

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

LISTED ON:
VLR 09/17/2009
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**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Virginia Trunk & Bag Company

other names/site number VDHR #123-5423

2. Location

street & number 600 W. Wythe Street not for publication N/A

city or town Petersburg vicinity N/A

state Virginia code VA county Independent City code 730 zip code 23803

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 nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

[Date]
Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings (2, 1), sites (1, 0), structures (0, 1), objects (0, 0), Total (3, 2).

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE, COMMERCE/TRADE, INDUSTRY/PORCESSING/EXTRACTION. Sub: business, warehouse, manufacturing facility.

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE, COMMERCE/TRADE, INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION. Sub: business, warehouse, manufacturing facility.

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th-century American Movement

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
roof METAL- Aluminum
walls BRICK; METAL - Aluminum; CONCRETE
other METAL - Copper

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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)

- X 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.
X 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 a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
INDUSTRY

Period of Significance 1903-1931

Significant Dates 1903; 1916; 1931

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder UNKNOWN

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

The Virginia Trunk & Bag Company

Petersburg, Virginia

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

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

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreeage of Property 6.33

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing												
1	18	286077E	4	122261N	2				3			4		

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Sarah McPhail & Marcus Pollard
organization Commonwealth Preservation Group, LLC date June 2009
street & number 139 N Main Street telephone (757) 923-9991
city or town Suffolk state VA zip code 23434

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Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Battiston Realty, LLC
street & number 600 W. Wythe Street telephone (804) 861-0063
city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23803

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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. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the 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 National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Virginia Trunk & Bag Company
Petersburg, VA**

Section 7 Page 1

Summary Paragraph

The Virginia Trunk & Bag Company, located at 600 W. Wythe Street in Petersburg, Virginia, is an evolved manufacturing complex constructed in several phases between the years 1903 and ca. 1931. The complex consists of two contributing buildings with contributing and non-contributing additions constructed in phases as the trunk manufacturing business on site evolved. The contributing additions follow the same architectural trends of the earlier buildings including the large number of windows on each floor of each building, the shape and type of the windows, and the type of brick. Also on site there is a contributing railroad spur, a non-contributing cinderblock building, and a non-contributing water tank. Typically, the buildings and additions within the complex are early 20th-century industrial architecture, 1-4 stories tall, brick construction, with slightly sloped metal roofs clad with asphalt. Several of the buildings feature a stepped parapet, all of which are in the same style. Some buildings feature decorative cast-iron star anchors on their exterior walls and arched window and door openings. Significant architectural features within the complex include the enclosed 2, 3, and 4-story pedestrian bridges connecting the ca. 1908 4-story stock room building and the ca. 1903 3- and 4-story storage and shipping building to the original trunk factory as well as the continued connectivity between each building. All interior spaces are intact. The current owner of the manufacturing complex added his machinery to some of the buildings but the historic interior is completely identifiable. Several post-WWII metal roll up doors have been added to the complex since the end of the period of significance, likely for tractor-trailer loading.

An inventory with building descriptions is provided below to distinguish the difference between the function of the buildings and additions and to show the chronology and connectivity between each part. The majority of the complex was completed by 1915 with the remainder being completed before 1950. There are a total of 3 contributing and 2 non-contributing resources. This manufacturing complex is not a part of a historic district but is surrounded by other historic districts within the City of Petersburg including the Folly Castle Historic District and Extension to the North and West, the South Market Street Historic District to the east, and the Poplar Lawn Historic District and Expansion to the southeast.

Site Description

Historically, the area containing the Virginia Trunk & Bag Company was industrial in character. Today, it features a mix of industrial, commercial, educational, and residential uses. The buildings within the Virginia Trunk & Bag Company complex are located on the north and west portions of the parcel. There is open land to the south and east of the buildings creating a large loading area for trucks to park and load. For many years, raw lumber was also stacked in open areas. The open space is enclosed with a chain link fence running along Guarantee and Brown Streets. Railroad spurs served the manufacturing facility next to the ca. 1903, 3-and 4-story storage and shipping building and the 4-story storage and shipping building. Little remains of the rail spurs today.

The current complex consists of 2 contributing buildings, 1 contributing site, 1 non-contributing building and 1 non-contributing structure. All of the buildings within the complex are connected to each other by way of shared walls with openings and doors or by enclosed pedestrian bridges.

The original ca.1903 complex featured several of the buildings still extant today including the trunk factory, the 3-story storage and shipping building, the box shop, the planing mill and the boiler house. Each building had its own function lending to the overall operation of the manufacturing facility. Originally, the trunk factory, box shop and planing mill created an "L" shaped building in the middle of the complex. As the complex evolved and the trunk manufacturing business grew, the company added on the necessary manufacturing buildings to the original two buildings. By 1908, the complex had almost doubled in size with the addition of the stock room, the veneer room, the lumber storage area, and the tool room. Additionally, the box shop and planing mill were expanded to the west. Later contributing additions which were added after 1915 but before 1950, include the Independent Electric Plant addition, the veneer mill addition, the office and machine shop addition, the 4-story warehouse addition, and the 4-story shipping and storage addition.

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It is likely that the railroad was in place well before the end of the period of significance. Architectural evidence, such as odd window patterns and 2nd-story loading door openings, suggests the conversion of loading areas around the complex from truck and wagon loading doors to 2nd-story rail loading doors on both of the buildings facing the railroad spurs.

Building Descriptions

The Trunk Factory

Contributing Building

The ca. 1903 trunk factory building is a part of the core of the original complex. Originally, it was connected to the box shop and to the 3- and 4-story storage and shipping building. It was connected to the box shop by a shared brick wall with an opening with an iron door. The trunk factory is connected to the shipping and storage building by two enclosed pedestrian bridges. The east bridge connects the 2nd and 3rd floor and is completely enclosed. Its exterior walls are clad with corrugated metal siding and the slightly sloped roof is clad with standing seam metal. The west bridge connects the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors of the trunk factory and shipping and storage building. It is also enclosed, clad with corrugated metal siding, and topped with a standing seam metal roof. The west bridge features a metal cargo shoot on its west wall.

The trunk factory is an early 20th-century 4-story brick masonry building with 5-course American bond brickwork. It features arched window and door openings. Some of these openings have been enclosed with brick and plywood. Many of the historic 6/6 double-hung windows are in place. The low-pitch gabled roof is clad with standing seam metal. The interior of the building is typical of many early 20th-century industrial buildings. It features open spaces with exposed wooden rafters, wooden posts, and pipes. Historically, this building functioned as the trunk factory. Over the years, the function of the building evolved with the growth of the trunk industry. Historically, the first floor functioned as a storage and satchel department. It also featured a staining room and strip machinery in its west portion. The second floor functioned historically as the trunk making department and later as a bench work and storage area. The function of the third floor has mirrored that of the 2nd floor in that it has been used for trunk making. The third and fourth floors of the building functioned as storage areas.

The Box Shop Addition

The ca. 1903 box shop was a part of the original manufacturing complex and connected to the trunk factory. As mentioned above, it shares a wall with the trunk factory with only iron doors separating the two spaces. It also shares a wall with the planing mill. This shared wall features an arched door opening with no door. The three-story box shop was constructed in the same manner as the trunk factory. It too is an early 20th-century brick building with 5-course American bond brickwork. It also features arched windows and doorways, some of which have been enclosed with brick and/or covered with plywood. It is topped by a gabled roof clad with standing seam metal and features a stepped parapet. Historically, the box shop addition was occupied by a box shop and sawing room on the first floor. The second floor was used for bench work. The third floor was used for printing and pasting and leather storage. A small addition to the box shop was appended to its west wall ca.1908 to accommodate more bench work on the second floor and another drying room on the third.

The Boiler House

The ca. 1903 boiler house is original to the complex. It shares brick walls with the Independent Electric Plant and the engine room but there is no connectivity. The boiler house is an open 2-story building. It is a brick and steel frame structure. The north and west walls are brick while the rest of the building is supported by a steel frame. The two exposed exterior walls are clad with corrugated metal siding. There are several metal frame, fixed windows with 8 divided lights at the second level and two large metal frame fixed windows with 20 divided lights each. The interior of the building is completely open and remnants of the foundation of the historic boilers are visible. At one point, this building also featured a shavings vault which was connected to several of the other buildings within the complex via pipes which were controlled by blowers. There were also steam pipes leading to the box shop and to the 3- and 4-story shipping and storage building. The building historically contained three steam boilers.

The Planing Mill Addition

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The ca. 1903 planing mill was a part of the original complex. It was originally connected to the box shop by a shared wall with openings. It was also historically connected to the shavings vault (boiler house) by a blower. This building also matches the style of the other original buildings with its brick construction, 5-course American bond brickwork. It stands 1 ½-stories tall and is topped with a gable roof with low pitch clad with standing seam metal. It can only be accessed through the box shop or the veneer room since it shares walls with both additions. The interior of the building retains its historic character with exposed wooden posts and rafters. Parts of the historic blower are still in place. The entire building was used as a planing mill throughout its history.

The Stock Room Building Addition

The stock room building was added to the complex ca. 1908 during a large expansion to the then extant manufacturing facilities. It was appended to the north end of the complex. It is connected to building by an enclosed brick passageway on the first floor. An enclosed brick bridge connects the top three floors. Historically, there was a courtyard which stood between these two buildings. The courtyard was enclosed sometime after the end of the period of significance. A 3-story brick hyphen was constructed at the west end of the courtyard to connect the stock room building to the box shop. The hyphen later became a part of the box shop. This 4-story, industrial building is almost identical to the trunk factory in its architectural characteristics and style. Its exterior walls are 5-course American bond brickwork and its window and door openings are arched. There are a large number of windows on each floor, allowing plenty of natural light into the building. This is an indicator of the building being there before the manufacturing facilities had electric lights. The interior of the building features mainly open spaces with exposed wooden posts. Historically, the building was used as a stock room on the first floor, for bench work on the 2nd and 3rd floors and for storage on the 4th. A 4-story office and machine shop addition was appended to the north end of the stock room after 1915. It is reminiscent of the style of the rest of the complex with its American bond brick work and large number of windows. It even features a stepped parapet mirroring the others within the complex.

The Veneer Room Addition

The Veneer room was also added to the complex ca. 1908. This addition was appended to the south wall of the planing mill. This wall is the only separation between the two additions and it features arched openings. The 2-story veneer room is also an early 20th-century industrial building of brick construction. It is topped with a gabled roof clad with standing seam metal and features a stepped parapet. It has an open floor plan with an exposed truss roof. A post-WWII metal roll up door for truck loading was added outside the period of significance. All of the windows on the first floor have been enclosed but there are several 6/6 wood frame windows extant at the second level. This building was used as a veneer mill and then a veneer room.

The Independent Electric Plant Addition

The Independent Electric Plant addition was appended to the box shop and planing mill between the years 1915 and 1931. It cannot be accessed from the exterior, only through openings in the shared wall between the box shop and the planing mill. It also shared its brick east wall with the boiler house. The one-story plant addition is of brick construction and features a gabled roof with raised skylights. The building also served as an engine room.

The Lumber Storage Addition

The lumber storage addition was appended to the planing mill ca. 1908. It is a small, one-story masonry structure with no windows or exterior doors. It shares its west wall with the planing mill and can only be accessed from the planing mill. It served as lumber storage while the complex was used for manufacturing trunks.

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The Tool Room Addition

The tool room addition was appended to the complex ca. 1908. It too is a small, one-story masonry structure with no windows. A post-WWII metal roll up door was added to the east wall of the building. It shares walls with the lumber storage addition, and the veneer room. Historically, it was only accessible from the interior of the veneer room and it served as a place for tools and it was at one time an engine room.

The Engine Room Addition

The engine room was appended to the complex ca. 1908. It shares a wall with the trunk factory and with the box shop. This one-story masonry building served as the engine room during the occupation of the trunk manufacturing business. A post-WWII addition was made to the east elevation of the building. It is clad with brick veneer and features two metal frame windows and a single door. It features a flat roof. This addition was expanded to the east at an unknown date outside of the period of significance.

The Veneer Mill Addition

The veneer mill was appended to the complex after 1915. It shares its north wall with the Veneer Room and historically was only accessible through openings in the shared wall from the interior of the veneer room. It is typical of early 20th-century industrial architecture with its brick construction and flat roof. The interior of the addition is completely open. It served as the veneer mill for the trunk manufacturing business during its occupation.

The 4-story Warehouse Addition

The 4-story warehouse was appended to the stock room addition post-1915. It is of typical early 20th-century warehouse construction. Its exterior walls are masonry with 5-course American bond brickwork. It follows the early building trends within the complex and includes features such as the large number of windows on each floor. The interior of the space is also typical of early 20th-century warehouses. Each floor is a big open space with exposed wooden posts and rafters. The addition was historically used for storage. The current owner of the building constructed a modern loading dock on the north side of the building complete with a modern metal overhead door and concrete foundation.

The 4-story Shipping and Storage Addition

The 4-story shipping and storage addition was also one of the later additions to the complex. It is almost identical in architectural style and detailing to the warehouse on the exterior. Its south elevation has been altered several times. The irregular window patterns suggest that the railroad car loading doors on the 2nd floor of the building were added after the initial construction of the addition. Historically, the addition was used for storage on the 1st floor, shipping on the 2nd and 3rd floors, sampling on the 3rd floor and for the wardrobe trunk department on the 4th floor. The interior of the building is open with exposed wooden posts. The 2nd floor appears to have been an office at some point because it is the only floor with any sort of ceiling cover. One end of the 2nd floor features tin ceiling tiles. There may have been a wall separating this finished ceiling area from the rest of the 2nd floor, but it is now missing. There is a smaller one room office within the tin ceiling area which appears to have been constructed after the period of significance. There is also a large safe painted with the name of "Virginia Trunk and Bag Co." located in the corner of the tin ceiling section of the 2nd floor.

Non-Contributing Additions

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The two one-story, non-contributing additions within the complex were added after the period of significance. One addition is appended to the south wall of the Veneer Mill (Bldg. # 12), while the other addition serves as a connector between the trunk factory building (#1) and the stock room addition (#6). Both additions are of brick construction. The interior of the addition appended to the Veneer Mill (#12) is in poor condition. Its shared north wall is of brick construction and the arched window openings between the Veneer Mill and the post-1950 non-contributing addition have been enclosed with concrete block. The brick is painted but the block is not. The other three walls in the building are a mixture of brick and concrete block. The first few feet at the bottom of each wall is brick but then they are constructed of concrete block the rest of the way up. The flat roof is clad with corrugated metal and supported by a series of modern metal trusses.

The connector addition built between the trunk factory (#1) and the stock room addition (#6) was made in the former courtyard between buildings #1 and #6 and shares all of its brick walls with the two buildings. It is topped by a flat roof with skylights clad with an unknown material. The interior of this space was very obviously once an outdoor space. The shared walls (formerly exterior) feature arched window and door openings. Several of these openings have been slightly enclosed to create a square frame but the evidence of the arches is extant.

The 3- and 4-story Storage and Shipping Building

Contributing Building

The ca. 1903 storage and shipping building is one of the original trunk manufacturing buildings. This 3- and 4-story building is connected to the trunk factory by enclosed pedestrian bridges as described above. The style of this building matches that of the others in the complex. It is of brick construction and it features 5-course American bond brickwork. All of the window and door openings are arched. Most of these openings have been enclosed or covered with plywood. The gabled roof is clad with standing seam metal and features a parapet. The façade of the building features a partially enclosed loading dock on the 2nd floor which is supported by full-height brick columns and covered on the north and south with horizontal metal siding and by a shed roof clad with standing seam metal. This was most likely used as a loading dock for railroad cars. There are three 2nd floor loading docks on the south elevation of the building facing the former railroad spur. There are also two loading door openings on the first floor. The interior of the building retains its historic character. Each floor features large open spaces with exposed wooden posts. Alterations were made to the building within the period of significance to enlarge the building. Historically, the first floor of the building was used for storage in the front portion and iron cutting in the rear. The second floor was used for shipping and touching up and the top floors were used for storage. Eventually, the entire building was converted into a storage facility ca. 1950.

Railroad Spur

Contributing Site

Railroad spurs served the manufacturing facility next to the 3-and 4-story storage and shipping building (# 4) and the 4-story storage and shipping building (#14). The majority of the historic track has been buried over the years due to traffic within the complex but some of the metal from the tracks is visible next to the 3-and 4-story storage and shipping building (#4).

Water Tank and Pump House

Non-Contributing building and Non-contributing structure

The water tank and attached pump house are non-contributing to the significance of the complex. Both were added to the complex post-1950. The water tank is of steel construction. The small, one-story pump house is of concrete block construction and features a single metal door. It is topped with a flat roof clad with an unknown material.

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Summary Statement of Significance

The Virginia Trunk & Bag Company was established in Petersburg in 1898. Its manufacturing complex was constructed and functioning as a large scale facility by 1903. During part of the early twentieth century Petersburg claimed to be the leading trunk and valise manufacturing city in the world and the Virginia Trunk and Bag Co. facility was one of the largest trunk manufacturers in the city during that period. The Virginia Trunk and Bag Co. complex is located in its original location and retains its original buildings and structures representing the trunk manufacturing process in its entirety from raw lumber to completed product. From 1916 until 1931 the site was also the headquarters for the American Hardware Company, which was the parent company for at least six different trunk makers in Petersburg, representing the majority of trunk manufacturing in Petersburg at that time. The Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. currently represents the most intact and best preserved of the remaining trunk manufacturing facilities in the city of Petersburg. The Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. manufacturing facility at 600 W. Wythe Street is eligible for listing at the local level of significance in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (Industry) and Criterion C (Architecture). The property is strongly linked with the development of the trunk manufacturing industry in Petersburg; it represents one of the most important facilities in that industry as a result of its size, complexity and administrative importance; the property is almost completely intact and represents a high level of integrity. The period of significance spans the period from the completion of the facility's initial construction in 1903 until 1931 when Virginia Trunk and Bag Co. ceased to be an independent entity.

Historical Background

Petersburg, Virginia, historically known as the "Cockade City", is an independent city located along the Appomattox River. It was originally occupied by a tribe belonging to the Powhatan Confederacy until the arrival of English settlers in the 1600s. Fort Henry was constructed in the 1640s and was an established trading center before the end of the decade. During the first half of the 18th-century, Colonel William Byrd II laid the groundwork for the establishment of Richmond and Petersburg. The plan for Petersburg was formally organized in 1748 by the Virginia General Assembly. By 1784, Petersburg and surrounding areas of Blandford and Pocahontas were consolidated into a single town called Petersburg. The city grew as a commercial center for processing local cotton, tobacco, and metals. The introduction of Petersburg's first railroad in the 1830s sped up the development of the "Cockade City" as an important commercial and manufacturing center.¹

Between 1830 and 1840, Petersburg began to flourish as a manufacturing and transportation center. This was significant for a southern town as many southern cities were not in a location which provided the necessary means for both manufacturing and transportation.² Tobacco and cotton manufacturing were the main industries in Petersburg until the last quarter of the 19th century when the trunk manufacturing industry was established. Industrial growth in Petersburg was interrupted by the onset of the Civil War. Petersburg found itself at the center of the military action as a result of its location on the Appomattox River and along major railroad lines. Between 1864 and 1865, the City "underwent a 10-month siege (longest in American History) before the Federal General Grant forced General Lee down the road to Appomattox".³ It has been said that the "significance of Petersburg in delaying the final outcome of the Civil War cannot be overstated".⁴ The result of the war for Petersburg's economy was clear and devastating. From the outset of the war the demands of military service depleted the workforce. The Union naval blockade and attacks on railroads increasingly hampered the movement of goods into and out of the city, resulting in short supplies and stockpiles of unsold tobacco. As the war progressed nearly all goods became scarce or nonexistent and the result was rampant inflation which decimated what was left of the city's economy.⁵ A decade after the war a local publication described Petersburg's economy as fully recovered and even stronger than before the war with tobacco and cotton production expanding significantly.⁶

The trunk industry had its beginnings in Petersburg when Simon Seward and his brother-in-law H.F. Munt formed a trunk manufacturing business in 1878. The trunk manufacturing industry rapidly grew and soon became one of Petersburg's most important industries. Petersburg (and Seward) went on to become the "largest producer of trunks in the world".⁷ Seward was one of many trunk producers in Petersburg during the late 19th century. As indicated by Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Seward and Munt originally opened a small factory just north of the Appomattox River ca. 1885. The ca.1885 factory produced trunks, bags, and boxes and featured storage facilities.⁸ By 1891 the company had a new name, Simon Seward & Co. Trunk & Traveling Bag Manufactory, and had been expanded to include storage warehouses on Fleet Street, just south of the Appomattox River.⁹

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By the end of the 1890s Seward & Co had constructed its first large-scale warehouse complex near the intersection of Lafayette and High Streets. It was renamed "Seward Trunk & Bag Company" and the complex at Lafayette and High Streets evolved into Seward's largest manufacturing operation in town. The fully functioning complex was the headquarters of the production of trunks, bags, and boxes; several storage warehouses; and the offices for Seward. It was often referred to as "Seward Plant No. 1."¹⁰ According to the April 1903 Sanborn Maps, after the turn of the 20th century the Seward complex at High and Lafayette Streets was expanded to accommodate the great demand for trunks and bags. The 1903 Sanborn also indicated that for the first time, the Virginia Trunk and Bag Company, a fully-functional luggage manufacturing complex, was located at 600 W. Wythe Street (Historically Smith/Lawrence Street).¹¹

The Virginia Trunk & Bag Company was established in Petersburg in 1898. The primary manufacturing facility was completed and was operating as a fully functioning producer of trunks, satchels, and suit cases by 1903. The facility filled the majority of the block bounded by W. Wythe Street to the north, Guarantee Street to the east, Brown Street to the south and Pine Street to the west, though a small canal named Brick House Run formed the official western boundary of the property. The Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. operated from this location as an independent entity until ca. 1915.¹²

The many sections of the large complex represented various functions from the processing of raw materials, to every stage of product production, to the storage, and finally shipping of finished products. Raw lumber was stored inside, but also stacked in large piles all over the site. The core manufacturing facility was constructed first and consisted of a large trunk factory, a box shop, a planing mill, a boiler house, and a large storage and shipping warehouse. As the business rapidly grew, a large stock room, a tool room, and a separate veneer room were quickly added for the finishing of higher end trunks. After the merger with the American Hardware Company by 1916, two large additions were completed to serve as increased warehouse, storage, and shipping capacity.¹³ The result is one large structure with numerous sections and additions all interconnected by wall openings, enclosed pedestrian bridges, and hyphens. There is also a separate boiler building and two noncontributing resources, including a water tower. There was a spur of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad added to the site between 1915 and 1950.¹⁴ In 1912 the competing Seward Bag and Trunk Factory had tracks of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad running directly through its manufacturing facility for the immediate loading and transportation of goods.¹⁵ One can only assume that the Virginia Trunk and Bag Co. would have added its railroad spur sooner rather than later to match its leading competitor. This indicates a likely date of construction closer to 1915 than 1950, and almost certainly within the period of significance ending in 1931. This spur demonstrates the transition of shipping for the facility from wagons and small trucks to the railroads, a common change for industry during this period.

The company grew rapidly and by 1908 had already expanded its facility from 100,000 to 150,000 square feet and was using 10,000 linear feet of lumber each day.¹⁶ By 1909 this trunk manufacturing facility was described in the following terms: "one of the most complete and extensive in the country...gives employment to about five hundred people...handled about twelve thousand tons of material last year."¹⁷ At the same time the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce compiled statistics from five trunk and bag factories in the city which they claimed established "that Petersburg leads the world in this line of manufacture." The estimated annual output for the trunk and bag industry at that time was 633,825 trunks and 688,600 bags sold throughout the United States and exported to numerous foreign countries.¹⁸

By this time the Petersburg trunk and bag businesses were not only a leader in their industry nationally, but represented a significant part of the total Petersburg economy. By 1917 seven of the eighty seven manufacturing establishments in Petersburg were "trunk and valises" companies, but they represented a far larger share of the total local economy. The total value of products produced in Petersburg in 1914 was \$12,610,000 and of that, the trunk and valise industry accounted for \$1,935,373. In the same year, the number of people employed by manufacturing establishments was 4,320, while the number employed by trunk and valise manufacturers was 1,135.¹⁹ In addition, the trunk industry consumed 15,000,000 feet of lumber annually consisting of mostly yellow pine from Southside Virginia and North Carolina. The trunk factories also expended more than \$1,000,000 annually for hardware and fiber used in production of their products.²⁰

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The makeup of the labor force for each industry in Petersburg varied depending upon the physical demands of the job and the rules of society at that time. While certain heavy labor jobs were assigned to men instead of women and children, it was the issues of race and gender which decided the division of most labor forces. Women and men were often separated as a result of conservative social expectations. When race was a factor, entire job categories or whole factories were staffed by only whites or African Americans. The tobacco industry was more often served by labor from the black community while the cotton industry in Petersburg employed predominantly white workers.²¹ A 1914 census revealed a clear picture of the Petersburg trunk industry labor force. Of the 2,000-2,500 total workers, ninety percent were white men and boys of at least sixteen years of age. A small percentage of white women and girls worked in the trunk lining departments revealing a labor force segregated by both race and gender.²²

The next stage in the trunk industry development in Petersburg was the creation of the American Hardware Company 1913-16.²³ The American Hardware Co. was a holding company which controlled six of the largest trunk manufacturers in Petersburg: Seward Trunk & Bag Co., Virginia Trunk & Bag Co., Petersburg Trunk & Bag Co., Standard Trunk & Bag, Co., Petersburg Travelling Goods Co., and the Appomattox Trunk & Bag Co.²⁴ These companies represented the vast majority of trunk and valise manufacturing in Petersburg and the headquarters for this new company, from approximately 1916 to 1931, was the Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. facility at 110-120 Guarantee Street (currently 600 W. Wythe St.).²⁵ The Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. facility continued to operate as a subsidiary of the American Hardware Co. while also hosting the administrative offices of the other subsidiaries. This put the Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. facility in the position of being not only one of the two most prominent trunk manufacturing facilities in the city, along with the Seward Trunk & Bag Co., but also the administrative headquarters for the majority of Petersburg trunk manufacturers for over a decade.

With the 1931 takeover of the American Hardware Co. by Seward Trunk & Bag Co., the Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. ceased to be an independent company. However, the facility remained part of the American Hardware Co. until 1950 when the Seward Trunk & Bag Co. became the sole operating name of the company.²⁶ The Seward Trunk Co. itself was purchased by the Dayco Corp. of Dayton, Ohio in 1976 and then sold to the Mercury Luggage Co. in 1998.²⁷ The Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. facility remained with Seward until it was sold to the present owner, Tubular Fabricators Industry, Inc (TFI) in 1985.

Currently, the Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. facility is used by TFI as a manufacturing, storage, and shipping facility for health care products. The large complex is still unified as one property with the original buildings remaining, representing every phase of production, storage, and shipping of trunks, bags, and other products. The interior and exterior of the various sections of the facility are largely intact and retain almost all of their original appearance and historic character. The exteriors are all unpainted brick masonry construction with each section of the facility between 1-4 stories in height. The exception is the boiler building, which has two walls constructed of metal, and the sides of the pedestrian bridges, which are also clad in metal. All of the multi-story sections feature numerous windows running the length of the building, likely for light as was typical in early 20th century industrial construction. The only identifiable changes to the exterior are some filled in windows, the addition of a few modern ground level truck loading doors, and the early addition of second story loading openings along the facades facing the railroad spur.

The interiors are also largely unchanged from the original period of construction. The surfaces consist of almost entirely exposed brick and large wooden posts and beams. The ground floor of each section has concrete floors with wood flooring in the upper stories. The generic interiors reflect the flexibility of the spaces, many of which changed purposes over time. The modern changes consist of machinery for the current business placed on warehouse floors, conduit for modern wiring, and modern lighting. There are original sliding wood doors on their original tracks in several locations. On the second floor of the four-story shipping and storage building (Bldg. 14) there appears to have been an office. One end of the 2nd floor features tin ceiling tiles; this is the only area in the complex with any type of historic ceiling. There may have been a wall separating this finished ceiling area from the rest of the 2nd floor, but it is now missing. There is a smaller one room office within the tin ceiling area which appears to have been constructed after the period of significance, perhaps when the original office demarcated by the tin ceiling was eliminated. There is also a large safe painted with the name of "Virginia Trunk and Bag Co." located in the corner of the tin ceilinged section of the 2nd floor.

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The overall result is a highly intact and architecturally significant industrial complex. The Virginia Trunk and Bag Co. retains all of its original structures representing a complete picture of the trunk manufacturing process. The architecture is a good example of early 20th century industrial architecture and retains all of its original features with very few modern alterations. The contributing additions maintain the same style as the original factory, with matching brick masonry construction and window placement, creating an architecturally unified complex. The addition of the railroad spur, and the accompanying railroad loading openings added to the second stories of the storage and warehouse space, replaced the still existing ground floor openings used for loading wagons and small early trucks when the facility was first constructed. The post-WWII addition of openings and loading docks for modern tractor-trailers demonstrates the continued evolution of the facility even after the period of significance.

In comparison to the other trunk manufacturing facilities in Petersburg which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. facility stands out with its combination of history, industrial significance, and architectural integrity. The ca. 1921 Rogers and Madison facility (DHR #123-5359 and #123-5420-0007) retains only two contributing resources with several 1960 additions, has not been renovated, and was determined to be not individually eligible for listing. The ca. 1915 Petersburg Trunk & Bag Co. facility (DHR #123-5367 and #123-5420-0008) retains only a single contributing resource, a factory building, which has been converted into the Dunlop Lofts multi-residential apartment complex, and was also determined to be not eligible for individual listing. Finally, there is the main Seward Luggage Manufacturing Co. facility on High Street and Lafayette Street (DHR #123-0097-0295, #123-0097-0296, #123-0097-0297) consisting of three interconnected buildings representing a significant and largely intact complex. Historically, this resource is comparable with the Virginia Trunk & Bag Co. facility, and may exceed it in local prominence. A section of the complex was renovated into multi-unit residential in 2004, but the rest of the complex is in poor condition with significant deterioration and some collapse as a result of being exposed to the elements for an extended period. Also, unlike Virginia Trunk & Bag Co., most of the supporting buildings have been torn down, leaving only the main factory facility.

The Virginia Trunk & Bag Company resource represents a strong candidate for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (Industry) and Criterion C (Architecture). It has a high degree of architectural and historical integrity, retaining its original structures, each of which in turn retains most of their interior and exterior historic features and character. The original site is intact and none of the buildings have been moved. The facility is also the most intact of the remaining trunk manufacturing facilities in Petersburg. The importance of the trunk manufacturing industry to local Petersburg history is well-known and the prominent place of this facility within that history is firmly established.

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<http://www.scripophily.net/daycor.html>.

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA, June 1897; Sheet 20.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA, April 1903; Sheet 18; Sheet 20.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Virginia Trunk & Bag Company Complex (Tax Parcel ID# 023300005) is bound by W. Wythe Street to the north, Guarantee Street to the east, Brown Street to the south, and by a small creek known as Brick House Run to the west.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with Virginia Trunk & Bag Company.

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Petersburg, VA**

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Photographic Documentation

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Name of Property: Virginia Trunk & Bag Company

Location: Petersburg, VA

Photographer: Sarah C. McPhail

Date of Photographs: June 2008 and January 2009

Digital images of the photographs are being stored in the archives department at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond, VA.

Photo Number	Description	Direction
0001	VA Trunk & Bag Company, Office and Machine Shop	looking east
0002	VA Trunk & Bag Company, 4-story warehouse	looking east
0003	VA Trunk & Bag Company, 1908 and 1915 Additions	looking west
0004	VA Trunk & Bag Company, 3 and 4 story Shipping/Storage Building	looking west
0005	VA Trunk & Bag Company, Site	looking west
0006	VA Trunk & Bag Company, typical warehouse space	looking east
0007	VA Trunk & Bag Company, historic loading area	looking south
0008	VA Trunk & Bag Company, historic office space	looking northeast
0009	VA Trunk & Bag Company, manufacturing area	looking east
0010	VA Trunk & Bag Company, Boiler House, historic pipes and blower	looking west

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Section Endnotes Page 13

Endnotes

- ¹ <http://www.craterroad.com/timeline.html>.
- ² Scott, James E. and Edward Wyatt, IV, Petersburg's Story: A History, Petersburg, VA: 1960, p.75.
- ³ "Petersburg, Virginia: Historically Speaking Colorful Glimpses of American History," Petersburg, VA., Tourism Department: p.1-22.
- ⁴ "Petersburg, Virginia: Historically Speaking," p.22.
- ⁵ Greene, A. Wilson, Civil War Petersburg, Charlottesville, VA: 2006, p.116-18.
- ⁶ Pollock, Edward, Historical and Industrial Guide to Petersburg, Petersburg, VA: 1884, p.64-66.
- ⁷ Scott, Petersburg's Story, p. 291.
- ⁸ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA, September 1885; Sheet 13.
- ⁹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA, April 1891; Sheet 13.
- ¹⁰ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA, June 1897; Sheet 20.
- ¹¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA, April 1903; Sheet 18; Sheet 20.
- ¹² Hill's Petersburg (Virginia) City Directory, 1915-1916.
- ¹³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA: 1885-1950.
- ¹⁴ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Petersburg, VA, 1915-1950; Sheet 32.
- ¹⁵ Willoughby, Laura E., Petersburg, Charleston, SC: 2006, p.70.
- ¹⁶ "Petersburg's Commercial Souvenir," Petersburg, VA: 1908.
- ¹⁷ "Mercantile and Industrial Review of Petersburg, Virginia," Industrial Department Seaboard Air Line Railway, Portsmouth, Virginia: 1909, p.25.
- ¹⁸ "Mercantile and Industrial Review," p.30.
- ¹⁹ Hodges, LeRoy. Petersburg Virginia, Economic and Municipal. Chamber of Commerce of Petersburg, Inc.: Petersburg, VA: 1917, p.23, 24, 48.
- ²⁰ Hodges, Petersburg Virginia, Economic and Municipal, p.49.
- ²¹ Scott, Petersburg's Story, p.291-92.
- ²² Hodges, Petersburg Virginia, Economic and Municipal, p.49.
- ²³ Hill's City Directory, 1913-16.
- ²⁴ Hodges, Petersburg Virginia, Economic and Municipal, p.48.
- ²⁵ Hill's City Directory, 1913-33.
- ²⁶ Hill's City Directory, 1950.
- ²⁷ <http://www.scripophily.net/daycor.html>.

Rec'd 7/27/09
MFW



City of Petersburg

Department of Planning &
Community Development
804-733-2308

Room 304, City Hall
Petersburg, Virginia 23803
FAX 863-2772
TDD 733-8003

July 23, 2009

Mr. Marc Christian Wagner
Director, Resource Information Division
Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond VA 23221

Re: Virginia Trunk and Bag Company Building, Petersburg

Dear Mr. Wagner,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the nomination for the Virginia Trunk and Bag Company Building located at 600 West Wythe Street in Petersburg. The Architectural Review Board reviewed the nomination at their meeting of July 22, 2009.

The ARB is pleased that the structure is being considered for placement on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. They wish to offer their full support of the nomination.

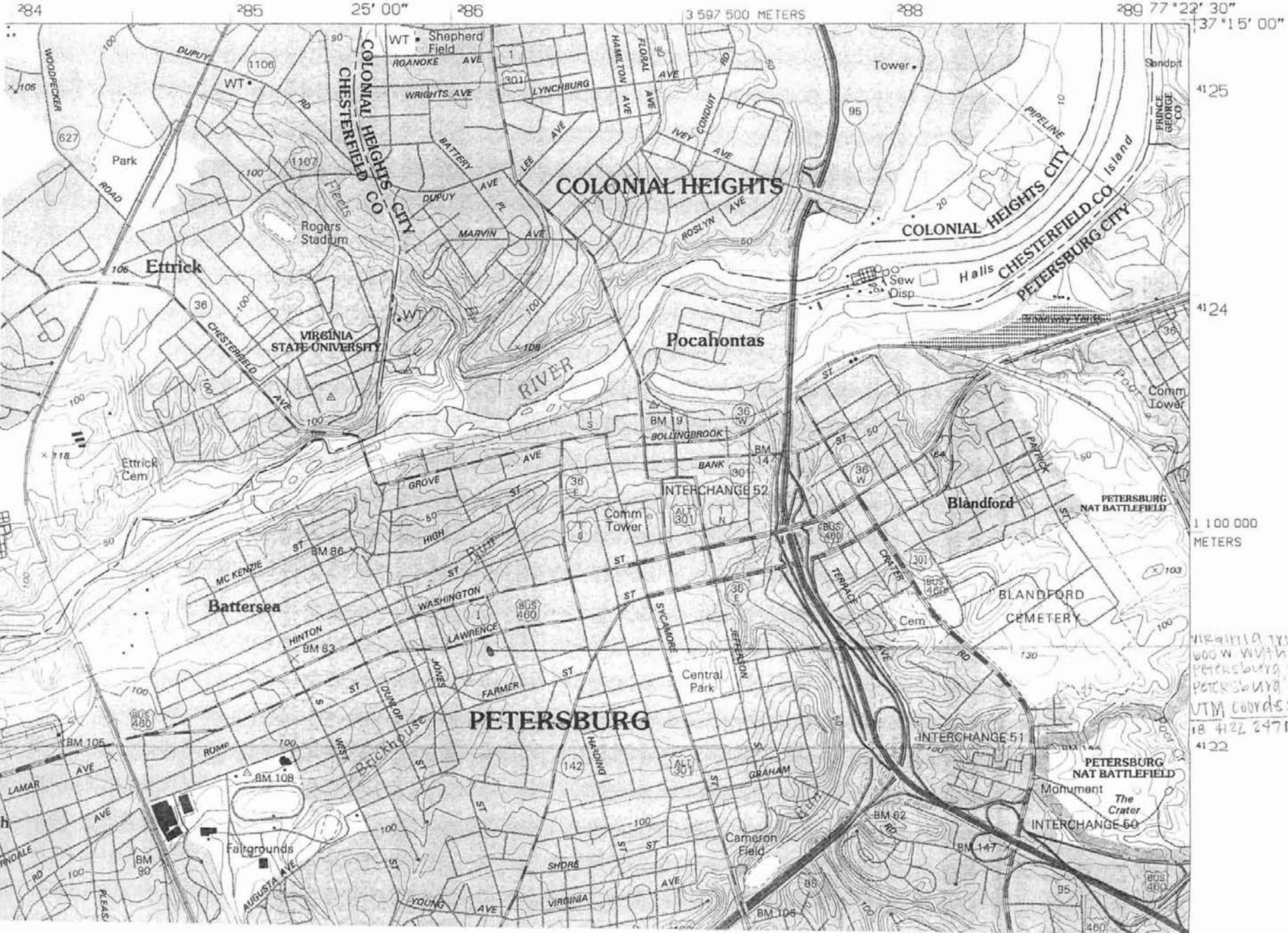
Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and feel free to contact me with any concerns.

Sincerely,

Alain Joyaux
Chair, Architectural Review Board

c: B. David Canada, City Manager
Leonard A. Muse, Director of Planning and Community Development
Victoria A. Hauser, Preservation Planner

PETERSBURG QUADRANGLE
VIRGINIA
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Virginia trunk # 502 (I-95)
 600 W White Street
 Petersburg, Virginia
 Petersburg, Va road
 UTM coords:
 18 42 247N 286 077E
 4122