

**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.

**VLR Listed: 12/13/2018**  
**NRHP Listed: 4/2/2019**

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks

Other names/site number: DHR ID 204-5097

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: 410-414 Spring Street

City or town: Culpeper State: VA County: Culpeper

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  X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 X statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b><br/><u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u><br/>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p> | <p><b>Date</b></p> |
|--|--------------------|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> |   |
| <p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>  | <p><b>Date</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Title :</b></p>  | <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p> |

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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:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**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>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | buildings  |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | sites      |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | objects    |
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/Public Works

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne  
MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; GLASS; CONCRETE; METAL

### 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.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is located on the west end of Spring Street, southwest of downtown of the Town of Culpeper, Culpeper County, Virginia. Constructed in 1933 and 1946, with additions in 1949 and 1966, the complex is situated on a sloped parcel. The electric plant and waterworks were constructed close to nearby Mountain Run, which provided water for the buildings' electric generating and water filtration systems. Designed by Wiley & Wilson, a locally prominent architectural and engineering firm in Lynchburg, Virginia, these industrial utility buildings were designed with both a subtle Art Deco and streamlined Moderne style influence. Each of these styles were popular for both utilitarian architecture and municipal construction during the 1930s and 1940s. Key features of the buildings include their rectilinear massing, simplicity of detail, and clean lines. The balance between the verticality of the buildings and their horizontal elements enrich the compositions and give the buildings a dynamic quality that express their industrial functions. Overall, the property has a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association.

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## Narrative Description

### Site Description

These two former municipal utility buildings are located at the west end of Spring Street near and to the southwest of downtown Culpeper, Virginia. The parcel incorporates the two buildings and a small amount of land surrounding them. The waterworks building (on the east end of the parcel) is fronted by an asphalt driveway and small parking area to the south. Its west and east sides slope up to the north and are covered in grass. The elevated grassy slope to the north of the building is located on a separate parcel; an extension of Spring Street runs along the east side of this parcel. The electric plant is fronted by an asphalt drive to the south and a gravel parking lot to the west. The asphalt driveway continues along the east side of the building and to the rear and is bounded by a curved concrete retaining wall which holds back the grassy slope to the north and east. There is one mature tree located on the south end of the parcel between the two buildings.

### Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant is a masonry building situated at the west end of Spring Street near downtown Culpeper, Virginia. Demonstrating Moderne and Art Deco stylistic influences, the building was constructed in 1934 to house the electric generation and distribution machinery to provide power to the town of Culpeper. The building is currently vacant, having been replaced in recent years with a new facility at a different location. Constructed of load bearing brick masonry walls with structural steel components, the building is fronted by an asphalt drive on the south side and a gravel parking area to the west. A sloping grassy field on a separate parcel overlooks the building to the north and east. The steep slope to the east of the building is held in place by a curved poured concrete retaining wall.

The exterior of the former power plant is composed of red brick that is accented by large window openings. Windowsills are composed of cast concrete, and the window openings are topped with headers formed by brick soldier courses. The mass of the building consists of a tall center section with single-story wings flanking the central mass to the east and west. The building is capped by a series of flat roofs which are edged by brick parapet walls. The parapet walls are topped by shaped metal cap flashing. Scuppers extend through the building's brick parapet walls to carry rain runoff to the series of rectangular metal downspouts.

The building's south façade features a large vehicular entrance, as well as a smaller pedestrian door. The south facade is seven bays wide and is asymmetrical due to the uneven lengths of the flanking east and west wings. The two-story central portion of the south elevation is accented by a pattern of projecting and receding planes, which continue along the east and west wings of the building. The vehicle door opening extends nearly the entire height of the façade to facilitate the movement of machinery and generators in and out of the building. A metal overhead door fills

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the opening. The head of the central vehicle door is shaped by a stepped steel lintel that mirrors the stepped shape of the overall building. Tall, narrow windows flank the vehicle door, further accenting the scale and vertical emphasis of the central portion of the building.

The building's east elevation faces the east retaining wall and the adjacent Culpeper Waterworks building. Similar to the south elevation, the east elevation is characterized by a certain degree of formality and design, in contrast with the predominantly utilitarian nature of the building's north and west elevations. The east elevation is distinguished through the use of advancing and receding planes, similar to the treatment of the south elevation. Recessed panels, infilled with bricks in a stacked header pattern, form additional accents along the east elevation of the east wing. Evidence of previous openings, both window openings and ventilation openings, that have been closed with brick, remain visible at the first story of the east elevation. The alteration of openings over the years illustrates the building's long lifetime of use and the evolution of electricity generating technology over the years. A range of consistently-sized window openings is present at the east elevation of the building's central portion.

The north and west elevations of the building are simply finished, although the west elevation of the taller central portion is accented by the continuation of advancing and receding planes from the south side. The single-story west wing presents a U-shaped footprint to the west and holds two pedestrian doors. Window openings are present at the first- and second-story levels of the west elevation. In 1949, the Town constructed an addition on the north elevation of the building in order to expand the capacity of the facility. The north elevation has a large vehicle bay opening near the western end. Similar to the treatment of the building's windows, the vehicle bay is topped by a header defined by a simple soldier course of brick. The central portion of the north elevation holds three window openings. The central and eastern bays have tall narrow windows running the height of the building, while the western window is a shorter unit and terminates at a concrete sill above the large vehicle bay opening.

The interior of the Power Plant is primarily composed of the expansive engine room at the center of the building, which was historically filled with large-scale equipment. The space has no intervening columns or posts and is characterized by a concrete slab floor and painted brick walls. The roof's structural framing is exposed, and the supporting steel beams and steel roof deck that comprise the roof structure are painted.

A series of offices, storerooms, and a restroom are located to the west of the central engine room. The interior of the single-story east wing is largely composed of a single unbroken space, though it too would have housed equipment for most of the building's history. A small room is partitioned at the southern end of the space. Similar to the central engine room, the subsidiary spaces are finished with poured concrete floors, painted brick walls, and the exposed roof structure. The restroom entrance has an extant single-leaf, two-panel wood door. The fields of the panels are composed of diagonal tongue and groove boards.

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The concrete slab floor of the engine room retains deep channels and pits that allowed workers to service the massive generators and turbines that originally filled the space. Similar channels are present in the east rooms. The interior walls of the building are generally composed of exposed brick that has been painted. The north office at the western side is defined by a concrete block wall, which is unpainted. The building's bridge crane remains in place in the tall central portion of the building. The crane, operated from below through the use of a series of chains and pulleys, allowed the movement of heavy equipment and machinery along the engine room floor.

### **The Culpeper Waterworks Building**

The Culpeper Waterworks is a masonry building situated at the west end of Spring Street near downtown Culpeper, Virginia. Displaying attributes of the Moderne and Art Deco styles, the building was constructed in 1946 to serve as the municipal water treatment and filtration facility for the town of Culpeper; it is currently vacant. Constructed of reinforced concrete, brick masonry, and concrete block with cast concrete accents, the building is fronted by an asphalt driveway and small parking area on the south side. The west and east sides are covered in grass and slope up to a larger grassy elevation on a separate parcel to the north of the building. The building is built into the steeply-sloping hillside, presenting a three-story elevation on the south side and a two-story mass on the north side.

The primary entrance is centered on the south façade of the building and is sheltered under a slightly cantilevered concrete awning. The shallow concrete awning features curved corners and scoured horizontal bands. The double entry doors are narrowly inset into the ground level of the building, which is differentiated from the upper stories through the use of concrete rather than brick. In addition to differentiating the levels on the exterior through the use of alternative materials, the horizontal scouring in the concrete along the lower level breaks the verticality of the upper stories created by tall recessed window planes. The south elevation is three bays in width, with windows aligned in recessed bays across the elevation. The brick courses in the recessed bays between the first- and second-story windows are set in stacked courses. The building's large windows feature metal frame sash units. The center portions of the window sash are operable for ventilation. The windows are generally consistently-sized and extend around all four elevations of the building. A pair of secondary entrances are located at the second-story level of the north elevation; although providing exterior access from the second story, these doors are positioned at-grade due to the building's placement at the edge of the hill.

In 1966, the Town constructed an addition to the waterworks building along its west elevation. Although the design follows the Moderne and Art Deco styled original building and uses similar materials, the façade is set back from the original building and does not continue the scoured concrete base on the first story's exterior. The addition is three bays wide and has a central door and recessed window panels symmetrically spaced across the south façade. The west elevation is built into the hill and is two bays wide. The southernmost bay continues the recessed window panels, however; the northernmost bay has one window on the second story flush with the exterior wall.

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The interior of the Waterworks is characterized by a variety of large open rooms and small offices, workspaces, and a restroom. The primary entrance doors on the south elevation provide access to the first-floor hall. Two small offices are located to the east of the hall, and the building's elevator and stair are positioned to the west. The majority of the ground floor consists of two large, undivided rooms, which historically housed large equipment and water pipes. The pipe gallery occupies the east room in the original portion of the building. The similar large open room in the later west addition functioned as an additional pipe gallery. A series of segmental concrete arches provides visual separation between the first floor hall and the eastern pipe gallery. The flooring material at the building's ground-floor level is composed of poured concrete.

The plan of the second floor of the Waterworks consists of large open rooms in the original portion of the building and in the west addition, which also historically contained substantial equipment supporting the water supply function of the building. A corridor and workroom are positioned at the southern portion of the original building, with an operating gallery and filter tanks to the north. A second operating gallery and two filter tanks are similarly placed in the west addition. Catwalks positioned between the filter tanks provide access to the two exterior doors on the north elevation. A small restroom is situated between the elevator and the laboratory in the original portion of the building. The second level of the building is floored with square terra cotta tiles, and the wall finishes consist of painted brick and painted concrete block. The third floor of the building occupies the third level of the original portion of the Waterworks; the west addition is limited to two stories in height. The third floor holds a series of rooms of varying sizes. Generally used for storage, the original plan of the third floor has been altered through the installation of several concrete block walls. The finishes at the third-floor level consist of concrete floors, painted brick walls, and painted concrete block walls.

The Culpeper Waterworks building is in good overall condition. The windows have been boarded over on the exterior for security. Several of the window sash compositions are damaged, however, exhibiting broken glass panes and rusted steel muntins. The majority of the mechanical and electrical components have been removed, and a roof leak is present near the northwest corner of the third floor. The painted finishes on the interior walls and ceilings is peeling and flaking. Despite this evidence of deferred maintenance, the building appears sound with no evidence of structural deterioration or movement.

### **Integrity Analysis**

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks property retains a high degree of architectural integrity. Located at the dead-end of Spring Street in the town of Culpeper, the property abuts an historic residential neighborhood. Both of the buildings are at their original locations. The property's historic setting has been somewhat altered by removal of various secondary resources such as a garage/shop, a storage shed, and fuel storage tanks. The locations and functions of these are recorded on historic Sanborn maps. Although necessary to the



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facility's operation, the loss of the secondary resources does not completely compromise the property's integrity of setting, as the two primary resources are extant and largely unaltered, and the open space that historically surrounded the buildings is intact. The Moderne/Art Deco styled buildings retain integrity of design with extant architectural elements characteristic of the period and association with New Deal architecture. While there has been loss of some historic materials including original window sash and glass panes in some areas, overall the building retains its historic building materials. A vast majority of the original machinery has been removed from the buildings; however, the buildings retain the design and workmanship that demonstrates their association with municipal utility production. The site's integrity of location, setting, design, materials and workmanship combine to evoke the historic feeling of the property as a utilitarian and/or industrial complex. Directly linked to Culpeper's early twentieth century infrastructure development and the New Deal, and to significant architectural trends of the period, the property also has integrity of association.

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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.)

INDUSTRY

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1933-1966

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1933

1946

1949

1966

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Wiley & Wilson (Architect/Engineer)

Lucas Construction Company (Builder)

\_\_\_\_\_

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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.)

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government as Virginia's first municipal electric facility funded with federal Public Works Administration financing. The facility is also significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with important trends in municipal electric generation and distribution, as well as drinking water treatment, across rural Virginia during the early to mid-twentieth century. The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent example of an early to mid-twentieth century Moderne style municipal complex with Art Deco influences. The utility complex retains high levels of architectural and historic integrity from its period of significance, which ranges from the construction of the Electric Plant in 1933 to the completion of the final addition to the Waterworks building in 1966.

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

## Historical Overview

### Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant

The Culpeper Light and Ice Company was the first electric generating facility in the town of Culpeper. Established by Dr. Orville Nalle and George Major in 1903, the private facility was located near the town's current facility. During the early twentieth century, electric power was also generated from other sources, including the dam and turbine located at Monumental Mills, which began producing power in 1923. The Virginia Public Service Company purchased the Culpeper Light and Ice Company and continued generating power for the town. This company eventually became the Virginia Electric and Power Company, or VEPCO.<sup>1</sup>

As the town grew and the needs for reliable electric power increased, residents of Culpeper petitioned their local representatives to call for a public vote on the construction of a town-owned and -operated power plant.<sup>2</sup> The Culpeper Town Council approved the introduction of a referendum or special election in 1933 to establish a municipal power plant and accompanying distribution system.<sup>3</sup> The referendum was approved by a "strong majority" of town residents, allowing the Town to sell bonds to cover the costs of construction. With this resounding approval, the residents made the construction of a municipal electric plant mandatory.<sup>4</sup> This action was a significant step for the improvement of Culpeper's electric utilities, and was a

<sup>1</sup> Donnie Johnston, Donnie Johnston's Culpeper, 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Petition, Town of Culpeper, 26 April 1925

<sup>3</sup> Council Minutes, Report of the Light and Power Committee, Town of Culpeper, March 14, 1933

<sup>4</sup> "Seek Loan for Electric Plant," *Virginia Star*, 7 September 1933.

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grassroots effort to take local responsibility for public utilities rather than relying on private efforts.

Following the results of the special election, the Town sought alternative sources of funding for the construction of its municipal electric plant. In July 1933, the Town applied for a loan and grant from the Federal government to construct the municipal power plant.<sup>5</sup> Keeping the promises of his 1932 presidential campaign, Franklin D. Roosevelt made rural electrification a key component of his administration's New Deal program through the creation of the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA). While the REA supported efforts to bring electricity to the 90 percent of Americans without access to electric utilities in the early 1930s, the PWA sought to improve the nation's infrastructure and public utilities while boosting the national economy at the same time.<sup>6</sup> The PWA acknowledged "since the earliest times public works had been used in all countries to take up the slack in unemployment."<sup>7</sup> The Town of Culpeper's contract with PWA confirmed the Roosevelt administration's desire to provide unemployment relief. The PWA's "Labor Preference" provisions gave priority to residents of Culpeper.<sup>8</sup> When the legality of the Town's action to apply for these federal funds was questioned by a small cohort of town residents and the Virginia Public Service Co., Town officials stressed that the project and the PWA support would help relieve local economic and unemployment conditions.<sup>9</sup>

On December 20, 1933, the Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant became the first of its kind among PWA-funded projects.<sup>10</sup> The agreement between the Town of Culpeper and the PWA provided a maximum of \$160,000 for the construction of the plant, 30 percent of which would be in the form of a grant.<sup>11</sup> The overall cost of the building project ultimately totaled \$158,430, which included expenses and equipment related to the electrical distribution system. A majority of the project budget funded the purchase of mechanical and electric equipment including three De La Vergne diesel engines, which had a "combined horsepower of 1,040," and a generating capacity of 700KW.<sup>12</sup> This significant investment in public funds soon proved to be both an economical

<sup>5</sup> Town Council Minutes, Application for Loan From Federal Administration of Public Works, Town of Culpeper, 7 July 1933

<sup>6</sup> Harold D. Wallace Jr., "Power from the People: Rural Electrification Brought More than Lights," *O Say Can You See?: Stories from the National Museum of American History*, 2 Feb 2016, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/blog/rural-electrification> (accessed 16 Aug 2018); Public Works Administration, Division of Information, *America Builds: The Record of PWA*, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1939, 4-7.

<sup>7</sup> PWA, *America Builds*, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Town Council Minutes, Loan Agreement between the Town of Culpeper and the United States of America, Town of Culpeper, 20 December 1933

<sup>9</sup> "Seek Loan for Electric Plant," *Virginia Star*, 7 Sept. 1933; "Legality of Act, Town Issuing Bonds Without Vote of Tax Payers, Argued Before Judge on Monday," *Virginia Star*, 21 Dec. 1933.

<sup>10</sup> PWA, *America Builds*, 121; "Local Electric Plan is First," Culpeper Exponent, 13 September 1934

<sup>11</sup> Town Council Minutes, Loan Agreement between the Town of Culpeper and the United States of America, Town of Culpeper, 20 December 1933

<sup>12</sup> Mike Stover, *Memorandum, Generation System Improvements*, 2017; "Light Service is being Installed," *Virginia Star*, 23 August 1943.

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and efficient source of electric service that reduced consumer rates by approximately 10 percent while also profiting the Town “more than \$24,000 over and above the operating and investment retirement expense” within the first five years of operation.<sup>13</sup> The success of Culpeper’s electric plant prompted other municipalities and utility companies in Virginia to evaluate their rate structures and improve their services.<sup>14</sup>

The Town commissioned local engineering firm Wiley & Wilson to design the facility, while Lucas Construction Company of Fredericksburg, Virginia served as the prime building contractor. Several subcontractors worked under Lucas Construction Company, including Wolfe & Mann Company of Baltimore, Maryland, for the construction and installation of the power plant’s switchboard; Morris Hunter of Richmond, Virginia, for the electrical wiring; R. H. Lowe, Inc. of Roanoke, Virginia, for the installation of auxiliary equipment and machinery; and John Fension of Richmond, Virginia, for the installation of pumps.<sup>15</sup>

The site of the existing Culpeper Waterworks at the west end of Spring Street along Mount Run was chosen for the construction of the new electric plant. A diesel-powered water pumping station existed on the property as part of the waterworks facility, and the new electric generation plant was constructed to encompass the existing pumping station. Personnel who maintained and operated the pumping station equipment could then operate the electric generating equipment simultaneously. This relationship continued until the pumping station equipment was removed in the early 1950s.<sup>16</sup> The power plant complex included concrete block garages with brick veneer to the west of the main building, noted as “Auto” and “Storage” on the 1958 Sanborn Fire Insurance map. These garages were used to house the maintenance equipment and maintenance vehicles. A series of diesel fuel oil tanks were located to the north of garages. The Sanborn Map notes that the power plant building featured a roof that was composed of a steel deck on steel beams and utilized a concrete floor.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the three De La Vergne diesel engine generator units that occupied the building, the interior was configured to allow space for two additional units that could be added as the town required additional power. The first additional engine was installed in 1941 at a cost of \$55,000. The facility was also equipped with a hand-operated bridge crane that facilitated the relocation of generators and the movement of heavy equipment. Although water was originally pulled from the adjacent Mountain Run to cool the equipment, it was later found unsuitable for engine jacket cooling. As a result, a closed cooling water system was installed.<sup>18</sup> The building also housed a Fairbanks-Morse Diesel engine, which was originally used for the town’s water pumping needs and had a capacity of 700 gallons per minute.<sup>19</sup> The Fairbanks-Morse diesel

<sup>13</sup> PWA, *America Builds*, 121.

<sup>14</sup> William Martin Johnson, *A History of Wiley & Wilson: A Professional Organization since 1901*, 1986, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Town Council Minutes, “Light and Power Bids Accepted,” 3 August 1933

<sup>16</sup> Mike Stover, *Memorandum*.

<sup>17</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1931 (Revised 1958).

<sup>18</sup> Mike Stover, *Memorandum*.

<sup>19</sup> “Light Service is being Installed,” *Virginia Star*, 23 August 1943; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1931 (Revised 1958).

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engine, first released in 1924, was one of the earliest sources of reliable power generation for rural parts of the country.<sup>20</sup>

The August 14, 1947, edition of the *Culpeper Exponent* described an accident at the plant, where an explosion involving an oil heater occurred, sending the heater head through the roof of the building. The article noted that glass was blown out of some of the windows, and that the steel frames of the affected windows were bent by the force of the explosion.<sup>21</sup> Substantial additions were made to the building and its generating capacity in 1949. The diesel pumping station for the town's water system was still in place at this point, and consequently there was not space available to accommodate additional generators without adding to the building. An extension was added to the building for two new units, as well as room for offices and associated functions. Natural gas supply lines were included in the 1949 addition to serve a new dual-fuel type generator. The water system's diesel pumping unit was removed prior to 1952 and this space was made available for additions and upgrades to the building's generating systems.

In the 1960s, two new buildings were constructed to the north of the main facility. The buildings housed oil lubricating equipment and also accommodated general storage needs. The original diesel engine generators were retired and replaced with Nordberg Supairthermal Engines with a capacity of 1220 KW and 1500KW in 1960 and 1965. The Nordberg engines increased the power generating capacity of the plant, likely responding to increased needs of the utility's residential, commercial, and other customers. The pattern of upgrading and replacing equipment continued through the life of the power plant facility.<sup>22</sup>

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant remained in operation until it was replaced with a new facility on a different site in 2006. The new facility was located on the Chandler Street complex, where the Chandler Street substation was already located. The estimated cost of the new generating facility was \$1,400,000.00. In addition to providing substantial upgrades to the town's electric generating capacity, the new facility addressed complaints related to noise and pollution of the Spring Street plant.<sup>23</sup>

### **Culpeper Waterworks**

Residents of the town of Culpeper historically acquired water from private wells located on the residential lots and adjacent to certain business establishments, as was typical in rural Virginian communities before the widespread provision of running water. A municipal water supply has been provided within the limits of the Town of Culpeper since 1895. The civil engineer in charge of construction of the first waterworks pumping station was General William Nalle, a graduate of Virginia Military Institute. Nalle was later appointed Adjutant General of Virginia. The pumping

<sup>20</sup> ASME, "Fairbanks-Morse Y-VA Engine Diesel," ASME Landmarks Program, <https://www.asme.org/about-asme/who-we-are/engineering-history/landmarks/208-fairbanks-morse-y-va-engine-diesel> (accessed 27 July 2018)

<sup>21</sup> "Oil Heater Explodes at Power Plant Sunday," *Culpeper Exponent*, Thursday, August 14, 1947, p 3.

<sup>22</sup> Mike Stover, *Memorandum*.

<sup>23</sup> Mike Stover, *Memorandum*.

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station was located on the same parcel where the Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant was later constructed, at the west end of Spring Street. A standpipe was constructed as part of the early facility, and water supply mains were installed throughout the town. The early pumping station, however, did not provide a filtration system.<sup>24</sup>

The current Spring Street building was constructed on the site of the city's first filtration plant and is located on the banks of Mountain Run. The initial filtration plant was built in 1925 and was demolished in 1945 to make way for the construction of the current facility. The Culpeper Waterworks was constructed in 1946, with an addition constructed on the west elevation in 1966. Engineering firm Wiley & Wilson designed the building and the layout of its processing machinery. The contractor was F.L. Showalter, Inc., of Lynchburg, and the filters in the processing facility were provided by the Roberts Filter Manufacturing Company of Darby, Pennsylvania.

The Culpeper Waterworks facility commenced operation on September 1, 1946. The plant operated twelve hours per day and had a capacity of one million gallons of treated water per day, or 350 gallons per minute, when it first began operation. The *Culpeper Exponent* noted in 1947 that "Two low-head pumps take the liquid from the raw water well into the mixing basin, where it flows by gravity through the coagulation basin, into the filters and down into the clear water well. There it is chlorinated and pumped out with the two high-head pumps through the mains of the town."<sup>25</sup> A laboratory for the purpose of testing the water was located in the building on the second floor and technicians tested the product four times per day. Samples were sent to the State Health Department in Richmond twice a month along with monthly written reports. Culpeper's Town Manager, R. W. Huffman, boasted that the filtration plant was "one of the most modern in Virginia."<sup>26</sup>

The facility was designed to utilize a rapid filtration system, which is a physical process to purify drinking water through coagulation, filtration, and chlorination. The process required power-operated pumps which pulled raw water from nearby Lake Pelham and Mountain Run Lake into a mixing basin. Gravity then flowed the water through the coagulation basin where dirt and other particles in the water were removed. The water then moved through the sand filters and was stored in a clear water well where it was chlorinated before being pumped out through the town water system. The filtration plan used a Wheeler filter, and tested the water daily to ensure public health.<sup>27</sup>

According to architectural plans, the waterworks was expanded and upgraded in 1966 to include a supplementary pipe gallery, which moved water through the facility, an operating floor, and

<sup>24</sup> "Town of Culpeper Bicentennial Celebration" brochure, *Culpeper Star-Exponent*, 1976.

<sup>25</sup> "Culpeper's Water Filtration Plant One of the Best in State," *Culpeper Exponent*, Thursday, August 7, 1947, p 1.

<sup>26</sup> "Culpeper's Water Filtration Plant One of the Best in State," *Culpeper Exponent*, Thursday, August 7, 1947, p 1.

<sup>27</sup> "Culpeper's Water Filtration Plant One of the Best in State," *Culpeper Exponent*, Thursday, August 7, 1947, p 1; United States Environmental Protection Agency, "The History of Drinking Water Treatment," from *25 Years of the Safe Drinking Water Act: History and Trends*, February 2000; *Culpeper County Comprehensive Plan*, 1999.



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additional filtration tanks in a large two-story addition to the west of the original three-story building. The 1958 Sanborn Fire Insurance map indicates that the waterworks building utilized fireproof construction techniques including concrete posts, beams, floors, and roof, as well as brick walls. The coagulating basin was located to the north of the building. The town council authorized the construction of a new water treatment facility on a different site in March 1994.

## Criterion A

### *Politics/Government*

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government as the first municipal electric facility funded with federal Public Works Administration (PWA) financing. During the Great Depression, private construction activity nearly came to a halt, leaving localities without proper public works and laborers across the country without adequate work. While the Federal Employment Stabilization Board was created in 1931 under President Herbert Hoover, it lacked financial authorization to achieve its goals. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's PWA, established on June 16, 1933, was a financially-backed New Deal program that put Americans back to work while also improving the nation's infrastructure.<sup>28</sup> Executive Order 6252, Issued by President Roosevelt, delegated authority to the PWA to "construct, finance, aid in the construction or financing of any public works project."<sup>29</sup> The PWA quickly began working on federal projects across the country including government buildings such as post offices, dams and other flood control measures, canals, natural resource conservation, and national defense projects. The PWA was also responsible for billions of dollars in aid to state and local governments for various public works projects.

In order to evaluate local applications, the PWA developed a criterion for selection of appropriate projects. The areas of consideration included: "(1) the social desirability of the project and its relation to coordinated planning; (2) the economic desirability; that is, its relation to unemployment and revival of Industry; (3) the soundness of the project from engineering and technical standpoints; (4) the financial ability of the applicant to complete the work and 'reasonably secure' any loans by the United States; and (5) the legal collectability of the securities to be purchased or the enforceability of any lease entered into."<sup>30</sup> Projects selected for PWA funding were then offered a combination of grant-in-aid funds not to exceed 30 percent of

<sup>28</sup> Harold D. Wallace Jr., "Power from the People: Rural Electrification Brought More than Lights," *O Say Can You See?: Stories from the National Museum of American History*, 2 Feb 2016, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/blog/rural-electrification> (accessed 16 Aug 2018); Public Works Administration, Division of Information, *America Builds: The Record of PWA*, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1939, 4-7.

<sup>29</sup> "Executive Order 6252 on the Public Works Administration," *Franklin D. Roosevelt, XXXII President of the United States: 1933-1945*, on The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14505> (accessed 24 Aug. 2018).

<sup>30</sup>PWA, *America Builds*, 36.

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the total project cost and loans from the Federal government. The PWA also carefully considered the value and enforceability of the bonds it issued as well as the “reasonable assurance that they could be repaid with interest.”<sup>31</sup> Communities across the country competed for the PWA’s funds under these criteria. From 1933 to 1939, approximately 750 applications were submitted to the PWA for electric distribution systems alone, while only 80 were ultimately funded.<sup>32</sup> The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant was one of only two electric plants in Virginia that received PWA allotments. Although the electric plant completed in Danville in 1939 was a much larger and more expensive facility, Culpeper’s municipal plant set state and national precedent as the first PWA-funded plant of its kind.<sup>33</sup>

Although communities across the country desperately sought financial aid from the PWA, existing laws and lack of a precedent for such fiscal partnerships between local governments and the federal government created barriers for many municipalities. The PWA sent lawyers to communities and states to help codify new laws to expedite the process. In Virginia, like other states, enabling legislation removed “antiquated and inconsequential restrictions.”<sup>34</sup> Once these laws were in place, local, state, and federal courts were asked to test their constitutionality. In December 1933, the Culpeper County Circuit Court heard an injunction filed against the Town of Culpeper by the Virginia Electric and Power Company (VEPCO) challenging the legality of the Town’s request for PWA bonds, as well as Virginia’s enabling legislation passed during the summer of 1933. As local newspapers reported, “The decision of Judge A. T. Browning... is a matter of interest not only in Culpeper but throughout the state, where many projects in different sections of Virginia will be affected by the outcome of this hearing, which has become a test case for the balance of the state.”<sup>35</sup> Judge Browning ultimately ruled that the Town’s actions were legal, and upheld the constitutionality of the General Assembly’s special legislation, setting precedent for future projects throughout the state.<sup>36</sup>

### *Industry*

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with trends in municipal electric generation and distribution, as well as drinking water treatment in rural American during the early to mid-twentieth century. While increased demand for reliable and dependable electrical service in Culpeper provided impetus for the construction of the municipal electric plant in 1934, advances in technology and the need for increased capacity prompted the 1947 addition to the power plant. The town installed state-of-the-art diesel engine electric generating equipment in its new

<sup>31</sup>PWA, *America Builds*, 63.

<sup>32</sup>PWA, *America Builds*, 123.

<sup>33</sup>Frank da Cruz, “Sortable Searchable Table of PWA Projects in Virginia 1934-1939,” *The New Deal in Virginia*, <http://kermitproject.org/newdeal/virginia/pwa-virginia.html> (accessed 28 Aug. 2018).

<sup>34</sup>PWA, *America Builds*, 50; “May Secure Federal Loan by Plant Revenue Bonds,” *Culpeper Exponent*, 16 Nov. 1933.

<sup>35</sup>“Legality of Act, Town Issuing Bonds Without Vote of Tax Payers, Argued Before Judge on Monday,” *Virginia Star*, 21 December 1933.

<sup>36</sup>“Injunction Against Town Council Refused by Court,” *Virginia Star*, 28 Dec. 1933.

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municipal plant, and continued to upgrade the machinery as technological advancements became available. Similarly, as research in the water treatment industry became more informed, trends in water treatment technology and standards altered the way municipal water treatment facilities across the country operated. The construction of the Culpeper Waterworks facility, completed in 1947, followed closely the revised and expanded water treatment standards issued by the U. S. Public Health Service in 1946. These standards regulated the bacteriological quality of drinking water and introduced methods for removing disease-causing substances and pathogens. In the 1960s, the Public Health Service released additional standards that “were the most comprehensive federal drinking water standards” prior to the adoption of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974.<sup>37</sup> The 1962 standards, in addition to increased demand on the town’s system, likely prompted the 1966 additions to the waterworks facility and its treatment capacity and equipment. The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks demonstrate the Town’s effort to maintain a high standard of living for its residents through the utilization of industry standards and technological advancements in the areas of electric generation and distribution, as well as water treatment.

### Criterion C

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a fine example of an early to mid-twentieth century Moderne Style municipal complex with Art Deco influences. The Municipal Electric Plant utilized New Deal financing through the PWA which, by using stringent oversight and regulatory standards for design, engineering, and construction, coupled with efforts to reduce waste of “taxpayers’ money through extravagance,” resulted in an architectural style nationwide that is often referred to as streamlined or “PWA Moderne.”<sup>38</sup> The rectilinear massing, simplicity of detail, and unencumbered lines that characterize PWA Moderne both expresses the Modern Movement’s confidence in technology as well as the conscious rejection of previous architectural trends that had emphasized elaborate ornamentation and thus increased the cost of construction. Constructed in the early post-World War II period, the Culpeper Waterworks building continued the streamlined Moderne style associated with the town’s utilities. Both buildings also exhibit subtle characteristics of the Art Deco style, including the vertical recessions in the planes of the exterior brickwork, understated geometric ornamentation, and parallel horizontal lines along the lower half of the Waterworks building.

The traditional red brick construction of both buildings reflects the materials historically used throughout the town, allowing them to relate to the surrounding residential neighborhood and also visually softening the industrial nature of the buildings. Cast concrete details contrast with the traditional brick cladding and illustrate the increasing popularity and economy of the material. The emphasis on the verticality of the buildings, contrasted with horizontal accents, enriches the compositions without complicated embellishment and gives the buildings a dynamic quality that reflected the active mechanical and technical processes that were originally housed

<sup>37</sup>EPA, “The History of Drinking Water Treatment,”

<sup>38</sup>PWA, *America Builds*, 74.

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within them. Despite the simple nature of the buildings and the restriction of ornament, the buildings clearly express their industrial functions and utilize features that convey the stylistic influences of the “PWA Moderne” and Art Deco styles.

### *Wiley & Wilson, Inc.*

Wiley & Wilson, Inc., the engineering firm responsible for the design of the Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks, was originally founded in 1901 by Edgar C. Wiley. E. John F. Wilson join Wiley in 1913 and together they developed a “multi-disciplined architecture, engineering, and planning firm serving a solid base of industrial, commercial, and governmental clients.”<sup>39</sup> In addition to their work in Culpeper, the Lynchburg, Virginia, firm was known for its work modernizing institutional buildings and designing utility infrastructure throughout Virginia and North Carolina. The firm was also commissioned for several federal commissions in Virginia.<sup>40</sup> On the heels of World War II, Wiley & Wilson was selected to serve as consulting engineers for the expansion of Camp Lee, which reopened in October 1940 in preparation for training soldiers and officers for the Atlantic and Pacific fronts. This served as the firm’s first direct federal commission, and established its reputation as a “go-to” firm for government projects.<sup>41</sup> The company continues operations today with offices Virginia, Georgia, and North Carolina.

### **Justification for Statewide Significance**

The Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is a relatively rare property type in Virginia and is one of just a handful of municipal facilities including both electrical generation and water supply that have been documented to date. Even fewer have been listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) and National Register. According to the Virginia Cultural Resources Information System (VCRIS), just one power-generating facility in Virginia is currently individually listed in the VLR and National Register of Historic Places. Located in Richmond, the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Howard Road Facility (VLR/NRHP 2007; DHR #127-6184) is associated with a period of rapid development and expansion of the City of Richmond during the early to mid-twentieth century. It was listed at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The City’s infrastructure for gas and water service was built and maintained by the DPU and this facility was their base of operations. The complex consists of a two-story stucco building, three brick and concrete buildings, and a row of metal and brick storage sheds arrayed along the rear (southern) property line. The property’s primary resource is the Meter

<sup>39</sup>Wiley & Wilson, “History,” *About Us*, <https://www.wileywilson.com/history/> (accessed 23 Aug. 2018).

<sup>40</sup> Johnson, *A History of Wiley & Wilson: A Professional Organization since 1901*, 1986.

<sup>41</sup>Wiley & Wilson, “Wiley & Wilson Marks 75-Plus Year History of Federal Work,” *Wiley & Wilson Projects*, <https://www.wileywilson.com/2016/10/wileywilson-marks-60-plus-year-history-federal-work/> (accessed 23 Aug. 2018); Bradford A. Wineman, “Fort Lee,” *Encyclopedia Virginia*, [https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Fort\\_Lee](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Fort_Lee) (accessed 23 Aug. 2018).

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Repair Building, designed by City of Richmond engineer Kenneth M. Adelstein. The two-story stucco building dates to 1925. Its expressed concrete structural frame, used in conjunction with traditional brick warehouse construction, was pioneering concept during the first quarter of the twentieth century. As the Howard Road Facility continued to meet the demands of a growing city, it expanded, incorporating adjacent parcels and buildings into the 1980s.

In Fluvanna County, a VEPCO power plant (DHR#132-0164) constructed in 1931 was recommended eligible for the Registers through an environmental compliance review process in 2012 but is not officially listed. This property is probably the most comparable to the electrical plant in Culpeper. The original part of the VEPCO plant, built circa 1930, is constructed of brick and concrete in an industrial Art Deco style. The exterior exhibits a streamlined appearance with only limited areas of ornament such as the low relief stepped square design above the entry into Turbine Building and banded brickwork. A number of more modern additions behind the building have been constructed to accommodate the growing need for electricity during the mid-to late twentieth century. At the time of its construction, the coal-fired power plant produced 15,000 kw of power per turbine. Coal was delivered by railroad car to the power plant by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, now CSX, whose tracks still run between the power plant and the James River. A spur off the main track serviced the complex for dispensing of coal as well as extended into the turbine building for the delivery of heavy machinery and other equipment. To meet increased demand for power during the 1950s, resulting from population growth in the area, two additional turbines were added, Unit 3 in 1950 and Unit 4 in 1958. The units' boilers were manufactured by Babcock and Wilcox and the turbine generators by Westinghouse Electric Corporation. In 1972, Units 1 and 2, the original turbines installed in the plant, were taken offline. The original stacks were removed during the 1980s. Large-scale additions to the original power plant followed during the late twentieth century to meet the ever-expanding demand for electricity in the region. The complex's areas of significance included Engineering, Industry, and Architecture due to the property's original inclusion of technological innovations as well as later redesigns to create the most efficient use of energy and manpower. Architecturally, the Power Station is an excellent example of 1930s Art Deco industrial architecture.

On the south side of Richmond, the ca. 1930 VEPCO Power Plant (DHR #127-0457-0085) is located in the Manchester area. Bounded on the north by the Manchester Canal and Mill Race, the south by the railroad tracks, and the west by Hull Street. The two-story, two-by-four bay brick building is laid in Flemish bond and has a concrete foundation and cast-concrete trim. The roof is flat with a parapet capped in cast concrete. An off-center pedimented parapet is located on the front with an inscription that reads "Manchester Power Station - Virginia Railway and Power Company." The windows have multiple-light metal-framed, industrial sash. The property is contributing to the Manchester Industrial Historic District Boundary Increase (NRHP/VLR 2011; DHR #127-0457). As a privately funded plant in a large urban environment, however, the property is not very comparable to Culpeper's municipal power plant.

A hydroelectric plant and a coal-fired power plant also have been recorded in VCRIS. In Prince William County, the eight-story hydroelectric plant known as Powerhouse #2 (DHR # 076-5186)

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dates to ca. 1956. The International Style building has rectilinear massing emphasized by a concrete belt course and wraparound brick pilasters at each corner, as well as brick curtain walls and a flat roof. In rural southwestern Virginia, the Appalachian Power Clinch River Steam Plant (DHR #083-5363) is a large coal-fired, power plant complex located on the Clinch River near Carbo in Russell County. Constructed in 1957-1958, the complex is owned by Appalachian Power, a part of American Electric Power. The central steel and concrete power-generating facility is dominated by two large cooling towers. Multiple support buildings and a coal and rail yard also are located on the property. Both of these properties were recommended not eligible for the Registers during separate environmental review processes. Given their scale, neither is particularly comparable to Culpeper's electric plant.

Other power generating facilities in Virginia are found on military installations, such as Fort Belvoir, Marine Corps Base Quantico, and Fort Monroe. Such facilities, however, either have been continually updated to incorporate changing technology or their use has been discontinued. Various colleges and universities also have their own power plants. For example, at Hampden-Sydney College, the Electrical House (otherwise known as the Dial Building) was built in 1935 and serves the college's electrical grid. Still retaining its historic materials and form, the building is contributing to the Hampden Sydney Historic District (NRHP 1970; VLR 1969; DHR #073-0058). Although its original purpose and scale are not similar to Culpeper's, the two plants date to the 1930s and represent gradual electrification efforts then taking place in Virginia.

With regard to waterworks, there is a similar paucity of recorded historic facilities. Probably the most similar to Culpeper's waterworks is the old Middleburg Water Treatment Plant (DHR #030-5337), located along the north bank of Little River, with Landmark School Road running by the east side of the building and Bridge 6232 spanning the waterway. This complex was constructed circa 1936 as the water intake and treatment plant for the Town of Middleburg in Loudoun County. The two-story, four-bay, stone building features exposed rafter ends, a lateral two-story, one-bay stone addition built in 1963, double-leaf wooden doors, and a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. Some openings on the front and side have been infilled with concrete. Filled-in concrete settling basins are at the rear of the building. The water intake valve is visible along the creek and has an iron grate. The water storage unit is a concrete domed structure with flared eaves and a metal vent. About two-tenths of a mile north of the treatment plant stands an associated electric building, set close to the road and surrounded by trees. The circa 1950 electric building is a modest one-story, one-bay, cinder-block building with a single-leaf, metal door along the east elevation and a front-gabled roof covered with standing-seam metal. This complex is representative of industrial architecture of the era. Use of stone on the main building references other historic buildings in the community. The complex closed in 1972 and has been abandoned ever since. Although not found to be individually eligible for the Registers, all the property's resources are contributing to the Little River Rural Historic District (NRHP 2014; DHR #030-5579). As a small town's water treatment plant, the Middleburg property has better integrity of setting than Culpeper's, as it retains features such as the settling basins and water intake valve that have been lost at Culpeper.

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Located between Gant Lane and Belmont Ridge Road north of Dulles Toll Road, the 182-acre Goose Creek Reservoir, Dam, and Water Treatment Plant complex (DHR #053-6376) includes three parcels. Predominantly wooded, they are surrounded by residential subdivisions to the east and south and industry to the west and north. At the northwest corner of Belmont Ridge Road and Hearford Lane, the water treatment facility includes an elevated water tower, a wash-water lagoon, and a small brick outbuilding, all built in 1961, and a ground-level water tank and adjacent storage building, both built in 1981. A pump house is located on a 36-acre parcel west of the treatment facility. It is surrounded by a tall chain-linked fence at the north end of a gravel road close to the east bank of the reservoir. A reservoir located west of the pump house and just over four miles south the Potomac River, into which Goose Creek drains. The City of Fairfax, in Fairfax County, built the Goose Creek Reservoir, Dam, and Water Treatment Plant, in Loudoun County, between 1956 and 1961. Prior to this, the city's water supply had been provided by 11 wells, which were unable to meet the needs of the rapidly growing suburban community. In contrast, the 1961 water system provided more water than the City of Fairfax needed, so the excess was sold to the growing suburban communities of Herndon, Reston, and some areas within Loudoun County. This complex's scale dwarfs Culpeper's waterworks and is related to a later period of Virginia's history, when massive post-World War II economic development spawned unprecedented suburbanization in northern Virginia.

Similarly, the Fairfax County Water Authority Lorton Water Filtration Plant is a large complex off of Ox Road. There are twelve low, open-air tanks, several storage tanks shaped like silos, five additional buildings of varying size and age, and a sedimentation pond, all of which date to 1955. Built circa 1955, the buildings display tenets of the International style. The main two-story building has both one- and two-story wings. Both the continuous foundation and the masonry structural system are of brick laid in a common bond. All sections of the building have flat roofs. The centrally located main entrance consists of a single garage bay on the front facade. Fenestration includes glass block and three-light awning windows. Concrete banding wraps around the building above and below the windows, emphasizing the building's horizontal massing. Given its scale and date of construction, like the Goose Creek property, the Fairfax County plant is not comparable to the Culpeper waterworks in terms of historic associations and scale.

Finally, the South Fork Rivanna Water Treatment Plant (DHR #002-5230) is located at 2383 Woodburn Road, approximately 1.35 mi north of its intersection with Rio Road. The treatment plant sits on a cleared rise within a larger wooded area south of the South Fork Rivanna River, and the plant itself is enclosed within a chain link and barbed wire fence. The site is first depicted on the 1964 Charlottesville East topographic quadrangle. Additions and upgrades followed through the end of the twentieth century as the Charlottesville area grew rapidly. The plant consists of the main building, two later secondary buildings, and associated infrastructure including holding tanks. It was recommended not eligible for the Registers during an environmental review process.

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This comparative analysis demonstrates that the Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is a relatively rare resource type and represents an important era in municipal infrastructure development between World Wars I and II. It also is associated with the New Deal programs of the Roosevelt administration and its PWA financing make it unique in Virginia. The construction of modern infrastructure, including electrical plants, water filtration and wastewater treatment plants, telephones, and paved roads, were a defining aspect of expanding publicly owned infrastructure as well as community planning and development across Virginia during the first half of the twentieth century. After World War II, unprecedented population growth, economic expansion, and technological innovation fueled infrastructure development at an even greater scale and more rapid pace. As one of the few known surviving examples of a rural municipal power and water facility, the Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the areas of Politics/Government and Industry.



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[https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Fort\\_Lee](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Fort_Lee) (accessed 23 Aug. 2018).

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**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, VA;  
Culpeper County Library, Culpeper, Virginia; Town of Culpeper, Culpeper, Virginia

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR No. 204-5097

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acree of Property** 0.964

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**  
Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

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(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.469030 | Longitude: -78.003598 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 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 boundary of the Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks includes parcel 40 77 in the Town of Culpeper, Virginia, as noted in the Town's real estate assessor's records. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Location Map and Sketch Map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The selected boundary for the Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks encompasses the legal parcel boundary historically associated with the property during its period of significance and thus encompasses all known historic resources as well as the historic setting.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Kayla Halberg, Preservation Project Manager; Marcus Pollard; Bryan Townes  
organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group  
street & number: PO Box 1083  
city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23517  
e-mail: kayla@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com

Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and  
Waterworks  
Name of Property

Culpeper County, VA  
County and State

telephone: 757-905-4380  
date: November 2018

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### 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.
- **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: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks

City or Vicinity: Culpeper

County: Culpeper

State: Virginia

Photographer: Bryan Townes

Date Photographed: March 15, 2018

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

- 1 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, view to the northeast
- 2 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, view to the west
- 3 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, hood at front entrance
- 4 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, front (south) doors

Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and  
Waterworks

Name of Property

Culpeper County, VA

County and State

- 5 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, view to the southwest
- 6 of 46: General view of property, exterior view to the southwest
- 7 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, downspout at the north elevation
- 8 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, brickwork detail
- 9 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, view to the northwest
- 10 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, first floor, hall, view to the east
- 11 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, east pipe gallery, view to the west
- 12 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, west pipe gallery, view to the east
- 13 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, first floor, stair, view to the west
- 14 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, second floor, stair, view to the east
- 15 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, laboratory, view to the southeast
- 16 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, tile detail at the second floor
- 17 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, second floor, east operating gallery view to the west
- 18 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, second floor, east operating gallery view to northeast
- 19 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, second floor, west operating gallery, view to the west
- 20 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, third floor, storage, view to the west
- 21 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, third floor, storage, view to the east
- 22 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, third floor, window (typical)
- 23 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, second floor, filter tanks
- 24 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, second floor, east operating gallery, view to the northwest
- 25 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, second floor, east operating gallery, view to the south
- 26 of 46: Culpeper Waterworks Building, first floor, hall, view to the west to the stairs
- 27 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, south elevation view to the northwest
- 28 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, south and east elevations view to the northwest
- 29 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, plaque commemorating construction
- 30 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, south elevation detail
- 31 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, west elevation view to the east
- 32 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, north elevation view to the south
- 33 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, brick detail at the east elevation
- 34 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, engine room view to the north
- 35 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, storage room view to the west
- 36 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, office view to the west
- 37 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, office view to the south
- 38 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, east room view to the north
- 39 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, ceiling detail at the east room
- 40 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, service pit detail
- 41 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, engine room view to the north
- 42 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, engine room view to the northeast

Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and  
Waterworks

Name of Property

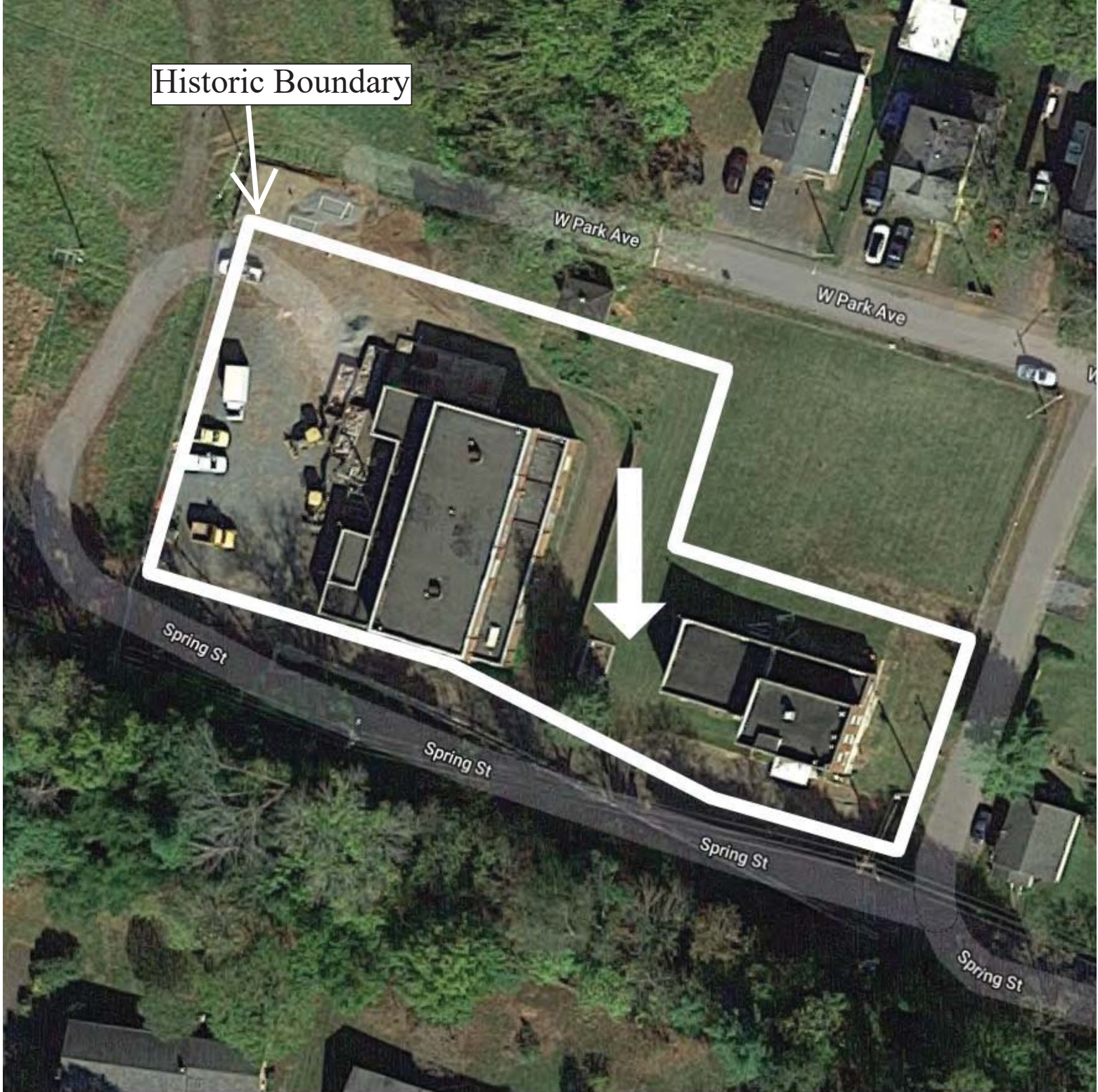
Culpeper County, VA

County and State

- 43 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, southeast room view to the south
- 44 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, engine room view to the southeast
- 45 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, engine room bridge crane detail
- 46 of 46: Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant, engine room view to the west

**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.



Historic Boundary

W Park Ave

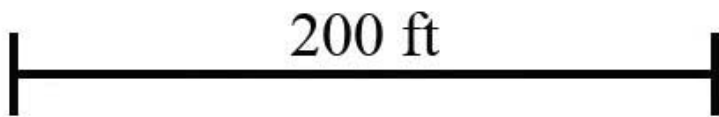
W Park Ave

Spring St

Spring St

Spring St

Spring St



200 ft



Coordinates:  
38.469030, -78.003598

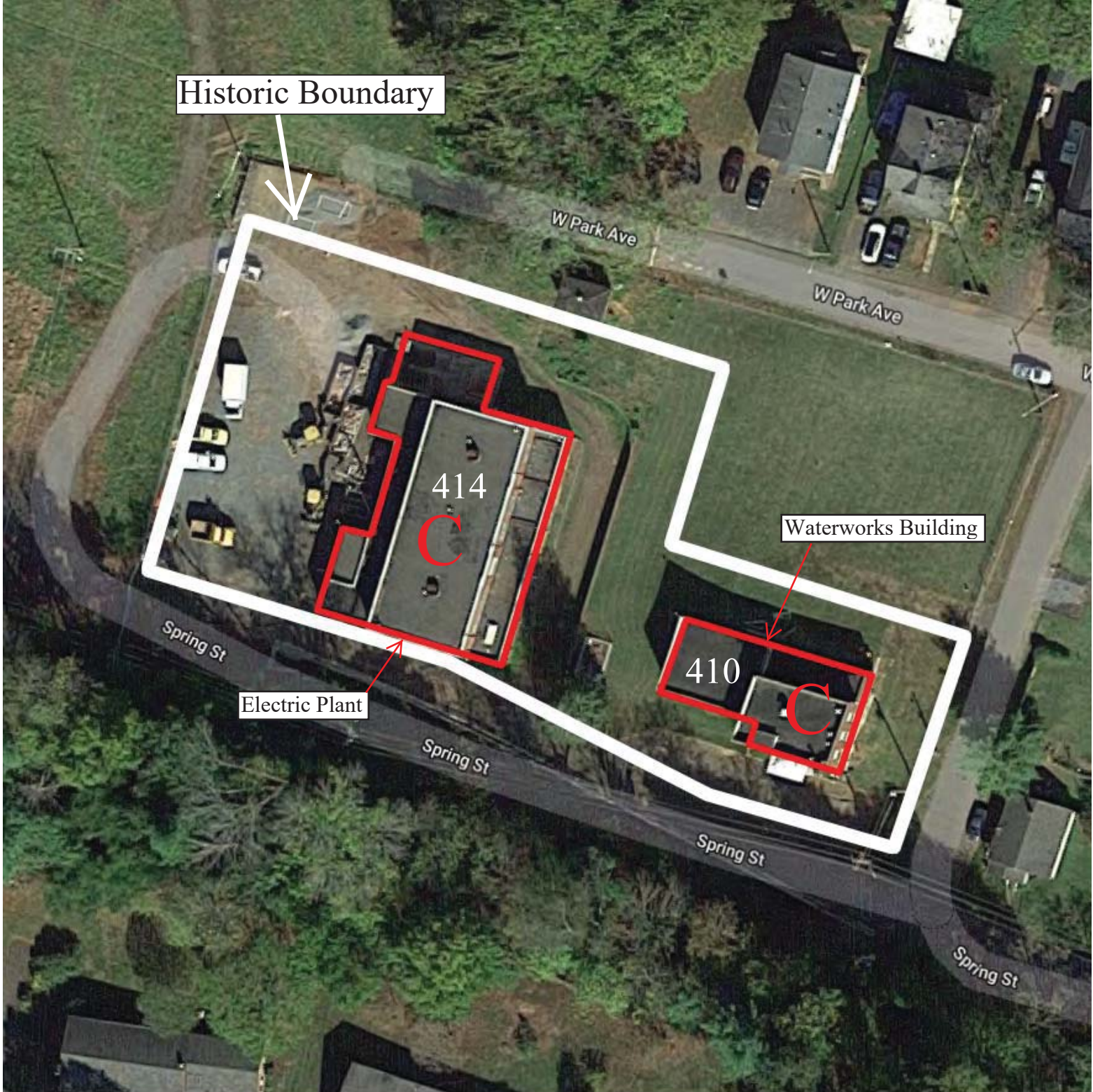
**LOCATION MAP**

Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks

DHR No. 204-5097

410- 414 Spring Street

Town of Culpeper, Culpeper County, VA 23192



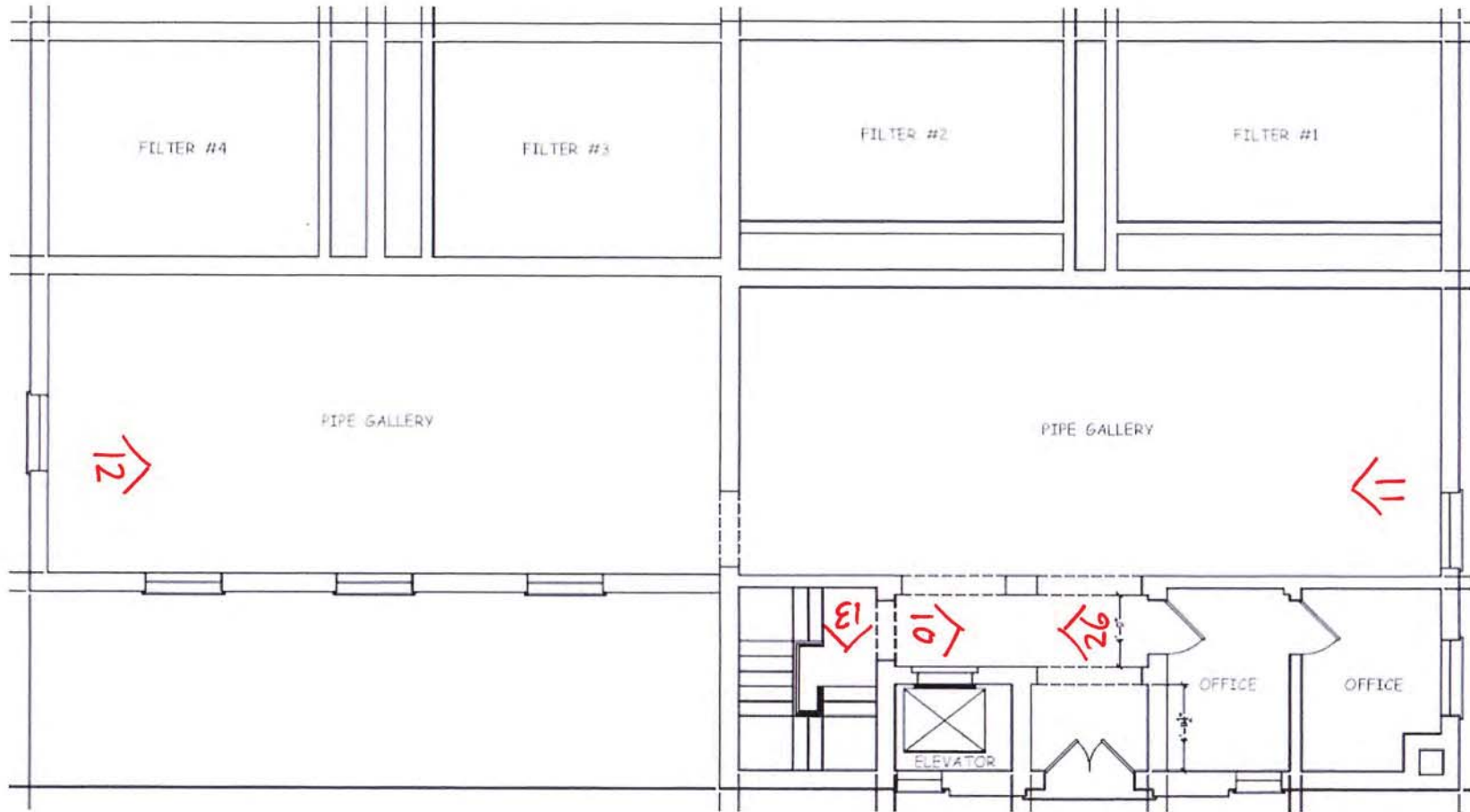
**SKETCH MAP**

Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks

DHR #204-5097

Waterworks - 410 Spring Street  
Electric Plant - 414 Spring Street  
Town of Culpeper, Culpeper County, VA



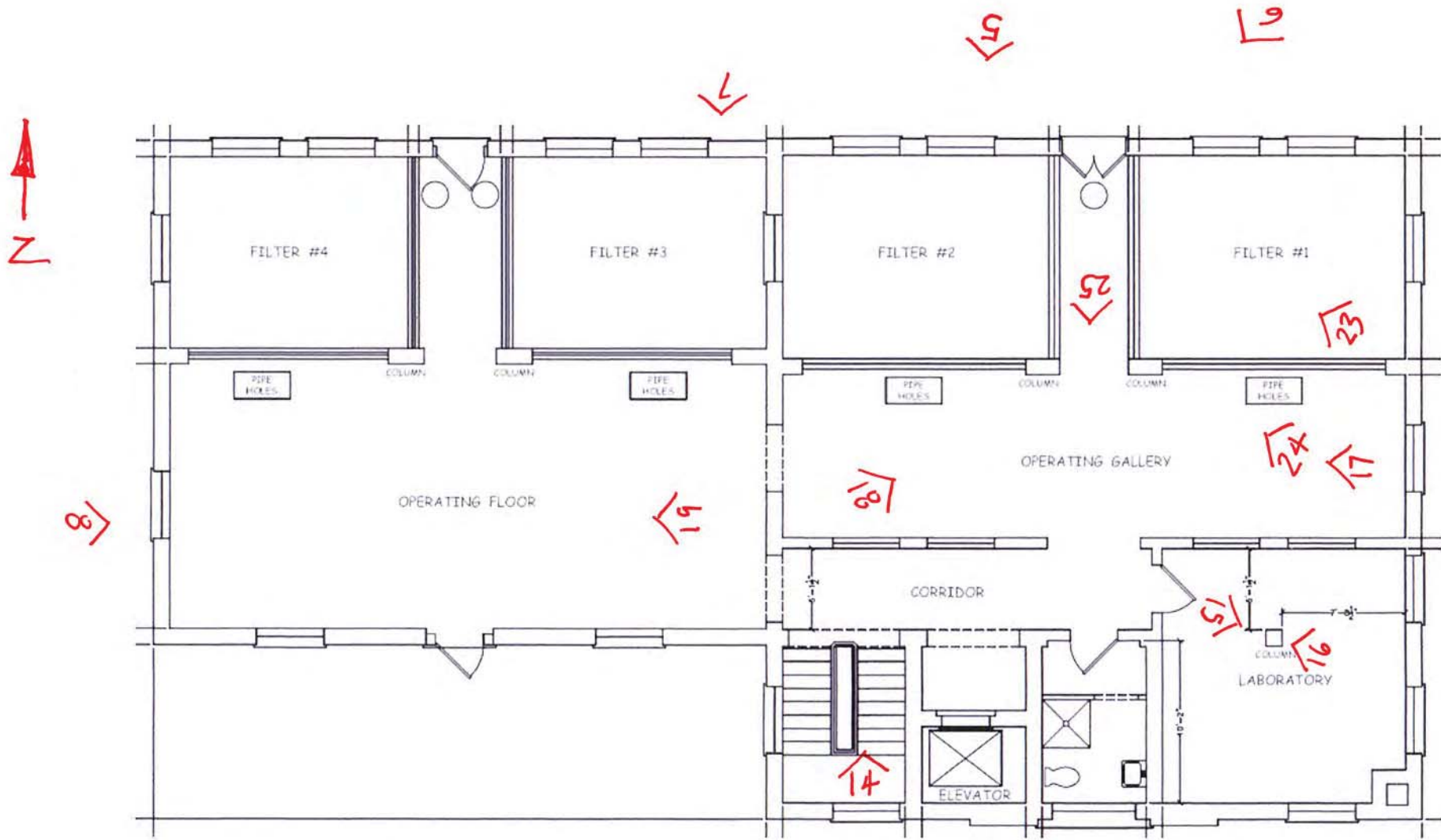


Waterworks Building -  
First Floor



**PHOTO KEY (1 of 4)**

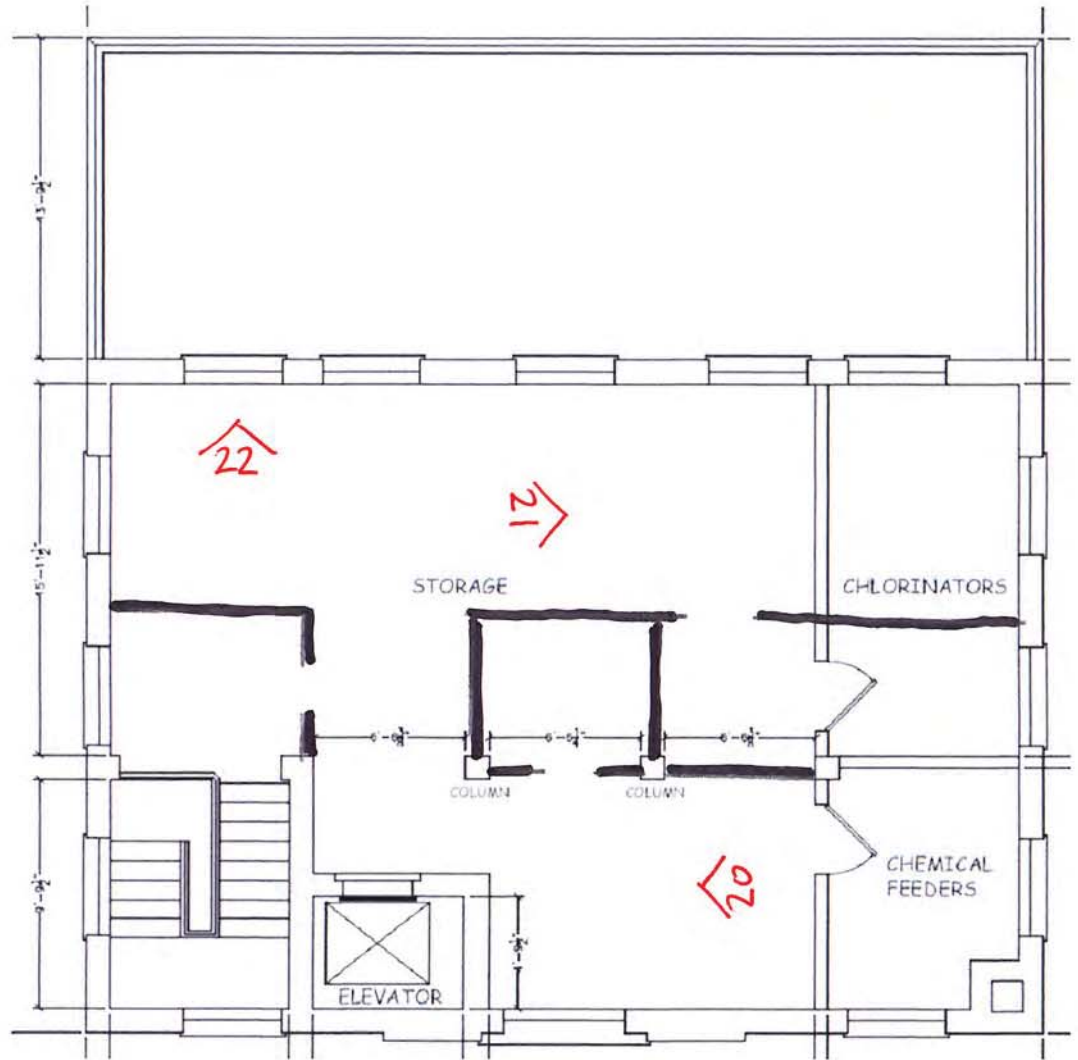
Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks  
Town of Culpeper, Culpeper County, VA  
DHR No. 204-5097



Waterworks Building -  
Second Floor

**PHOTO KEY (2 of 4)**

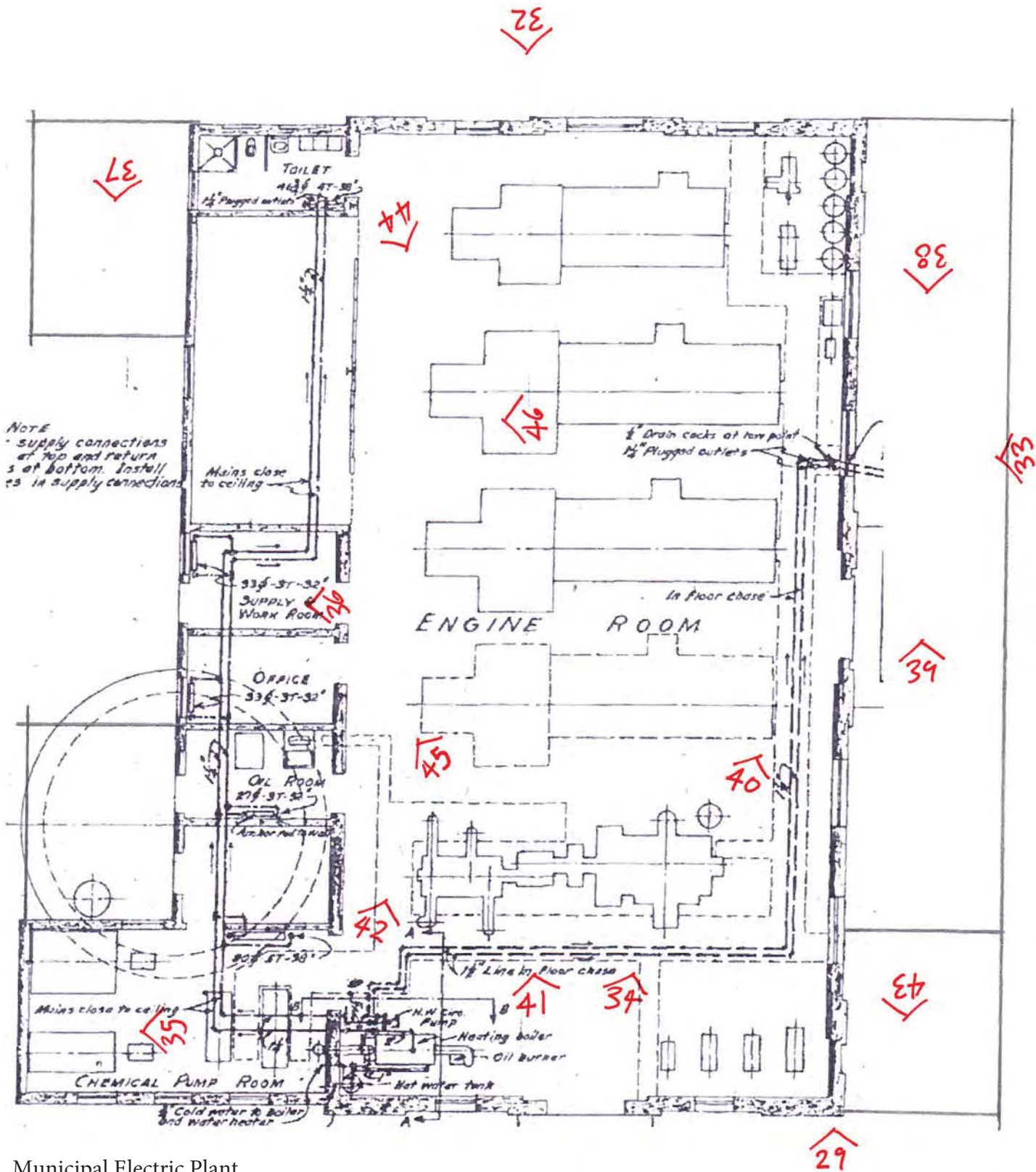
Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks  
Town of Culpeper, Culpeper County, VA  
DHR No. 204-5097



Waterworks Building -  
Third Floor

**PHOTO KEY (3 of 4)**

Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks  
Town of Culpeper, Culpeper County, VA  
DHR No. 204-5097



Municipal Electric Plant

PHOTO KEY (4 of 4)

Culpeper Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks  
 Town of Culpeper, Culpeper County, VA  
 DHR No. 204-5097

