

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: Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Other names/site number: VDHR File Number 014-5054
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: 1171 Jerusalem Church Road
City or town: Buckingham State: VA County: Buckingham
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: X

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. Longor 9/29/17
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

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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:) _____

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

11/7/2017
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
Public – Local
Public – State
Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
District
Site
Structure
Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious Facility: Church

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Greek Revival

OTHER: Log

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD: Log; Weatherboard; METAL;
ASPHALT

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

Alexander Hill Baptist Church, the oldest African American church in Buckingham County, Virginia, was constructed c. 1870 and sits on its original site in a clearing in an otherwise isolated, densely forested area. The one-story log building, with vernacular interpretations of Greek Revival style, is in fair/good condition. Some alterations have been made to the original building; however, the building retains its integrity in form and size. A surviving preacher's mound, which likely predates the church, and brush arbor, as well as a non-contributing outbuilding, are also on the property. The privately-owned property is about one acre in size.

Narrative Description

Inventory

1. Alexander Hill Baptist Church, circa 1870, Contributing Building
2. Preachers Mound, circa 1850, Contributing Site
3. Shed, circa 1980, Non-Contributing Building

Location/Setting

Alexander Hill Baptist Church is located at 1171 Jerusalem Church Road in northern Buckingham County, Virginia, off of Route 655, between Glenmore and Grays Corner, southeast of the James River. The area remains very rural and the surrounding landscape is heavily forested; the managed forests are subject to periodic timbering. The church occupies a one-acre parcel that is mostly cleared, with trees along its east, north, and west boundaries, while

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Jerusalem Church Road defines the property's south boundary. East of the church is an unpaved driveway that leads to a grassy parking area. A small outbuilding stands directly north of the church.

Church, ca. 1870 (Contributing Building)

Exterior

Characteristic of vernacular interpretations of the Greek Revival style, the south-facing Alexander Hill Baptist Church is a one-story, rectangular, front-gabled building with a pedimented façade and a simple octagonal apse on the north end. Metal panels cover the main roof and a conical asphalt roof covers the apse. Weatherboard, painted white, clads the entirety of the building, attached to furring strips over log construction. The building sits on an irregular stone foundation, which is clearly visible below the main volume. The apse is set on two courses of stone, lifting it above the main foundation.

On the south façade, elevated substantially from ground level, a large concrete slab spreads out before the church extending in width from just beyond each door surround and in length roughly six feet in front of the church. Additional cement blocks, used as steps, rise roughly half a foot sit before each door. More recently installed simple wooden handrails, painted white, extend from the right side of each door surround out to the slab. The south gable is treated as a pediment with a slight eave overhang. Additional Greek Revival elements are the façade's corner boards which are accentuated with small, simple, pilasters, complete with a capital-like detail and a frieze band between the capital and pediment. A simple rectangular cupola sits atop the roof's southern peak, slightly off-center, similarly covered in white weatherboard and capped with a pyramidal roof that is finished in metal as well. Furthering its aesthetic connection to the whole, the corners of the cupola volume are similarly articulated with small pilasters. The cupola's four sides have louvered vents and there may still be a bell inside. There are two entries symmetrically spaced along the south façade, each with a wood, paneled door with surrounds completed by a minor segmented arch above.

The west and east elevations are very similar in appearance. Two six-over-six double-hung sash windows mark the elevation of the main volume, each with surrounding trim that includes a segmented arch above. Victorian-era shutters, likely added after 1900, are included on all side elevation window openings. In the apse volume, there is a window on the east and west walls, both with no shutters and a less elaborate surround. Though some of the glass panes appear to be replacements, the thin mullions between panes suggest that the windows are moderately aged if not original. On the western elevation a cinderblock chimney rises just to the north of the southernmost window. Its height is diminutive enough that it is not visible from the primary façade. On the east elevation of the apse, an entry with a five-panel door is immediately to the left of the window. Stacked cinderblocks provide a stair access to this entry.

The north or back wall of the church has no windows. The rear gable has not been turned into a complete pediment but features cornice returns. The roof over the apse begins just above the bottom of the discontinuous frieze band of the main volume and does not rise much higher. The difference between the apse foundation and the foundation of the main volume is clear from this

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view. Within the gable a few irregular pieces of weatherboard are larger, pointing to minor repairs made over time. On the northern gable upper wall, some of the weatherboards appear to be of chipboard construction.

Church Interior

The interior of the church has likely been remodeled since it was initially built, although the basic layout of two aisles leading to the raised altar area has presumably remained the same since the Victorian-era remodeling period. Variable widths in the wooden floor planks suggest that the flooring may be original. Carpet covers the oak floor in some areas including the raised apse, which is entirely carpeted. The walls are clad with “wall board.” The double aisle and entryway are an evolved design common in Protestant Churches. Overall the interior is separated into three bays articulated by two rows of two simple boxed columns. Each column is capped with a basic stepped embellishment mimicking a capital. Two beams run longitudinally along the ceiling of the main volume, supported by the columns, drawing the eye forward to the raised altar. A segmented arch creates a transition from the main volume to the apse and includes a folk-style keystone. The interior of the apse, including the ceiling, is finished in matchstick woodwork. The main volume, now covered in more recent sheetrock, may have matchstick wall cladding underneath. Just to the west of the apse is a raised rectangular dais for the choir that takes up most of its bay with a piano against the north wall and three pews facing the center of the room. The floor of the dais is finished in wood planks. The cut of the dais floorboards with keys suggests that it was constructed later than the rest of the floor. The side of the dais matches the matchstick interior of the apse though not exactly in kind. The pulpit furniture (chairs and lectern) is believed to be original. The extant wood pews are not original; one of the older church members recalls that they replaced simpler pews. The west side of the main space contains a cinderblock chimney related to the wood burning stove used to heat the space. The current stove dates to c. 1940–1950.

Brush Arbor/Preacher’s Mound c. 1850 (Contributing Site)

Located roughly twenty feet to the East of the Church is the preacher’s mound that has survived and may predate the church in its use. A rebuilt brush arbor has been constructed to the North with six simple wood posts and light covering with both light wood and brush. The mound is a circular raised area rising roughly one foot above ground level. It is marked with a substantial log roughly 3 feet high, cut at an angle to act as a lectern (the log is a reconstruction). It is a critical link to a tradition that pre-dates built churches for the African-American community.

Shed, c. 1980 (Non-Contributing Building)

A one story, one-room frame storage shed is located about fifty feet north of the church. It has light frame construction, probably dating no earlier than the 1960s. It has a shed roof and ply-board walls with no windows. The entrance is a single leaf of ply-board. The rafter tails extend out just under the roof at front and rear. The small building is set on what appear to be railroad ties. The ties lie on low concrete block footers.

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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.)

- 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.
- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1870–1967

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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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.)

Alexander Hill Baptist Church is a locally significant example of a rural African American church constructed shortly after the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery in the United States. The presence of a preacher's mound suggests the site was used for religious purposes prior to the building's construction and possibly even before emancipation by the enslaved men, women, and children living at Sycamore Island, owned by Alexander Moseley. The church served its congregation into the twenty-first century. Along with Alexander Hill School (no longer standing on the property), from the Reconstruction Era the church was a focal point for the newly freed individuals in the community. Therefore, under Criterion A, the church is significant for its association with the area of Ethnic Heritage: African American. Under Criterion C in the area of Architecture the property is significant as an intact example of vernacular log construction with later Greek Revival design applied to update the building. Character-defining features include the stylistic references in the pedimented gable, cupola, door and window trim, six-over-six sash and wood shutters, as well as interior flooring, trim, and finishes in the apse. The property meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties because its significance is derived from its association with Buckingham County's African American community life since its c. 1870 construction to the recent past, as well as its architectural character. The property's period of significance, c. 1870-1967, begins with its approximate original construction date and ends with the traditional 50-year cutoff for properties where significant activities have continued into the more recent past, as the church remained in the local African American community's regular use until about 2014.

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

Historical Background

The origins of Alexander Hill Baptist Church are unique in the history of Buckingham County. Before 1867, a congregation was established by the once-enslaved men and women of Sycamore Island, the plantation gifted to them by their former owner, Alexander Moseley, long-time Editor of the *Richmond Whig*.

In 1858, nearby Sycamore Island plantation was occupied by twenty-one enslaved adults and seven additional young people between the ages of twelve and sixteen. Undoubtedly, there were also numerous, younger children. There, without the presence of a white family to care for, they lived in relative independence, tending horses, sheep, cattle, hogs, crops, and a sawmill. Property on the plantation for their use included furniture, a watch, a clock, two guns, and a set of silver spoons valued at \$80.00. It is entirely possible that they formed their own church at Sycamore Island before their emancipation. (2)

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In 1860, Buckingham County-born Alexander Moseley resided in Nelson County, at his farm Fish Pond, while Sycamore Island, where some of his laborers lived and worked, was located across the James River in Buckingham County. A kinsman of Moseley's acted as overseer.

As the post-Civil War era of Reconstruction began, Moseley assessed his new life and the future of the many men, women, and children who had been his enslaved laborers and servants. On January 1, 1867, Moseley granted a tract of land consisting of 346 acres to nine "men of color," including Gabriel Palmer, who would become the pastor of Alexander Hill Baptist Church, the first African-American Baptist church in Buckingham County. The others were Emanuel Wayne, Emanuel Moseley, Cornelius Palmer, Winston Palmer, Peter Scott, Jesse Moseley, Sr., John Harris, Sr., and Samuel Braxton. At least one of the grantees, John Harris, Sr., was a free black man prior to Emancipation, employed by Moseley and, in 1860, had lived with him in Nelson County. In the center of the tract, on Emanuel Moseley's lot, there was a sawmill. At the tip of Emanuel Wayne's land on Nicholas Cabell's Ferry Road, there sat a church. It is currently unknown if the surviving Alexander Hill Baptist Church is the one noted on the 1866 survey which was recorded with the land deed. It could be another structure or a grove church. In any case, it is the spot where Alexander Hill Baptist Church stands today. (1) It is notable that Alexander Moseley's first name was remembered rather than his surname. Oddly, there is no hill on the property.

The Alexander Hill community provided homes and livelihoods not only for the nine original grantees, but also for their rapidly expanding families. Together with their wives, children, and extended families, some of whom may have joined them from plantations other than Moseley's Fish Pond, they were a ready-made community. When the census was enumerated in July of 1870, all of the grantees of Alexander Hill were still living at that place in James River Township, Buckingham County. (3)

The Palmer families included three grantees: Gabriel, Cornelius, and Winston. Atypical of the times, in 1870, these three men could read and write, indicating they were unusually prepared for independence. In 1870, the forty-year-old "Gabe" Palmer was enumerated as a farmer whose real estate was valued at \$114.00. If he was already the pastor of Alexander Hill Baptist Church, the census taker did not note it as his occupation; ten years later, however, Gabriel Palmer's occupation was given as "preacher."

During the period while Gabriel Palmer was pastor, it is believed that the congregation at Alexander Hill Baptist Church numbered over 500 members. Over the decades, segments of that congregation formed Jerusalem Baptist Church, Warminster Baptist Church, and other new churches.

The New York Freeman's Union Commission as well as the Freedmen's Bureau are reported to have financially supported a school at Alexander Hill. According to tradition, Cornelius Palmer founded Alexander Hill School; the building is no longer extant. Edward Lomax taught there, beginning a long and illustrious career in Buckingham County. In 1870, Edward Lomax and his family lived near the John Harris family at Alexander Hill. Lomax was enumerated as a twenty-

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one-year-old “mulatto.” By 1886/1887 and perhaps before, Edward and his wife, Josephine, held “First Grade” Certificates and were teaching in a “colored school” at Buckingham Court House. Together, they would go on to become leaders in Buckingham County’s segregated school system, conducting training institutes for African American teachers. (4)

The ultimate success of the Alexander Hill neighborhood and the longevity of Alexander Hill Baptist Church demonstrates that Moseley exhibited sound judgement when he established “nine men of color” on land they could call their own. He believed in their abilities and, perhaps more importantly, they believed in themselves. The Palmers, the Moseleys, Emanuel Wayne, Peter Scott, John Harris, Sr., and Samuel Braxton took their gift and soared with it, providing a community for their children and their grandchildren, which included Alexander Hill Baptist Church. These founding families were long remembered. In 2007, over 300 people gathered at Alexander Hill Baptist Church to witness a reenactment of the brush arbor service as it would have been performed in 1867. The event was sponsored by the Jamestown Celebration and a slate plaque was placed on the property commemorating the event. (5)

Despite diminishing numbers, Alexander Hill Baptist Church was in continual use until about 2014. To date, written records for the church have not been found. Lacking those details, it is informative to look at the community of Alexander Hill as a reflection of the church’s integral part in the neighborhood and the growth of other churches as its legacy.

Architectural Significance

The landscape and the architecture at this site indicate a typical, but rarely surviving evolution of a very rural, nineteenth-century African American religious property. It is possible that prior to the Civil War, this site was used for religious services by enslaved African Americans in this area of Buckingham County. The preacher’s mound may predate the church and it could have had a brush arbor structure built in the proximity of the one recently constructed. The church appears to have started as a simple log building. During the several survey visits (in 2014 and 2016), sections of square-cut log were visible under the weatherboards on the eastern wall. The log wall was visible near the foundation and at about 4-5 feet above the foundation. The exposed log appearance of the church may have been temporary in the late 1860s or early 1870s. The current more sophisticated Greek Revival exterior, including the weatherboard, trim, bell cupola and southern apse, appear to date to the 1890s to c. 1910. Other character-defining features include the Greek Revival stylistic references in the pedimented gable, six-over-six sash and wood shutters, as well as interior flooring, trim, and finishes in the apse. The building together with the preacher’s mound illustrate a cultural, social, and religious tradition that evolved from simple means into a more sophisticated form as African Americans gained their freedom and enjoyed more autonomy in Buckingham County and in Virginia between Reconstruction and the early twentieth century.

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ENDNOTES

(1) Federal Population Census, Nelson County, Virginia, 1860; Land survey by Gr. (Grandison) Moseley for Alex. Moseley, Esq., 23 Oct 1866, Buckingham County Deed Book 1, p. 273.

(2) Records of the Sycamore Island and Fish Pond Plantations, 1856–1858, Robert Alonzo Brock Collection, BR137, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA; Roger G. Ward, *Land Tax Summaries & Implied Deeds 1841–1870, Volume 3* (Athens, GA: Iberian Publishing Company), 197–198. Sycamore Island was adjacent to the expansive farm of elder statesman Charles Yancey. In 1850, Yancey’s plantation was valued at \$55,000. However, a complete accounting of Alexander Moseley’s land holdings in Buckingham County is particularly difficult to trace. In addition to the fact that the original deeds were burned in the 1869 Buckingham County courthouse fire, there were at least three adult Alexander Moseleys living concurrently in Buckingham County: Alexander Moseley, editor; Alexander Moseley, lawyer; and Alexander Trent Moseley. Over the years, their records have been conflated.

(3) Federal Population Census, Buckingham County, Virginia, 1870 & 1880; Martha Louis, “Circuit Court Appoints Trustees for Alexander Hill Baptist Church,” *Buckingham Beacon* (4 Nov – 1 Dec 2016), 10.

(4) Renée Ingram and Charles W. White, Sr., *Buckingham County* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 8–9. According to Ingram and White, the New York Freeman’s Union Commission as well as the Freedmen’s Bureau financially supported the school at Alexander Hill; Federal Population Census, Buckingham County, Virginia, 1870; “The Death of E. S. Lomax,” *The Daily Progress*, 19 January 1917.

(5) Louis, “Circuit Court Appoints Trustees for Alexander Hill Baptist Church,” *Buckingham Beacon*.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books

D'Aiutolo, Leila Eldridge, Warren L. Forsythe, William S. Hubbard, and Mary Carolyn Mitton. *The Descendants of William Moseley 1605/1606–1655 of Norfolk, Va., Book I*. Privately published, 2000.

Ingram, Renée and Charles W. White, Sr. *Buckingham County*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.

Ward, Roger G. Ward. *Land Tax Summaries & Implied Deeds 1841–1870, Volume 3*. Athens, GA: Iberian Publishing Company, 1993.

Yeck, Joanne L. “*At a Place Called Buckingham*,” *Volume Two*. Kettering, OH: Slate River Press, 2015.

Articles

“Death of Alexander Moseley, Esq.,” *The Daily Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), 1 September 1881, p. 1.

“The Death of E. S. Lomax,” *The Daily Progress* (Charlottesville, VA), 19 January 1917.

Louis, Martha. “Circuit Court Appoints Trustees for Alexander Hill Baptist Church,” *Buckingham Beacon* (4 Nov – 1 Dec 2016), 10.

Primary and Unpublished Sources

Alexander Hill deed. Buckingham County Deed Book 1, pp. 272–274.

Alexander Hill land survey by Gr. (Grandison) Moseley for Alex. Moseley, Esq., 23 Oct 1866. Buckingham County Deed Book 1, p. 273.

Alexander Moseley Diary. Alexander Moseley Papers, 1837-1880, Accession 25787, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Ethridge, Harrison Moseley. “Alexander Moseley, Editor of the Richmond Whig.” Master’s thesis, University of Richmond, 1967.

Federal Population Census. Buckingham County, Virginia, 1870 & 1880.

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Federal Population Census. Nelson County, Virginia, 1860.

Federal Slave Census. Nelson County, Virginia, 1860.

Federal Slave Census. Buckingham County, Virginia, 1860.

Sycamore Island and Fish Pond Plantations records, 1856–1858. Robert Alonzo Brock Collection, BR137, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 014-5054

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre +/-

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: 37.655697 Longitude: -78.613767

2. Latitude: Longitude:

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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 historic boundary conforms to the lot lines of tax parcel 47-25 as recorded by Buckingham County, Virginia. The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached Tax Parcel Map

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary coincides with the legal boundary as it has existed since the church was constructed, as well as the property's historic setting and all known historic resources associated with the property throughout its period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Martha Pennington Louis; Joanne Yeck; Architectural Survey/Description: Gwen Peck and Stephanie Pate (University of Virginia-Architecture School)

organization: Trustees of Alexander Hill Church

street & number: P.O. Box 12 (physical address: 2581 Howardsville Road)

city or town: Buckingham state: VA zip code: 23921

e-mail: marthalouis60@gmail.com

telephone: cell phone: (434) 547-2296

date: April 2017

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.

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- **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: Alexander Hill Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: Buckingham vicinity

County: Buckingham

State: Virginia

Photographer: Marc Wagner

Date Photographed: 6/3/2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0001

1 of 14. Church, Primary Elevation, view towards north.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0002

2 of 14. Church, Primary Elevation, view towards north-northeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0003

3 of 14. Church, Rear Elevation, view towards southeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0004

4 of 14. Church, Western Elevation, windows.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0005

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5 of 14. Church, Eastern Elevation, window detail.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0006

6 of 14. Church, Interior, Apse Door detail

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0007

7 of 14. Church, Foundation, northeast corner.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0008

8 of 14. Shed, view towards northwest.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0009

9 of 14. Preachers Mound and Arbor, view towards northwest

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0010

10 of 14. Preachers Mound, Church and Shed, view towards northwest

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0011

11 of 14. Preachers Mound. View toward northeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0012

12 of 14: Church, Interior, pews and aisle, view towards altar, northeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0013

13 of 14: Church, Interior, sanctuary/pulpit, view towards north- northwest.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0014

14 of 14: Church, Interior, Choir, view towards northwest.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications 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.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Virginia Cultural Resource Information System

LOCATION MAP

Alexander Hill Baptist Church

Buckingham County, VA

DHR No. 014-5054

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Latitude: 37.655697

Longitude: -78.613767



Feet



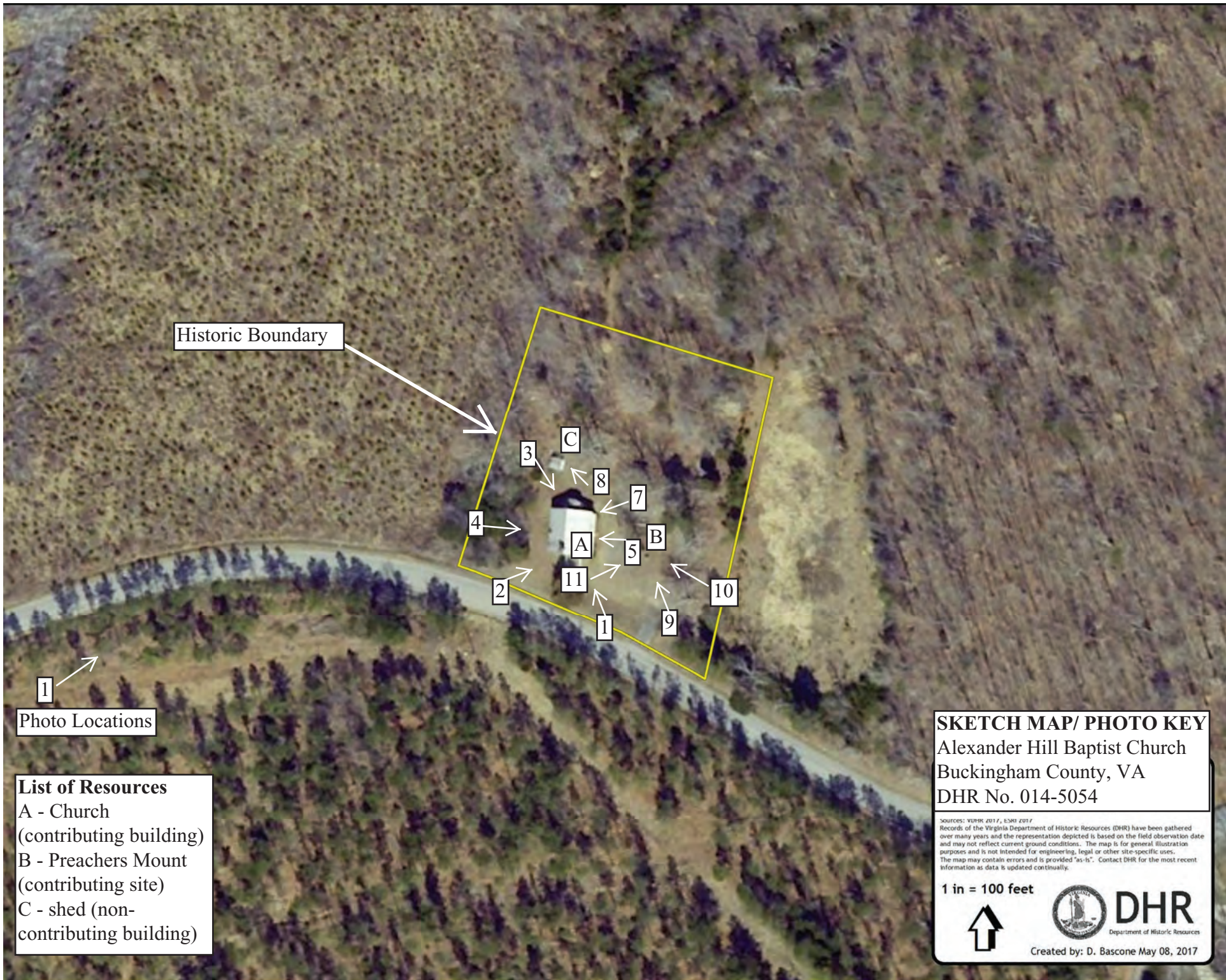
1:9,028 / 1"=752 Feet

Title:

Date: 5/12/2017

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 to 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.



Historic Boundary

Photo Locations

List of Resources

- A - Church
(contributing building)
- B - Preachers Mount
(contributing site)
- C - shed (non-contributing building)

SKETCH MAP/ PHOTO KEY
 Alexander Hill Baptist Church
 Buckingham County, VA
 DHR No. 014-5054

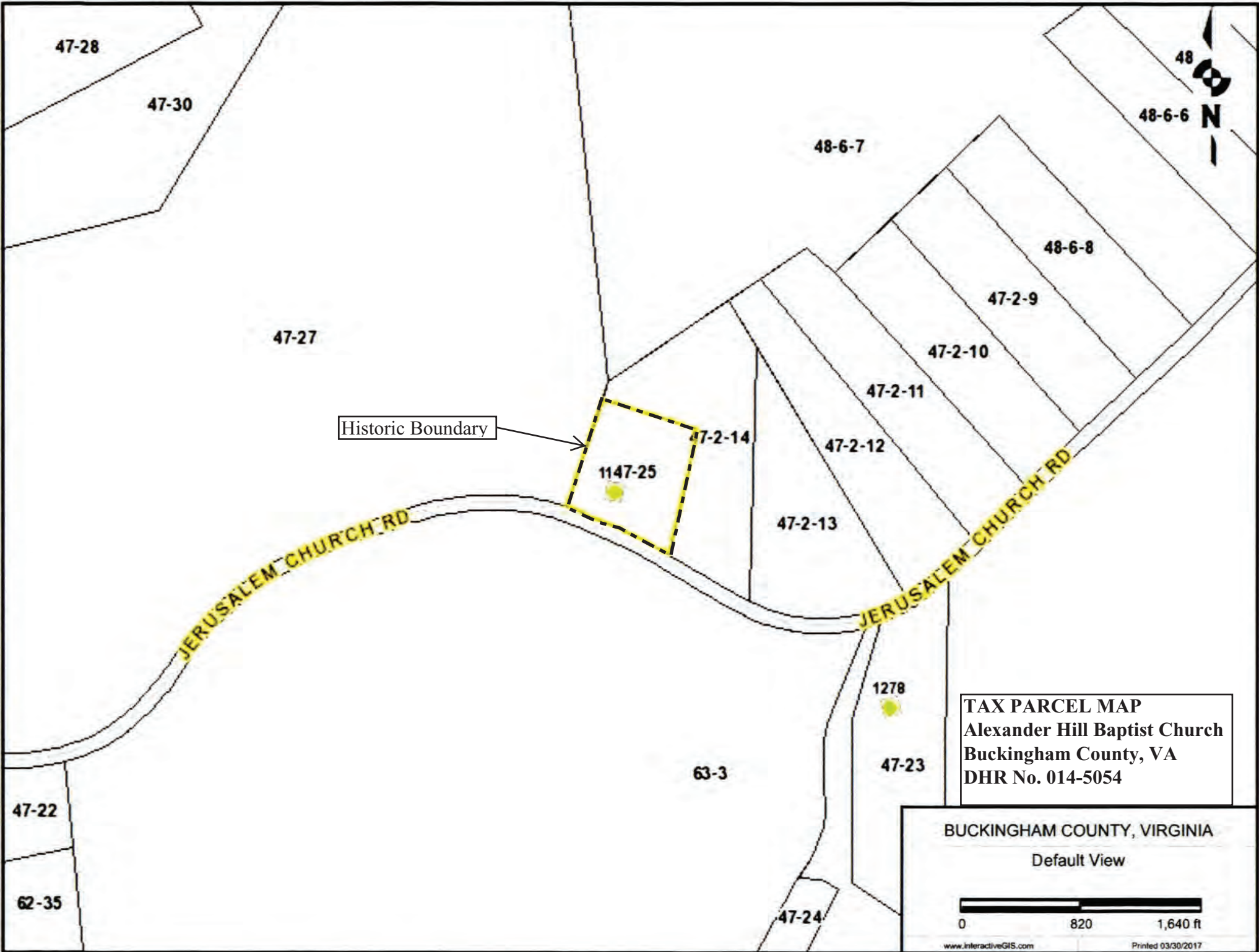
Sources: VDRM 2017, ESRI 2017.
 Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years and the representation depicted is based on the field observation date and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general illustration purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. The map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". Contact DHR for the most recent information as data is updated continually.

1 in = 100 feet



DHR
Department of Historic Resources

Created by: D. Bascone May 08, 2017



47-28

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47-2-10

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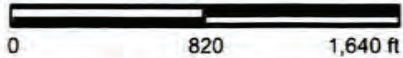
47-24

Historic Boundary

TAX PARCEL MAP
Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Buckingham County, VA
DHR No. 014-5054

BUCKINGHAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Default View





ALL SAINTS
M.E.
BAPTIST



MEMORIAL
SCHOOL
1907

























National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Resubmission

Property Name: Alexander Hill Baptist Church

Multiple Name:

State & County: VIRGINIA, Buckingham

Date Received:
10/4/2017

Date of Pending List:
8/2/2017

Date of 16th Day:
8/17/2017

Date of 45th Day:
11/20/2017

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100001495

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Accept

Return

Reject

11/7/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria Nomination is being returned to State for substantive reasons. See attached Return Sheet for detailed comment. Nomination was revised and resubmitted. All issues from the Return have been addressed. Accept, National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus

Patrick Andrus

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218

Date

11/7/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Historic Resources

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Molly Joseph Ward
Secretary of Natural Resources

Julie V. Langan
Director

Tel: (804) 367-2323
Fax: (804) 367-2391
www.dhr.virginia.gov

June 28, 2017

Mr. Paul Loether
Chief, National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Programs
National Park Service 2280
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Alexander Hill Baptist Church, Buckingham County, Virginia

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Alexander Hill Baptist Church** to the National Register of Historic Places. Submitted for your review, the nomination has been considered, and approved, by the State Review Board and the Virginia SHPO has recommended it for listing. Any letters of comment or objection have been copied at the end of the nomination material, along with any FPO notification letters.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My direct phone line is 804-482-6439.

Sincerely,

Lena Sweeten McDonald
National/State Register Historian

Enclosures

Western Region Office
962 Kime Lane
Salem, VA 24153
Tel: (540) 387-5443
Fax: (540) 387-5446

Northern Region Office
5357 Main Street
PO Box 519
Stephens City, VA 22655
Tel: (540) 868-7029
Fax: (540) 868-7033

Eastern Region Office
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, VA 23221
Tel: (804) 367-2323
Fax: (804) 367-2391

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-1495

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: Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Other names/site number: VDHR File Number 014-5054
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: 1171 Jerusalem Church Road
City or town: Buckingham State: VA County: Buckingham
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: X

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

Returned

Julie A. Longan 6/20/17
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

Alexander Hill Baptist Church
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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:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

Returned

Alexander Hill Baptist Church
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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious Facility: Church

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Greek Revival

OTHER: Log

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD: Log; Weatherboard; METAL;
ASPHALT

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

Alexander Hill Baptist Church, the oldest African American church in Buckingham County, Virginia, was constructed c. 1870 and sits on its original site in a clearing in an otherwise isolated, densely forested area. The one-story log building, with vernacular interpretations of Greek Revival style, is in fair/good condition. Some alterations have been made to the original building; however, the building retains its integrity in form and size. A surviving preacher's mound, which likely predates the church, and brush arbor, as well as a non-contributing outbuilding, are also on the property. The privately-owned property is about one acre in size.

Narrative Description

Inventory

1. Alexander Hill Baptist Church, circa 1870, Contributing Building
2. Preachers Mound, circa 1850, Contributing Site
3. Shed, circa 1980, Non-Contributing Building

Location/Setting

Alexander Hill Baptist Church is located at 1171 Jerusalem Church Road in northern Buckingham County, Virginia, off of Route 655, between Glenmore and Grays Corner, southeast of the James River. The area remains very rural and the surrounding landscape is heavily forested; the managed forests are subject to periodic timbering. The church occupies a one-acre parcel that is mostly cleared, with trees along its east, north, and west boundaries, while

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Jerusalem Church Road defines the property's south boundary. East of the church is an unpaved driveway that leads to a grassy parking area. A small outbuilding stands directly north of the church.

Church, ca. 1870 (Contributing Building)

Exterior

Characteristic of vernacular interpretations of the Greek Revival style, the south-facing Alexander Hill Baptist Church is a one-story, rectangular, front-gabled building with a pedimented façade and a simple octagonal apse on the north end. Metal panels cover the main roof and a conical asphalt roof covers the apse. Weatherboard, painted white, clads the entirety of the building, attached to furring strips over log construction. The building sits on an irregular stone foundation, which is clearly visible below the main volume. The apse is set on two courses of stone, lifting it above the main foundation.

On the south façade, elevated substantially from ground level, a large concrete slab spreads out before the church extending in width from just beyond each door surround and in length roughly six feet in front of the church. Additional cement blocks, used as steps, rise roughly half a foot before each door. More recently installed simple wooden handrails, painted white, extend from the right side of each door surround out to the slab. The south gable is treated as a pediment with a slight eave overhang. Additional Greek Revival elements are the façade's corner boards which are accentuated with small, simple, pilasters, complete with a capital-like detail and a frieze band between the capital and pediment. A simple rectangular cupola sits atop the roof's southern peak, slightly off-center, similarly covered in white weatherboard and capped with a pyramidal roof that is finished in metal as well. Furthering its aesthetic connection to the whole, the corners of the cupola volume are similarly articulated with small pilasters. The cupola's four sides have louvered vents and there may still be a bell inside. There are two entries symmetrically spaced along the south façade, each with a wood, paneled door with surrounds completed by a minor segmented arch above.

The west and east elevations are very similar in appearance. Two six-over-six double-hung sash windows mark the elevation of the main volume, each with surrounding trim that includes a segmented arch above. Victorian-era shutters, likely added after 1900, are included on all side elevation window openings. In the apse volume, there is a window on the east and west walls, both with no shutters and a less elaborate surround. Though some of the glass panes appear to be replacements, the thin mullions between panes suggest that the windows are moderately aged if not original. On the western elevation a cinderblock chimney rises just to the north of the southernmost window. Its height is diminutive enough that it is not visible from the primary façade. On the east elevation of the apse, an entry with a five-panel door is immediately to the left of the window. Stacked cinderblocks provide a stair access to this entry.

The north or back wall of the church has no windows. The rear gable has not been turned into a complete pediment but features cornice returns. The roof over the apse begins just above the bottom of the discontinuous frieze band of the main volume and does not rise much higher. The difference between the apse foundation and the foundation of the main volume is clear from this

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view. Within the gable a few irregular pieces of weatherboard are larger, pointing to minor repairs made over time. On the northern gable upper wall, some of the weatherboards appear to be of chipboard construction.

Church Interior

The interior of the church has likely been remodeled since it was initially built, although the basic layout of two aisles leading to the raised altar area has presumably remained the same since the Victorian-era remodeling period. Variable widths in the wooden floor planks suggest that the flooring may be original. Carpet covers the oak floor in some areas including the raised apse, which is entirely carpeted. The walls are clad with “wall board.” The double aisle and entryway are an evolved design common in Protestant Churches. Overall the interior is separated into three bays articulated by two rows of two simple boxed columns. Each column is capped with a basic stepped embellishment mimicking a capital. Two beams run longitudinally along the ceiling of the main volume, supported by the columns, drawing the eye forward to the raised altar. A segmented arch creates a transition from the main volume to the apse and includes a folk-style keystone. The interior of the apse, including the ceiling, is finished in matchstick woodwork. The main volume, now covered in more recent sheetrock, may have matchstick wall cladding underneath. Just to the west of the apse is a raised rectangular dais for the choir that takes up most of its bay with a piano against the north wall and three pews facing the center of the room. The floor of the dais is finished in wood planks. The cut of the dais floorboards with keys suggests that it was constructed later than the rest of the floor. The side of the dais matches the matchstick interior of the apse though not exactly in kind. The pulpit furniture (chairs and lectern) is believed to be original. The extant wood pews are not original; one of the older church members recalls that they replaced simpler pews. The west side of the main space contains a cinderblock chimney related to the wood burning stove used to heat the space. The current stove dates to c. 1940–1950.

Brush Arbor/Preacher’s Mound c. 1850 (Contributing Site)

Located roughly twenty feet to the East of the Church is the preacher’s mound that has survived and may predate the church in its use. A rebuilt brush arbor has been constructed to the North with six simple wood posts and light covering with both light wood and brush. The mound is a circular raised area rising roughly one foot above ground level. It is marked with a substantial log roughly 3 feet high, cut at an angle to act as a lectern (the log is a reconstruction). It is a critical link to a tradition that pre-dates built churches for the African-American community.

Shed, c. 1980 (Non-Contributing Building)

A one story, one-room frame storage shed is located about fifty feet north of the church. It has light frame construction, probably dating no earlier than the 1960s. It has a shed roof and ply-board walls with no windows. The entrance is a single leaf of ply-board. The rafter tails extend out just under the roof at front and rear. The small building is set on what appear to be railroad ties. The ties lie on low concrete block footers.

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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.)

- 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.
- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1870-1910

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Returned

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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.)

Alexander Hill Baptist Church is a locally significant example of a rural African American church constructed shortly after the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery in the United States. The presence of a preacher's mound suggests the site was used for religious purposes prior to the building's construction and possibly even before emancipation by the enslaved men, women, and children living at Sycamore Island, owned by Alexander Moseley. The church served its congregation into the twenty-first century. Along with Alexander Hill School (no longer standing on the property), from the Reconstruction Era the church was a focal point for the newly freed individuals in the community. Therefore, under Criterion A, the church is significant for its association with the area of Ethnic Heritage: African American. Under Criterion C in the area of Architecture the property is significant as an intact example of vernacular log construction with later Greek Revival design applied to update the building. Character-defining features include the stylistic references in the pedimented gable, cupola, door and window trim, six-over-six sash and wood shutters, as well as interior flooring, trim, and finishes in the apse. The property meets Criteria Consideration D because its significance is derived from its association with Buckingham County's African American community and religious life since its c. 1870 construction to the recent past as well as its architectural character. The property's period of significance, c. 1870-1910, is based on its approximate original construction date through the last significant updates to the building.

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

Historical Background

The origins of Alexander Hill Baptist Church are unique in the history of Buckingham County. Before 1867, a congregation was established by the once-enslaved men and women of Sycamore Island, the plantation gifted to them by their former owner, Alexander Moseley, long-time Editor of the *Richmond Whig*.

In 1858, nearby Sycamore Island plantation was occupied by twenty-one enslaved adults and seven additional young people between the ages of twelve and sixteen. Undoubtedly, there were also numerous, younger children. There, without the presence of a white family to care for, they lived in relative independence, tending horses, sheep, cattle, hogs, crops, and a sawmill. Property on the plantation for their use included furniture, a watch, a clock, two guns, and a set of silver spoons valued at \$80.00. It is entirely possible that they formed their own church at Sycamore Island before their emancipation. (2)

In 1860, Buckingham County-born Alexander Moseley resided in Nelson County, at his farm Fish Pond, while Sycamore Island, where some of his laborers lived and worked, was located across the James River in Buckingham County. A kinsman of Moseley's acted as overseer.

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As the post-Civil War era of Reconstruction began, Moseley assessed his new life and the future of the many men, women, and children who had been his enslaved laborers and servants. On January 1, 1867, Moseley granted a tract of land consisting of 346 acres to nine “men of color,” including Gabriel Palmer, who would become the pastor of Alexander Hill Baptist Church, the first African-American Baptist church in Buckingham County. The others were Emanuel Wayne, Emanuel Moseley, Cornelius Palmer, Winston Palmer, Peter Scott, Jesse Moseley, Sr., John Harris, Sr., and Samuel Braxton. At least one of the grantees, John Harris, Sr., was a free black man prior to Emancipation, employed by Moseley and, in 1860, had lived with him in Nelson County. In the center of the tract, on Emanuel Moseley’s lot, there was a sawmill. At the tip of Emanuel Wayne’s land on Nicholas Cabell’s Ferry Road, there sat a church. It is currently unknown if the surviving Alexander Hill Baptist Church is the one noted on the 1866 survey which was recorded with the land deed. It could be another structure or a grove church. In any case, it is the spot where Alexander Hill Baptist Church stands today. (1) It is notable that Moseley’s first name was remembered rather than his surname. Oddly, there is no hill on the property.

The Alexander Hill community provided homes and livelihoods not only for the nine original grantees, but also for their rapidly expanding families. Together with their wives, children, and extended families, some of whom may have joined them from plantations other than Moseley’s Fish Pond, they were a ready-made community. When the census was enumerated in July of 1870, all of the grantees of Alexander Hill were still living at that place in James River Township, Buckingham County. (3)

The Palmer families included three grantees: Gabriel, Cornelius, and Winston. Atypical of the times, in 1870, these three men could read and write, indicating they were unusually prepared for independence. In 1870, the forty-year-old “Gabe” Palmer was enumerated as a farmer whose real estate was valued at \$114.00. If he was already the pastor of Alexander Hill Baptist Church, the census taker did not note it as his occupation; ten years later, however, Gabriel Palmer’s occupation was given as “preacher.”

During the period while Gabriel Palmer was pastor, it is believed that the congregation at Alexander Hill Baptist Church numbered over 500 members. Over the decades, segments of that congregation formed Jerusalem Baptist Church, Warminster Baptist Church, and other new churches.

The New York Freeman’s Union Commission as well as the Freedmen’s Bureau are reported to have financially supported a school at Alexander Hill. According to tradition, Cornelius Palmer founded Alexander Hill School; the building is no longer extant. Edward Lomax taught there, beginning a long and illustrious career in Buckingham County. In 1870, Edward Lomax and his family lived near the John Harris family at Alexander Hill. Lomax was enumerated as a twenty-one-year-old “mulatto.” By 1886/1887 and perhaps before, Edward and his wife, Josephine, held “First Grade” Certificates and were teaching in a “colored school” at Buckingham Court House. Together, they would go on to become leaders in Buckingham County’s segregated school system, conducting training institutes for African American teachers. (4)

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The ultimate success of the Alexander Hill neighborhood and the longevity of Alexander Hill Baptist Church demonstrates that Moseley exhibited sound judgement when he established “nine men of color” on land they could call their own. He believed in their abilities and, perhaps more importantly, they believed in themselves. The Palmers, the Moseleys, Emanuel Wayne, Peter Scott, John Harris, Sr., and Samuel Braxton took their gift and soared with it, providing a community for their children and their grandchildren, which included Alexander Hill Baptist Church. These founding families were long remembered. In 2007, over 300 people gathered at Alexander Hill Baptist Church to witness a reenactment of the brush arbor service as it would have been performed in 1867. The event was sponsored by the Jamestown Celebration and a slate plaque was placed on the property commemorating the event. (5)

Despite diminishing numbers, Alexander Hill Baptist Church was in continual use until about 2014. To date, written records for the church have not been found. Lacking those details, it is informative to look at the community of Alexander Hill as a reflection of the church’s integral part in the neighborhood and the growth of other churches as its legacy.

Architectural Significance

The landscape and the architecture at this site indicate a typical, but rarely surviving evolution of a very rural, nineteenth-century African American religious property. It is possible that prior to the Civil War, this site was used for religious services by enslaved African Americans in this area of Buckingham County. The preachers mound may predate the church and it could have had a brush arbor structure built in the proximity of the one recently constructed. The church appears to have started as a simple log building. During the several survey visits (in 2014 and 2016), sections of square-cut log were visible under the weatherboards on the eastern wall. The log wall was visible near the foundation and at about 4-5 feet above the foundation. The exposed log appearance of the church may have been temporary in the late 1860s or early 1870s. The current more sophisticated Greek Revival exterior, including the weatherboard, trim, bell cupola and southern apse, appear to date to the 1890s to c. 1910. Other character-defining features include the Greek Revival stylistic references in the pedimented gable, six-over-six sash and wood shutters, as well as interior flooring, trim, and finishes in the apse. The building together with the preachers mound illustrate a cultural, social, and religious tradition that evolved from simple means into a more sophisticated form as African Americans gained their freedom and enjoyed more autonomy in Buckingham County and in Virginia between Reconstruction and the early twentieth century.

ENDNOTES

(1) Federal Population Census, Nelson County, Virginia, 1860; Land survey by Gr. (Grandison) Moseley for Alex. Moseley, Esq., 23 Oct 1866, Buckingham County Deed Book 1, p. 273.

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(2) Records of the Sycamore Island and Fish Pond Plantations, 1856–1858, Robert Alonzo Brock Collection, BR137, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA; Roger G. Ward, *Land Tax Summaries & Implied Deeds 1841–1870, Volume 3* (Athens, GA: Iberian Publishing Company), 197–198. Sycamore Island was adjacent to the expansive farm of elder statesman Charles Yancey. In 1850, Yancey’s plantation was valued at \$55,000. However, a complete accounting of Alexander Moseley’s land holdings in Buckingham County is particularly difficult to trace. In addition to the fact that the original deeds were burned in the 1869 Buckingham County courthouse fire, there were at least three adult Alexander Moseleys living concurrently in Buckingham County: Alexander Moseley, editor; Alexander Moseley, lawyer; and Alexander Trent Moseley. Over the years, their records have been conflated.

(3) Federal Population Census, Buckingham County, Virginia, 1870 & 1880; Martha Louis, “Circuit Court Appoints Trustees for Alexander Hill Baptist Church,” *Buckingham Beacon* (4 Nov – 1 Dec 2016), 10.

(4) Renée Ingram and Charles W. White, Sr., *Buckingham County* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 8–9. According to Ingram and White, the New York Freeman’s Union Commission as well as the Freedmen’s Bureau financially supported the school at Alexander Hill; Federal Population Census, Buckingham County, Virginia, 1870; “The Death of E. S. Lomax,” *The Daily Progress*, 19 January 1917.

(5) Louis, “Circuit Court Appoints Trustees for Alexander Hill Baptist Church,” *Buckingham Beacon*.

Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buckingham County, VA
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books

D'Aiutolo, Leila Eldridge, Warren L. Forsythe, William S. Hubbard, and Mary Carolyn Mitton. *The Descendants of William Moseley 1605/1606–1655 of Norfolk, Va., Book I*. Privately published, 2000.

Ingram, Renée and Charles W. White, Sr. *Buckingham County*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.

Ward, Roger G. Ward. *Land Tax Summaries & Implied Deeds 1841–1870, Volume 3*. Athens, GA: Iberian Publishing Company, 1993.

Yeck, Joanne L. "At a Place Called Buckingham," *Volume Two*. Kettering, OH: Slate River Press, 2015.

Articles

"Death of Alexander Moseley, Esq.," *The Daily Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), 1 September 1881, p. 1.

"The Death of E. S. Lomax," *The Daily Progress* (Charlottesville, VA), 19 January 1917.

Louis, Martha. "Circuit Court Appoints Trustees for Alexander Hill Baptist Church," *Buckingham Beacon* (4 Nov – 1 Dec 2016), 10.

Primary and Unpublished Sources

Alexander Hill deed. Buckingham County Deed Book 1, pp. 272–274.

Alexander Hill land survey by Gr. (Grandison) Moseley for Alex. Moseley, Esq., 23 Oct 1866. Buckingham County Deed Book 1, p. 273.

Alexander Moseley Diary. Alexander Moseley Papers, 1837-1880, Accession 25787, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Ethridge, Harrison Moseley. "Alexander Moseley, Editor of the Richmond Whig." Master's thesis, University of Richmond, 1967.

Federal Population Census. Buckingham County, Virginia, 1870 & 1880.

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Federal Population Census. Nelson County, Virginia, 1860.

Federal Slave Census. Nelson County, Virginia, 1860.

Federal Slave Census. Buckingham County, Virginia, 1860.

Sycamore Island and Fish Pond Plantations records, 1856–1858. Robert Alonzo Brock Collection, BR137, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 014-5054

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre +/-

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: 37.655697 Longitude: -78.613767

2. Latitude: Longitude:

Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buckingham County, VA
County and State

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 historic boundary conforms to the lot lines of tax parcel 47-25 as recorded by Buckingham County, Virginia. The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached Tax Parcel Map

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary coincides with the legal boundary as it has existed since the church was constructed, as well as the property's historic setting and all known historic resources associated with the property throughout its period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Martha Pennington Louis; Joanne Yeck; Architectural Survey/Description: Gwen Peck and Stephanie Pate (University of Virginia-Architecture School)

organization: Trustees of Alexander Hill Church

street & number: P.O. Box 12 (physical address: 2581 Howardsville Road)

city or town: Buckingham state: VA zip code: 23921

e-mail: marthalouis60@gmail.com

telephone: cell phone: (434) 547-2296

date: April 2017

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.

Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buckingham County, VA
County and State

- **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: Alexander Hill Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: Buckingham vicinity

County: Buckingham

State: Virginia

Photographer: Marc Wagner

Date Photographed: 6/3/2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0001

1 of 14. Church, Primary Elevation, view towards north.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0002

2 of 14. Church, Primary Elevation, view towards north-northeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0003

3 of 14. Church, Rear Elevation, view towards southeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0004

4 of 14. Church, Western Elevation, windows.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0005

Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buckingham County, VA
County and State

5 of 14. Church, Eastern Elevation , window detail.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0006

6 of 14. Church, Interior, Apse Door detail

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0007

7 of 14. Church, Foundation, northeast corner.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0008

8 of 14. Shed, view towards northwest.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0009

9 of 14. Preachers Mound and Arbor, view towards northwest

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0010

10 of 14. Preachers Mound, Church and Shed, view towards northwest

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0011

11 of 14. Preachers Mound. View toward northeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0012

12 of 14: Church, Interior, pews and aisle, view towards altar, northeast.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0013

13 of 14: Church, Interior, sanctuary/pulpit, view towards north- northwest.

VA_BuckinghamCounty_AlexanderHillBaptistChurch_0014

14 of 14: Church, Interior, Choir, view towards northwest.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications 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.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Virginia Cultural Resource Information System

LOCATION MAP

Alexander Hill Baptist Church

Buckingham County, VA

DHR No. 014-5054

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Latitude: 37.655697

Longitude: -78.613767



Feet



1:9,028 / 1"=752 Feet

Title:

Date: 5/12/2017

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 to 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.



Historic Boundary

Retained

1
Photo Locations

- List of Resources**
- A - Church
(contributing building)
 - B - Preachers Mount
(contributing site)
 - C - shed (non-contributing building)

SKETCH MAP/ PHOTO KEY
 Alexander Hill Baptist Church
 Buckingham County, VA
 DHR No. 014-5054

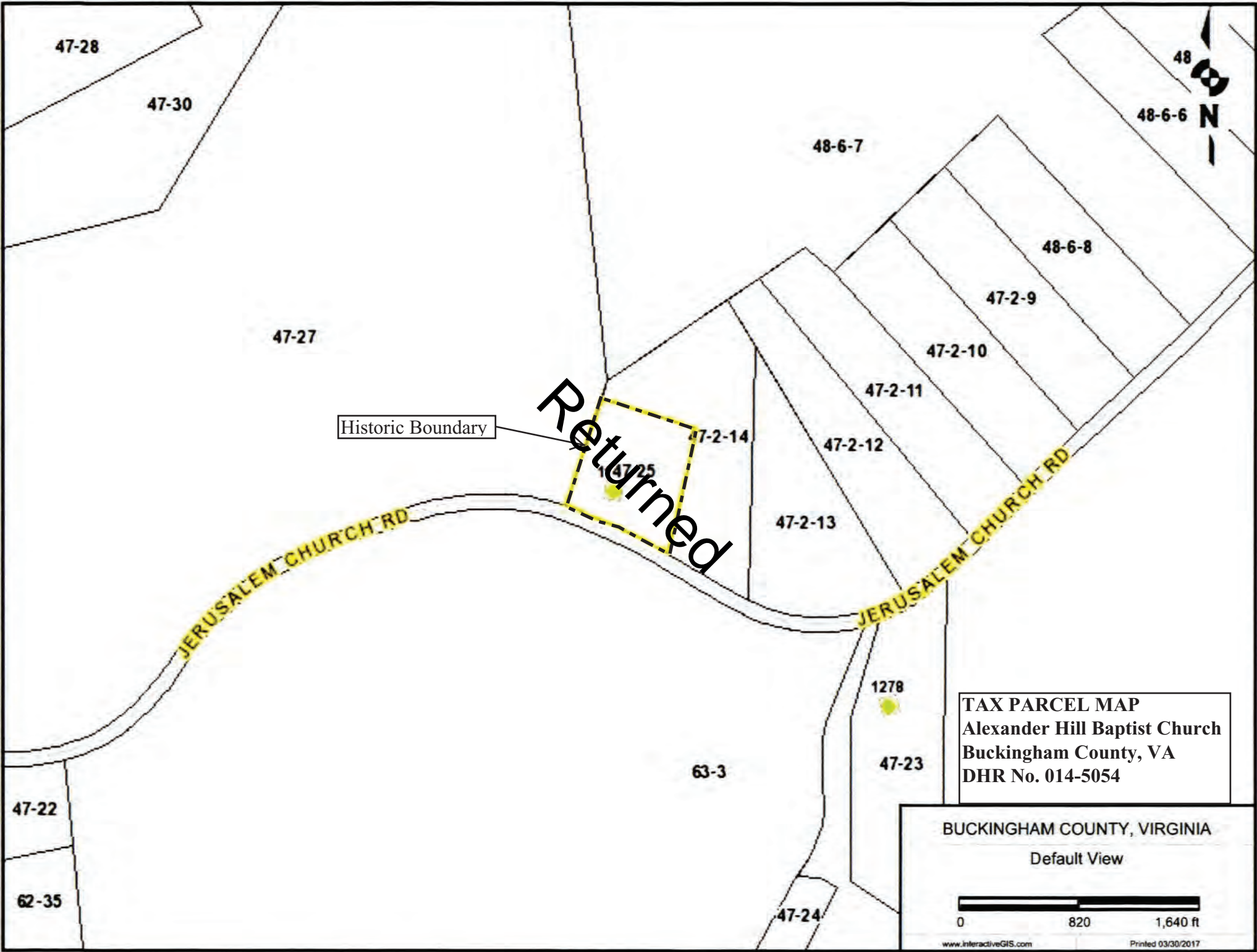
Sources: VDRM 2017, ESRI 2017.
 Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years and the representation depicted is based on the field observation date and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general illustration purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. The map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". Contact DHR for the most recent information as data is updated continually.

1 in = 100 feet



DHR
Department of Historic Resources

Created by: D. Bascone May 08, 2017



47-28

47-30

47-27

48-6-7

48-6-6

48-6-8

47-2-9

47-2-10

47-2-11

47-2-14

47-2-15

47-2-12

47-2-13

1278

47-23

63-3

47-22

62-35

47-24

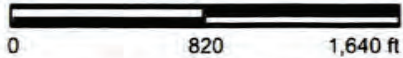
Historic Boundary

Returned

TAX PARCEL MAP
Alexander Hill Baptist Church
Buckingham County, VA
DHR No. 014-5054

BUCKINGHAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Default View



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Alexander Hill Baptist Church

Multiple Name:

State & County: VIRGINIA, Buckingham

Date Received:
7/7/2017

Date of Pending List:
8/2/2017

Date of 16th Day:
8/17/2017

Date of 45th Day:
8/21/2017

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100001495

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Accept

Return

Reject

8/21/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria Nomination is being returned to State for substantive reasons. See attached Return Sheet
for detailed comment.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus

Patrick Andrus

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218

Date

8/21/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the
National Park Service.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Alexander Hill Baptist Church

STATE & COUNTY: VIRGINIA, Buckingham
Reference Number: SG100001495

Reasons for Return:

The nomination for the Alexander Hill Baptist Church is being returned for reconsideration of the Period of Significance defined for the nominated property and for technical issues.

The Church is nominated under National Register Criterion A for its historic association with the local African American community and under National Register Criterion C for its architectural importance. The Period of Significance is defined as ca. 1870-1910 and is "based on its approximate original construction date through the last significant updates to the building" (Section 8, page 9). This Period of Significance encompasses the architectural importance of the building but does not recognize the continuing use of the church by the local community. It is recommended that the period of significance be reconsidered and extended (perhaps to the 50 year cutoff point).

In the Summary Paragraph of the Statement of Significance (Section 8, page 9) it states that "the property meets Criteria Consideration D." This appears to be an error (Criteria Consideration D is for cemeteries) and should be Criteria Consideration A (for religious properties). In the first paragraph of Section 8, page 10 it states that "It is notable that Mosley's first name was remembered rather than his surname." It is not clear who this is referring to as several Mosley's are mentioned in the text. Please clarify.

Patrick Andrus

Patrick Andrus, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
8/21/2017



Andrus, Patrick <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>

Alexander Hill Baptist Church nomination return

1 message

Andrus, Patrick <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>

Tue, Aug 22, 2017 at 8:39 AM

To: "McDonald, Lena (DHR)" <Lena.McDonald@dhr.virginia.gov>

Hello Lena: As we discussed, the nomination for the Alexander Hill Baptist Church in Buckingham County, VA, is being returned for substantive and technical reasons. Attached is the National Register Return Sheet with detailed comments. We will not be physically returning the original submission.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

—
Patrick Andrus, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
(202) 354-2218
patrick_andrus@nps.gov



AlexanderHillReturn.pdf

110K



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Historic Resources

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Molly Joseph Ward
Secretary of Natural Resources

Julie V. Langan
Director

Tel: (804) 367-2323
Fax: (804) 367-2391
www.dhr.virginia.gov

September 29, 2017

Mr. Paul Loether
Chief, National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Programs
National Park Service 2280
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Alexander Hill Baptist Church, Buckingham County, VA, resubmission

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed nomination, referenced above, is being re-submitted for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination was returned on August 21, 2017, for the following substantial and technical reasons: extension of the period of significance to end in 1967 based on the property's significance under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage; correction to the statement that the property meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties (not Criteria Consideration D); and clarification in Section 8, p. 10 that Alexander Moseley was the person remembered. We feel the nomination has been revised in accordance with the requests.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My direct phone line is 804-482-6439.

Sincerely,

Lena Sweeten McDonald
National/State Register Historian

Enclosures

Western Region Office
962 Kime Lane
Salem, VA 24153
Tel: (540) 387-5443
Fax: (540) 387-5446

Northern Region Office
5357 Main Street
PO Box 519
Stephens City, VA 22655
Tel: (540) 868-7029
Fax: (540) 868-7033

Eastern Region Office
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, VA 23221
Tel: (804) 367-2323
Fax: (804) 367-2391