

Eleanor Historic District  
Name of Property

Putnam County, WV  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

As further detailed in Section 8, the historic district is significant on a state level under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development (1934-1966), Social History (1934-1966), and Politics/Government (1934-1946). The district is also eligible under Criterion C on a local level of significance for Architecture for its planned designs of the original dwellings and street layout (1934-1935). By the mid-to-late twentieth century, the town grew from a self-subsistence settlement with cooperative farming and industry to an incorporated town. Over that time, the town experienced population and construction growth, a pattern that has continued in recent decades. The Eleanor Historic District meets National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criterion A at the state level of significance in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Politics/Government, and Social History as representative of federally-funded initiatives to improve the lives of working Americans in the wake of the Great Depression. One of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's earliest New Deal programs, the resettlement communities became a primary focus of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt after witnessing poor living conditions of unemployed coal miners in Scotts Run, West Virginia. As the second of three homesteading communities in the state, Eleanor was established in 1934 to support former miners. The period of significance for Politics/Government begins in 1934 when the FERA acquired the land for and developed the resettlement community of Eleanor and ends in 1946 when the government sold the town to the citizen-led corporation known as Washington Homesteads, Inc. The period of significance for Community Planning and Development and Social History at the state level extends further to 1966 when the town was officially incorporated. The period between 1946 and 1966 is defined by the Washington Homesteads, Inc. managing and maintaining the community as a membership-based organization. Residents and business owners paid membership dues and then directly voted at regular meetings about town issues. The district also meets National Register Criterion C at the local level in the area of Architecture for its design and development by Charleston-based architects, Meanor & Handloser. The periods of significance incorporate the community's first developments as a federal government program during the Great Depression, as designed by regionally significant architects, through its governmental transitions in the post-WWII era.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Historical Context**

#### **Contested Territory and Bounty Lands**

By the mid-seventeenth century, the Shawnee was the primary tribe occupying the area during early European exploration. The Shawnee were forced from present-day West Virginia to lands further west during the late seventeenth century due to Iroquois attacks during the Beaver Wars.

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No permanent native populations were settled in the area with the arrival of the first European settlers in the early eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

In the decade between the French and Indian War and the beginning of the American Revolution, settlements were established only by opposing the policies of the British government. King George III established the Proclamation Line of 1763, which prohibited European settlement beyond the Allegheny Front, nullifying the military bounty claims to the land. As such, settlement in the trans-Allegheny area of Virginia was delayed by several years.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy ceded to the King of England practically all of what is now West Virginia. George Washington took the opportunity to claim the land he was promised by Dinwiddie in 1754 and petitioned the Virginia government for the land he was due. In 1770, Washington ventured down the Ohio River and Kanawha River to explore his options and he began surveying the land in 1771. By early 1773, the Virginia governor released the surveyed patents. Washington received approximately 9,000 acres along the Ohio River in present-day Wood and Jackson counties, 7,276 acres on the south side of the Kanawha River in present-day Mason County, and 7,276 acres on the north side of the Kanawha River in present-day Putnam County. Eleanor is located within these tracts.<sup>3</sup>

The Treaty of Fort Stanwix, along with the Treaty of Hard Labor in 1768 and the Treaty of Lochaber in 1770, brought an end to the rights of the Iroquois and Cherokee to lands south and east of the Ohio River, which included nearly the entirety of present-day West Virginia. As settlers began to pour into the region, the Shawnee and Mingo tribes, which had not relinquished their rights to the land, continued attacks on settlers in the area. There were numerous skirmishes and attacks throughout the region, which were known as Dunmore's War. These hostilities culminated at the Battle of Point Pleasant in 1774. The Treaty of Camp Charlotte in 1774 helped to neutralize this threat in the western frontier as the Shawnee, Mingo, and Delaware released their claims to land south and east of the Ohio River ending Dunmore's War. By the end of the eighteenth century, settlement in West Virginia had moved past the Eastern Panhandle and Greenbrier Valley and now extended into the Kanawha, Monongahela, and Ohio River Valleys.<sup>4</sup>

### **Permanent Settlement and Early Industries**

With the end of the Revolutionary War, Americans resumed their course westward in search of new lands in trans-Allegheny West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Old Northwest Territory. While the earliest settlements in what became West Virginia were made in the 1760s, the rate of settlement did not pick up until the 1780s and 1790s. In 1790, about 125,000 Virginians lived west of the Appalachians. More than 70,000 of them were in Kentucky, which experienced a dramatic population upsurge of nearly 600 percent between 1783 and 1790.

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<sup>1</sup> Maslowski, "Indians," E-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia, 2010.

<https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/841>; John Alexander Williams, "Shawnee," e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia, 2010. <http://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/383>.

<sup>2</sup> Riddel, 2008, page 66; Maxwell, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Rice 1986, pages 35, 88.

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While the area of present-day West Virginia had less spectacular growth, increases in settlement led to the establishment of additional counties in what was then, western Virginia. Kanawha County was formed in 1788 from Greenbrier and Montgomery Counties. In 1790, Virginia's total population was 55,873, but only about 20,000 lived west of the mountains.<sup>5</sup>

When Washington died in 1799, his landholdings were divided between his brothers, nephews, and great-nephews, each receiving 1/23rd of his more than 50,000 acres of amassed land. By 1805, Samuel Washington inherited the land containing present-day Eleanor, which included 2,233 acres, but sold the land to Joseph Lewis, Jr in 1807. Lewis transferred the ownership to Thomas Stribling the following year. Stribling passed the land to his son, Robert, upon his passing in 1821. Robert Stribling sold the property to Chilton family in 1834, who sold it to Richard E. Putney in 1836. Putney sold the land three years later to his wife's first cousin, Benjamin Franklin Ruffner. Ruffner is believed to have constructed the Red House Plantation House that currently serves as the Eleanor Town Hall (Figure 4). Ruffner owned the house for 44 years. The 1840 Census indicated that Ruffner owned 13 enslaved people and employed 10 others for agricultural work.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1790 and 1830, the region grew 317 percent, compared with a 354 percent growth for the nation as a whole. The population influx required the creation of additional local governments. In 1848, Virginia created Putnam County from portions of Kanawha, Mason, and Cabell counties. The new county's population in 1850 included 5,336 individuals, including 632 slaves. Slavery in the area of present-day West Virginia was primarily concentrated along four major valleys: Shenandoah, South Branch, Kanawha, and Greenbrier. Enslaved people were typically used in the salt making, coal mining, and blacksmithing industries as well as general laboring.<sup>7</sup>

Natural resources fueled the region's economies. Rich soils along river bottomlands spurred agricultural growth. The principal agricultural products in Putnam County were corn, wheat, oats, potatoes tobacco, and fruit. The raising of cattle, sheep, hogs, and horses also proved profitable.<sup>8</sup> However, salt came to be one of the more lucrative industries in the Kanawha Valley in the early- to mid-nineteenth century. By 1815, the Kanawha Valley was considered one of the foremost salt producing centers in the United States, as 52 furnaces were producing between 2,500 and 3,000 bushels of salt per day. Most of the salt produced in the Kanawha Valley was packed in barrels and taken to markets on the river using large boats. South-central Ohio – a

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Laura Cox, "Ruffner House/Red House/Eleanor Town Hall," Historic Property Inventory Form, PU-0003-0432, West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History, 2019.  
[https://mapwv.gov/shpo/docs/PDFs/ArchitecturalSites/PU-0003-0432\\_Rev01.pdf](https://mapwv.gov/shpo/docs/PDFs/ArchitecturalSites/PU-0003-0432_Rev01.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> William D. Wintz, "Putnam County," e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia, 2013.

<https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1948>; John Edmund Stealey III, "Slavery," e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia, 2021. <https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/456>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, page 14.

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region known for pork-processing industries – was a key market for Kanawha Valley salt connecting the area with western markets through various river systems.<sup>9</sup>

### **Post-Civil War Development**

While river traffic had been successful in the previous 100 years of Euro-American settlement in the region, the federal government decided in 1873 to invest four million dollars in the Kanawha River to build a slack water canal. This increased river traffic and prolonged the life of river transportation in West Virginia. Lock and dams were constructed on the Kanawha River, thus allowing year-round navigation. Even with the investments of the federal government in river traffic development, railroads provided a faster and more efficient transportation alternative as various lines traversed the valley in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>10</sup>

In 1888, the Kanawha & Michigan Railroad (K&M) completed a 58-mile track from Charleston to Point Pleasant, traversing through present-day Eleanor and connecting to the Toledo & Ohio Central Railroad (T&OC). The railway continued to expand east and north to access coal fields during the turn of the twentieth century. The T&OC took control of the K&M in 1900, and the New York Central System railroad absorbed the T&OC ten years later.<sup>11</sup> In most cases, local coal fields dictated where the rails were constructed.

Coal was discovered along the Pocatalico River in 1798, south of Eleanor, but commercial coal mining in Putnam County did not start until the late nineteenth century and developed quickly after the Civil War. By the turn of the twentieth century, five mining companies operated in the county, which employed 1,000 men and produced 400,000 tons of coal a year. The Plymouth Coal Mine was located five miles southeast of present-day Eleanor.<sup>12</sup>

While not the primary pursuit in the area, agriculture was practiced throughout the county and region. The primary products were grains used for consumption by humans and animals, while the production of wool and tobacco was undertaken to supplement subsistence farms. A total of 12.6 million pounds of tobacco were produced in 1909 in West Virginia. Just one year later, over two million pounds of tobacco were sold and shipped in St. Albans, and three million pounds were sold at Hurricane in Putnam County. Between these two areas, nearly half of the statewide total of tobacco products were sold and shipped within a 20-mile radius from present-day Eleanor. Fruit production was another industry that flourished in the Kanawha Valley. In 1910, the Great Kanawha Orchard Company had 35,000 trees in production in Raymond City, dwarfing all other producers in the state. Tobacco and tree fruits served as cash crops in a region that often proved difficult to farm in anything but small personal plots.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> George Wesley Atkinson, *History of Kanawha County*, The West Virginia Journal: Charleston, 1876.

<sup>10</sup> Krebs, 1911, page 3.

<sup>11</sup> Robert L. Frey, "New York Central," E-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia, 2016.  
<https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1646>.

<sup>12</sup> Krebs, 1911; Wintz, 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Krebs, 1911; Atkinson, 1876.

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## First Attempts at Private Development

With Putnam County's local economy on the rise during the first decades of the twentieth century, the owners of the former Red House plantation took advantage of the opportunity. The property changed hands through a series of short-term owners following Benjamin Ruffner's death in 1883. William Long purchased most of the property at that time and he eventually willed the land to his daughters, Emma Spindle, Alice Ford, and Eva Rosenberger. In 1920, their husbands formed the Putnam Development Company. The company created "Putnam-on-Kanawha", a new town from subdivided lots of the former plantation property. On July 1, 1920, the company advertised the sale of the lots in *The Charleston Daily Mail*, in which they would give away two free lots for their "new industrial city" at an event promoting the town (Figure 5). Thousands of people were expected at the combined promotion and Fourth of July celebration, where baseball games, lunch, and concerts were planned. Despite the press and advertising leading up to the event, no articles were found about the event itself. The company failed in less than five years, as did a successor company, The Putnam Company.<sup>14</sup> By the end of the decade, some lots were independently owned, but the industrial town that the Putnam Development Company envisioned never materialized.

## New Deal Resettlement

As the 1920s shifted to the 1930s, farmers in West Virginia and across the country began to suffer from financial and agricultural hardships. The financial crash in 1929 resulted in a sharp decline of prices for crops and agricultural goods. Additionally, severe droughts occurred in 1930 and 1932, further causing farm incomes to plummet, with credit and loans no longer available to most farmers. Soil conditions throughout parts of the state had degraded significantly due to overcultivation. Paired with the environmental fallout of timbering and coal operations, farming had become impossible or impractical in these areas. Hundreds of coal operations throughout the state, many of which provided housing near remote mining sites to miners, closed during the panic. This left hundreds of families not only unemployed but also facing housing insecurity in isolated areas without any other economic engines. Textile mills, another primary employer of many in cities and towns throughout the region, also shut down during the early years of the Great Depression, with most never reopening.<sup>15</sup> Many counties in West Virginia saw unemployment rates reach 80 percent during the Depression.<sup>16</sup>

Following the election of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932, President Roosevelt and Congress created the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) in 1933 as one of the first New Deal programs. Lorena Hickok, Associated Press journalist and friend of First Lady Eleanor

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<sup>14</sup> Cox 2019; *The Charleston Daily Mail*, Advertisement, 1 July 1920; *The Charleston Daily Mail*, "Big Crowd is Expected at Putnam on Monday," 4 July 1920.

<sup>15</sup> Ronald J. Eller, *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982) 157.

<sup>16</sup> Jerry Bruce Thomas, "The Great Depression." e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia, 2012. <https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/2155>

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Roosevelt, was hired by FERA administrator Harry Hopkins to investigate and report upon the worst conditions of the Great Depression throughout the country. Working on a tip from Clarence E. Pickett, Executive Director of the Philadelphia-based Quaker American Friends Service Committee, she began her reporting in August 1933 in southwestern Pennsylvania, interviewing unemployed coal miners.<sup>17</sup> Traveling south through north-central West Virginia, Hickok visited Scotts Run, a hollow just west of Morgantown upon which many small coal companies had operated at the height of the coal boom. Following the stock market collapse, nearly 40 of the companies in the valley shut down permanently. This left hundreds of miners and their families stranded without access to resources.<sup>18</sup> Writing to Hopkins, Hickok called Scotts Run “the worst place I’d ever seen. [...] On either side of the street there were ramshackled houses, black with coal dust, which most Americans would not have considered fit for pigs.”<sup>19</sup>

Horried at Hickok’s description of the area, the First Lady joined her friend and Clarence Pickett in Morgantown on August 18, and the three toured and conducted interviews with the residents of Scotts Run. The First Lady’s visit brought nationwide media attention, and soon, articles and photographs detailing conditions in the area began to circulate. Although arguably far less geographically isolated than other coal camps in the state, the community became nationally recognized as a symbol of the Great Depression’s devastating impact on Appalachia, illustrating the region’s dire need for jobs and safe housing.<sup>20</sup>

Greatly impacted by the conditions she witnessed, Eleanor began to advocate for the federally-sponsored relocation of industrial workers impacted by the Depression. According to historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, “Eleanor shared with Harry [Hopkins] an abiding faith in the unemployed, a belief that they were decent, honest people suffering through no fault of their own, totally deserving of government help [...] [Mrs. Roosevelt and Hopkins] kept in their minds a vivid picture of the lives of these people and that image drove them to push the government to create as many jobs for as many people as it possibly could.”<sup>21</sup> She viewed the rural-industrial subsistence farming model as a way for residents to engage in self-sufficient gardening rather than competing with regular farms. With the creation of the Subsistence Homesteads Division of the National Industrial Recovery Act on August 23, 1933, \$25 million was allocated for the creation of semirural planned homesteading communities throughout the country. The farming component of these homestead experiments was not meant to be the sole

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<sup>17</sup> Franklin Parker, *Arthurdale (WV), Its Community School, and Director Elsie Ripley Clapp (1879-1965): First New Deal Subsistence Homestead Program (1933-48)*, Western Carolina University (Cullowhee, NC:1991), 1.

<sup>18</sup> Tom Stafford, “Looking Back: For Eleanor Roosevelt, Arthurdale was a chance to help,” *Springfield News-Sun*, 23 August 2010, <https://www.springfieldnewssun.com/news/local/looking-back-for-eleanor-roosevelt-arthurdale-was-chance-help/i1DI5wSyks6m6TnGOMhTyL/>.

<sup>19</sup> Parker 1991, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Ronald L. Lewis, “Scotts Run: An Introduction,” *Scott’s Run Writing Heritage Project*, [http://www.as.wvu.edu/~srsh/lewis\\_2.html](http://www.as.wvu.edu/~srsh/lewis_2.html).

<sup>21</sup> Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time: Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).

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source of family income, but to provide produce and winter provisions while family members also worked in nearby industries.<sup>22</sup>

In an effort to improve the lives of families in Scotts Run, Eleanor began promoting the creation of Arthurdale, located approximately 20 miles to the southeast on farmland once belonging to Preston County's Arthur family. In October of 1933, the nation's first homesteading community began accepting relocation applications from unemployed miners. Applicants were required to be white, English-speaking, married with children, and to have a background in practical farming, excluding the majority of miners living along Scotts Run. Construction of Arthurdale's first houses was completed in March 1934, with the first homesteading families arriving in June. First Lady Roosevelt visited the site several times to observe and advise upon the construction of the community, insisting upon modern housing conveniences such as indoor plumbing and refrigerators. While construction of each house was budgeted at \$2,000, later records indicated that the dwellings in Arthurdale ultimately cost between \$8,500 and \$16,000 each.<sup>23</sup>

A total of 99 resettlement communities were ultimately constructed around the country as part of the New Deal. Each community was administered by one of three programs: the Division of Subsistence Homesteads, which established 34 communities, the FERA, which established 28 communities, and the Resettlement Administration, which established 37 communities.<sup>24</sup> States with high unemployment rates, including Alabama, Mississippi, Nebraska, Texas, and Arkansas had the largest numbers of resettlement communities, ranging from 8 to 13, while some states had just one such community. Economic factors led to the categorization of these communities as stranded, industrial, farm villages, forest plantations, and garden cities, and ranged in size from ten to 890 units in size, with the largest located in Greenbelt, Maryland. West Virginia's three resettlement projects, Arthurdale, Eleanor, and Tygart Valley Homesteads were considered "stranded communities," in which the primary employer or industry was not expected to return.<sup>25</sup> These communities were amongst only six stranded communities in the country, including Westmoreland Homesteads in Greensburg, Pennsylvania and Cumberland Homesteads in Crossville, Tennessee. With 255 and 262 units, respectively, these former mining communities were similar in scope but slightly larger than those in West Virginia, which ranged in size from 150 to 195 units. The Tygart Valley project was the last and largest in the state, comprised of the towns of Dailey, East Dailey, and Valley Bend. The Burlington Project in North Dakota was also

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<sup>22</sup> Emily Marsh, "Subsistence Homesteads," USDA National Agricultural Library, n.d., <https://www.nal.usda.gov/collections/stories/subsistence-homesteads>.

<sup>23</sup> Barbara J. Howe, Arthurdale Historic District, NRHP 88001862. West Virginia Division of Culture and History (WVDCH), National Park Service, 1988, page 2.

<sup>24</sup> Community Table, National New Deal Preservation Association, [http://newdeallegacy.org/table\\_communities.html](http://newdeallegacy.org/table_communities.html).

<sup>25</sup> Barbara E. Rasmussen, Tygart Valley Homesteads Historic District, NRHP 04000304. West Virginia Division of Culture and History (WVDCH), National Park Service, 2003; Renee Trepagnier, "Turning Coal to Diamond: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Arthurdale Subsistence Housing Project." *Women Leading Change: Case Studies on Women, Gender, and Feminism*, vol. 4, issue 1, 2019; Eleanor Roosevelt, "Subsistence Farmsteads." *Forum and Century 91* (April 1934), pages 199-201.

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considered a stranded community but was considerably smaller in size than those in West Virginia with only 35 units.<sup>26</sup>

Upon its formation, the FERA estimated that 1.2 million rural families were receiving aid across the United States from the previous administration's Emergency Relief Administration, of which they assumed responsibilities. To better tailor relief programs for rural communities, the FERA developed the rural rehabilitation program in 1934 to assist farmers in regaining self-sufficiency. The FERA delegated the rural rehabilitation program to the state level. While most of the assistance provided by the state rural rehabilitation programs included loans and rural relief camps, 45 states formed rural rehabilitation corporations. These corporations, under the management of the FERA, began to buy large tracts of farmland and subdivide the land to mortgage to displaced farm families.<sup>27</sup>

The West Virginia Rural Relief Corporation (WVRRRC) formed in October 1934 as part of the West Virginia Unemployment Relief Administration. While most other states provided tracts of land that ranged between 40-60 acres, one of the WVRRRC's first initiatives was the purchase of 2,200 acres of the former Red House plantation for the Putnam County Farms Project. The land was divided into tracts approximately one acre in size to create a rural-industrial community focused on subsistence agriculture and populated by families displaced by the closure of mines in the Kanawha-region coalfields.<sup>28</sup> This new community, which would become known as Red House Farms and later Eleanor, was the second of three New Deal resettlement communities throughout the state. Unlike Eleanor, however, the other two communities were both projects of the Division of Subsistence Homesteads under the National Industrial Recovery Act, rather than the FERA. Resettlement programs developed within the Division of Subsistence Homesteads were designed for displaced industrial laborers to provide a place to work outside of the home with the ability to create their own food supply. The FERA primarily focused on displaced farm and rural families.<sup>29</sup>

FERA administrator Harry Hopkins reported in late October 1934 about the development of what was then known as the Putnam County Farms Project. As described by Hopkins, the project was designed for the eventual self-support of 150 families with the objectives to reduce the relief rolls within the state, demonstrate the practicality of planned rural-industrial communities, and show that "low-cost, sturdy, adequate housing for families of small income is a sound use of public or private capital."<sup>30</sup> At the time of Hopkins' report on October 25, 1934, 33 houses were

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<sup>26</sup> Community Table, National New Deal Preservation Association.

<sup>27</sup> Kevin J. Cahill, "Fertilizing the Weeds: The Rural Rehabilitation Program in West Virginia." *Journal of Appalachian Studies* (Fall 1998), pg. 285-297; Leland Beatty, "A Brief History of America's Rural Rehabilitation Corporations." National Association of Rural Rehabilitation Corporations, 1997; *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, "Organization Designed to Break Bread Lines," 7 October 1934.

<sup>28</sup> Cahill, 1998, pages 285-297; Beatty, 1997; Cox, 2019; Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), "Description of rural-industrial community near Red House, West Virginia." 25 October 1934.

<sup>29</sup> USDA, "Homestead Project Timeline," National Agricultural Library, [https://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/ipd/small/homestead-timeline#event-division-of-subsistence-homesteads.](https://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/ipd/small/homestead-timeline#event-division-of-subsistence-homesteads;); Cahill, 1998.

<sup>30</sup> FERA, 1934.



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completed, 105 houses were under construction, the roads, sewers, and water system were under construction, and 105 barns were completed. The anticipated construction schedule was set for 90 days, to be completed by December 15th, 1934, employing 450 men living on site, and completing an average of four houses a day (Figure 6).<sup>31</sup>

The planned community comprised 2,200 acres, costing approximately \$29 per acre. The dwellings and farmland were designed within 800 acres in a semicircular valley, with tracts ranging from three-quarters of an acre to one acre. Each tract contained space for a garden, a small barn, chicken house, modest home, and lawn. No work animals, cows, or pigs were planned to be kept on individual lots, but the town plan provided for a cooperative dairy farm. The existing railroad and highway, State Route 62, were integral to the community's street design, with the highway serving as the town's main street, later renamed Roosevelt Boulevard, and the streets branching off the highway at angles and semicircles (Figure 7). The planned community offered a cooperative farm, a canning facility, school, store, gas station, greenhouse, restaurant, and utilities. The former plantation house served as the administration building for the Red House Farms Association.<sup>32</sup>

The dwellings were designed with one to one-and-one-half stories, and built primarily with cinder blocks, with wood frame interiors. Wood was minimally used on the exterior of the homes, primarily in the gable ends. The cinder blocks were made in a temporary factory on site. Lumber was brought in and processed on site for materials. The dwellings ranged in size from three to five rooms with 12 different possible design plans (Figure 8). The dwelling designs were sturdy, modest, and economical with Minimal Traditional styling (Figure 9). While different designs were offered, the designs were similar and used the same mass-produced construction methods. At the base design of three rooms, the dwellings included a front and back porch, a living room, a combination kitchen and dining room with a pantry, a bedroom, a bathroom, an unfinished attic and cellar. Dwellings with four and five rooms included additional bedrooms. All dwellings accommodated running hot water and electricity.<sup>33</sup>

An architecture firm from Charleston, Meanor & Handloser, designed the town layout and dwellings. Wilbur Meanor and Edward Handloser formed their firm in 1916 in Huntington, West Virginia, and moved their company to Charleston at an unknown date. Meanor & Handloser had a varied repertoire of work prior to their contract with the FERA to design the Red House Farms. These works included the Memorial Arch in Huntington (1921), Mountaineer Hotel (1924) in Williamson, Ohev Sholom Temple in Huntington (1925), and the Morrow Library, also located in Huntington (1929). Shifting from their previous works with high architectural styles, Meanor & Handloser used 12 different functional designs for the planned community housing to avoid a repetitive streetscape. The architects also supervised the construction to ensure the proper assembly of the dwellings and street layout. Following their work with the FERA, Meanor &

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> FERA, 1934; Rick Wilson, "Eleanor." e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia, 2013.  
<https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1948>.

<sup>33</sup> FERA, 1934.

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Handloser later worked with the Federal Housing Authority in the 1940s to design the Williams Terrace Public Housing project in Williamson, West Virginia.<sup>34</sup>

Out of the more than 1,000 applications from six nearby counties, the FERA selected 150 families to resettle in the planned community. A selection committee reviewed the applications and narrowed down the final pool of applicants. The committee examined the applicants for histories of self-support prior to the Great Depression, focusing on unemployed carpenters, miners, electricians, plumbers, and farmers from agricultural and rural backgrounds. The resettlement selection committee frequently excluded applicants with disabilities, foreign backgrounds, and people of color. Homestead residents chosen throughout West Virginia were white, native-born citizens, justified by a project administrator because of the state's segregated school system. The state and national representatives of the NAACP sought to secure Black enrollment in Arthurdale, Tygart Valley, and Red House. All Black applicants to these communities were denied residency.<sup>35</sup> The committee expected the selected families to earn their living by working at the cooperative farming facilities or other on-site industries. Each family chosen for resettlement was expected to visit and talk with community administrative officials about the anticipated commitment and requirements. Of the selected families, 90 head of households received work relief assistance with their housing payments by being on the work crews constructing the town in late 1934.<sup>36</sup>

As the town's construction neared completion in mid-December 1934, First Lady Roosevelt visited Red House Farms to inspect the project (Figure 10). She found it "very well planned" and "an ideal location for industry."<sup>37</sup> In honor of the First Lady's interest and support in the Red House Farms community, as well as the other resettlement communities in West Virginia, Red House Farms changed its name to Eleanor in 1936 with the establishment of the local post office. Mrs. Roosevelt made up to five trips to her namesake town. Three of these visits were planned and documented by the press, occurring on December 15, 1934, May 29, 1935, and May 13,

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<sup>34</sup> S. Allen Chambers, Jr. "Memorial Arch," Huntington, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; "Mountaineer Hotel," Williamson, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; "Ohev Sholom Temple," Huntington, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; "Morrow Library," Huntington, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; "Eleanor (Red House Farms)," Eleanor, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; Ernest Everett Blevins, "Williams Terrace Public Housing," Williamson, WV. Living New Deal, 2018. <https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/williamson-terrace-public-housing-williamson-wv/>; Ernest Everett Blevins, "Victoria Court Housing Project," Williamson, WV. Living New Deal, 2018. <https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/victoria-court-housing-project-williamson-wv/>.

<sup>35</sup> Nathan Tauger, *Racial Segregation in West Virginia Housing, 1929-1971*, West Virginia Law Review vol. 123, issue 1 (2020).

<sup>36</sup> FERA, 1934; Trepagnier, 2019.

<sup>37</sup> *The Charleston Daily Mail*, "Mrs. Roosevelt Pays Visit to Red House Homesteads; Calls Project Marvelous." 15 December 1934.

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1938. However, resident recollections noted that the First Lady visited other times without press coverage.<sup>38</sup>

The first residents of the newly constructed town of 150 dwellings moved into their designated lots in January 1935 (Figure 11). The settlement's administration kept the selected families on a probation period for one year before obtaining the status of a permanent resident. Families rented the houses during that first year. Once they became permanent residents, they were able to purchase the properties. The new community members started their own newspaper, *The Melting Pot*, and organized local clubs, adult education, team sports, 4-H, bands, and dances to fulfill their social needs. A free medical clinic was provided to citizens. As requested by Mrs. Roosevelt, the local administration was set up as a town-meeting style government. Employment was mandatory for heads of households, but opportunities included community projects, local public works, and private industries. These community projects also included the town's experimental cooperative endeavors such as the farm. Planted in 1936, the farm had 20 acres for tomatoes, 20 acres for snap beans, 15 acres for cabbage, 15 acres for potatoes, 20 acres for miscellaneous vegetables, 30 acres for corn, 30 acres for oats, 35 acres for alfalfa, and approximately 100 acres for hay. In 1937, beef cattle were added to the communal farming town to be raised in conjunction with general farm crops in order for the crops to have a steady supply of fertilizer. The community also had a cooperative dairy farm, which housed approximately 80 dairy cows, and a cooperative canning facility.<sup>39</sup>

The FERA, the federal management and original financier of the settlement, dissolved in 1935. While most of the administration's programs were transferred to the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Red House Farms, in addition to Arthurdale and Tygart Valley, were instead transferred to the newly-formed Resettlement Administration (RA). Roosevelt created the RA to provide a department dedicated to resettling in-need families. In addition to resettlement, the RA also handled financial assistance to farmers, land conservation work, and rural infrastructure upgrades. Roosevelt replaced the RA within two years with the Farm Security Administration (FSA) in 1937. The FSA continued to manage the dozens of experimental homestead communities until 1946.<sup>40</sup>

The Red House Farms project was not without criticism. The Republican National Committee declared Roosevelt's New Deal farm communities were "communistic in conception" that "follow the Russian pattern."<sup>41</sup> In May 1936, the RA admitted in hearings about various relief bills that the nine resettlement projects, including Red House, Arthurdale, and Tygart, were financially unsuccessful. However, the RA stated that they were going to continue to protect the

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<sup>38</sup>; (Town of) Eleanor, "Town History," no date. <https://eleanorwv.com/town-history/>; *The Charleston Daily Mail*, "Arthurdale is being Finished; Name 'Eleanor' Selected for Red House Post Office Approved," 16 May 1936; *The Charleston Daily Mail*, "Getting 'lost in time' at Eleanor," n.d., Eleanor Scrapbook.

<sup>39</sup> FERA, 1934; Eleanor, n.d.; Roosevelt, 1934; Rick Wilson, "Happy to Have a Chance." *Goldenseal* (Spring 1988) 14:1, pg. 28; Resettlement Administration, "Report of Agricultural and Economic Study of RF-WV 8, Red House Farms and Homestead Unit Final Plans." Rural Resettlement Division, 1937.

<sup>40</sup> Beatty, 1997; Lisa Thompson, "Resettlement Administration (RA) (1935)." *The Living New Deal*, 2016. <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/resettlement-administration-ra-1935>.

<sup>41</sup> *The Charleston Daily Mail*, "Red House is Hit as Communistic," 30 March 1936.

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interests of the homesteaders by enlarging the agricultural enterprises and stimulating the cooperatives of local processing. The government entered negotiations to sell the property to the Charleston Educational Center at this time but retained control of the cooperative community until the end of the program.<sup>42</sup>

During WWII, the federal government focused its resources on military spending and encouraging American citizens to help from the homefront by rationing consumption of certain goods, recycling metals, and investing in war bonds. Citizens planted victory gardens to both assist with the spending rations and to preserve commercial farm crops for the troops. Mrs. Roosevelt even planted a victory garden at the White House. Victory gardens were also utilized during WWI, and many Americans across the country gardened through the Great Depression to ease economic difficulties. Resettlement communities, such as Eleanor, were particularly posed to excel at this homefront effort, as residency included partial self-supportive gardening.<sup>43</sup>

However, the war caused the federal government to focus less on domestic social issues. The House Appropriations Committee began an investigation of the FSA and other federal assistance programs in 1943 to investigate complaints and review the spending of federal funds. The committee investigation concluded with recommendations that the FSA be dissolved, and the management and liquidation of resettlement projects and other enterprises be transferred to the Farm Credit Act (FCA). A select committee of the House Committee of Agriculture also investigated the FSA. The select committee did not recommend the dissolution of the FSA, but did recommend the reduction of services and the orderly and gradual liquidation of the resettlement and cooperative communities. As a result of these findings, the House passed a bill on April 20, 1943, significantly reducing the program's funding.<sup>44</sup>

The federal government had other concerns about the FSA, and the resettlement program specifically, beyond the cost of its operation. Dr. Rexford Tugwell, an economist, worked for the Roosevelt Administration during the height of the New Deal era. He helped create the RA and served as its first director. His visions for the resettlement communities, however, were deemed socialistic and un-American by others within the administration and he left his position in 1936. Although he left the Roosevelt Administration, the principles he established within the RA and the FERA continued.<sup>45</sup> The select committee investigation found that despite the RA termination and the organization of the FSA in its place in 1937, the original "socialistic land policies" that "resemble the practice of collective farming in Communist Russia" continued under the new organization.<sup>46</sup>

Bills were introduced in 1944 and 1945 that would have resulted in the dissolution of the FSA, but each failed to go to a vote. In April 1946, a third bill was introduced called the Farmers

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<sup>42</sup> *The Charleston Daily Mail*, "Three Homestead Project in State Called Fiscal Failures," 28 May 1936.

<sup>43</sup> Jennifer Steinhauer, "Victory Gardens Were More About Solidarity Than Survival" *The New York Times Magazine*, 15 July 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Sidney Baldwin, *Poverty & Politics*, The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1968, pp. 385-389.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 385,

<sup>46</sup> House of Representatives 78<sup>th</sup> Congress, "Hearings before the Select Committee of the House Committee on Agriculture to investigate the activities of the Farm Security Administration," May 11 to 28, 1943, pp. 811.

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Home Administration Act of 1946, which abolished the FSA and created the Farmers Home Administration to take its place. The bill also transferred some services, such as the Emergency Crop and Feed Loan Division of the FCA, to the new agency. The tenant purchase program of the FSA became the primary aspect of the new agency, and anything resembling “sociological experimentation”, including the resettlement program, was discontinued and avoided.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the formal dissolution occurring in 1946, the FSA began downsizing in the years leading up to the Congressional decision to discontinue the program. The FSA liquidated 60 of the 152 resettlement communities by the spring of 1945. Properties within these communities owned by the government were sold to individuals and corporations.<sup>48</sup> For example, houses in Arthurdale were sold to the residents, the schools were sold to the Preston County Board of Education, and the surrounding communal farmland was sold to West Virginia University.<sup>49</sup> In Eleanor’s case, one corporation was formed to take control of and manage all of the former federally-owned properties within the town limits. By September 1946, 17 resettlement communities were sold to a homestead association, with Eleanor being the largest community to make this transition: Austin, MN, 44 homes; Bankhead, Jasper, AL, 100 homes; Beauxart Gardens, Beaumont, TX, 50 homes; Dalworthington Gardens, Arlington, TX, 80 homes; Decatur, IL, 48 homes; Duluth MN, 84 homes; Elmonte, CA, 100 homes; Granger, IA, 50 homes; Greenwood, Bessemer, AL, 83 homes; Houston Gardens, Houston, TX, 100 homes; Longview, WA, 60 homes; Mt. Olive, AL, 75 homes; Palmerdale, AL, 102 homes; Phoenix, AZ, 80 homes; Red House (Eleanor), Charleston, WV, 150 homes; San Fernando, Reseda, CA, 40 homes; and Wichita Gardens, Wichita Falls, TX, 62 homes.<sup>50</sup>

### Washington Homesteads, Inc.

In February 1946, Congress sold the Title of Eleanor to Washington Homesteads, Inc., a non-profit corporation. Washington Homesteads was organized on February 7, 1946, by ten men and were granted a state charter to manage the town as a corporation. This group of men included Dean Allen, A. E. Jividen, G. Ura Grover, C. Leslie Saams, Jesse W. Cockrell, Guy Pickens, E.G. Davis, Forrest B. Casto, D. L. Stone, and A. A. Whitener. These men were local residents of various backgrounds, including carpenters, laborers, a teacher, a bricklayer, a mechanic, and an accountant.<sup>51</sup> D. L. Stone was the only one of these men to be an original Red House resident.<sup>52</sup>

The corporation’s purpose was to organize residents and businesses within Eleanor as members of the corporation. Membership dues and utility bills paid for maintenance and upgrades of the roads and said utilities. Members of the corporation were then able to attend quarterly member meetings and vote on issues concerning the community. During the first meeting of the

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 401-402.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 398-399.

<sup>49</sup> Howe, 1988.

<sup>50</sup> Howard Dobson, “Subsistence Homesteads Grow Up,” *The Raleigh Register*, 26 September 1946 .

<sup>51</sup> Washington Homesteads, Inc., Meeting Ledger, 7 February 1946; US Census Bureau, generated by Ancestry.com, 1950.

<sup>52</sup> FERA, 1934.

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Washington Homesteads, Inc.'s founding members, the by-laws<sup>53</sup> were accepted and a board of directors was elected. Within one month of incorporation, 138 of 150 residents had already joined as members of the corporation.<sup>54</sup>

Washington Homesteads, Inc.'s first order of business was to obtain the property, homesteads, and utilities from the federal government for the purpose of selling and conveying the property to individuals who applied and were approved by the corporation. An initial meeting with the federal government in March 1946 outlined that the directors were responsible for road maintenance, review the proposed contracts and schedule of charges, and consider hiring a manager.<sup>55</sup> The board of directors held a special meeting on May 16, 1946, to purchase the Red House Farms Project, including the housing units, Administration Building, and water system, for the sum of \$238,471.74 to the Federal Public Housing Authority.<sup>56</sup>

Following the acquisition of the properties from the federal government, the corporation sold the homestead units to the residents. Most of the original homesteaders no longer lived in Eleanor by this time, likely returning to their original communities that they left during the Great Depression. Only 30 original "homesteaders" remained during this transitional period. The government's managing association rented out the homes to new families as they arrived. When the town was sold, the new families and remaining original homesteaders purchased their homes from the newly incorporated Washington Homesteads, Inc. All residents owned their homes outright by 1947, while the corporation owned the administration building and the town's utilities.<sup>57</sup>

During the Washington Homesteads period of the mid-1940s and through the mid-twentieth century, the town began to shift from an agricultural focus to an industrial one. Industries such as Diamond Alkali Company and Carbide and Carbon Chemicals Corporation owned thousands of acres of property in and around Eleanor by 1947. Gotham Mills in Eleanor produced nylon hosiery, reflecting the prominence of industrial operations in other nearby cities. Nitro, also located in Putnam County, focused on chemical production as early as WWI with industries such as Hercules Powder Company and Carbide and Carbon Chemicals Corporation. As personal vehicle ownership became more common with the prosperity of the post-war economy in the late 1940s and through the 1950s, Eleanor residents could commute more easily to neighboring communities for employment.<sup>58</sup>

Many homeowners in Eleanor no longer needed subsistence gardening by the mid-twentieth century as steady manufacturing and industrial work was available throughout the Kanawha River valley. The Washington Homesteads, Inc. even prohibited livestock on residential lots.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> The Washington Homesteads, Inc. by-laws were not found in the town archives.

<sup>54</sup> Washington Homesteads, Inc., 6 March 1946.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 13 March 1946.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 16 May 1946.

<sup>57</sup> Town of Eleanor, n.d.

<sup>58</sup> Eleanor Scrapbook, "Noted Farm Area Sees Agriculture Taking Back Seat in Near Future." 3 August 1947. Article found in scrapbook, no publisher listed.

<sup>59</sup> Tax Payers League, Grievance Letter, Town of Eleanor Archives, 1959.

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As such, they began to subdivide their three-quarters of an acre and one-acre lots. The lots were used for new construction, as mid-twentieth century Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split-Level dwellings filled in the spaces between the Meanor & Handloser designed dwellings and apartments constructed along Roosevelt Boulevard. These new buildings and a change in overall land use demonstrated the economic and social shifts in the town, transitioning from a community managed and owned by the federal government to one owned and governed by Eleanor citizens through Washington Homesteads, Inc.<sup>60</sup>

As a private cooperative corporation, Washington Homesteads, Inc. did not have taxing powers and became unsustainable by the 1960s. Their only sources of income for operations were utility bills, property sales, and membership dues. Homeowners purchased all residential property from the corporation within their first year of operation.<sup>61</sup> The formerly communal farmland surrounding the community was sold by the board in 1947 to the Diamond Alkali Company. By 1949, the board sold the administration building to a doctor and the water works to a private company, using the funds from these sales to pave the roads. With the sale of these assets, the board was largely responsible for residential applications, road maintenance, and the sewer system. In 1959, the Washington Homesteads, Inc. owned and operated one of only ten privately-owned sewer systems in the state.<sup>62</sup>

Citizens and business owners continued to participate in Washington Homesteads membership to collectively vote on planning decisions for the community. As early as 1959, a motion was introduced and carried during a board meeting to hire a lawyer to investigate the proposed incorporation of the Town of Eleanor.<sup>63</sup> A delegation from Washington Homesteads, Inc. filed an order with the Putnam County Court on November 20, 1965 for incorporation. An election was held in March 1966 for new town officials and the town was incorporated with a majority in favor vote on the issue.<sup>64</sup> The town title, public property, and facilities were finally transferred in September 1967.<sup>65</sup>

The first years of incorporation brought physical and economic changes to the town. Some of the original lots continued to be subdivided for new residential construction, but at a much slower pace than experienced in the 1950s and early 1960s. By the late 1960s, many of the original residential lots were already subdivided. Washington Homesteads, Inc. restricted the suitable farming and homesteading practices on residential lots during their administration. The large lots originally designed for self-sustaining crops were no longer needed in the mid-twentieth century.

By the 1980s, planning and development became a concern of the community. Parcels not originally designated for residential development (Lots L, N, and O) were subdivided for housing, and new roads were constructed outside of the original Red House Farms original plans,

<sup>60</sup> United States Geological Survey (USGS), Winfield 7.5" Topographical Map, 1958, 1975.

<sup>61</sup> Town of Eleanor, n.d.

<sup>62</sup> Tax Payers League, 1959; The Public Service Commission, *Forty-Seventh Annual Report*. Charleston, 1959, pp. 410.

<sup>63</sup> Washington Homesteads, Inc., 13 April 1959.

<sup>64</sup> Town of Eleanor, n.d.

<sup>65</sup> *The Charleston Daily Mail*, "Town of Eleanor Now Owns Itself," 02 September 1967.

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including Marble Drive. Commercial development also occurred outside of the town's original plat boundaries in the 1980s with the construction of the Eleanor Plaza shopping center.<sup>66</sup>

### **Criterion A – Community Planning, Politics/Government, Social History**

The Eleanor Historic District meets NRHP Criterion A on a state level of significance for Community Planning and Development, Politics/Government, and Social History as representing one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's earliest New Deal programs, established in 1934-1935, in response to the Great Depression. Visited by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, for whom it was named, and one of only three resettlement communities in West Virginia, the federal government designed the experimental homestead town to be largely self-sufficient. The government created parcels with large lots for subsistence gardening and chicken-raising, and developed a plan for cooperative farms and industries to provide goods and income to residents. The experimental project sought to aid displaced rural laborers and farmers through a blend of capitalistic and socialistic policies. The period of significance associated with the areas of Politics/Government begins in 1934 when the FERA acquired the land of the former Red House plantation and ends in 1946. The FERA, and later the RA and FSA, planned, financed and managed the town through WWII. The federal government shifted resources away from these New Deal resettlement communities following WWII and sold the public facilities, utilities, administration building, and remaining mortgages to a private organization of citizens known as Washington Homesteads, Inc. in 1946.

The period of significance associated with the area of Community Planning and Development and Social History begins in 1934 and extends to 1966 when Eleanor was officially incorporated as a town. This extended period of significance includes the town's operation under Washington Homesteads, Inc. The citizen-led, private corporation ran the town through a unique, self-governed, corporation ownership of citizens. Residents and business owners within the community paid membership dues and directly voted on community issues, while the corporation's board managed the maintenance of the town's roads and utilities. By 1947, all residents owned their property outright. Resources constructed during this period represent the developmental shift from a subsistence farming community to an industrial and commuter town. The corporation assumed ownership of community facilities and utilities and served as the town council. Ultimately, this model proved to be financially unsustainable; the town voted for incorporation through the county and state governments in 1966.

### **Criterion C – Architecture**

The Eleanor Historic District is also recommended for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C: Architecture at the local level of significance from 1934-1935. Charleston-based architects, Meanor & Handloser, designed the town's original 150 dwellings, community buildings, public facilities, and overall street layout as a completely planned and self-sufficient resettlement community managed by the federal government. The architecture firm designed the dwellings

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<sup>66</sup> Wilbur Meanor and Edward Handloser, "Red House Farms for W.Va. Rural Rehabilitation Corporation," 1935; NetrOnline, "Historic Aerial Viewer," 1990; USGS, 1975, 1989.



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with 12 forms of similar layout and massing. These designs reflect the Minimal Traditional styling. Minimal Traditional styles began to appear in the 1930s during the Great Depression, commonly associated with the Federal Housing Assistance loans and other federal programs. A response to low-cost and high-demand housing needs, this style is characterized by low-pitched, gable roofs and the lack of elaborate exterior details.<sup>67</sup> The dwellings' slight exterior differences built into the community's design were meant to avoid a monotonous streetscape (see Figures 6-9). Assisting the FERA, the architects created street layout (Figure 12), as well as the plans for the lots, which included the dwelling footprint and location of the outbuilding. These detailed plans also included the assigned head of the household, family size, original lot number, cultivated land, soil type, planned crops, and livestock.<sup>68</sup> An example page of the original plat book is located in Figure 13 and a table of data extrapolated from the plat book, including original lot numbers, family size, original owner, and form type, as identified by the surveyors through an examination of the plat book, is located in Table 2. Nearly all of the original dwellings remain with some modern alterations. Meanor & Handloser also planned the easily identifiable street layout with its notable semicircular and petal-like designs.<sup>69</sup> This original layout remains largely unaltered within the district boundaries, with the exception of Cherry Street.

Despite modern alterations to the individual dwellings, the original minimal styling and massing of the dwellings remain largely intact, with few demolitions or extensive renovations to these Meanor & Handloser homes. As such, the collective dwellings from the FERA period are still readily identifiable within the present state of the community and contribute to the district's integrity. The most prominent and unaltered aspect of Meanor & Handloser's work is the original town layout, with the semicircular roads, space in the town center for public use, and homestead lots radiating from the existing road at the time of construction in 1934, State Route 62. Since the FERA period, only one road was added to this original layout. Town planning and development in the late twentieth century primarily restricted new roads and blocks to land outside of the original community street design (see Figure 3).

Meanor & Handloser's work prior to their contract with the FERA to design the Red House Farms predominantly dealt with institutional designs and styles. These works included the Memorial Arch (1921), Ohev Sholom Temple (1925), and Morrow Library (1929) in Huntington, and the Mountaineer Hotel in Williamson (1924), with elaborate Neoclassical and Georgian Revival styles. Following their work designing the Red House Farms project, they continued working with federal residential programs. The architectural firm designed the Williams Terrace Public Housing project in Williamson, WV for the Federal Housing Authority in the 1940s.<sup>70</sup> Meanor & Handloser's stylistic and project shifts reflect the national architectural and economic trends from the early twentieth century to the mid-twentieth century.

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<sup>67</sup> Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 2013.

<sup>68</sup> FERA 1934.

<sup>69</sup> Meanor and Handlosr, 1934.

<sup>70</sup> S. Allen Chambers, Jr. "Memorial Arch," Huntington, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; "Mountaineer Hotel," Williamson, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; "Ohev Sholom Temple," Huntington, WV. SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012; "Morrow Library,"