

**RECONNAISSANCE LEVEL METAL DETECTOR SURVEY
FOR THE
EPISCOPAL HIGH SCHOOL NEW FACULTY HOUSING PROJECT
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA**

**MANAGEMENT SUMMARY
COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE GROUP, INC.
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA
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The Episcopal High School (EHS) is proposing to build two additional faculty housing units in an approximately 0.5-acre area at the end of Goodwin Road in the City of Alexandria, Virginia (Figure 1). Alexandria Archaeology has determined that the location has the potential for containing cultural resources associated with the Civil War and has recommended a metal detector survey. EHS contracted Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc. (Commonwealth) to perform a reconnaissance level metal detector survey within the 0.5-acre proposed limits of disturbance. The fieldwork was conducted on July 18, 2017 by Joseph Balicki, Cynthia V. Goode, and W. Brett Arnold, metal detectorists with a combined experience of over 32 years. Artifact processing was done by Cynthia V. Goode and W. Brett Arnold. W. Brett Arnold prepared the results and Sarah Ruch prepared the graphics. A historic context and background research section compiled for a previous metal detector survey in the vicinity (see Balicki and Corle 2006:13-26) was deemed sufficient for the purposes of this study and no further background research was conducted.

The project area included the irregularly-shaped EHS proposed limits of disturbance and its direct vicinity (Figures 1-2). The proposed limits of disturbance comprise the sites of the two new faculty dwelling structures and a grass channel for drainage. The eastern part of the project area consists of a narrow lawn and a trail leading north from an adjacent athletic field that has been disturbed by the installation of a private sewer line. The rest of the area is wooded with mature hardwoods. Undergrowth, consisting of invasive and native species, ranges from light in the central and southern parts of the project area to extremely dense in the northern parts of the project area. An artificial drainage swale begins on the east side of the project area and runs roughly east-west through the southern portion of the limits of disturbance.

The survey included an initial walkover and metal detection by three operators using a White's MXT, a MineLab CTX 30/30, a Fisher Pro Tech, and a MineLab E-Trac. All work was designed to conform with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources *Guidelines for Conducting Cultural Resource Survey in Virginia* and Alexandria Archaeology's *City of Alexandria Archeological Standards*. Metal detection was conducted in overlapping transects where possible. All signals were investigated. Modern trash was noted and discarded. Positive metal detector hits and other pertinent features were mapped with a GPS capable of sub-meter accuracy.

The open area and the tree line closest to the existing faculty housing contains a large concentration of modern trash, including aluminum cans, pull tabs, auto parts, bike chains, modern trash

wrappers, and tin foil. Modern trash was also encountered in the existing drainage swale. Additionally, the areas immediately adjacent to the sewer and extant residences have been disturbed by construction activities.

The metal detector survey resulted in the recovery of ten artifacts. Most of these were centered in the area clear of underbrush around the proposed grass channel on the east side of the limits of disturbance. These included a horseshoe, a cut spike, a cast iron vessel fragment, a copper alloy caster wheel, a 1937 silver half dollar, a possible lock or lock hasp, and two lead balls. The larger of the lead balls is a .63 caliber unfired musket ball. The smaller of the lead balls is fired 0.21 caliber buckshot. These two artifacts are from a Civil War era Buck and Ball cartridge. Two additional objects were recovered northeast of the limits of disturbance in patches of undergrowth. These were two unidentifiable copper alloy fragments. All artifacts were collected from an Ap horizon, an inorganic or mineral horizon with <25% humified organic matter that has been entirely or partially disturbed by human activity.

Ten artifacts were recovered during the reconnaissance level metal detector survey of the 0.5-acre EHS additional faculty housing limits of disturbance and its immediate vicinity. Most of these artifacts were recovered from a disturbed topsoil horizon near the proposed grass channel on the west side of the project area. The artifacts range between the mid nineteenth century through the early twentieth century and are not related to one another. They represent scattered trash deposits and do not constitute a meaningful archeological site. Two pieces of lead ammunition (one piece of buckshot and one musket ball) date to the Civil War occupation of this area, but no further evidence of Civil War occupation was recovered. No further work is warranted.

REFERENCES CITED

Alexandria Archaeology

- 2005 *City of Alexandria Archeological Standards*. Alexandria Archaeology, Office of Historic Alexandria, VA.

Balicki, Joseph and Bryan Corle

- 2006 Archaeological Evaluation and Resource Management Plan for Episcopal High School Faculty Housing, 1200 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria, Virginia. Report to the Episcopal High School from John Milner Associates, Inc., Alexandria, Virginia.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR)

- 2011 *Guidelines for Conducting Cultural Resource Survey in Virginia*. Richmond, VA.

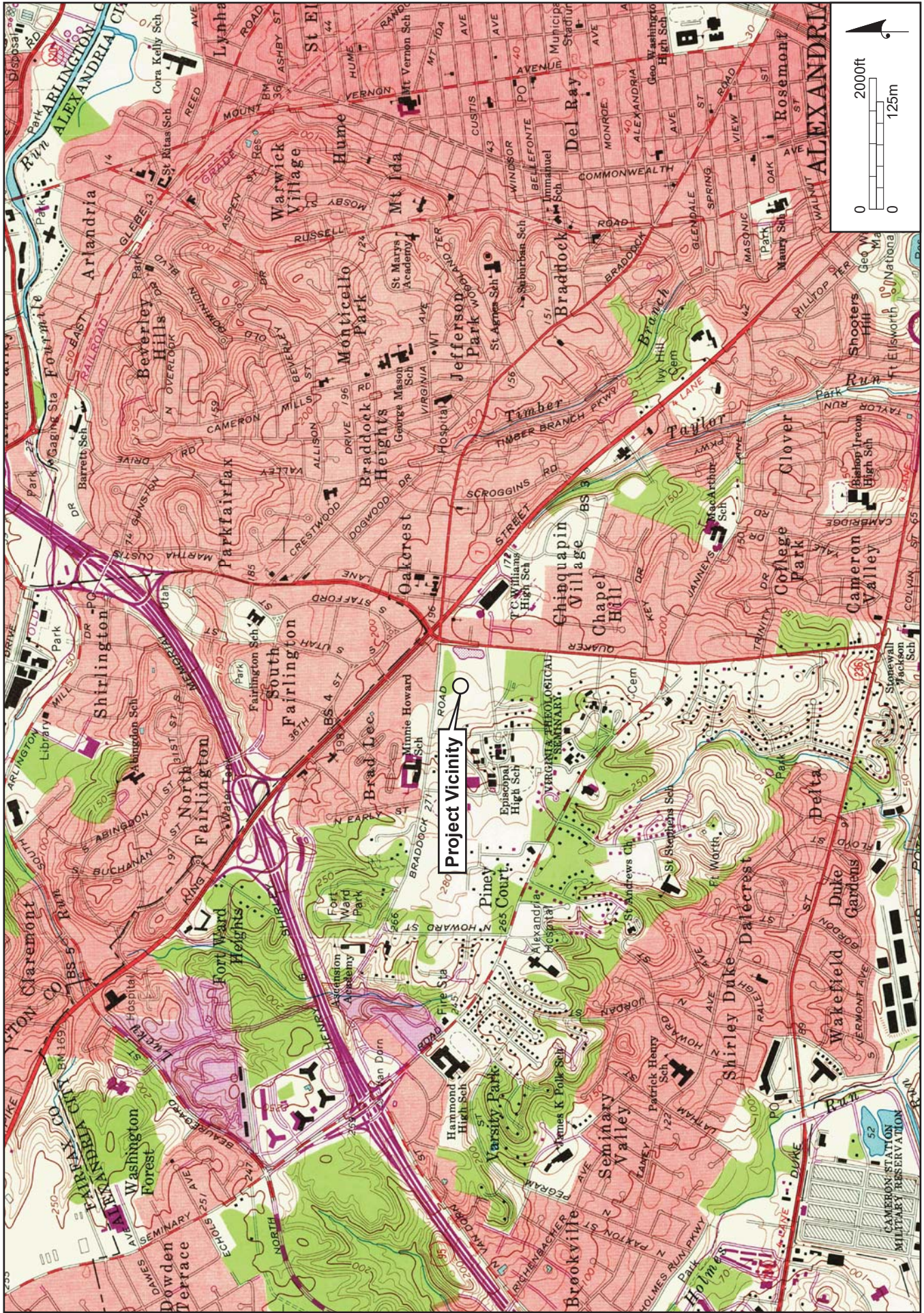


Figure 1. Detail of USGS Alexandria, VA.-D.C.-MD. 7.5' quadrangle showing the location of the project area (USGS 1965).



Figure 2. Aerial photograph showing the location of the limits of disturbance, artificial drainage feature, and metal detector finds.