

VLR- 3/19/09  
NAHP- 6/3/09

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *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 Schoolfield School Complex  
other names/site number 108-5065-0081

**2. Location**

street & number 31 Baltimore Avenue not for publication   
city or town Danville vicinity   
state Virginia code VA county City of Danville code 590 zip code 24541

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 4/17/09  
Signature of certifying official 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)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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: EDUCATION Sub: School

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/Not In Use Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Prairie

Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Georgian Revival

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Poured Concrete

roof Built-Up Roofing (asphalt, aggregate)

walls Brick

other n/a

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

See continuation Sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or 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  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance** 1913-1940

**Significant Dates** 1913, 1938, 1940

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

**Cultural Affiliation** N/A

**Architect/Builder** Pettit, Charles G., Jr.

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

*See continuation Sheet*

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 4.5 +/-

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

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1 <u>17S 0641020 4047851</u>	2 <u>17S 0641058 4047896</u>	3 <u>17S 0640939 4047893</u>	4 <u>        </u>

         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.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Emmet W. Lifsey, AIA, Principal Calloway, Johnson, Moore & West, PA (Architects)  
W. Scott Smith, Jesse Adams-Doolittle, The Antiquaries, LC (Consultants)

Organization          date 28 December 2008

street & number 1030 Main Street telephone 434-847-6564

city or town Lynchburg state Virginia zip code 24504

**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 Nancy Moore, City of Danville

street & number 427 Patton Street telephone         

city or town Danville state Virginia zip code 24541

**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**

**Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, Virginia**

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The Schoolfield School Complex, located at 22 & 31 Baltimore Avenue in Danville, Virginia, is comprised of three separate school buildings constructed in the first half of the 20th century. The buildings are described as follows; Building A, built in 1912 or 1913, Building B, built in 1936 or 1937, and Building C, built in 1939 or 1940. The grouping of three educational buildings lies approximately 1,500 feet to the south southeast of the heart of the Riverside and Dan River Cotton Mill complex, and in the center of the Schoolfield Village neighborhood of Danville. Immediately to the north of the Schoolfield Complex is a Norfolk Southern Rail line. Baltimore Avenue connects to West Main Street (which, along with the rail line, bisects the Schoolfield Village in an east-west direction) via a concrete arched bridge. Hylton Hall, which formerly served as the Dan River Textile School, lies to the west. A neighborhood of closely-spaced, frame, generally single-story millworkers houses is located to the south and east of the Schoolfield School Complex.

**Building A** is articulated in a simplified early 20th Century Prairie Style; it also incorporates features common to academic structures of the same period. The aesthetic elements immediately visible as relating to the Prairie Style are deep eaves that cap a narrow elongated structure, multi-paned windows massed on each floor level, and horizontal banding in the masonry. Additionally the louvers which feature on the entry tower are reminiscent of the Prairie tradition of textured or patterned areas used to enliven the exterior.

The generally rectangular building rises two and a half stories above grade, with two stories above a finished basement level. The grade of the site is such that the north end of the building requires a retaining wall to accommodate the basement window openings while at the south end the basement is fully above grade. Originally, the school was built as a rectangle facing west towards Baltimore Avenue, and measured 145 by 65 feet. The west elevation facing Baltimore Avenue is clearly defined as the front of the building by an entry tower engaged at the center of the facade, which projects above the otherwise unbroken roofline. The regular rectangular footprint was broken by this front vestibule tower and two smaller stair towers centered on the north and south elevations of the building. In 1933 a narrow rectangular addition was placed perpendicular to the south elevation, but engaged flush with the facade. The addition necessitated the removal of the south stair tower, the only substantive change that has been made to the original structure; a staircase is located at the re-entrant angle on the east elevation, which replaces the one that was removed.

The interior layout of Building A follows the archetype of many early to mid-20th Century schools in that it contains long uninterrupted corridors in the center of the structure, with classrooms distributed around the perimeter to provide the most natural lighting. Staircases are located at the end of this main hallway and permit access to all three stories. As the entry doorway on the facade is located halfway above grade, a single stair course springs from the entry door level to the first floor. Utilities and service spaces are generally confined to the basement level, and a stage and gathering space is located on the second floor.

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The exterior shell consists of poured concrete up to the bottom of the first floor window openings, with brickwork continuing up to the eaves. The concrete basement walls are capped by a protruding water table, also of poured concrete, which encircles the entire structure and is continued on the 1933 addition (whose walls match the earlier structure in form and composition). The masonry above the basement level is extruded red brick laid in a five course common bond pattern, where each course of headers is composed of bricks of a darker color. These darker bricks are also used to decorate all of the building's corners and fenestration openings, where they are alternated with regular bricks; this stippling creates what appear to be miniature quoins. A slightly protruding rowlock of the dark bricks encircles the building at the base of the second story windows, stylistically matching the water table at the base of the first floor. Headers above all of the window openings consist of bricks arranged in a soldier course, unless otherwise noted. A cornerstone is located at the bottom of the brickwork at the northwest corner of the structure.

The front (west) elevation has a very regular appearance with five bays in the original structure, two to either side of the entry tower, and one additional bay in the addition elevation. Each bay in the original building, excepting the tower, contains four windows. The basement level fenestration consists of quartets of nine light wooden windows separated by concrete piers within and between each bay. The first and second stories contain quartets of twelve over twelve wooden windows separated by undifferentiated brickwork. The single bay of the addition is composed of five twelve over twelve light wooden windows on each level; the four outermost windows are symmetrical and the middle window is slightly narrower. The windows of each bay are topped by a soldier course header.

The entry tower contains the primary entrance at grade, recessed to the depth of the facade and sheltered by a flat metal canopy suspended by chains from the tower face. The entrance consists of two six light doors with matching sidelights one pane in width, and a large transom above containing thirty panes, also with accompanying single width sidelights of matching height. The three six-over-six light windows at the second floor level each sit beneath a set of large serrated louvers, which also feature on the north and south face of the tower where it projects above the roofline. The louvers are surmounted by a rounded jack arch header with a keystone. A single set of these louvers is centered on the north and south elevations of the tower, surmounted by a three course half-circular header.

The north elevation is largely plain brickwork with no windows, except in the stair tower at the center of the wall. Three doors comprise the entrance at the base of the tower, recessed like the front entrance and under a four course brick half-circle header on the tower face. Narrow, paired, six-over-six light wooden windows sit at the middle of the elevation (at the interior staircase landing), with a four pane single sash above each just below the eave.

The rear (west) elevation mirrors the front with the exception of the central bay of windows, which takes the place of the entry tower. This bay consists only of paired windows symmetrical to those in the other bays. The lower grade in the rear also allows for six over six windows and a pair of doors in the central bay in the basement level. The east elevation of the addition intrudes greatly on the symmetry of the original structure; at the south end it protrudes perpendicular to the axis of the original structure. This elevation of the addition is quite plain, with fenestration only in the east wall of the re-entrant staircase mass. The paired windows in the staircase mass break the symmetry of the original structure as they intersect the predominant horizontal bands at the first and second floors, and are of an non-standard muntin pattern (these 15 pane windows are probably not original to this elevation).

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The three bay south elevation of the addition is the most irregular of the elevations, with one bay of unfenestrated brickwork at the west end, and two bays containing five twelve over twelve wooden windows in the center and at the east end. The four outermost windows of the center bay are smaller than the center window, while all windows of the eastern bay match these smaller windows in size. This elevation and the west elevation of the addition are alike and singular in that the fenestration is symmetrical on all three floors.

Deeply projecting eaves dominate the roofline, which is unbroken save for the protruding west entry tower. A low slope hipped roof covers the building, with large rectangular brick chimneys paired at the north and south ends and to either side of the center of the original building. The four end-chimneys have vertical bands of bricks removed, three on the widest faces and one on the smaller faces. A projecting concrete corbel sits atop each of the eight chimneys.

The interior of Building A is very light and airy owing to the large exterior windows, and natural light is conveyed to the central hallways by glass panes in the interior doors and by transoms above. The flooring consists of linoleum and carpet over original tongue and groove wood decking on steel bar joists. The relatively low slope stairways are finished with simple large newels and multiple square balusters on each tread. All other interior trim is relatively utilitarian but not stark. A stage with the requisite audience chamber is situated on the third floor, accessible through double doors at either end. The classrooms, accessible from the central hallway, are large and have not been subdivided.

**Building B** is a vocational center situated to the rear (east) of Building A. Constructed with a utilitarian exterior and long narrow footprint with only one regular elevation, Building B is stylistically reminiscent of a multi-use vernacular industrial building of the mid-20th Century.

Measuring 124 by 52 feet, the buildings north and west elevations rise one level above grade, while the east and south elevations have two full levels above grade. The only deviation from the regular rectangular footprint is a small addition at the northeast corner of the building. A cornerstone sits near the base of the brick wall at the northwest corner, and dedicates this building in the name of the Improved Order of the Red Man, a vocational education society of the mid 20th Century. The west elevation which aligns with Baltimore Avenue is the most regular in appearance, with pairs of 20-pane windows flanking double entry doors with sidelights and a transom.

Poured concrete makes up the walls of the basement, and the original first floor exterior walls are of extruded brick laid in a five course common band pattern; the addition walls are brick laid in running bond. Groups of large steel windows are prominent on each elevation, generally 20-pane on the short sides and 25-pane on the long sides. Excluding those on the west elevation, the windows are grouped with no particular order in sets of one two or three windows. The basement windows are generally four panes in height and the first floor windows are five panes high. Two exceptions to the pattern are at the entryway on the north elevation, whose doors are flanked by single 12-pane steel windows, and the two 8-pane windows north of the east elevation basement doors. Each window has a poured concrete sill situated at a consistent level on each floor, excepting the aforementioned diminished windows on the north facade. No header is present in the brickwork above the windows, although thin steel lintels are visible at the top of each opening. One bank of windows has either been removed or was never present where the northeast addition adjoins the structure, as its low-slope lean-to roof intersects the elevation below the standard height of the windows on that floor.

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A wide, flat, (probably metal) cornice encircles the original building, while a diminished cornice of the same composition surmounts the addition. Two square chimneys each sit near the east and west ends, flush with the exterior walls; poured concrete caps sit atop a stepped corbel at the top of each chimney.

The interior of Building B has been thoroughly modernized, and carpet now covers the original wood floor decking. The interior originally consisted of open spaces suitable to vocational or shop classes, and steel columns spaced evenly throughout the floorspace provided interior support. Currently the building's interior is subdivided by thin non-load bearing walls and a modern drop ceiling conceals the original plaster.

**Building C** is an elementary school building across Baltimore Avenue from the other two structures, and was the last of the three to be built. Building C is an excellent example of simplified vernacular Georgian Revival. The massing and decoration of the structure are roughly Georgian, but are clearly not meant to emulate a true Georgian facade. A brass plaque in the front hallway states that the building was a Public Works Administration project, and names it "Schoolfield High School" (the building's use changed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Measuring 144 by 56 feet, the building is roughly rectangular; a half courtyard incised from the center of the rear (west) elevation results in a C-shaped footprint. The building is one story only, although at the rear a lower grade necessitates stairs which ascend to the entries. A small utility shed addition has been placed at the south re-entrant angle on the rear elevation. The entire construction is of extruded brick laid in a vernacular pattern of Flemish courses separated by two courses of running bond. A water table encircles the building just above grade on the front elevation; it consists of a soldier course of bricks which match the walls.

The front (east) elevation features four pairs of twelve-over-twelve wooden windows to either side of the central entryway, which is composed of double nine-light doors below a seven-light transom. A small poured concrete staircase sits at the recessed entrance, which is flanked by simple pilasters supporting an arcuated pediment above; this feature is the most stylistically representative of the Georgian influence on this structure. Although the paired windows are stylistically counter to the Georgian motif, the windows are surmounted by much more appropriate brick jack arches with a central keystone of poured concrete.

The central mass of the facade, which contains the entrance and two pairs of windows to either side, is stepped forward and is slightly taller than the side masses, which are reminiscent of diminished Georgian wings, despite the symmetrical fenestration. The corners of this central bay are decorated with six-course brick quoins, and a concrete bracket sits atop the parapet at the intersection of the side walls with the wings. The north and south sides feature two pairs of twelve-over-twelve windows grouped in the rear half of the elevation, and standard brickwork in the front half.

The rear elevation is sparingly fenestrated with single pairs of 9-pane steel windows next to the two entrances on the wings and two pairs of 12-pane steel windows near the re-entrant angles of the concavity. The rear entrances are double doors sheltered by simple bracketed porticos with sloping copper shed roofs. The portico brackets are decidedly vernacular Craftsman in style, with straight, chamfered beams composing triangular shapes.

A parapet wall encircles the front and side elevations, it is capped by a poured concrete running lintel. The rear elevation features a plain wood board cornice, which supports the external hanging gutters.



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The interior of Building C consists of a central hallway, with large classrooms distributed around the perimeter of the front and sides of the building. The hallway features simple terra cotta tile wainscoting, and an arcuated niche is slightly recessed at the center of the rear wall; this niche contained the water fountain. The classroom doors each have a transom above and the windows on the rear elevation help light the interior spaces. The interior trim is very sparing, and linoleum floors cover the original tongue and groove wood floors, which sit on subfloor over steel bar joists. The crawlspace is accessible through the rear utility shed; some of the floor is concrete, however most is simply exposed dirt.

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**Summary**

In the late nineteenth century, Danville added the textile manufacturing element to its already robust tobacco-driven economy. As the textile mills began to grow, they found it necessary to recruit (often unskilled) workers from the mountains of southwest Virginia (and probably North Carolina) to work all-day shifts. As the “mountain folk” (as described by Nell Collins Thompson) moved to Danville in droves, the Riverside & Dan River Cotton Mill Company took it upon itself to construct a mill neighborhood called “Schoolfield Village” (named after the primary founder of the company), where employees would enjoy the benefits of a total community, including housing, stores, churches, fire protection, public works, and educational opportunities. The three buildings of the Schoolfield School Complex, built between 1913 and 1940, significantly represent the heart of this formerly thriving manufacturing community. The period of significance, 1913-1940, represents the period that witnessed the construction of the three architecturally significant buildings within the complex. The Schoolfield School Complex is considered to locally significant and eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its progressive and distinctive architecture, particularly the Prairie Style “Building A” designed by noted regional architect Charles G. Pettit, Jr.

**Historical and Architectural Context**

Danville’s first cotton mill, owned by the Danville Manufacturing Company, was initiated in 1828, but foundered (perhaps by the nationwide financial panic of 1837), and was ultimately destroyed by a flood in 1850.<sup>1</sup> Following the Civil War, the Schoolfield family moved from Henry County to Danville, and established businesses there. John H. Schoolfield founded the Schoolfield & Watson Tobacco Factory in 1870, and James E. Schoolfield opened Schoolfield, Vass & Co. (hardware dealers) three years later.<sup>2</sup>

On 27 July 1882, John and James Schoolfield, along with their brother Robert Addison Schoolfield were granted a charter for the establishment of the Riverside Cotton Mills. Two other cotton mills were begun during the early 1880s: the Gerst Brothers Company (a knitting mill) and the Morotock Manufacturing Company (manufacturers of cloth and yarn).<sup>3</sup> By 1900, had constructed more than half a dozen mill facilities in Danville.<sup>4</sup>

In March of 1901, Robert Schoolfield met with Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, who was in Danville attempting to organize labor unions in the local textile plants. Later, Schoolfield wrote of the visit:

“Just prior to the time the unions brought Mr. Gompers to Danville [the newspapers vied] with each other in printing the most sensational stories. Big headlines announced that Gompers was coming here and that he had never lost a strike... ..Labor agitators from various parts of the country came in to engineer the strike. ...the agitators were present in full force and wherever they could, bled their Danville sympathizers [of money]. After getting all they could this way, and having exhausted the savings of their operatives, they departed for more fertile fields, leaving their friends wiser but poorer by approximately half a million dollars.”

This strike broke out on 1 April, 1901, just two days after Gompers’ arrival in Danville. The primary issue was to limit work to no more than ten hours per day. In January, the mills in Danville had already lowered the number of hours worked in a day from twelve to eleven from April to September, and to ten hours from October to March. Schoolfield noted that the company had to hire watchmen to protect the mills and employees until normalcy resumed.<sup>5</sup>

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In an effort to recruit and retain workers, Schoolfield determined to develop an all-inclusive mill “village” to house and support employees of the mills. In August of 1902, Mary C. Haskins of Durham, NC sold a 54 acre tract of land (now known as the Schoolfield area, named for Robert Addison Schoolfield) to Riverside Cotton Mills.<sup>6</sup> The first mill in the “Schoolfield Village” was constructed in 1902, and the first tenant houses in Schoolfield Village were built the following year. An eight room frame school building (now demolished) was constructed on Baltimore Avenue between 1905 and 1907.<sup>7</sup> By 1910, over four hundred houses were completed, one year after Riverside Cotton Mills merged with Dan River Power and Manufacturing Company to form “Riverside and Dan River Cotton Mills.”<sup>8</sup>

In September of 1910, Riverside sold a 200’ x 140’ lot along Baltimore Avenue to the Board of School Trustees for the Tunstall District “to be used for public school purposes.” A clause in the deed stated that the land would revert to Riverside if the school board abandoned or vacated the property.<sup>9</sup> In June of 1912, Riverside annulled the aforementioned deed, and re-conveyed the land without encumbrances if the Pittsylvania County School Board would “construct and erect at once, a public school Building, with modern improvements and appliances upon the property... .for the training and education of white children,” with a construction cost of approximately \$25,000.<sup>10</sup>

The following year, Riverside and Dan River Cotton Mills constructed a school (referred to in this document as Building A) for the education of the children of Dan River Mills’ employees.<sup>11</sup> The company commissioned local architect Charles G. Pettit, Jr. to design the building. Pettit likely began his architectural career in Richmond, where he appears on the 1900 Census as being a 19 year old “draughtsman assistant.”<sup>12</sup> He then moved to Lynchburg, and worked with the noted firm of Frye & Chesterman, where he designed at least two school buildings: White Rock School (now the Carl Hutcherson Learning Center) and the Miller Park School (now headquarters for the Lynchburg Parks & Recreation Department).<sup>13</sup> These structures exhibit the strong influence of Frye & Chesterman’s preference towards the Georgian Revival style, and are typical of many public buildings constructed in the region during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

By 1910, Pettit was living in Danville<sup>14</sup>, and was hired to design the Elks Home at 560 Main Street in that city<sup>15</sup>. The design of this building bears a stark contrast to Pettit’s earlier work, and suggests his exploration of other, more progressive, styles of the day. The Elks Home displays elements of the Craftsman style (modified to meet the needs of a commercial building), as well as Frank Lloyd Wright’s further refinement and interpretation of this style. The Schoolfield School, constructed just a year after the Elks Home, presents further evidence of Pettit’s experimentation with these themes.

The Schoolfield School Complex is locally architecturally significant and eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, as it exhibits stylistic elements not known to be found in other educational buildings within the City of Danville, the County of Pittsylvania, or the Southside Region as a whole. In addition, “Building A” is one of the few extant structures known to have been designed by Charles G. Pettit, Jr., a notable architect within the region.

A promotional booklet printed in 1913 stated that within the Schoolfield Village, which covered 1,600 acres, there “are a number of stores here for the benefit of the inhabitants, and these conducted entirely independently, there being nothing of the character of a commissary store in the village. There are three regular churches, several school-houses—a fine new one now being erected [this is assuredly making reference to “Building A”, the main Schoolfield school building]—also a kindergarten for the younger children, which the company provided.”<sup>16</sup>

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A 1914 company recruitment publication entitled "Features of Riverside & Dan River Cotton Mills, Incorporated" described the Schoolfield area in this way:

"The Mill and surrounding village crown the summit of a range of hills overlooking the Dan River meadows, and there is not a more beautiful and advantageous site in the United States. Being the highest point in the community and in full view of the mountains, the atmosphere is always pure, fresh and invigorating....

The Village- enjoys practically all the advantages of a modern city: the houses are new and commodious, ranging in size from two, three, four, and six to eight rooms, and each one has a nice yard and space for a garden; there is an abundant supply of pure water and all streets are lighted with electricity, and the natural drainage and splendid sanitary conditions combine to make it a most healthful location.<sup>17</sup>

In 1918, Pittsylvania County paid twenty-three teachers at Schoolfield between fifty and sixty dollars per month for six months, and Riverside & Dan River Mills paid them for the remaining three months of the school year. In 1920, enrollment at the neighborhood schools was 976, and this rose significantly to 1,227 in the 1925-26 year. Early in the school's history, most boys only attended through the seventh grade, when they became eligible to work in the mills. In May of 1924, the first junior high class graduated. The first year that a high school class graduated was in 1936.<sup>18</sup>

In 1936, Riverside conveyed a lot adjoining the main school to the Pittsylvania County School Board for the erection of a "new Vocational School Building," which is referred to as Building B in this document.<sup>19</sup> A marble cornerstone on this building attributes its construction in 1936 to the Motega Tribe Number 80 of the Improved Order of Red Men.

Riverside then sold the Pittsylvania School Board a lot across Baltimore Avenue (to the west of the main Schoolfield building) in 1939. The deed stated that "said County School Board of Pittsylvania County desires to erect immediately on the land hereinafter described a public school building according to the general plans therefor [sic] which have been prepared."<sup>20</sup> The third school building (known as Building C in this document) was built by the Federal Works Agency, Public Works Administration, and was probably standing by 1940. This structure was originally built as a high school, but was converted to a primary school later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1951, the Schoolfield area was annexed into the City of Danville<sup>21</sup>, and the schools described in this document continued operation into the third quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the mid 1990s, Danville City Schools' Central Office Annex occupied the buildings, but the complex was vacated prior to 2007 when all school system officers were consolidated at a downtown location.<sup>22</sup>

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources evaluated the Schoolfield School Complex as a part of a proposed historic district (108-5065) in 1994, and determined that the buildings within the district were eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places as contributing properties within the district.<sup>23</sup> Since an intensive level survey was conducted in 2000, however, a number of key structures within the district have been demolished, including the nearby Schoolfield Recreation Center in February of 2007 and most of the Schoolfield Mill Complex later that year.<sup>24</sup>

Because of these losses of historic fabric within the proposed district, the Schoolfield School Complex is being presented for evaluation on its own merit, primarily eligibility under National Register Criterion C due to the progressive and architecturally stimulating design of Charles G. Pettit, Jr.

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**Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, Virginia**

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2. Ibid. pages 28-29
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4. Web site: <http://web.wm.edu/wmcar/Danvilledig/taledanville.htm>, accessed 5 October, 2008
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Web Site: <http://blog.preservedanville.com/schoolfield/index.html>, accessed 6 October 2008

Web site: <http://web.wm.edu/wmcar/Danvilledig/taledanville.htm>

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The three buildings included in this nomination are located in the Schoolfield Village area of the City of Danville on Baltimore Avenue, and occupy Tax Parcels 59874 (Buildings A and B) and 59868 (Building C). The boundaries of this National Register listing are identical to those of the aforementioned City of Danville tax parcels. Parcel 59875, a vacant lot located immediately to the north of parcel 59874, was not included in this nomination.

**Boundary Justification**

The proposed boundaries form the approximate boundaries that have identified the school complex since the construction of the buildings, and encompass all known buildings and structures associated with the property.

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**Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, Virginia**

**Section** \_\_\_\_\_ **Photos** \_\_\_\_\_ **Page** 11

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**Photo Captions**

Information Common to All Images

Property Name: **Schoolfield School Complex**

Town, County, State: **City of Danville, VA**

VDHR File Number: **108-5065-0081**

Date: **All photographs taken September 2008, December 2008**

Photographer: **Jim Dumminger, Amanda Adams, W. Scott Smith (unless noted otherwise)**

Electronic Images: **Stored at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia.**

Photo Captions:

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex

City of Danville, VA

118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_01.tif

Building A, Main Entrance Tower

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex

City of Danville, VA

118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_02.tif

Building A, South & West Elevations

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex

City of Danville, VA

118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_03.tif

Building A, South Elevation

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex

City of Danville, VA

118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_04.tif

Building A, East Elevation

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex

City of Danville, VA

118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_05.tif

Building A, North Elevation

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**Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, Virginia**

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**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, VA  
118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_06.tif  
Building A, View of Typical Corridor

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, VA  
118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_07.tif  
Building A, View from Corridor into Auditorium

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, VA  
118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_08.tif  
Building A, Detail of Wooden Stair

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, VA  
118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_09.tif  
Building B, South and West Elevations

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, VA  
118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_10.tif  
Building B, Typical Interior View

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, VA  
118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_11.tif  
Building C, East Elevation

**DHR# 118\_5065\_0081**

Schoolfield School Complex  
City of Danville, VA  
118\_5065\_0081\_SchoolfieldSchoolComplex\_2008\_12.tif  
Building C, View of Corridor

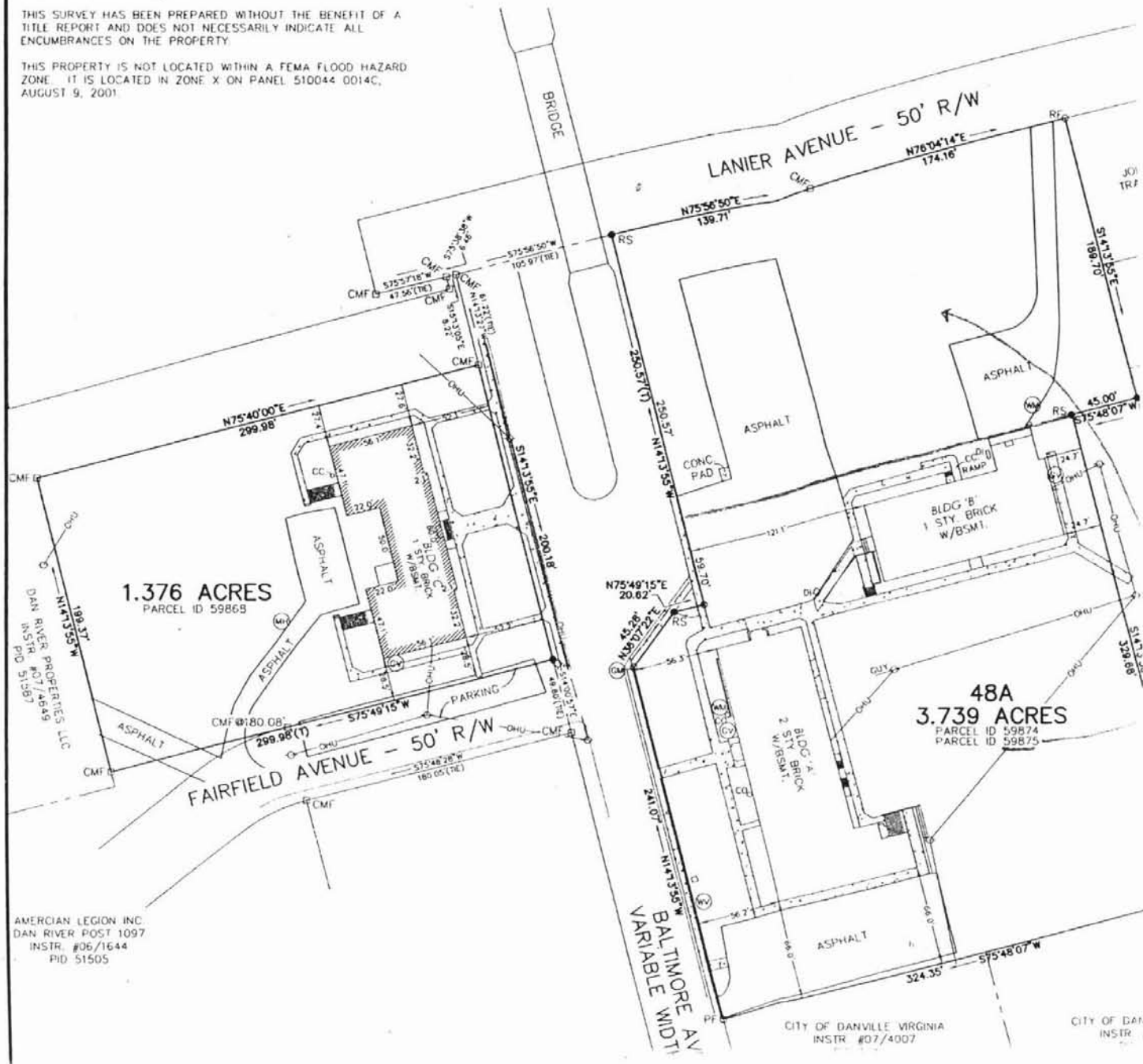


**CURRENT SURVEY**

THIS PLAT REPRESENTS A CURRENT FIELD SURVEY BY PIEDMONT SURVEYING AND DESIGN, P.C.

THIS SURVEY HAS BEEN PREPARED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A TITLE REPORT AND DOES NOT NECESSARILY INDICATE ALL ENCUMBRANCES ON THE PROPERTY.

THIS PROPERTY IS NOT LOCATED WITHIN A FEMA FLOOD HAZARD ZONE. IT IS LOCATED IN ZONE X ON PANEL 510044 0014C, AUGUST 9, 2001.



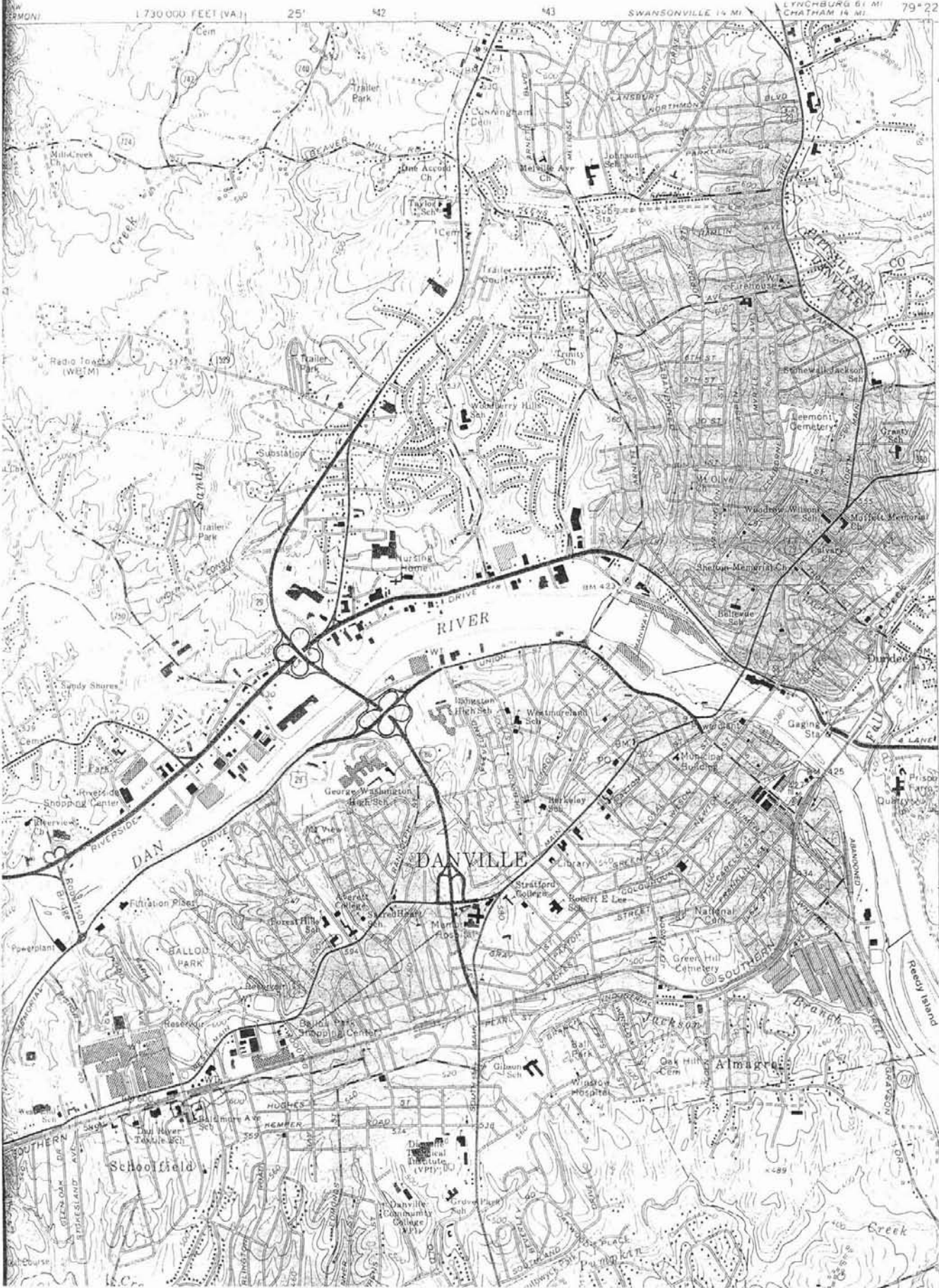
AMERICAN LEGION INC.  
DAN RIVER POST 1097  
INSTR. #06/1644  
PID 51505

CITY OF DANVILLE VIRGINIA  
INSTR. #07/4007

CITY OF DANVILLE VIRGINIA  
INSTR. #07/4007

DANVILLE QUADRANGLE  
VIRGINIA-NORTH CAROLINA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5157 331 NE  
18LAIRSI



79° 22' 30" W  
36° 37' 30" N  
SWANSONVILLE 14 MI  
LYNCHBURG 61 MI  
CHATHAM 14 MI  
100 000 FEET (VA)  
SCHOOLFIELD SCHOOL COMPLEX  
DNR ID# 104-5065-0091  
DANVILLE QUAD  
UTM  
17S 0641070 EAS  
404 7651 NORTH  
BEAVER PARK 8 MI  
TURBEVILLE 25 MI  
SOUTH BOSTON 21 MI  
RINGGOLDY 5157 331 SE