

EXP. 12/31/84

VLR-9/16/82 NRHP-7/21/83

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Greenville County Courthouse Complex (VHLC 109-2)

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number S. Main Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Emporia

N/A vicinity of

~~Congressional district~~

state Virginia

code 51

county

(in city)

code 595

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☒ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture ☐ museum
☒ building(s)	☐ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial ☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational ☐ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment ☐ religious
☐ object	☐ in process	☐ yes: restricted	☒ government ☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☒ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial ☐ transportation
	N/A	☐ no	☐ military ☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

Greenville County
name c/o Chairman, Board of Supervisors

street & number P.O. Box 908

city, town Emporia

N/A vicinity of

state Virginia 23847

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Greenville County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Emporia

state Virginia 23847

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

(1) Historic American Building Survey

title Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1959

☒ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington

state DC

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
☒ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☒ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☒ altered	☐ moved
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance
SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Greenville County Courthouse complex on Main Street in Emporia consists of the courthouse, county administrator's office, and the clerk's office. The buildings are constructed of brick, painted white, and were erected on land that has served as the site of a county courthouse since 1787. The two-story, porticoed courthouse was built in 1831, the clerk's office in 1894, and the present county administrator's office in 1900 and 1907. The courthouse and the clerk's office show considerable evolution through alterations and enlargements over the years reflecting the growth and need of the county. The county administrator's office, once the Greenville Bank, preserves an extraordinary pressed-tin interior.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The primary building of the complex, the Greenville County Courthouse, is the architectural focal point of Emporia's Main Street. The two-story, Flemish-bond brick building was erected in 1831 to replace an earlier courthouse of 1787. While extensively altered and enlarged, early photographs show the building in what is presumed to have been its original appearance. The three-bay facade had a pedimented gable-end front with the tympanum containing a lunette with interesecting tracery. A full entablature ran the perimeter of the eaves. The main entrance of the temple-form structure was found in the center bay of the first floor. One-story, two-bay wings also laid in Flemish bond, each contained an entrance in the bay closest to the center. The wings also had shallow hipped roofs. The fenestration consisted of 12/12 hung-sash windows with louvered shutters. The principal openings on the facade were topped by square lintels with turned corner blocks. The original plan of the courthouse most likely consisted of the courtroom in the main block on the first floor with a gallery and jury rooms on the second floor. The north wing served as the county clerk's office and the south wing as the office of the clerk of the circuit court.

Substantial changes were first made to the building in 1907 when a two-story tetra-style Tuscan portico was added to the facade, the wings raised to two stories, and rear (east) extended to accommodate additional office space. A small cupola was also added and a balustrade graced the roof of the two-story wings. In 1910 the present columns were added replacing those installed in 1907. In 1934 additional modifications were made to the building when the rear wing was added, giving the edifice its present "H"-shape plan. The original interior fabric and plan were lost in the 1934 alterations.

In its present form, the portico has fluted Ionic columns on pedestals and a frieze with the words, "Greenville County Courthouse, 1781." The inner columns are single while the outer columns are in a cluster of three. A round window with a Star-of-David tracery in the tympanum of the 1907 portico has been replaced by a clock. The portico shelters the main entrance which consists of paneled double doors topped by a transom flanked by brackets supporting a broken pediment. The facade's first and second-story windows are also pedimented and have 12/12 hung-sash windows. The pediments were apparently added during or prior to the 1907 remodeling. Hung-sash windows are also found on the rear and the side elevations. Secondary entrances are located in the 1934 rear addition and consist of paneled doors topped by transoms sheltered by small porches. When the rear addition was built, the first-floor entrances in the wings were filled in with Flemish-bonded brick. Chimney stacks project from the roof line on the north and south elevations.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☒ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☒ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates Courthouse 1834;
Clerk's Office 1894; **Builder/Architect** Daniel Lynch; Reuben Sherriff

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) County Administrator's Office ca. 1900.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Greensville County's Courthouse Square, located at the intersection of what was formerly the crossing of two colonial trade routes, has served as the location of the county's seat of government since 1787 and contains three buildings of architectural interest. The present courthouse, built in 1831 by Daniel Lynch, began as a Jeffersonian-school, three-part, Palladian-type structure and has evolved architecturally reflecting the growth and prosperity of the county. In the 1910 remodeling, the Ionic columns were added to the 1907 portico giving the building a somewhat Beaux-Arts appearance. The excellently documented Clerk's Office, built by the Southern Fireproof Co. after the plans of Reuben Sherriff, has likewise evolved architecturally, receiving a Georgian facade in 1961. On the north side of the square, the former Greensville Bank Building of 1900, now the county administrator's office, contains an extraordinary locally produced interior of decorative stamped sheet metal. The square was the scene of military action in the Civil War when General Wade Hampton undertook to defend the railroad bridge across the Meherrin, General Lee's link to Southern supply sources.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Greensville County, formed from the eastern portion of Brunswick County in 1781, located its county seat at the intersection of two colonial trade routes, the Halifax Road, crossing the county along a north-south axis, and the Fort Road from Williamsburg to Fort Christanna, which crossed the county from east to west. Emporia, created in 1887 from a merger of the villages of Belfield and Hicksford, owes much of its present vitality to its location at the intersection of Interstate 95 and U.S. 58, the modern counterparts of the Halifax and Fort roads. Greensville's strategic location immediately brought it into the thick of the Revolution. In May 1781 Lord Cornwallis marched along the Halifax Road in transit from Wilmington, N.C. to Petersburg, following the raids of colonels Simcoe from the north and Tarleton from the south.

In 1787 the first gentlemen justices of Greensville chose the crossing of the Halifax and Fort roads as the site of the county's first permanent courthouse, which occupied the same space as the present courthouse square. The earliest plat of this site is found in Alexander Madill's legislative petition of December 22, 1798 which details not only the square but also the proposed village of Hicksford.

The original portion of the present courthouse was commissioned in 1831 and "undertaken" by Daniel Lynch. It appears that Lynch may have been a better planner than builder; however, his building leaked so badly that he was not paid for his work until 1834. His design remained unaltered until 1907.

During the Civil War major artillery batteries were constructed on elevations almost adjacent to the courthouse square by the troops of Confederate General Wade Hampton in defense of the last railroad bridge linking Lee's army at Petersburg to its southern

9. Major Bibliographical References (See Continuation Sheet #3)

Duncan, Doris. "History and Account of Greenville County." (Unpublished mss. VHLC, n.d.).
Greenville County Bicentennial Commission. A Treasured Past. (Undated).
Greenville County Deed Book 4 (1813).
Greenville County Order Books 1, 6, 8, 9.
Legislative Petitions of Greenville County (1798).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Emporia, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 1 8 2 7 2 8 2 0 4 0 6 2 8 7 0
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification Boundary Justification: The Greenville County Courthouse complex consists of one acre. This acre includes the courthouse, clerk's office and county administrator's office. Description: Beginning at a point on NE side of intersection of US 301 and VA 611; thence extending approximately 300' NE along E side of US 301; thence approximately 150' E to alley; thence approximately 300' S along W side of alley; thence approximately 150' W to alley; thence approximately 300' N along E side of US 301 to beginning point. (See Continuation Sheet #3)

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date September 1982

street & number 221 Governor Street

telephone (804) 786-3144

city or town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national X state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director
title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date

SEP 16 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

GREENSVILLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX, GREENSVILLE COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 6, 7

Page 1, 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey (File 109-2)
1982 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

The interior of the courthouse has been extensively remodeled so that little original fabric remains. With the addition of 1907 the courtroom moved to the expanded second floor and the first floor was converted into offices. The courtroom was further modernized in the 1960s. A twin stair in each of the flanking wings provides access to the second floor. The original king-post truss system remains in place as the roof's structural support.

The clerk's office is located to the south of the courthouse. It was built as a very plain building in 1894 after the plans of Reuben Sherriff, "architect for Orange County." The building was considerably enlarged in 1916 and the Georgian-style facade added in 1961. The facade has its main entrance centered in a small pedimented pavilion. The glass door entry is flanked by 9/6 hung-sash windows. The corners of the building have brick quoining. The later 1916 addition has a corbeled brick cornice. The building's interior has been extensively remodeled.

The county administrator's office sits on the northernmost point of the courthouse square. The office is actually two former commercial buildings, the Greenville Bank Building of 1900 and the Virginia Public Service Building of 1907, sharing a party wall. The two-story, three-bay Greenville Bank Building is constructed of brick, painted white. It has 1/1 hung-sash on the facade and 2/2 hung-sash windows on the side wall facing the court square. Unlike the courthouse and the clerk's office, the original interior is well preserved and features elaborate pressed-tin walls and ceilings manufactured by the local concern, H.J. Klugel. (The Klugel shop was added to the National Register in 1973.) The ceiling is divided into coffer with ornamental moldings. The walls have complex filigree ornaments worked into decorative panels. Surrounding the main banking room is a heavily decorated cove cornice. While the banking counters have been removed, the original vault with its very fancy doorway remains. The four-bay former Virginia Public Service Company building shares with the former bank building a common cornice and brick parapet. The shop front has been fitted in and the second story has been made smaller, but the building has been included because it has its offices joined with those in the bank building and could be restored to its original appearance.

The courthouse square contains numerous memorials. A cannon bears honors to the county's residents who participated in World War I. To the north of the courthouse, a Confederate monument commemorates the county's citizens who fought in the Civil War. A stone marker with a brass tablet was erected in 1981 to honor the county's bicentennial. The lawn around the courthouse is planted with trees and shrubs.

EXP. 10/31/84

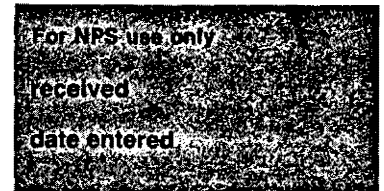
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

GREENSVILLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX, GREENSVILLE COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #2

Item number 8

Page 1

**8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background**

supply sources. The Union operation probably would have succeeded but for superior Confederate artillery and the heroic action of five teenage boys who, under intense rifle fire, crawled out onto the wagon bridge spanning the Meherrin and set it aflame. The Union cavalry were thus prevented from crossing and capturing the bridge. Today a statue and several monuments at the courthouse pay tribute to the Confederate dead of Greenville as well as to the fallen soldiers of the Revolution and the world wars of this century.

The roads and rails that crossed Greenville brought not only war but also growth and prosperity to the county, which became in the postwar years a trade, agricultural, legal, banking, retail, and industrial center of Southside Virginia. Representative of this period in Greenville's development is the block of retail stores facing the courthouse square from the west called the Phoenix Block because they were so quickly rebuilt by William Bailey after the entire block burned in 1881.

Greenville Bank, one of four banks started in the county at the end of the 19th century, was formed in 1897 and two years later purchased the northwest corner of courthouse square for the site of a handsome brick edifice completed in 1900. It was recently acquired by the county from Mrs. E.E. Goodwyn, widow of the bank's first cashier. After the 1922 merger of the Greenville Bank with the Merchants and Farmers Bank, Colonel and Mrs. Goodwyn used the building as offices for their insurance company. The building now serves as offices for the county administrator. The unusually fine stamped sheet-metal decorating the walls and ceiling has been preserved. The sheet-metal is one of the best examples of its type in the state and was manufactured locally at the H.J. Klugal metal works.

Suggestive of modern economic developments in the county, which has seen peanuts, corn, and pork supplant tobacco and cotton as the major products of the area, is a sign on the rear door of the old Greenville Bank identifying the location of the "Offices of the Virginia Pork Festival," a major social event of the region now attracting 15,000 people.

The legal profession of Greenville so closely identified with the courthouse square has produced distinguished lawyers for two centuries. From the days of Henry Tazewell who left Greenville in the early national period to become U.S. Senator from Virginia to the era of D. Dortch Warriner who today sits on the federal bench, the courthouse and clerk's office have served many capable attorneys. The clerk's office was housed in the south wing of the courthouse from 1831 until 1894 when the current clerk's office on the southeast corner of the square was built by the Southern Fireproof Building Company of Richmond on a plan done by Reuben Sherriff. The original architectural drawings and specifications survive in the courthouse records. Its rear vault section was added in 1916 and the Georgian-style facade in 1961.

Still bordered by a major railroad and interstate highways, the Greenville Courthouse Square remains the center of a historic but progressive governmental complex, directing the betterment of the lives of 16,000 citizens.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

GREENSVILLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX, GREENSVILLE COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #3

Item number 9, 10

Page 1, 1

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

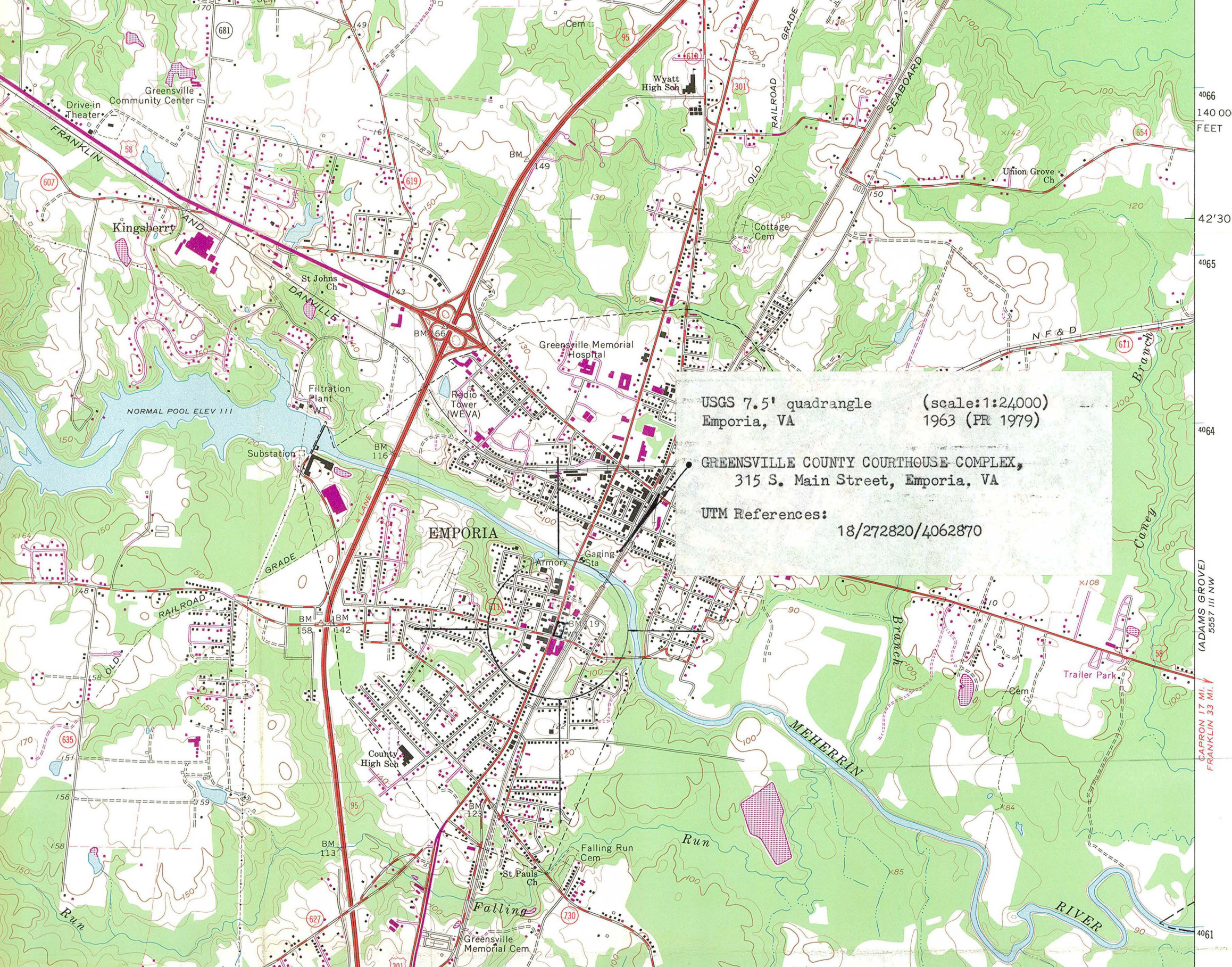
Livesay, Inez. "The Courthouse." (Unpublished mss. 1937, VHLC Files).

Minutes of the Board of Supervisors, Greenville County, 1907, 1934.

Premier List of Emporia Agricultural Fair Association (for its first annual fair, October 16-20, 1906).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA--Verbal Boundary Description

alley to N side of VA 611; thence approximately 150' W along said side of VA 611 to point of origin.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
Emporia, VA 1963 (PR 1979)

GREENVILLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX,
315 S. Main Street, Emporia, VA

UTM References:
18/272820/4062870

(ADAMS GROVE)
5557 III NW
CAPRON 17 MI.
FRANKLIN 33 MI.