



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

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.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 014-0151

1. General Property Information

Property name: Arvonnia Primary School

Property address: 29406 North James Madison Hwy

City or Town: Arvonnia

Zip code: 23004

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

Buckingham

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site _____ Structure _____ Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 1.889

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban _____ Suburban _____ Town _____ Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural X

Briefly describe the property's overall location and setting, including any notable landscape features:

The land is flat and cleared with wooded areas located to the south and west. The front of the property or north side is at the road. There is a grassy area with a semi-circular drive. In the grassy area there is a slate sign with the school name, a metal flag pole and mature boxwoods that line the drive. Mature boxwoods flank the main entry.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Colonial Revival

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Likely State Dept. of Education – Buckingham County School Board

If the builder is known, please list here: _____

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1930

Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):

Briefly describe the property's general characteristics, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

The "E" shaped building was built in 1930. It was a secondary school until the 1950s and was remodeled and became Arvonias Elementary School. Around 1974 the school was renamed and repurposed as Arvonias Primary School for kindergarten to third grade children. It suffered a fire in 1987 which led to it being closed permanently. It was sold in 1996 and later resold to the current owner, Hi-Tech Real Estate, LLC. This company has removed the asbestos and plans to rehabilitate the building, use to be determined.

During its use as a school there were several additions added to the school. Soon after the building was completed bathrooms and fire escape doors were added to the rear wings of the building. Around 1954, a kitchen was built onto the east side of the center projection or auditorium. In 1974, when the school was used as a primary school for young children several closets within the classrooms were fitted with toilets.

Exterior

The foundation of the building is concrete with brick walls measuring 145'x 81'6' according to a 1949 survey of the structure. The brick bond is three stretcher rows to one alternating row of headers and stretchers. The roof of the building is locally quarried slate shingles. The main section of the roof is hipped with cross gable pavilions with gable end returns and pedimented entry in the center of the mass. The auditorium and rear wings are gabled with gable end returns. There is a large interior, brick chimney located in the eastern rear of the main roof section. Typical windows of the main section are a bank of five wooden 6/6 double-hung sashes on the north, east and west elevations. The south elevation of the main block has a bank of three wooden 6/6 double-hung sashes. Currently all of these windows are boarded. The 1940s additions and the auditorium have iron frame windows. The windows of the wing additions are blocks of three awning windows with nine lights. The auditorium windows are paired and single pivot windows of 20 lights. The 1960s windows in the kitchen addition are double and single sets of aluminum frame hopper windows each having four vertical lights. The north or main elevation has two end pavilions, one on the east and one on the west. The pavilions have brick decoration consisting of two rectangular areas with stuccoed corner blocks and a diamond pattern within the rectangular area. In the gable of each pavilion is a vent that looks like a compass rose. Along the walls, flanking both sides of the pedimented entry are two banks of five large windows. The symmetrically placed pedimented entry has an archway with keystone and voussoir decoration of local slate. The main entry has a concrete stair of five risers and the main entry has a set of double-leaf doors with four lights in the top half of each leaf with two vertical panels in the lower section of each door. A transom of five lights is above the entry. The east and west elevations are identical and each has a set of two banks of five large windows symmetrically placed. At the southern ends of both wings is a bank of three metal frame windows. The southern elevation of the main block

of the building has a bank of three windows on either side of the auditorium projection from the center of the main block. Beneath the bank of windows on the west side of the elevation is the brick enclosure for the stair leading to the basement. The enclosure has a flat roof. The west elevation of the eastern rear wing and the east elevation of the western rear wing both have a set of double-leaf doors similar to those of the main entry. Both have a concrete stair of four risers and metal pipe railings. The south elevation of both wings have a single metal frame awning window placed symmetrically in the wall closest to the auditorium, in the gables of both wings is the same compass rose vent as seen on the main elevation. The central auditorium projection from the main block of the building is two stories high. The eastern auditorium elevation has two sets of two double metal frame 20 light pivot windows. The southern single metal frame window is obscured by the 1960s kitchen addition. The southern elevation of the auditorium has two brick buttresses and, in the gable, the compass rose vent. The western elevation contains two sets of double 20 light windows with a single window on the southern end, symmetrically placed. Below the single window is a single leaf entry with six lights in the top and two vertical panels in the lower section of the door and above the door is a gabled wooden hood. The kitchen addition to the eastern elevation of the auditorium is one story and is comprised of brick in all stretcher bond. The flat roof is made of asphalt. On its northern elevation are a set of double hopper windows symmetrically placed. The eastern elevation has a partial brick enclosure on the south with a partially collapsed upper wall of wooden board. The entry is a single leaf door with nine lights in the top section and a single panel in the lower. It has a concrete stoop with metal poles holding the flat roof canopy. North of the entry are three symmetrically placed hopper windows and between the center and northern window is a metal exhaust vent.

Interior

The interior plan of the school has a U-shaped hallway in the center of the building flanked on both sides by classrooms or offices. The auditorium entry is in the center of the building at the intersection of the entry hall and main hallway. According to the 1949 insurance survey the building originally had medium gauge oak floors and according to pictures and the survey the bathrooms and auditorium were tiled. Only the wooden sub-flooring in parts of the main section and the concrete sub-floor of the auditorium remains due to the 2008 asbestos removal project. The building is divided into about eight classrooms, a library, two office areas and the large auditorium space. The exterior walls of each classroom has the large windows, on the interior wall opposite the exterior wall are banks of four transom windows each frame containing four lights and a single transom above each door. Trim throughout the building, where it exists, is simple and plain. The main doors to the classrooms are solid with a large single upper panel and a smaller panel on the lower section. At the entry hall, on the east side is a reception window. The room behind the window was one of the administrative offices. There was another office on the west side of the auditorium. The classrooms are similar in plan. The walls between the exterior and hallway walls have a chalkboard hanging on one wall and the opposite wall has coat closets, shelves and a storage closet. The closet and storage doors are solid with five vertical panels and the shelving doors are glass are double leaf with three large glass panes. There is usually another chalkboard and a bulletin board beneath the transom windows. The rooms have modern fluorescent lights hanging from the ceiling. The classroom where the fire took place was never repaired. The auditorium has two entries, each is a double-leaf entry and the doors have six lights in the top with two vertical panels in the lower section. The auditorium is open with two sets of concrete steps of four risers at each interior entry from the main hall. There are two storage areas flanking the stairs and a storage area between the stairs. On the south end of the room, opposite the entry, is a wooden stage raised about three feet above the main floor. The interior kitchen entries are located on the east wall, near the stage. The ceiling of the auditorium is wooden and appears coffered. The original pendant lights, many of the globes are missing or broken, hang from the ceiling. The kitchen area east of the auditorium is in poor condition. The roof has partially collapsed and is open to the weather. The kitchen has four rooms: the largest room contains the stove hood and the serving equipment. At the southwest side of the room there is a concrete block partition wall separating the dishwashing area from the cooking area. The southern end of the addition has three rooms, a bathroom, office and pantry with shelves. This building is

currently not in use due to its severe state of disrepair with the large windows boarded, some smaller windows are broken, the burned room, paint peeling, the missing floors, and the roof failure of the kitchen addition.

In a bullet list, include any outbuildings or secondary resources or major landscape features (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

- The school is a complex consisting of the brick school building, a frame house known as the Home Economics cottage, and a concrete building called the Cannery, originally built for use as a secondary school named Marshall District High School.
- The cottage and cannery are located behind the school on the west side of the property. The property was in use from 1930 until 1987, after a fire, and since then the school and cannery have been closed but the cottage is used as rental property. All three buildings have roofs of locally quarried Buckingham slate. At this point, the cannery remains part of the property retained by the county.

4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

Changes since the 2015 PIF:

The kitchen roof has collapsed

- It was partially collapsed in 2015 and has now fully collapsed and is dangerous.
- The building has been broken into but most of it remains as it was in 2015.

The cannery was included in the 2015 PIF because the plat at the time showed it as part of the school grounds, however a new plat shows it and the athletic field are part of the Buckingham County ownership and not part of the plat that was sold to the current owner. The cannery and field were parts of the original school campus. Between 2015 and 2024, the cannery caught fire and it is a ruin with partial walls and the undergrowth has been allowed to grow up and takeover. It is partially hidden by that growth now.

Arvonía Primary School is significant architecturally and to the local history and development of public education in Buckingham County. In the 1930s, this building replaced an earlier frame secondary school, known as Arvonía Secondary School. At the time, this was a new modern school being built of brick and having modern conveniences such as running water and septic tank, and indoor toilets. The original school complex included three buildings, the school, the Home Economics house, and Cannery. This new school complex was completed around 1934 and known as Marshall District High School. Marshall District High School, from 1930 to 1940, was one of four high schools in the county. Then, due to consolidation by 1959, it was one of three high schools, two were for White students and one for Black students. According to promotional information, it offered the same class electives as Buckingham Central, which was a much larger school.

In 1957, further school modernization included a kitchen built onto the auditorium to provide hot lunches. In 1959, the county schools were again consolidated, and Marshall District High School became Arvonía Elementary School serving grades 5th to 7th. In 1966, when Buckingham schools were desegregated and underwent yet another consolidation, people were given a choice of where to send their children and Arvonía was especially noted for having Home Economic classes. Around 1974, Arvonía Elementary became Arvonía Primary School. This school offered kindergarten through third grades. It was used until 1987, when a fire gutted one of the interior rooms and was never repaired. The school closed and became surplus and was sold by the county in 1996. HiTech Real Estate LLC., current owner, purchased the building in 2004 and had the asbestos removed in 2008. The company is planning to rehabilitate and restore the building, but use has yet to be determined.

The building complex is architecturally significant as an example of a typical public school complex of the early 20th century. The main building, like many schools of the period, is brick with banks of large windows to take advantage of natural light. It is also significant for the use of locally quarried Buckingham slate for the roof of the school, and cottage. Slate is used as accent in the entry arch at the entrance to the main building. In 1974, a slate sign with the name of the school, Arvonía Primary School, engraved in it was placed in the front lawn area, near the flagpole. Buckingham slate is noted as one of the highest quality slates in the world. It has been quarried in the Arvonía area since 1726 and has been used on both federal and state government buildings, notably Ford's Theater (Washington, D.C.), Smithsonian Institute (Washington, D.C.), and University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA).

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

- Frank E. Webb Insurance. "1949 Insurance Evaluations." Dillwyn, VA.: Files of the Buckingham Preservation Society.
- Virginia Journal of Education 14. p. 40.
- "Arvonnia High School." Library of Virginia. February 13, 1930 .
<http://image.lva.virginia.gov/SB/00392.jpg> Image
(accessed 2015).
- "Arvonnia High School, Buckingham County." Library of Virginia. February 13, 1930.
<http://image.lva.virginia.gov/SB/00394.jpg> Image (accessed 2015).
- "Arvonnia School Board Records." From the Buckingham County School Board files.
- "Arvonnia, Buckingham County." Library of Virginia. February 13, 1930.
<http://image.lva.virginia.gov/SB/00393.jpg>
Image (accessed 2015).
- "Arvonnia, Buckingham County." Library of Virginia. 19--. <http://image.lva.virginia.gov/SB/00395.jpg>
Image
(accessed 2015).
- "Buckingham County." A Guide to the Virginia Education Association History of Various School Systems. pp. 21-24.
- Buckingham County Deed Book 169, p. 818.
- Buckingham County Deed Book 215, p. 394.
- Buckingham County Deed Book 215, p. 400.
- Buckingham County Deed Book 299, pp. 612-613.
- Buckingham County Deed Book 33, pp. 20-21.
- "Buckingham County Schools file." From the Buckingham Preservation Society files.
- Sadler, Vergilia P. and Driscoll, Mrs. Irving S. "Buckingham Schools and Churches." Virginia and the Virginia
County, September 1949: pp. 30-31.
- "Today and Yesterday in the Heart of Virginia." Reprint from the Farmville Herald. From the files of the
Buckingham Preservation Society, March 29, 1935.

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

Private: X Public\Local _____ Public\State _____ Public\Federal _____

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Hi-Tech Real Estate LLC
organization: _____
street & number: 2805 Barracks Road
city or town: Charlottesville state: VA zip code: 22901
e-mail: jeepnewman@aol.com telephone: 434-825-2429

Legal Owner's Signature: _____
Date: _____

• • Signature required for processing all applications. • •

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: _____
Daytime Telephone: _____


Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)


name/title: Sandra F. Esposito
organization: _____
street & number: 140 Cradon Hill Lane
city or town: Amherst state: VA zip code: 24521
e-mail: sandiesposito1@icloud.com telephone: 434-946-7496
Date: _____

PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!



Arvon Primary School
Buckingham County, VA
DHR ID# 014-0151

 Proposed Boundary

0 100 200
 Feet



























































