



2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221; Telephone: (804) 367-2323; Fax: (804) 367-2391

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

The Preliminary Information Form (PIF) constitutes an application for preliminary consideration of a property for eligibility for the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The PIF is **not** the same as a nomination to the Registers, but is a means for evaluating the **eligibility** of a property for listing. The PIF is evaluated by Department of Historic Resources (DHR) staff and the State Review Board (SRB) based on information available at the time of preparation. Recommendations are subject to change if additional information becomes available. DHR and SRB recommendations regarding the property's eligibility will be provided to the property owner in writing.

Before Preparing a PIF

Contact **DHR's Archivist** for assistance in obtaining any information DHR may have on file about your property, such as a previous architectural survey record or eligibility evaluation. You are welcome to use this information in preparing your PIF. Contact **DHR's Archivist** by phone at (804) 482-6102, or by email at Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov.

Staff at one of DHR's three Regional offices also are available to answer questions you may have as you begin preparing your PIF. Locations and contact information for each office is at <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/about-dhr/regional-preservation-offices/>. (You also are welcome to ask DHR's Archivist for the contact information.)

Preparing a PIF

A PIF consists of three equally important parts:

- Form:** Complete the attached form to the best of your ability, using your own research about the property to be evaluated as well as any information that DHR has provided. Remember that DHR's Regional staff also are available to assist you. The form may be completed using Microsoft Word software, typed, or hand-written. If using MS Word, send the electronic file via CD, email, ftp, or other file sharing means to **DHR's Archivist**.
Your PIF will not be evaluated if it is missing the property owner's signature and/or contact information for the person submitting the form (if different from the property owner)
- Photos:** Provide color digital images (JPGs are preferred) of your property's exterior and major interior spaces, with emphasis on architectural features instead of furnishings. Digital photos typically include views of the main building from all sides, as well as important ornamental and/or functional details; any outbuildings or secondary resources; and the property's general setting. Digital images can be submitted on CD, USB drive, or other file sharing means. Contact **DHR's Archivist** if you need assistance working with digital images. For further guidance on how to take photos, please refer to DHR's [Architectural Survey Guidelines](#).
- Maps:** A minimum of two maps must accompany your PIF.
 - Location map:** This map shows the exact location of your property. The map can be created using Google Maps, Google Earth, Bing, or other mapping websites. A copy of a road map also may be used as long as the property's exact location and physical address are shown on the map. If you need assistance, **DHR's Archivist** can provide you an example of an acceptable location map that shows boundaries.
 - Sketch map:** This map shows the locations of all resources on your property, such as the main building; any secondary resources (often referred to as outbuildings); major landscape features such as a stream, formal gardens, driveways, and parking areas, and the road on which the property fronts. The sketch map can be drawn by hand, or an annotated aerial view, tax parcel map or survey map may be used.

Submitting a PIF

Once you have completed the PIF, submit it to **DHR's Archivist** at the mailing address at the top of this page or via email at Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov. The PIF will be forwarded to the Regional staff member who will review your PIF and will answer any questions you may have about the evaluation process. Do not include materials for other DHR programs, such as easements or tax credits, with your PIF.

Note: All submitted materials become the property of DHR and will be retained in our permanent Archive. In addition, the materials will be posted on DHR's public website for a period of time during the evaluation process.

Thank you for taking the time to prepare and submit a Preliminary Information Form to DHR!



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DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) _____

1. General Property Information

Property name: Tony Segura and Marsh Harris House

Property address: 3522 Grove Avenue

City or Town: Richmond

Zip code: 23221

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

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

Building Site _____ Structure _____ Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: _____

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban _____ Town _____ Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural _____

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

The Tony Segura and Marsh Harris House is located at 3522 Grove Avenue in the west end of the Museum District in the City of Richmond. The lot sits at the middle of the block on the north side of Grove Avenue. The setting is generally less dense than the rest of the Museum District with detached dwellings and larger parcels. The Segura/Harris House parcel slopes gently to the north and is bound by a single-family residential property to the east, an apartment complex to the west, Grove Avenue to the south, and a paved alley to the north. A concrete sidewalk runs between Grove Avenue and the property. The primary resource spans the width of the lot. The picket fenced front yard contains several shrubs and small trees. The backyard is enclosed with a stockade privacy fence. It contains several larger trees and a non-historic prefabricated shed.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Vernacular, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: _____

If the builder is known, please list here: _____

Date of construction (can be approximate): Ca. 1925

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 Segura/Harris House is a two-story, three-bay Vernacular foursquare dwelling with elements of Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. It was constructed ca. 1925 and is a common type in Richmond. The foundation is composed of rusticated concrete block and the frame structural system is clad in aluminum siding over wooden clapboard siding. The dwelling is covered by a hip roof with side gables and clad in slate shingles. Three tall brick chimneys with corbeled caps rise from the roof; one on the east slope of the hipped roof, one from the north slope of the east facing gable, and one from the south slope of the west facing gable. The primary entrance occupies the west bay of the façade and consists of a historic windowed wood door with sidelights and a transom. The primary entrance sits within a hip roofed wraparound porch supported by wood Tuscan columns. Fenestration consists of original twelve-over-one and six-over-one wood sash as well as replacement four-over-four and one-over-one wood sash. A fixed stained-glass window on the west elevation corresponds to the interior ground floor staircase landing. A hip roof dormer projects from the center of the south slope of the hip roof and contains a single pane fixed wood sash. Aside from the replacement of the exterior cladding and some windows on the secondary elevations, the dwelling's exterior retains high material integrity from the period of significance.

The interior of the Segura/Harris House consists of a standard foursquare plan with an entrance hall containing an original winder staircase and three primary spaces on the ground floor. Notable architectural features on the ground floor include original mantels, trim, interior doors, and pony walls formerly supporting wood Tuscan columns (now removed) between the entrance hall and the southeast room on the ground floor. The kitchen, originally located in the northwest corner of the ground floor, was expanded by the current owners with a one-story addition attached to the north elevation. The upper floor contains three bedrooms and 2 bathrooms. The dwelling has a finished attic and unfinished basement with crawl space. Despite alterations to the kitchen and bathrooms in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the dwelling's interior retains most interior features and the original layout is still largely intact.

The dwelling is a contributing building in the West of the Boulevard Historic District. The district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994 under the areas of Architecture and Community Planning and Development with a Period of Significance of ca. 1895-1943.

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.

- Prefabricated shed, good condition, ca. 2012

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.

The Tony Segura and Marsh Harris House is recommended significant under Criterion B in the areas of Social History/LGBTQ History and Ethnic Heritage-Hispanic/Cuban for its association with pioneering gay rights activist Tony Segura and gay pulp fiction writer and artist Marsh Harris, who were life partners. The residence is also recommended significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History/LGBTQ History as a meeting space for some of Richmond's earliest LGBTQ rights organizations. The period of significance is 1965, when Segura purchased the property, until 1981, when the Segura co-led Richmond Gay Rights Association disbanded.

Tony Segura (1919-1991) was one of the nation's most significant early gay rights leaders of the 1950s and appears to be the earliest of Hispanic heritage. Born Gonzalo Segura, Jr. in Cuba, he immigrated to the United States in 1935 and moved to New York City following World War II. There, in 1955, he co-founded a gay rights group that later became the Mattachine Society of New York, a regional chapter of the first long-term national gay rights organization in America (founded 1951). The Mattachine Society was one of the country's most influential gay rights groups during the 1950s-60s "homophile" era, a formative period of the American LGBTQ rights movement.

In 1959, Segura, who worked as a research chemist, moved to Richmond, Virginia, for a job at Philip Morris. In a 1977 interview with historian Jonathan Ned Katz, Segura notes that he "desperately" tried to establish a gay group (perhaps a Mattachine chapter) in Richmond in the early 1960s but was not surprised when he could not drum up interest. The existence of gay groups was rare outside a few major U.S. cities before the 1969 uprising at the Stonewall Inn, a New York City gay bar, a nationally significant event that ultimately led to a sharp increase in LGBTQ groups nationwide.

Around 1962, Segura met Marshall "Marsh" Harris (1936-1993) at Eton's, 938 West Grace Street (extant), which, according to Segura, was Richmond's most popular gay bar at that time. Harris, born in North Carolina and raised in Chester, Virginia, lived with Segura by 1965 according to Hill City Directories from the period, the year Segura purchased the Grove Avenue house. The couple's occupancy of the house, that lasted through their deaths in the early 1990s, spanned a time of important change for Richmond's LGBTQ community, from small and hidden to publicly organizing for equal rights and establishing social, activist, and support groups.

Segura and Harris hosted gay groups in their house, providing a sense of belonging to gay Richmonders at a time when police abuse and general discrimination against the LGBTQ community made gathering in public spaces unsafe. Oral histories indicate that early organizing activities in Richmond took place at a handful of dwellings, including the Segura-Harris House and the residence of activist Neal Parsons at 1402 Floyd Avenue, as well as churches sympathetic to the plight of LGBTQ people, specifically Pace Memorial United Methodist Church. In 1977, Segura co-founded the Richmond Gay Rights Association and was a contributing writer to its free *GRA Newsletter*. The group was the first in the city to focus on repealing, enacting, and modifying laws and ordinances affecting gay men and lesbians. Prior to the internet, the *GRA Newsletter* and other similar regional publications imparted valuable information, ranging from queer-friendly business directories to interviews with medical professionals, that would have been difficult or dangerous for LGBTQ people to find elsewhere. Segura also became involved with other LGBTQ rights organizations, helped organize public demonstrations for gay equality, and wrote for *The Richmond Pride* newsletter. Harris, an introvert, was less publicly involved than his

partner but financially supported LGBTQ causes in Richmond. Beginning in the 1960s, at a time when LGBTQ-themed work was heavily censored by the mainstream press and positive portrayals of LGBTQ people were scarce, he authored gay pulp fiction books and short stories published through independent presses under the pen name Peter Randolph (based on his full name). Harris' work found success within gay audiences and his writing was notable for eschewing common pulp themes of transgression or tragedy, instead portraying men in conspicuous and happy romances.

The Tony Segura and Marsh Harris House stands as a significant example of LGBTQ history in Richmond. Segura employed his residence as a venue in which to plan some of the city's earliest public LGBTQ rights events using the skillset he developed co-founding the Mattachine Society of New York. As their primary residence for over thirty years, the Tony Segura and Marsh Harris House is the property with the strongest historical association with both men. In addition to its association with Segura and Harris' individual careers and accomplishments, the Segura-Harris House is one of only a handful of identified meeting spaces for early queer activists in Richmond. In an era of widespread discrimination against homosexual and gender variant people, the Segura-Harris House is representative of the role of private residences as vital community gathering spaces and as venues from which the LGBTQ rights movement could safely grow. In this way, the house can be compared to NRHP-listed examples including the Dr. Franklin E. Kameny House and The Furies Collective, both located in Washington, D.C. Notably, the Tony Segura and Marsh Harris House expands the telling of LGBTQ life and activism beyond larger metropolitan areas like New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., illustrates the influence an early gay rights activist and Cuban American immigrant brought to a smaller, then-socially conservative city, and contextualizes Richmond's evolution into a more inclusive place for LGBTQ people.

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.)

- Beth Marschak and Alex Lorch, *Images of America: Lesbian and Gay Richmond* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, July 7, 2008).
- Bob Swisher, "A Small, but Hidden, Community Thrived in the 50s," *Our Own Community Press*, May 1990.
- Cindy Bray, "Rainbow Richmond: LGBTQ History of Richmond, VA, 1625-2010," *OutHistory*, 2013 (accessed March 18, 2024), www.outhistory.org/exhibits/show/rainbow-richmond/developing-identity.
- Jay Shockley, "Tony Segura Residence," *NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project*, April 2022 (accessed March 18, 2024), www.nyclgbtsites.org/site/tony-segura-residence.
- Tony Segura, interview with Jonathan Ned Katz, April 24, 1977, Jonathan Ned Katz Papers, The New York Public Library.

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

Private: 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: Stephen and Susan

Versen

organization: _____

street & number: 3522 Grove Ave

city or town: Richmond state: VA zip code:

23221

e-mail: sversen@yahoo.com telephone: 804-678-8662

Legal Owner's Signature: 

Date: 5-28-24

•• *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: _____

organization: _____

street & number: _____

city or town: _____ state: _____ zip code: _____

e-mail: _____ telephone: _____

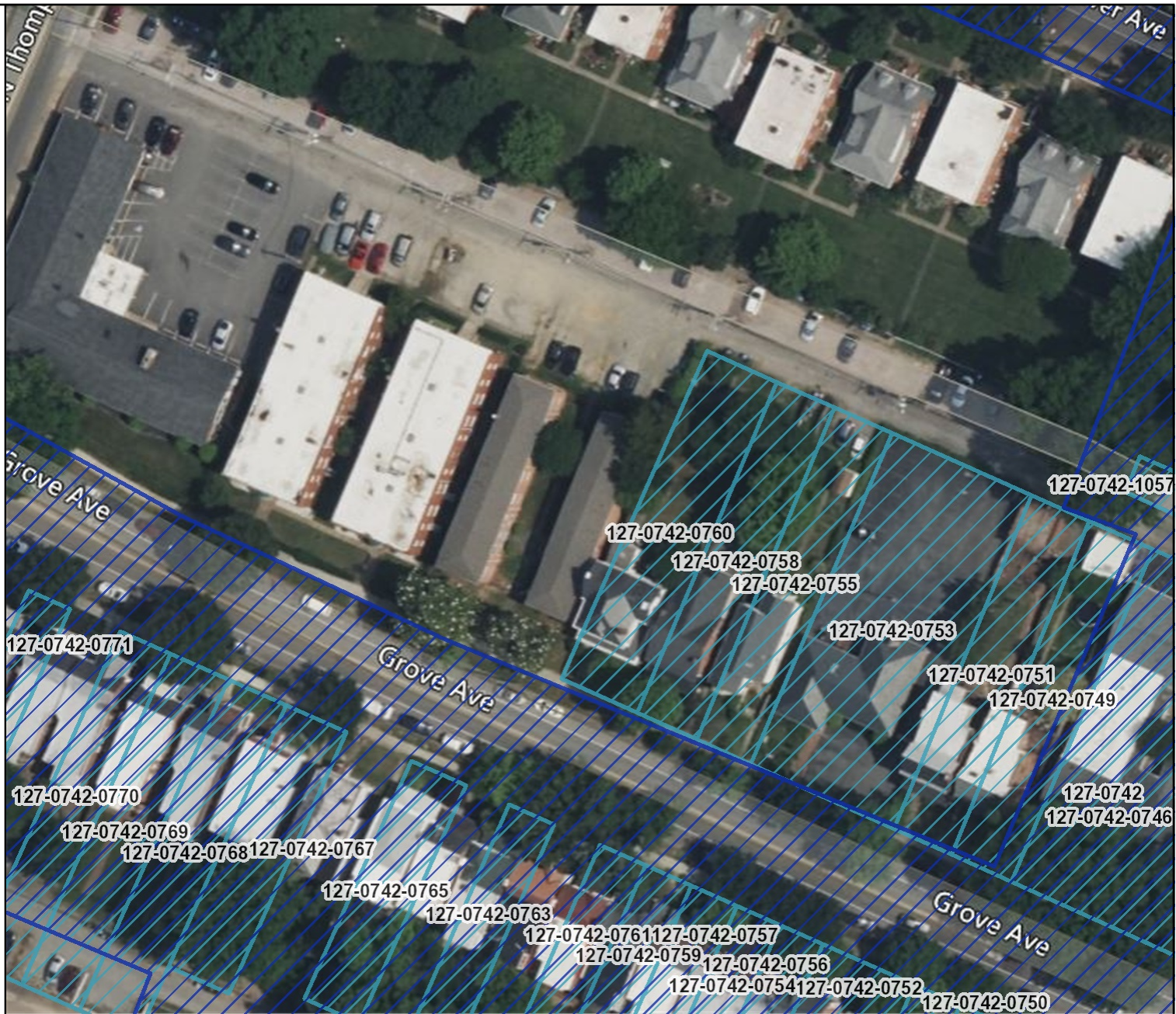
Date: _____

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

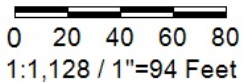


Legend

- Architecture Resources
- Architecture Labels
- Individual Historic District Properties
- Archaeological Resources
- Archaeology Labels
- DHR Easements
- County Boundaries



Feet



Title: Tony Segura and Marsh Harris House






Date: 6/4/2024

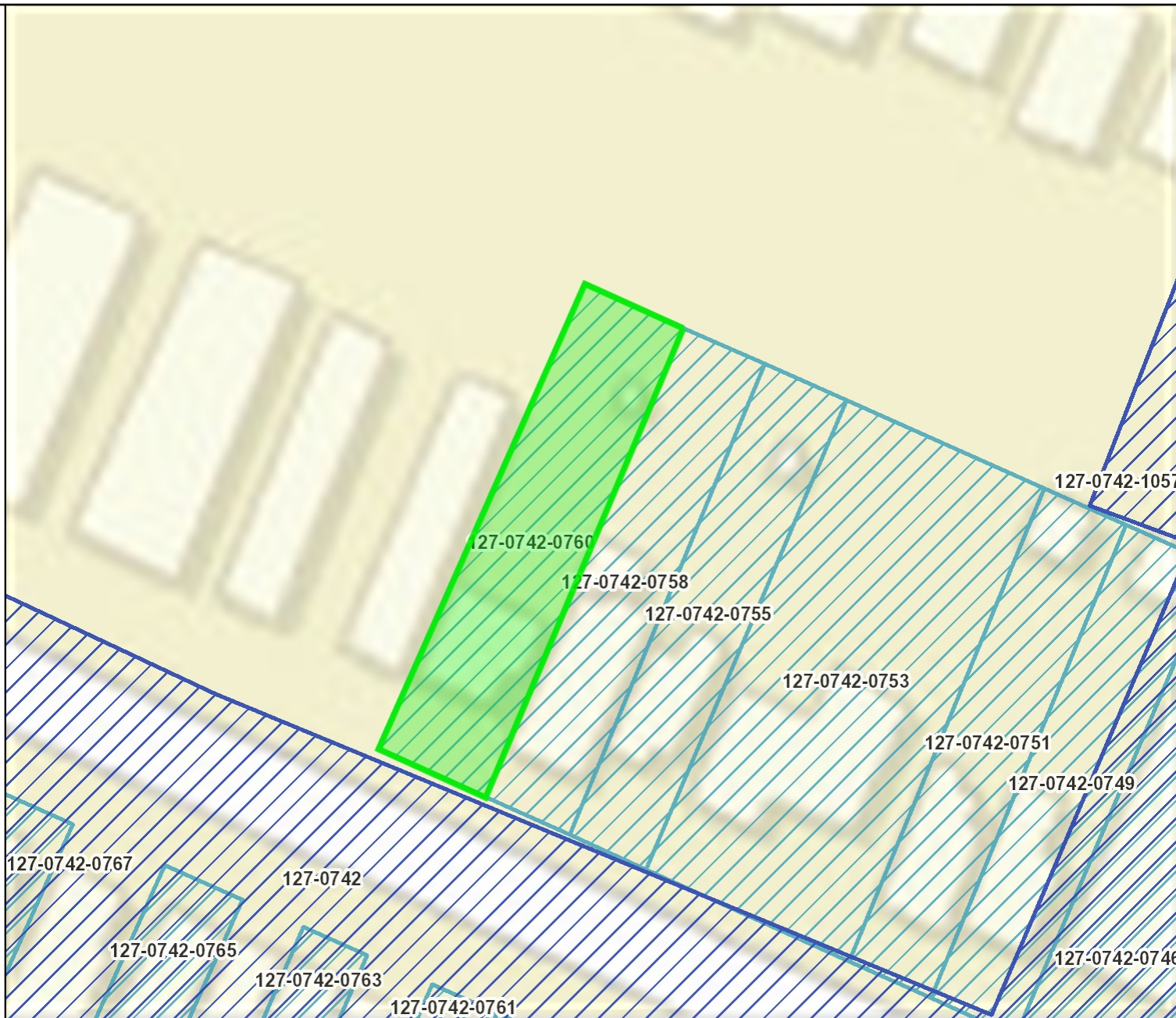
DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.



Legend

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Feet



1:800 / 1"=67 Feet

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