

VLR-3/20/79 NRHP-7/11/79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Seatack Life Saving Station

AND/OR COMMON

U.S. Coast Guard Station (Preferred)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Atlantic Avenue & 24th Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Virginia Beach

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second (G. William Whitehurst)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

(in city)

CODE

810

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBUC PRIVATE BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER: Storage**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Virginia Beach c/o Mayor

STREET & NUMBER

Municipal Center

CITY, TOWN

Virginia Beach

VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia 23456

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Virginia Beach City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Virginia Beach

STATE

Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE

1978

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To be MOVED DATE <u>Spring 1979</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The United States Coast Guard Station is to be relocated on Atlantic Avenue and 24th Street, Virginia Beach, approximately 100 yards from its original site. The 2½-story, gable-roof, wood-frame structure was erected in 1903.

The main (west) elevation is sheathed with shingles and contains the building's principal entrance. The entrance consists of a transom-light doorway within a simple wooden frame. Both the transom and door are presently covered by plywood. The doorway is flanked by windows that have been blocked. A one-story porch supported by posts shelters the entry. A secondary entrance and two large double doors and an overhead door complete the elevation's first story. The second story is marked by a paired dormer and three single-window dormers. The dormers have 6/6 hung-sash with shingled cheeks.

The south elevation contains a one-story porch that extends to the east and west elevations. The porch shelters three windows that have been blocked. The second story contains a 6/6 hung-sash window, flanked by 4/4 hung-sash windows. A 6/6 hung-sash window marks the attic story.

The sea (east) elevation is dominated by a four-story lookout tower. The tower's fourth story is marked by a wooden balustraded gallery. The elevation's first story contains four large double doors that originally served rescue boats. Three dormer windows break the roof line above the double doors. A one-story porch extending from the south completes the elevation. The north elevation's first story is composed of four windows that have been blocked. The second story consists of two 6/6 hung-sash windows with a 6/6 hung-sash window found on the attic story.

The plan of the station was altered to its present form in 1933. The first floor contains the building's service rooms. These include a large boat room, coal room, boiler room, office, and crew assembly room. A garage was added as part of the 1933 alteration. The second floor contains the crew's dormitory and an officer's suite, added in 1933. The lookout tower contains a metal stair that runs to the gallery. The first floor is simply finished and set on a concrete floor, also added in 1933.

(Note: The above elevations are as originally built. The structure is to be turned 90° when relocated due to the size of the lot).

RCC

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Coast Guard Station is presently bounded on the west by Atlantic Avenue, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the south by 24th Street, and on the north by the Holiday Inn.

When moved the building will be relocated on the ocean front in the right of way of 24th Street. The boundaries will be as follows: on the west by Atlantic Avenue, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the north by the Holiday Inn, and on the south by land owned by Oliver Enterprises, Inc. The new lot will measure 80' x 150'.

The Coast Guard Station has occupied its present site since it was built in 1903. The new site parallels the old site and only changes the southern boundary. The old site will be converted into a parking lot for the Holiday Inn. The building will be turned 90° to correspond with the size of the lot, 80' x 150'.

RCC

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
___PREHISTORIC	___ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	___COMMUNITY PLANNING	___LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	___RELIGION
___1400-1499	___ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	___CONSERVATION	___LAW	___SCIENCE
___1500-1599	___AGRICULTURE	___ECONOMICS	___LITERATURE	___SCULPTURE
___1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	___EDUCATION	___MILITARY	___SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
___1700-1799	___ART	___ENGINEERING	___MUSIC	___THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	___COMMERCE	___EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	___PHILOSOPHY	___TRANSPORTATION
___1900-	___COMMUNICATIONS	___INDUSTRY	___POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Maritime
		___INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1903, 1933 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built for the United States Lifesaving Service, a predecessor of the Coast Guard, the station at Virginia Beach is one of the few such facilities remaining on the Atlantic Coast. Erected in 1903 on Atlantic Avenue and 24th Street, the station was constructed to rescue victims of shipwrecks and other maritime disasters. Replaced by larger and more technologically advanced facilities, the station was abandoned by the United States Coast Guard in 1969 and is now the property of the City of Virginia Beach.

The earliest mention of the property's being used for lifesaving occurs in 1878. In the Princess Anne County Deed Book of that year, C. B. Cason of North Carolina and W. E. Wood of Norfolk County deeded to John Sherman, Secretary of the Treasury, "the right to use and occupy all that certain lot of land situate in the neighborhood of Seatack and known as the Rainey farm,"¹ and containing one acre of land. The provision was made for "the right to use and occupy sites for lifesaving or life boat stations, houses of refuge, and sites for pier head beacons..."² It is likely that a lifesaving station was built on the site at this time and became known as the "Seatack Station". The station was named for the site where the British launched a sea attack during the War of 1812. Built by the Treasury Department, it was one of several such stations located along the coast from Cape Henry to North Carolina.

The existing 1903 building was similar to other lifesaving stations built at the turn of the century. The first floor was designed to accommodate service facilities that included boat storage and office space. The second floor provided dormitory quarters for station operators, with provisions made for rescued persons. The station was also provided with a lookout and signal tower. According to early inventories, such stations were furnished with at least two lifeboats, boat carriages, life preservers, beach cart, rockets, and signal flags. Beach stations had a horse to draw the boat carriages along the beach. The increased size of most seagoing vessels and the spread of power propulsion so changed the character of marine casualties that larger and faster rescue operations were needed. By 1917 the Life Saving Service and the Rescue Cutter Service were merged to form the United States Coast Guard. In 1933 one of the worst storms ever to hit the Virginia coast did substantial damage to several of the lifesaving stations in the area. However, the Virginia Beach station survived relatively unscathed with the local press reporting that only "...the planks were knocked out of the run way and the yard filled with sand." (Ledger Star, August 26, 1933.) It was following this storm that renovation of the building took place with the tower being rebuilt on the east elevation. The Virginia Beach station was thus re-equipped for another generation of service.

In 1969 the building was abandoned by the Coast Guard. After lengthy litigation, it became the property of the City of Virginia Beach. Plans are presently under way to move the Coast Guard Station to the right-of-way of 24th Street on the ocean front. The building will be used as a public facility as the new location for the Virginia Beach Visitor and Information Center. The interior plan of the building will be modified to accommodate the new facilities.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

U.S. Coast Guard Station, Virginia Beach, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

8. SIGNIFICANCE

¹Princess Anne County Deed Book 54, p. 192.

²Ibid., p. 191.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Capron, Walter C. The U.S. Coast Guard, New York, 1965.
 Gurney, Gene. The U.S. Coast Guard, A Pictorial History. New York, 1975.
 Princess Anne County Deed Book 54, pp. 191-193, 417.
Land Tax Book - Seaboard District. 1876-1896.
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives.
Ledger Star, August 26, 1933.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

QUADRANGLE NAME Virginia Beach, Va.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

A 1,8 4,1,2,9,6,0 4,0,7,8,8,0,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
 Situated on a rectangular city lot 100' E of Atlantic Avenue and 300' NE of 24th Street, measuring less than half an acre.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

March 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

221 Governor Street

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Richmond

Virginia 23219

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Tucker Hill, Executive Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE MAR 20 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF MARINE RESOURCES
JAMES L. CALVERT

76° 00' 41.0000" E 5757 1 NE (CAPE HENRY) 412 NORFOLK I.U.S. 4601 19 MI. LYNNHAVEN SHORES 7 MI. 414 57'30" 415 416

