

18. Pump house interior with pumping equipment, photographer facing southhwest.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)


East Moring Street
72'
38
30'
South Coleman Street
Water Tank
Pump House
Shed
Reservoir
Power Plant
Chlorine Storage Tank
Well House
Norfolk Southern Railway
Swainsboro Light and Water Plant
Swainsboro, Emanuel County, Georgia
Site Plan
National Register Boundary:
Scale: 1' = 40'
North