



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 111-0089

Purpose of Evaluation

Please use the following space to explain briefly why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.

The church has long stood as a landmark in Fredericksburg but has had no formal eligibility determination. The trustees and members of the congregation would like for St. George's to be determined eligible and listed in the NRHP for honorific purposes.

Are you interested in applying for State and/or Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes No

Are you interested in receiving more information about DHR's easement program? Yes No

1. General Property Information

Property name: St. George's Episcopal Church

Property address: 905 Princess Anne Street

City or Town: Fredericksburg

Zip code: 22401

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

Fredericksburg

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

Building Site Structure Object

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 0.5

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban Town Village Hamlet Rural

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

St. George's Episcopal Church is located at 905 Princess Anne Street in the historic core of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Within the boundaries of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed Fredericksburg Historic District (111-0132), the property is situated on the north corner of the intersection of Princess Anne and George Streets and is bordered to the

northwest by the historic Market Square (111-0057/111-0132-0204). An alley is located to the northeast of the resource and divides the large block on which the church is located into two parcels. The St. George's Episcopal Church currently sits on 0.5 acres of land which includes the church and its large additions including McGuire Hall (a twentieth century school building) and Faulkner Hall (a Sunday school building dating to 1823), the church cemetery, and a small non-contributing shed used in support of the food pantry run by the church.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Romanesque Revival

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Robert Cary Long, Jr.

If the builder is known, please list here: H.G. Reynolds

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1849

Narrative Description:

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire property, 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 architectural style, materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions, remodelings, or other alterations.

EXTERIOR

St. George's Episcopal Church is a Romanesque Revival ecclesiastic building situated on the 0.5-acre lot at the northeast corner of Princess Anne and George Streets in downtown Fredericksburg, Virginia. It was designed by Baltimore architect Robert Cary Long, Jr. and construction was completed by H.G. Reynolds in 1849.

The two-story, three-bay church is built in a basilica plan upon a raised basement. The masonry structural system is constructed of brick laid in English bond. The moderately pitched, front-gabled roof is sheathed in slate shingles and its broken façade (west elevation) features a central projecting, three-story steeple tower which is discussed in detail below. The steeple contains the town clock (owned by the City of Fredericksburg) and a belfry, and is crowned with a sharply sloped, octagonal spire reaching 168 feet.

The façade contains three arched doorways, each filled with a double-leaf, four-paneled wooden door. Each door is arched to match the structural void and is slightly engaged within a decorative, Romanesque-style surround that features three compound arches and Tuscan order pilasters. A flight of sandstone steps with metal railings leads from the sidewalk to each doorway. The central doorway positioned in the projecting tower is designated the primary entrance. The other two doorways flank the tower; each is topped by horizontal wooden panels ornamented with a chevron pattern located approximately 5 feet above the doors, dividing the first and second stories. Above each of the horizontal panels in the second story is a quatrefoil window filled with wood-framed, diamond glass panes. A round-arched corbel table, sloped to

fit beneath the sloping gabled eave, is located above the quatrefoil windows, which is interrupted by the projecting tower.

The façade of the tower contains an arched, stained-glass window within a Romanesque-style surround at the second story. Above the tower window is the round face of the town clock, also positioned in the same location in the north and south elevations of the tower. A round-arched corbel table and a horizontal belt course are above the clock. The belfry, embellished with a round medallion and a pair of arched louvered ventilators, is set atop the tower's belt course. The belfry is capped by a hipped roof sheathed in copper which is pierced by four gabled dormers, each with an arched louvered ventilator and rosette. The tower is topped by a steep, copper, octagonal spire terminating with a slim, copper cross. The east elevation contains an arched corbel table along the rake of the gable. This corbel table is broken in two places by small chimney stacks disguised as finials situated at the junction of the nave and chancel, which extends from the east elevation.

On the first floor, the north and south elevations of the nave (central, main portion of the church) are identical. Both contain a series of six arched, pictorial stained-glass windows that were installed between 1907 and 1943, with specific dates being noted on each window. Each window is set within a rectangular panel of brick recessed in such a way as to suggest pilasters. At the basement level, the north and south elevations contain wood-paneled, diamond-paned, casement windows beneath each stained-glass window on the nave. These windows are likely to be the original windows of the church and may have filled openings in the first story of the nave prior to the installation of the stained-glass windows (Barbara Willis, personal communication 2017). Centered in the basement level of the south elevation is a secondary entrance leading to Sydnor Hall, the basement of the main church building. It is set beneath an arched doorway that is filled with a double-leaf paneled wood door with three fixed lights at the top. A single-leaf, board-and-batten door is located to the east of the secondary entrance and leads to the boiler room.

The chancel (rear section encompassing the altar) contains an arched doorway on its south elevation that is positioned in a protruding bay topped by a high-pitched pediment. Above the pediment is a horizontal belt course, which separates the first and second stories, and continues around to the south elevation of the chancel. A corbel arched table, which reaches the cornice of the gable roof, lies above the belt course. The chancel contains the same diamond casement windows as the basement of the nave. Above the belt course is a large blind arch containing three arched, pictorial stained-glass windows which date to 1885 and depict the "Ascension of Christ" flanked by the Apostles Peter and John (St. George's Episcopal n.d.).

To the north of the chancel is a side-gabled addition constructed around 1910 that houses stairs and service rooms. This addition connects to a multi-bay, three-story, L-shaped classroom wing built in 1958, called McGuire Hall. McGuire Hall runs the entire east perimeter of the lot, turns to the west creating the L shape, and connects to Faulkner Hall which dates to about 1823 and faces Princess Anne Street (Hicks 2016). Both McGuire Hall and Faulkner Hall are discussed in detail in the following subsections.

McGuire Hall

McGuire Hall is a multi-bay, three-story, L-shaped classroom wing built in 1958, as noted on a cornerstone. The masonry structural system is constructed of English-bond brick and the L-shaped roof is sheathed in slate shingles. The first two stories on the façade of the eastern section of the L do not have any windows and instead feature six recessed arches. The third story was added in 1995 and contains eight-over-eight, double-hung sash, wood-framed windows above each arch (Barbara Willis, personal communication 2017). The northern section of the façade of the L features three eight-over-eight, double-hung sash, wood-framed windows on the second and third stories as well as a single-leaf, half-glazed, wooden door. The rear of the entire hall features ribbons of three-light, wood-framed hopper windows.

Faulkner Hall

Faulkner Hall is a one-story, three-bay building constructed in 1823 that is currently used as a meeting room (Hicks 2016). The masonry structural system is constructed of English-bond brick covered by a front-gabled roof sheathed in slate shingles. The façade (west elevation) features two replacement six-over-six, double-hung sash, wood-framed windows on stone sills set beneath an undecorated arched pediment. They flank the centered primary entrance, which contains a double-leaf, fully-glazed, commercial-style wood door that is topped by a four-light transom and jack arch. A louvered vent is located within the gable end under a round arch. The north and south elevations contain three replacement six-over-six, double-hung sash, wood-framed windows set upon stone sills and topped by round arches.

INTERIOR

The primary entrance to the church is through the three, double-leaf door located on the façade. Directly inside the doors of the church is the narthex, which features slate floors and plastered walls. On the north and south ends of the narthex are rounded, recessed arches which divide the narthex into three sections. Each of the flanking sections features a curved, wooden staircase that leads to the gallery in the second story and down to Sydnor Hall. There are three double-leaf wood doors on the east end of the narthex by which the nave is entered. The central door has a recessed, triple rounded arch and leads to the center aisle of the nave.

The church has a basilica plan, with a wide central aisle, two side aisles, and a high vaulted ceiling. The walls are plastered, with the north and south walls containing the 12 stained glass windows, visible on the exterior of the church. The central aisle is flanked by rows of the original wooden pews. Eight large columns support an upper gallery which was added in 1854 when this portion of the church was repaired following a fire (Willis 1978:5). The gallery, which features a decorative wrought railing, surrounds the nave to the north, west, and east and holds additional pews for the choir and the pipe organ. Additional columns in the gallery are topped with large arches that provide support for the roof above. The plastered ceiling over the nave is ornamented with molding covering a substantial wooden truss roof.

The pulpit of the church, situated in the east end of the building, is raised three steps above the nave and extends eastward to the chancel. A large arch above the steps supported by pilasters visually divides the nave of the church from the chancel. The chancel has a barrel-vaulted ceiling and features three, pictorial stained-glass windows dating to 1885 depicting the “Ascension of Christ” flanked by the Apostle Peter and the Apostle John (St. George's Episcopal n.d.). The chancel originally served as a vestry room and was screened off from the nave. Currently, the

chancel contains chairs for clergy, an altar, pulpit, and various religious objects. To the north of the pulpit and east of the nave is the sacristy. Further to the north is a modern stairwell leading to McGuire Hall.

In the basement of the main church building, known as Sydnor Hall, is a large open room with a kitchen. This area is currently used as the food bank run by the church and also holds the church kitchen and meeting spaces. The church library, situated in the northern portion of the basement/lower level, is accessed through a single-leaf wooden door with three arched lights.

Briefly describe any outbuildings or secondary resources (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

Cemetery

Contained in the space bordered by the original church building to the south, McGuire Hall to the east, and Faulkner Hall to the north, is the St. George's Episcopal Church Cemetery, dating to about 1750, which makes it the oldest cemetery in Fredericksburg. It covers approximately 0.19 acre and contains about 120 interments plotted in a rough grid pattern. The headstones date from the mid-eighteenth century, and recent archeological investigations have determined that there are interments under Faulkner and McGuire Halls, as the cemetery is older than all of the currently extant buildings (St. George's Episcopal n.d.). On the west edge of the cemetery is a cast iron fence with a central cast-iron gate and gate posts set upon a raised brick base. The fence divides the cemetery from the public right-of-way along Princess Anne Street to the west. A walkway formed of brick pavers extends east from the sidewalk of Princess Anne Street and stretches northeast where it terminates at the entrance to McGuire Hall. Medium-sized deciduous trees and landscaped shrubs are north of the walkway. Smaller trees and shrubs dot the remainder of the cemetery. In 1815 the Town Council recommended that burials cease at St. George's, as there was no more space, though periodic interments continued until 1920 (Hicks n.d.). A variety of markers are found throughout the cemetery which are mostly composed of marble and granite. Most feature little decoration and are either upright, curved or square headstones or burial vaults. There are also many unmarked graves. Notable interments include John Dandridge (father of Martha Washington), Reverend Edward McGuire (Longest serving rector at St. George's from 1813-1858, helped grow the congregation and build the current church), and John Jones (oldest standing headstone, dated 1752).

Shed

A one-story, one-bay storage shed built in 2016 is located directly south of the church and is situated near the doors that lead into Sydnor Hall on the south elevation of the church (Barbara Willis, personal communication 2017). It is clad in vinyl and covered by a front-gabled roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. A single-leaf, paneled vinyl door is centered on the primary (east) elevation. This storage shed was built to support the food pantry that is run out of Sydnor Hall.

4. Property's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the property, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

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

Statement of Significance

St. George's Episcopal Church, designed by Robert Cart Long, Jr., is the earliest example of the Romanesque Revival style in the City of Fredericksburg (Rorrer 1991:9–10). The current St. George's Episcopal Church, built in 1849, is the third building located on the site. It is situated on the center lot, next to the government buildings and market square, of the original plat of Fredericksburg designated for the "church" and approved by the House of Burgesses in 1727 (Royston and Buckner 1721). Since then it has served as a landmark at the center of town, both because of its location and also its tall steeple, holding the city clock that has consistently rung since 1851. Robert Cary Long, Jr. was a renowned Baltimore architect known for his Gothic Revival and Classical Revival building throughout Virginia and Maryland. By the late 1840s, shortly before his death, he began adopting the Romanesque Revival, St. George's Episcopal Church being the only example in Virginia (Rorrer 1991:9-10).

Thus, St. George's Episcopal Church is recommended eligible under Criterion A for its importance to the growth of Fredericksburg as well as Criterion C for architecture. The church meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties since it derives its primary significance from architectural and historical importance.

History

Before Spotsylvania County and Fredericksburg were officially established, formal religious activities were held in Alexander Spotswood's settlement of Germanna. In 1720, legislation created Spotsylvania County as well as St. George's Parish in the same territory (Felder 1982:37–38). The vestry (an elected body of parishioners) built two churches to serve the entire county: one to the north called the Rappahannock Church and one to the south called the Mattaponi Church (Quenzel 1951:9). By 1730, the population in western Spotsylvania County had grown significantly and a proposal for the division of St. George's Parish passed the House of Burgesses thus creating St. Mark's Parish (Felder 1982:42–43). The creation of St. Mark's Parish occurred simultaneously with the establishment of the Town of Fredericksburg; subsequently, the vestry of St. George's decided to move the location of the Rappahannock Church to the growing Town of Fredericksburg (Felder 1982:54). When the first lots of Fredericksburg were informally laid out in 1721, the block bounded by Princess Anne, George, Caroline, and William streets was divided in half and the north half was set aside as the "Market Lot" and the south half as the "Church Lot" (Royston and Buckner 1721). By the 1730s, the lot to the west of the church, across George Street, contained the courthouse. The courthouse, together with the church and market square, formed the epicenter of the colonial government in Fredericksburg (Fredericksburgva.gov n.d.; Royston and Buckner 1721). In 1734, the church, still known as the Rappahannock Church, was built on the western half of the "Church Lot" at

the corner of Princess Anne and George streets. By the 1750s, the vestry used the land surrounding the chapel as the church's cemetery. The land on the eastern end of George Street proved unsuitable as a place of burial due to its steep decline towards the Rappahannock River; therefore, in 1772 the House of Burgesses passed an act empowering the vestry to sell this part of the churchyard, leaving the present 0.5-acre lot that the church is located on today (Felder 1982:42–43).

The American Revolution granted individuals religious freedom, and the church lost much of its governing power (Addison 1951:57–58). Dissenters were no longer obligated to the Episcopal Church and without any of its previous power, the Episcopal Church was left unable to sustain itself both spiritually and financially. Many saw the church as a part of the old regime and attendance dropped significantly. New denominations, accustomed to relying upon their own resources for support, gained members while popularity fell in the Episcopal Church. During this time the Rappahannock Church in Fredericksburg fell into disrepair (Quenzel 1951:21).

In 1813, a spiritual rebirth occurred under the new leadership of Reverend Edward McGuire, who replaced the older, frame chapel with a new, more permanent brick structure (Quenzel 1951:21). In the decade following the construction of the new church building, the rights to the property were turned over to the trustees of the church its name changed to St. George's (Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia 1836). In 1823, a new Sunday school building was erected in the northern half of the property to house the growing Sunday school run by the Episcopal Church since 1816, making it the first in the region (Hicks 2016). Because of the close proximity to the churchyard, the new school brought controversy to the congregation as many felt the church was in "a violation of the Sanctuary of the Grave" and were concerned that there were likely graves beneath the building (The Virginia Herald 1823). This Sunday school building was later called Faulkner Hall, after Reverend Thomas G. Faulkner, who led the church in the twentieth century (Willis 1978). A writer to *The Virginia Herald* at the time noted that the purpose was to erect a Sunday school building to educate the "poor children of our town and neighbourhood [sic] in the principles of knowledge and religion" (Hicks 2016). Since children at that time often worked with their parents during the week, the Sunday school was a place where underprivileged children could learn to read and write through reading and copying Bible passages (Hicks 2016). By the mid-nineteenth century, Sunday school attendance was a near universal aspect of childhood until compulsory state education was established in the 1870s which required weekday education. At that point, the Sunday school at St. George's started to resemble the Christian education of today (Hicks 2016).

Due to a faulty foundation, the second church was replaced in 1849 by the current and largest of the three churches (Slaughter 1847:49–51). To finance the new church, the vestry sold pews and as a result raised more than enough money necessary to pay for design and construction. The parish originally bought a Gothic design from architect Richard Upjohn, but ultimately decided upon a Romanesque-Revival design by Robert Cary Long, Jr. (Rorrer 1991:9). Construction was completed in 1849 by H. G. Reynolds, a builder who constructed many of Long's works (Rorrer 1991:1–3).

St. George's Episcopal Church is the only Romanesque Revival work of Robert Cary Long, Jr. in Virginia. Long, who designed the Frederick County Courthouse (034-5062/138-0042-1067), the

School for the Deaf in Staunton (132-0008), and Kinloch (028-0020), is principally known for his Classical Revival work in Virginia (Rorrer 1991:1–3). However, his career shifted in the middle of the 1840s as he began adopting the Romanesque Revival style (Rorrer 1991:5). The same year St. George's was completed, Long died of cholera, ending his life at the height of his career (Rorrer 1991:9–10).

The town clock was added to the steeple of St. George's in 1851, and while the clock is owned by the City, the bells that continue to ring today are owned and operated by the church (Willis 1978:5). A fire in 1854 brought several changes to the church with Reverend McGuire noting at the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Virginia that “our church was partially consumed by fire in July last. It has, however, been repaired with renovated beauty and convenience” (Diocese of Virginia 1855:69). The original vestry room, partitioned off to the east in a wing of its own, became part of an enlarged chancel (Quenzel 1951:36). Other restorations included the addition of side galleries to the nave and restoring the clock and bells (Willis 1978:5). The bells were replaced at that time by the current ones which were made by the Meneely's Company of West Troy, New York, weighing approximately 2,500 pounds (Hicks 2017).

During the Civil War, the church, along with most of Fredericksburg, was abandoned with services being held sporadically in the basement. St. George's, while also serving as a landmark to soldiers, gave shelter to both the Confederate and Union armies. It first served as a site of the Confederate religious revival in 1862 and 1863 when the other churches in town were no longer able to contain the large number of soldiers that were in attendance. This followed a trend of religious revivals that were rippling through the entire Army of Northern Virginia at that time (Harman 2000:105). Reverend William Wallace Bennett wrote, “At 11:00 we assembled at the Episcopal Church. On this occasion, perhaps 1,500 were in attendance, mostly soldiers. Every grade, from private to Major General was represented” (Harman 2000:109). About a year later, the church served as a hospital for Union soldiers following the Battle of the Wilderness with an observer noting how the entire church was filled with wounded soldiers (Willis 1978:14).

Although services were sporadic, the town clock and bells continued to ring throughout the war. Captain William C. Barlett wrote a recollection for *The Free Lance* (as cited in Willis 1978) about the Union bombardment of Fredericksburg:

On the night preceding the bombardment, the tall spire of the church loomed like a spectre to the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac camped across the river. Regularly from the belfry came the solemn record of the house resounding among the hills. Driven by frayed nerves and tension, one officer vowed that “the first shot he put in the city should pass through that clock.” But the clock survived three days of battle, though in the din of cannonade its tolling could not be heard. On the night of December 14th as the Federal troops retreated back across the river under an injunction of silence, they suddenly heard the sound of the clock of the church ringing out the hour of two—it took up the thread of its monotonous story, ringing out as though exalting with the victors, while the distant hills echoes back in solemn requiem (Willis 1978:14).

St. George's resumed weekly services in December 1864, with the vestry meetings commencing again in April of the following year. The first order of business was to repair the church, which

had suffered damages both inside and out including about 17 holes in the steeple (Willis 1978:15). The repairs were completed in 1870 and, in 1876, the first of 16 stained-glass windows were installed (Quenzel 1951:35). Three of the windows were contributed by the renowned Tiffany Studios and Colgate Glass Company of New York (Quenzel 1951:39).

St. George's underwent several changes in the twentieth century, the largest consisting of the addition of the classroom hyphen known as McGuire Hall between the chancel and Faulkner Hall, completed in 1959, and then added onto in 1995 (Barbara Willis, personal communication 2017; Willis 1978:5). Other changes include a reorganization of the chancel area, replacement of the original tin roof with slate shingles, and the rehabilitation of the steeple (Willis 1978:6). St. George's Episcopal Church has served its congregation as well as the City of Fredericksburg for over 280 years and it still stands as a landmark today.

Citations

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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: Dr. Marion H. Rambo, Trustee

organization: St. George's Episcopal Church

street & number: 812 Sunken Road

city or town: Fredericksburg state: Virginia zip code: 22401

e-mail: _____ telephone: 540-361-4570

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: Barbara Willis

Daytime Telephone: 540-373-7288

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

name/title: Caitlin Sylvester

organization: Dovetail Cultural Resource Group

street & number: 300 Central Road, Suite 200

city or town: Fredericksburg state: Virginia zip code: 22401

e-mail: csylvester@dovetailcrg.com telephone: 540-899-9170

6. Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

name/title: Timothy J. Baroody, City Manager

locality: Fredericksburg, Virginia

street & number: 715 Princess Anne Street

city or town: Fredericksburg state: Virginia zip code: 22401

telephone: 540-372-1010