



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for HISTORIC DISTRICTS

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 012-5368

1. General Information

District name(s): Ebony Historic District

Main Streets and/or Routes: near intersection of Robinson Ferry Rd, Hendrick's Mill Rd, and Ebony Rd

City or Town: Ebony, VA

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Brunswick County, VA

>>> See attached Locator Map.

>>> For sketch, see attached annotated Property Tax map.

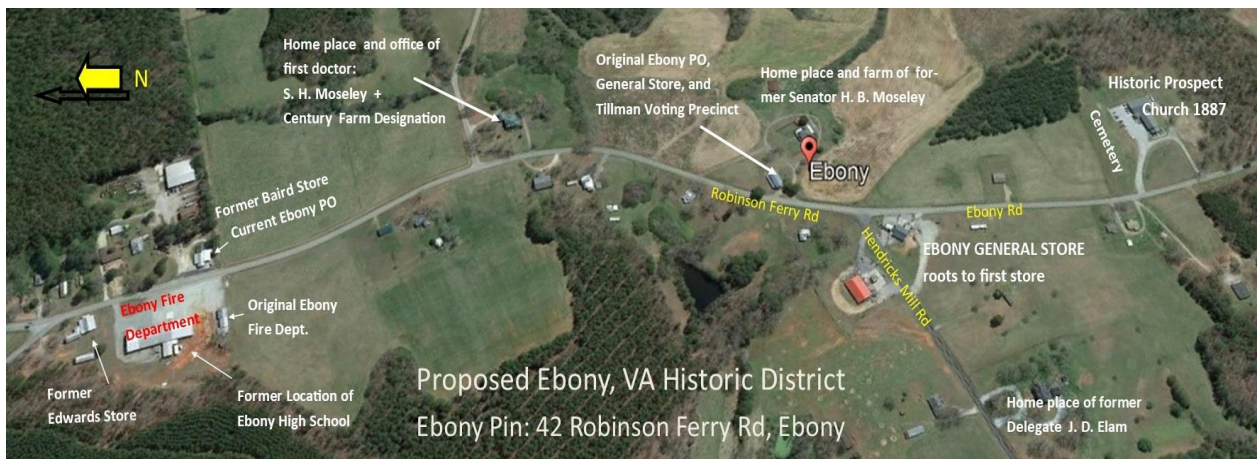
2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: TBD

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Town ☐ Village ☒ Hamlet ☐ Rural ☐

Briefly describe the district's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:



This designated area, with historic significance, is the birthplace of the Ebony, VA community named in 1882 when the first Post Office was established. It is still a beautiful, unspoiled rural community hub that has been intentionally preserved by landowners and further protected by Brunswick County's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances. It is a mix of rural residential, controlled local business that fits the community, farmland, timberland, Ebony Post Office, Ebony Volunteer Fire Department, and Prospect Church and Cemetery. Hendrick's Mill Road and Robinson Ferry Roads are Virginia Scenic Byways.

When nearby Lake Gaston was anticipated and established in 1963, it was clear to all the impact and change that would face the community – the benefits and the concerns - but it was accepted and people adapted. Local businesses in all counties around the lake certainly saw a significant increase during the lake season. New restaurants and other service-oriented businesses were created. This business impact remains true today for the two Ebony stores.

The increase in visitors and Lake Gaston residents consider unspoiled Ebony and its history a real treasure and attraction. Even with all the change, increase in traffic and population with nearby lake subdivisions, Ebony's legacy and its character has been preserved so far. There continues to be much pride and sense of stewardship to keep it that way.

3. Architectural/Physical Description

Architectural Style(s): HB Moseley homeplace - #2 in list below – brick, 4 square architectural design; there are several homes within a 10-mile radius that are similar

If any individual properties within the district were designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here:

If any builders or developers are known, please list here: Norman Holloway was the builder; bricks were made on the property.

Date(s) of construction (can be approximate): 1933 - 1936

Are there any known threats to this district? Yes - the County approving over commercialization allowing for businesses that are not compatible with Agricultural Districts, destroy historic integrity, and do harm to existing or future businesses that are appropriate as well as the character and safety of rural communities like Ebony – all that is not in accord with the current Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances or updating both to remove the protections.

>> See next page for list of all buildings.

Narrative Description:

The buildings in the community are a combination of post office, occupied homes, stores, church, fire department, and unused homes/stores that have been preserved by landowners to maintain the historic integrity of the community. A brief description is provided below and numbered pictures are provide as separate attachments with file names that start with the associated number.



1. **Original Ebony Post Office (EPO)**; unused but preserved - that served not only as post office but also as general store, first polling place, and second location of Prospect Church (1871 – 1887); built by Samuel Jackson Moseley (Civil War Soldier) between 1865 and 1870; the EPO was moved to current location nearby in 1955 - #9.
2. **H.B. Moseley homestead - Former VA Delegate and Senator**: maintained home and farm of former VA Delegate (1912 – 1931) and Senator Harvey B. Moseley (1932 – 1934, 1936 – 1938, 1940 – 1942) and his wife Selena Valentine Moseley; son of Samuel Jackson Moseley; the home was built between 1933 – 1936 replacing the prior home that burned; brick 4-square design that is similar to several others within 10 miles.
3. **Current Ebony General Store since 1962** that was built in same location as the original store built by J. D. Elam in the late 1800s. Cinderblock construction; expanded on the north side to accommodate freezer and new roof was added and fresh paint.
4. **J. D Elam homeplace - Former VA Delegate**: restored homeplace of former VA Delegate J. D. Elam (served 1901 - 1919)
5. **Prospect Cemetery** with graves dating back to the latter half of the 1800s including Civil War soldiers.
6. **Prospect Church** in its third and current location built in 1887; the original church has been preserved as the sanctuary of the current church that was last renovated in 2012; detailed history of the church and its renovations is available.
7. **Dr. Samuel H. Moseley homestead**: restored homeplace and office of first community doctor, Dr. Samuel H. Moseley and his wife, Lula Valentine Moseley, finished in 1903; son of Samuel Jackson Moseley.
8. **Century Farm designation** as part of S.H. Moseley homestead
9. **Current Ebony Post Office since 1955 – to be excluded from Historic District designation.**
10. **Original Ebony Volunteer Fire Dept building** with current building on same property; **commemorative marker of Ebony High School**
11. **Former Edwards Store and Mill**: preserved buildings of general store and mill owned and operated by Hubert L. Edwards from 1934 – 1975; the store building would have been built before 1934 by the former owner and operator.
12. **Homestead Antiques and Garden Shop** located in one of the old homes that was built in the early 1900s

13. **Occupied vintage homes** that have been maintained; the home with the large front porch was built in the 1920s and the screen porch was added in the 1980s
14. **Preserved vintage bungalow** that is not occupied.
15. **Preserved vintage bungalow** that is not occupied.
16. **A second store (Race In)** - food, gas - operates across the road from Ebony General, though built in the early 1990s it does not have historic significance except to reflect the small locally, owned country stores that were part of Ebony's yesteryear.

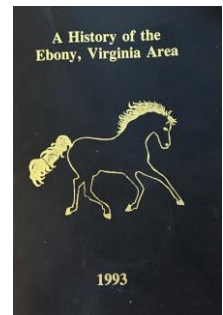
4. District's History and Significance

The Ebony community was established in 1882 when its first US Post Office was assigned. Prior to that the community and lands to the south toward the NC state line were known as Prospect. When the postal service came in they required a unique name that was not already in use. Because Prospect was already assigned, Samuel Jackson Moseley, selected the name Ebony, after a champion racehorse.

The legacy we would want to memorialize with Historic District designation is that of a rural anchor community in Brunswick County that has retained its character, authenticity, historic integrity, and quality of life for its residents and all who come to visit, since it was established in 1882. It was built on community spirit, principled families who worked hard, enjoyed living and creating fun memories, helped each other, and treated each other of all skin color with kindness and respect. It was a self-sufficient community.

EBONY HISTORY BOOK (EHB)

This special place and its legacy were previously memorialized when a leadership committee was formed, and 95 families and community historians joined together to write a book which was compiled from 1987 – 1993 and published in 1993. It was reprinted in 2021. Only one member of the original committee is still living and served on the reprint committee. The book is named "A History of the Ebony, Virginia Area" and a copy is available upon request. More details about life in Ebony, the people, business, stores, school, and volunteer fire department are easily accessible from the history book.



VIRGINIA SCENIC BYWAYS

Hendrick's Mill Road and Robinson Ferry Roads are Virginia Scenic Byway.

POST OFFICE

The first Ebony Post Office that has been preserved by the family served not only as post office but also as general store, first polling place, and second location of Prospect Church (1871 – 1887). It was built by Samuel Jackson Moseley (Civil War Soldier) between 1865 and 1870 who was first postmaster (1882 – 1891) and again 1895 – 1900. The post office was moved to its current location that was initially inside Lonnie Baird's store in 1955 when Lonnie became postmaster.

ECONOMIC SELF SUFFICIENCY

Ebony's legacy is that of a full service, self-sufficient community that was always a mix of rural residential, controlled local business that supported the area, schools, farmland, timberland, post office, church and cemetery – when combined with the saw mills, cotton gins, timber business, and farming operation – mostly provided employment for all who lived in the area until the 1950s when people began taking jobs in the larger towns. In 1951, another key business, Moseley-Nash Water Division was established that also employed several generations of local citizens – and is still in operation today by a family member. The Ebony Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1959 and has remained active ever since. More is written about the Economy in the EHB, pages 61 – 65, and the EVFD, pages 41-46.

COUNTRY STORES

Ebony maintained and relied upon four locally owned and operated general stores that coexisted with homes and farms of the community and operated until the 1970s:

1. S. J. Moseley Store / First PO – building preserved by owner; shelved still have inventory from the 1970s and earlier when the store was in operation; they have old ledgers as well
2. Ebony General – still in operation – in location of original J.D. Elam Store
3. Edwards Store – buildings preserved by owner; we have pictures before it closed
4. Baird Store / Current PO – building maintained by owner

More is written about these and other stores in the EHB, pages 47 – 60.

These four stores were gathering places for the community, had different personalities, goods and services which in some cases overlapped and also offered variety. The stores also served as banks and offered credit (“write it in the book or on the tab”) as a convenience since larger towns were at least twenty miles away and transportation accessibility was still evolving.

There are two stores in Ebony today – Ebony General and RACE IN - that continue to reflect the presence of stores in Ebony of yesteryear their role in the local community that also serve the broader community and, in the case of Ebony General, serve as an attraction for both tourists and Lake Gaston residents who want to experience the authentic country store in a beautiful country setting.

EBONY COMMUNITY CENTER: SCHOOL AND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Ebony included a High School that operated 1910 – 1944 and Elementary School that operated until 1953. A ball field was built next to the high school. Ebony High School was home to winning baseball and basketball teams. When it was no longer used as a school in 1953, the building was transformed to the Ebony Community Center. The first Ebony Volunteer Fire Department (EVFD) was built on the grounds of High School on the south side and succeeded the school as a community hub of activity and gatherings. The current Ebony Volunteer Fire Department facility built on the high school grounds serves as the community center.

A commemorative marker for the school was erected in 1990. More is written about the Ebony High School and Sports in Ebony in the EHB pages 21 – 40 and the EVFD on pages 41 – 46.

BRUNSWICK STEW

Ebony's rich history includes a special connection to cooking its own Brunswick Stew outside at the old high school or "fire house" and around the community by its renown stew master, Tommie King followed by his brother Cook King following the same recipe. Tommie's stew was considered the best around. His recipe stuck to the basic ingredients and was always consistent. This PIF applicant has a copy of the recipe Tommie used that was given to her by Tommie's sister and, with friends, has made it outside over an open fire in a big black caldron! More is written about this in the EHB, page 76.

PROSPECT CHURCH

Prospect Church and its roots have served the area for 200 years and in its current (third) location since 1887. The current sanctuary section with the steeple is the original church building.

The first location was south of current Ebony and was named Prospect Church because the area at the time was called Prospect. A decision was made to move the church closer to the center of the community when they relocated to the second floor of S. J. Moseley's store and met there from 1871 – 1887.

The stained-glass windows were added in 1935 and all are given by Prospect founding families in memory and recognition of individuals from the community who served the church in meaningful ways.

The most recent updates were completed in 2012. Those updates included replacing the old Fellowship Hall that had been added in 1970, adding the bell tower entrance, plus residing, and reroofing the whole church. The theme of the renovation was "Preserving Our Past While Building Our Future".

More is written about Prospect's history in the EHB, pages 13-17. An updated history is found on the church website: <https://www.prospectumc-ebonyva.org/history>

PROSPECT CEMETERY

The cemetery lies on three sides of the church: south, east, north. The east side with the oldest graves contains the landowners-at-the-time (Moseley) Family Cemetery. A plat for the south side of the cemetery is dated 1911 when owners first sold plots outside the family. The north side is considered the "new" cemetery that was established in the 1960s.

[Link to a list of those buried at the Prospect Cemetery as of 2011.](#) There are graves dating back to the late 1800s including Civil War soldiers.

More about the cemetery is found on the cemetery web page: https://www.prospectumc-ebonyva.org/prospect_cemetery

HOMES

There are three stately homes of prominent citizens in the proposed Historic District – HB Moseley, SH Moseley, JD Elam – that were built from late 1800s to mid-1930s. They are described in **3**.

Architectural/Physical Description. All have been renovated or maintained and continuously occupied. Other homes in the proposed district are distinct in their design and most were built in the early 1900s. Some have continued to be occupied while two of the vintage bungalows are no longer occupied, their exteriors have been preserved by the owners to preserve the historic integrity of the community.

PROMINENT CITIZENS

Samuel Jackson Moseley, first postmaster when the Ebony post office was established in 1882, served along with other family member in various leadership roles as the early community was developing. He was also a soldier in the Civil War and after returning home from the surrender at Appomattox Court House found that service to his community did not cease with the end of the War. His dedication to the restoration of his community was evidenced in his leadership and support of Prospect Church as well as his maintenance of farms, a store and the Post Office in Ebony. He is buried at Prospect Cemetery in the Moseley family cemetery next to his wife, Sarah Clary Moseley. More is written about Samuel Jackson and his family in the EHB, pages 226 – 230, which includes a copy of a letter he wrote home during the Civil War.

Ebony was home to two citizens who pursued a life of service in politics. **J. D. Elam** served in the VA House of Delegates from 1901 – 1919. Elam was a mentor to H. B. Moseley and was first to have running water in the community and buy a Maxwell automobile. Elam also built and operated one of the earliest country stores in the community that was located where Ebony General (built in 1962) is located today. More is written about J. D. Elam and his family in the EHB, page 143.

Harvey B. Moseley served in both the VA House of Delegates (1912 – 1931) and the VA Senate (1932 – 1934, 1936 – 1938, 1940 – 1942). Moseley is buried at Prospect Cemetery in the Moseley family cemetery. Before he got into politics and when not in Richmond, Moseley stayed busy running various family businesses: sawmills, cotton gins, general store, candy company, and served as Postmaster from 1914 to 1931. More is written about H. B. Moseley and his family in the EHB, pages 207 – 209.

In addition, the community had its own doctor, **Dr. S.H. Moseley**, who not only saw patients in his home office, but also made house calls by buggy. Because he was the only doc around of any kind, he sometimes served as a dentist and veterinarian – according to his story in the Ebony history book. Dr. Moseley was brother to H.B. Moseley and son of Samuel Jackson Moseley. More is written about S. H. Moseley and his family in the EHB, pages 219-223.

“It has been exciting to review our heritage. While we are certain that our findings are not all-inclusive, you can see that we are proud of our roots. The traditions of our people reflect the strong influence of bygone generations.

Our future is also heavily influenced by the new people who have been brought into our community by the development of the greater Lake Gaston area. These newcomers have quickly established themselves as part of our Ebony family. They have added a new dimension to our churches, community organizations, and economy. They bring invaluable perspectives and expertise that, blended with the fine traditions of the past, will change the future traditions of our area.

OUR CALL TO ACTION - STEWARDS OF A LEGACY – PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

6. Applicant/Sponsor (Individual and/or organization sponsoring preparation of the PIF, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

e-mail: ahartley1009@gmail.com telephone: 919-602-5012

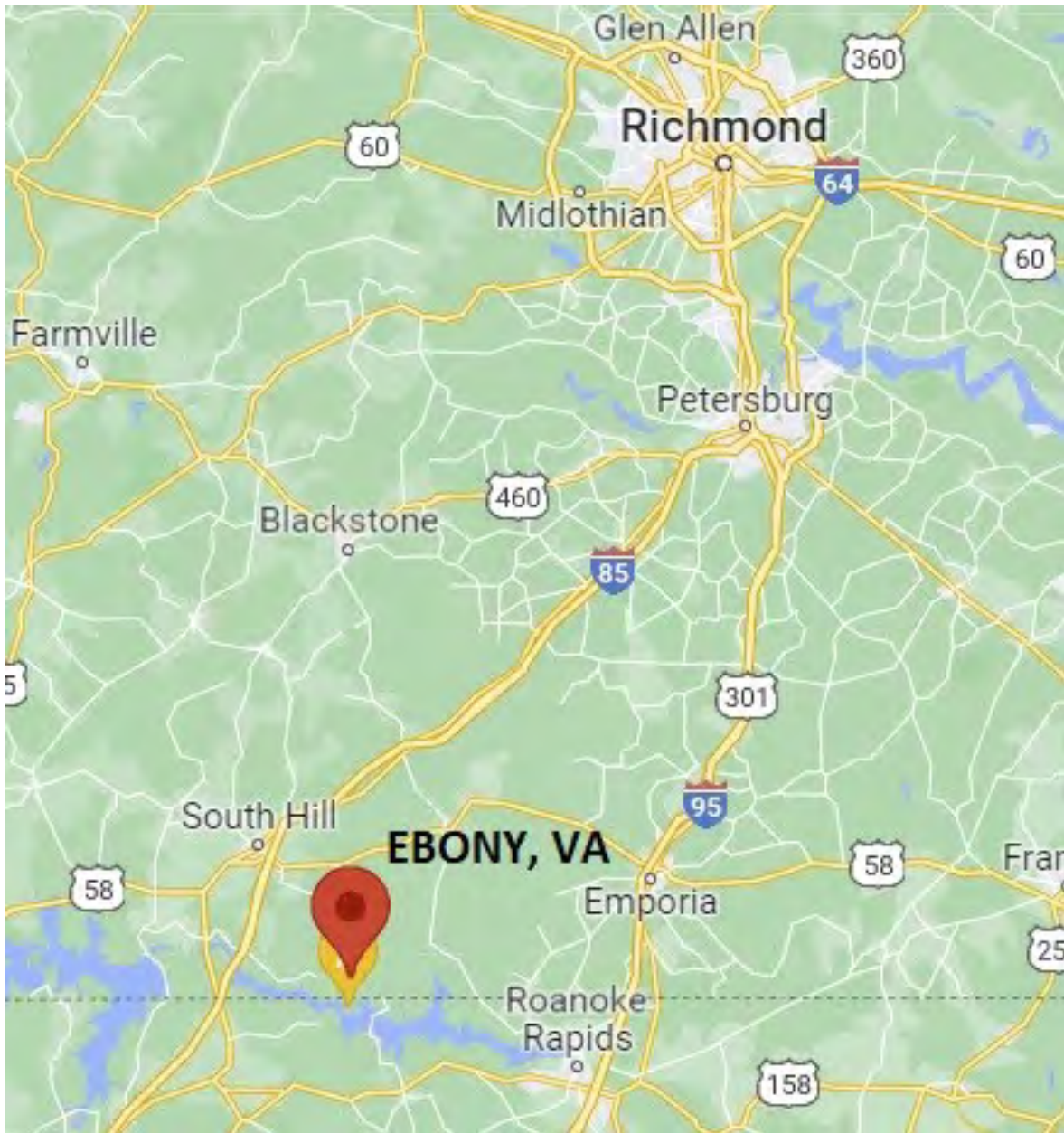
Applicant's Signature: Anne L. Hartley

Date: 1/31/23

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available

Ebony, VA Historic District Proposal

Locator Map

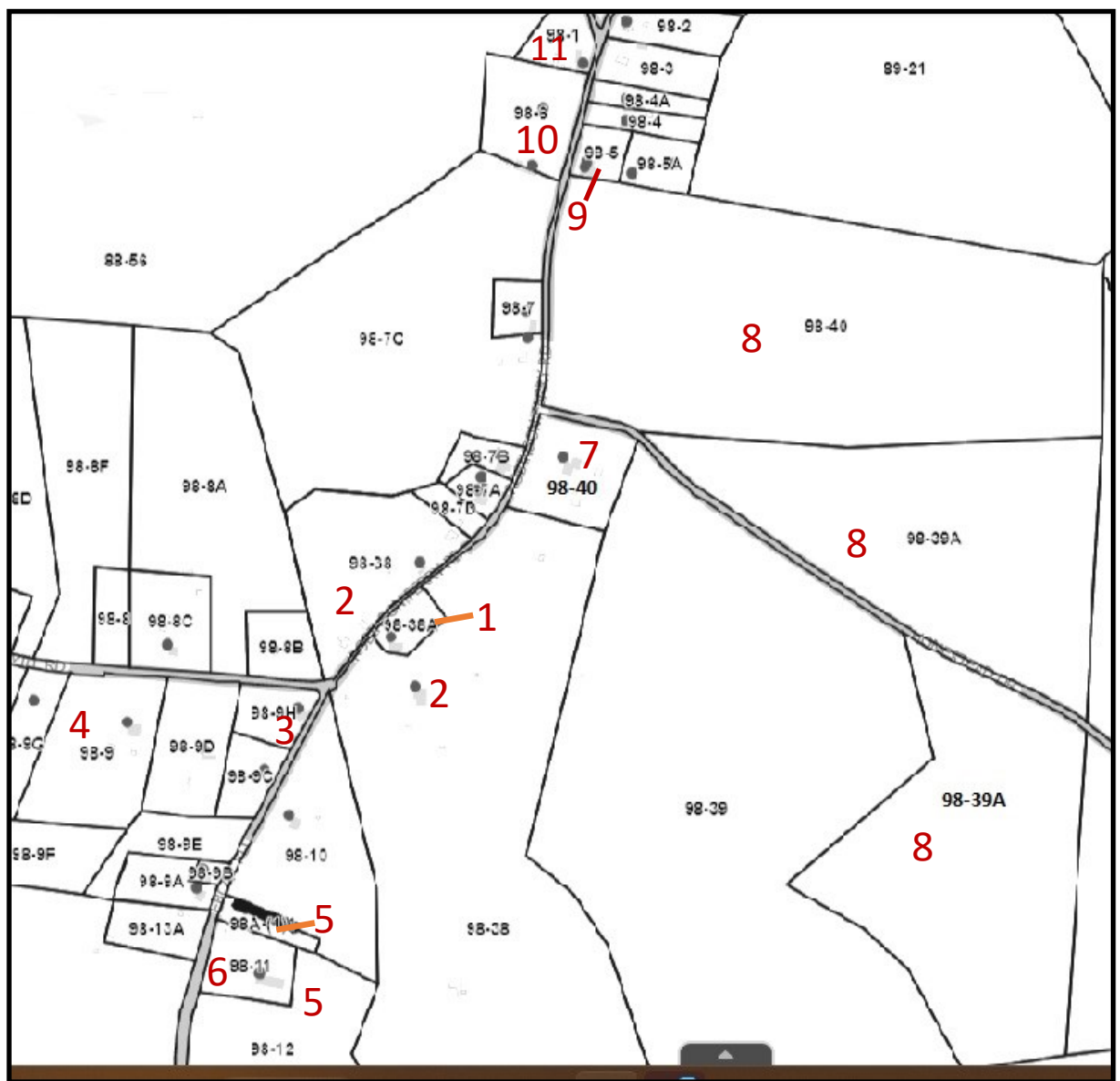


Pin: 42 Robinson Ferry Road, Ebony, VA

[Google Map](#)

Ebony, VA Historic District

Proposal Sketch Map Jan 2023

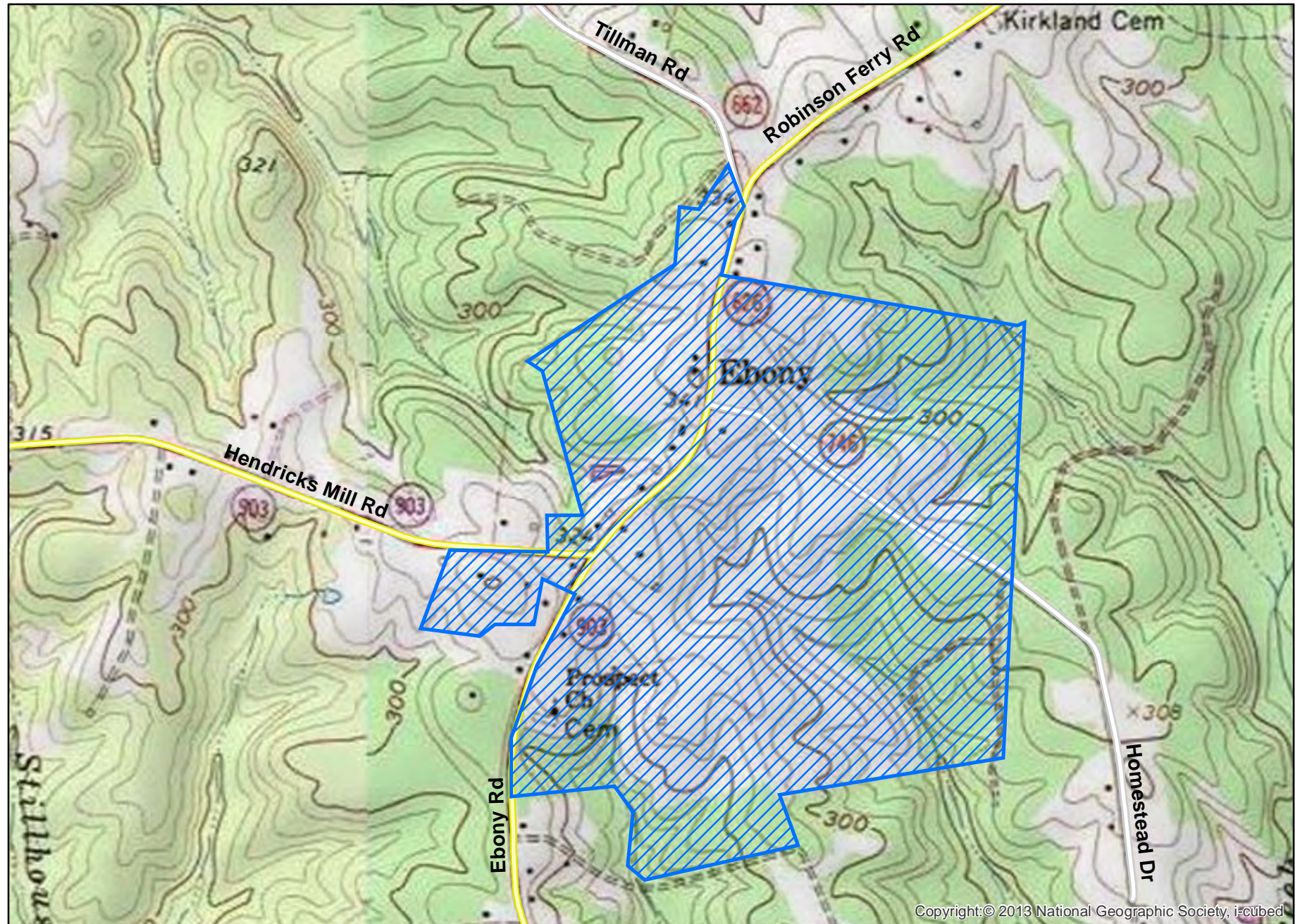


Source: Brunswick County GIS online: <https://brunswick.southsidegis.org/>

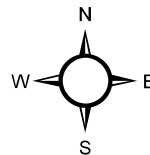
1	98-38A	Preserved Original Ebony PO, named in 1882 and owned by Samuel Jackson Moseley who named community; served as voting precinct, and operated as a general store until the 1970s.
2	98-38	Maintained Homeplace and farmland of former VA Delegate and Senator H.B. Moseley (son of Samuel Jackson Moseley); home was built in the 1930s replacing the prior home that burned
3	98-9H	Ebony General Store built in 1966 in location of first store built by J. D. Elam
4	98-9	Restored homeplace of former VA Delegate J.D. Elam
5	98A-1(1), 98-12	Prospect Cemetery — earliest graves date back to late 1800s and include Civil War veterans
6	98-11	Prospect Church—original church built in 1887 is preserved as sanctuary of current church
7	98-40	Restored homeplace and office of first community doctor, Dr. S. H. Moseley (son of Samuel Jackson Moseley) - finished in 1903
8	98-40, 98-39A	Designated Century Farm
9	98-5	Current Ebony PO since 1955; owners do not wish for the property to be part of Historic District designation. Please respect their wishes.
10	98-6	Preserved original Ebony VFD and new building on same property; commemorative marker for location of Ebony High School
11	98-1	Preserved buildings of former H.L. Edwards Store and Mill — owned and operated from 1934 to 1975 by Edwards; it was built earlier than 1934 and operated by former owner, FV Jones

Date: 2/1/2023 - PIF (proposed)

Author: Quatro Hubbard, DHR Archives



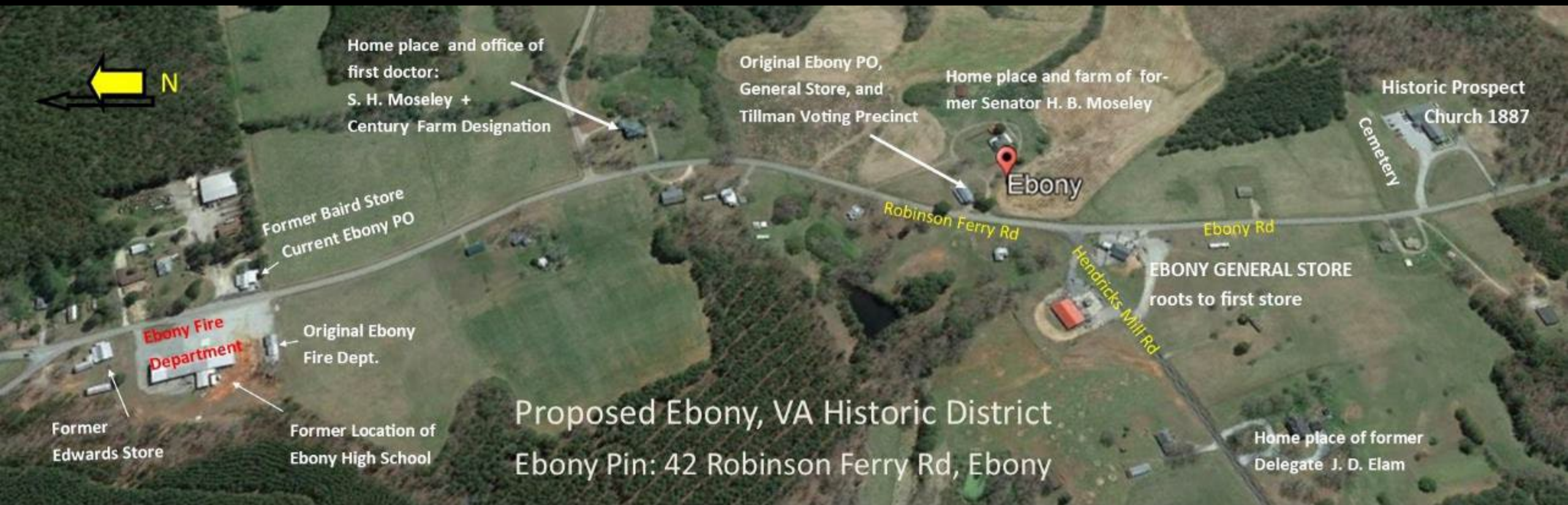
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Legend

 Architecture Resources

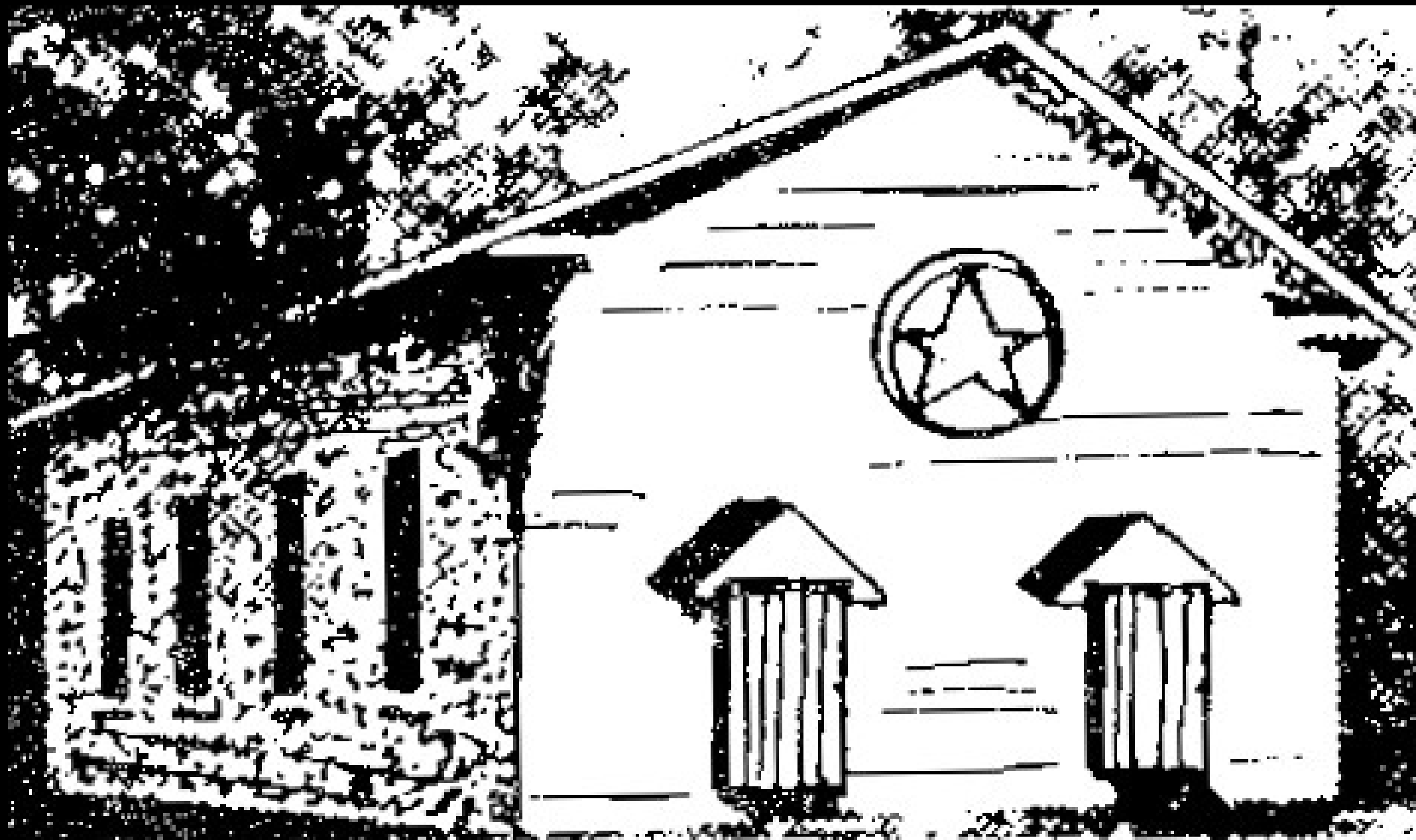
Ebony Historic District
DHR File No. 012-5368
Brunswick County
Gasburg USGS Quad





Ebony VA, Picture Locator Map

Ebony Pin: 42 Robinson Ferry Rd, Ebony























PROSPECT CEMETERY

In Memory of
Lucy Gay Moseley Nash
FOUNDER, PROSPECT CEMETERY ASSOC.

PROSPECT
CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 28 LEBONY, VA
22645













































