



Waiteville School  
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV  
County and State

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object



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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Front Gable

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation/CONCRETE;  
Walls/CONCRETE and ASBESTOS;  
Roof/METAL

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Waiteville School is a one-story, front gable former schoolhouse built in 1950. Constructed of concrete block and clad with a simple metal roof, the building is situated on a quiet, rural road in the historic railroad town of Waiteville in Monroe County, West Virginia. The former school is located on a small, raised knoll above Rays Siding Road with a gravel drive, however, the landscape surrounding the building is flat and grassy. The Waiteville School is recommended eligible under Criterion A for its association with the development of educational efforts in Monroe County, West Virginia during the mid-twentieth century. The building itself represents the architectural transition between the rural, one-room schoolhouse educational facility and the mid-twentieth century efforts of consolidated schools. Although the building has suffered from some material alterations due to the building's continued use as an emergency shelter and community space, the building retains a significant amount of its integrity of location, setting, association, design, workmanship, feeling and materials.



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## Narrative Description

Allegedly designed by Charleston architect Henry T. Elden, the Waiteville School is a one-story building constructed of concrete block with a metal clad front gable roof. The roof is topped with a small cupola with a bell.

The façade, which faces east, is unadorned except for the central entry with its original four-paneled wood double doors which are topped by a gabled portico. Seven concrete block stairs lead to the central entry with a turned wrought iron balustrade. The gabled roof overhangs the façade and has an exposed wood soffit supported by knee brackets. Asbestos shingles clad the gable end which has a louvered vent in the peak while the wall is accented by a painted heritage quilt square. The partial basement cafeteria and crawlspace is accessed via a steel door on the façade with an aluminum balustrade.

The south elevation is relatively unadorned with concrete block walls and small vents at ground level. The steel fenestration has a pivoted ventilator sash and is irregularly placed with 10 light windows of which four lights are operable. From west to east, the six bay windows are laid out with single, paired and triple ribbon windows. The K-style gutters are connected to aluminum downspouts.

The north elevation is similar to the south elevation with a large bank of metal windows on the main level, however, the basement level has eight 1x1 vinyl slider windows. A concrete block chimney is also located along the slope of the roof.

The west elevation is also minimalist in style with a central entry which has been reduced from a double door to a single door with wood paneled sidelights. A rectangular transom is also located above the rear door while a wooden ramp leads to the entry from the south elevation and a six-step concrete block stairway extends west. The gabled elevation also mimics the façade with asbestos shingles and knee brackets which support the overhanging roof.

The interior of the building has classrooms on either side of a wide, central hall. The original wood floors are laid parallel to the entry with an acoustic tile ceiling and fluorescent lighting. The walls are constructed of concrete block and are covered with a plaster coating. The former school contained five classroom spaces, one of which has been transformed into a kitchen. Three individual classrooms are situated on the south elevation. The first room encountered held grades 1-3. The second classroom on the south side contained class for students in grades 6-8 while the third room (currently a kitchen) held grades 4-5. The north side of the building contains a double classroom which served students between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The room was divided with an accordion wall which, when opened, also allowed the room to serve as an auditorium with a raised stage for school presentations and community events. This room has a new furnace installed to provide heating for the building in case of winter emergencies. The building also contains two small, gendered bathrooms on the north elevation as well as two small

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storage closets, one off the main hall which holds cleaning supplies and a second one at the back of the stage. A large, enable-coated, steel urinal is attached to the wall of one bathroom.

An individual room has been arranged to represent what the classroom experience was like in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century in Monroe County. Each former classroom (except the new kitchen) retains its original chalkboard and spatial layout.

Interior stair access to the basement cafeteria and original kitchen is located adjacent to the girls' bathroom. The basement cafeteria is approximately 21 feet, 8 inches in width and approximately 60 feet in length. The cafeteria has a poured concrete floor and exposed concrete block walls. Five concrete block pillars provide support for the first floor of the building. The wood ceiling joists are clad in plasterboard. The original wood cafeteria benches are present in the basement. The rear of the basement has the original coal-fired furnace within a concrete block room. The door to the boiler room and the original coal chimney was removed to the roofline when the new roof was installed. The remainder of the building is situated over a crawlspace and exposed ground.

The former school is situated on a small, raised knoll above Rays Siding Road with a gravel drive, however, the landscape surrounding the building is flat and grassy. The remnants of a former baseball diamond is located behind the school. While the backstop is no longer present, the infield is still visible. A one-story concrete block building is located to the south of the building and is used as a home office by a member of the community, but it is considered as a non-contributing structure. A modern playground with recreational equipment is also on the property and is considered non-contributing since it is not appropriate to the period of significance, however, it does not detract from the historic integrity of the resource.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

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**Period of Significance**

1950-1967

**Significant Dates**

1950

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Henry T. Elden, Architect

William Bradley, Builder

**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.)

The Waiteville School served as the center of community life in the small, former railroad town of Waiteville, West Virginia. Located in the southeast section of Monroe County, this concrete block, front-gable schoolhouse was designed and constructed in 1950 by the community to replace a dilapidated frame school in Monroe County with a modern facility constructed from fireproof materials. Originally designed to provide educational access for students in first through twelfth grades, its classes were reduced to primary students in the fall of 1958, reduced again to serve grades 1-3 in the fall of 1964 and then, after the spring of 1967, due to developments in transportation, infrastructure and reductions in the number of children living in the Waiteville area, it was no longer utilized as a school. Additionally, as a result of the larger state educational consolidation movement, students were bused to Gap Mills School over 30 miles away and later to other schools in Union and Lindside, WV. The Waiteville School Community Center, Inc. continues to utilize the building as a gathering place for the community. **This building is recommended eligible under Criterion A: Education at the local level for its association with the transformation of the educational system in Monroe County in the mid-twentieth century.** The schoolhouse still retains its integrity through its original mid-century design, workmanship, setting, feeling and association. The building's integrity of materials has been slightly compromised through the installation of a dropped ceiling and vinyl basement windows, but the building otherwise retains much of its original substance. The period of significance is from 1950-1967 which are the years the building was in active use as a school.

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

Southeastern West Virginia was a rugged, sparsely populated region at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most residents of the area practiced agriculture, while the region also contained bountiful timber resources. The economic development of this region was hampered by the lack of an efficient transportation network throughout much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Efforts to bring the railroad through Monroe County's gentle valley were up against strong financial interests from neighboring Greenbrier County.<sup>1</sup> Although the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad considered establishing lines in the area throughout the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, no railroad extended through Monroe County until the Potts Valley Railroad (a spur from the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio, later known as the Norfolk and Western) was completed in September 1909.<sup>2</sup> The Potts Valley Railroad ran from the New River in Giles County, Virginia to Paint Bank in Craig County, Virginia.<sup>3</sup>

Monroe County's major industry at the time centered around the fertile agricultural lands and virgin timber stands along Peters Mountain near the Potts Creek Valley. In order to access these natural resources, local entrepreneurs formed the Waiteville Land Company.<sup>4</sup> John Vaughn, resident of Roanoke, served as the president of the organization, while P.W. Early of Interior, Virginia served as secretary and A.M. Crozier [sic] of Waiteville, West Virginia was treasurer.<sup>5</sup> These three men made up the Waiteville Land Company with a capital stock of \$50,000.<sup>6</sup> The Waiteville Land Company proposed establishing a new town (called Waiteville) as well as "promoting development of iron ore, lumber, tan bark, agricultural and other resources..."<sup>7</sup> Mr. Crozier [sic] also sought to encourage the establishment of handle makers and furniture manufacturers in the region.<sup>8</sup>

By 1916, Waiteville grew to a town of 150 and boasted a telephone, express service, and a rural fire department. The town also had at this time, according to a trade publication, seven general stores, a church and a school.<sup>9</sup> Waiteville's location on the now established Potts Valley Railroad line brought attention to the area with developers soliciting for the services of a doctor, a dry goods store, a feed mill and a woodworking plant.<sup>10</sup> The rich timber stands enticed the

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<sup>1</sup> Oren Morton, *A History of Monroe County, West Virginia* (Staunton, Virginia: The McClure Company, 1916), 220.

<sup>2</sup> Morton, 220.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Industrial Development and Manufacturers' Record (United States: Conway Publications, 1909), 48.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. The spelling of Crozier in the Manufacturer's Record may be a typo as the common spelling of the name is A.M. Crosier.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Industrial Development and Manufacturers' Record, 59.

<sup>8</sup> Industrial Development and Manufacturers' Record (United States: Conway Publications, May 6, 1909), 80.

<sup>9</sup> *Industrial and Shippers Guide* (United States: Union Printing and Manufacturing Company, 1916), 89.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

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establishment of four sawmills in the immediate area which included the Craig Lumber Company, I. Crosier, Lemon Lumber Company, and the Shephard Brothers.<sup>11</sup>

As the twentieth century ticked on, the valley continued to be occupied by agricultural activities with a small increase in its population.

While the railroad town of Waiteville continued to grow, the community also pressed for educational opportunities for its residents. Historically, Monroe County has always had a strong educational presence, even before the establishment of West Virginia.

In 1796, prior to Monroe County's existence, the Virginia General Assembly enacted the "Aldermanic School Law" in which members of the county were to elect "three of their most honest and able men" to be aldermen and determine if there were enough children in an area to establish a school.<sup>12</sup> If so, the Aldermen were to have the school erected, keep it in good repair and to select a teacher.<sup>13</sup> All free children within the district were to receive free tuition for three years, and after that time, further education would need to be privately funded.<sup>14</sup>

In 1810, the General Assembly created a "Literary Fund" in order to educate the poor.<sup>15</sup> The number of destitute children granted an education through this fund was up to a group of "discreet" school commissioners.

It wasn't until an Act of the Virginia General Assembly in 1818 that the first board of school commissioners was established. By 1823, 25 schools were established in Monroe County.<sup>16</sup> Early 19<sup>th</sup> century school buildings were often small log buildings with rudimentary walls and floors with greased paper for windows.<sup>17</sup> Students sat on log benches and were arranged to focus on the teacher while the curriculum was based on memorization and oral expression.

Privately funded schools such as the Union Academy, which was established in 1820 under the auspices of Reverend L.A. Alderson and later the West Virginia Female Seminary, were better equipped than the rural schoolhouses yet still faced similar challenges.<sup>18</sup> The mountainous terrain proved difficult in both access to the school buildings as well as hiring competent teachers. In 1846, the Virginia General Assembly also passed an act that established the District Public School System, however, Monroe County did not adopt the new system and continued with its original program.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 291.

<sup>12</sup> "An Act to Establish Public Schools," School Act of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1796, Chapter CXCIX, Code 21<sup>st</sup> Year, as found in *Historical and Educational Development of Monroe County*, by Fred Taylor, 20-21; 53-54.

<sup>13</sup> Taylor, 22.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Taylor, 34-35.

<sup>18</sup> Taylor, 13-14.

<sup>19</sup> *Virginia Acts of 1846*, Chapter 40, Section 6, as found in Taylor,30-32.

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In 1851, the first Monroe County Superintendent of Schools, George Hutchinson, complained that... “they have great difficulty in obtaining competent teachers and in a majority of districts, teachers have to be employed without either regard to scholarship or moral character otherwise schools could not be had at all. It is a very difficult matter in the mountainous section to obtain good teachers, for the reason that a sufficient number of children cannot be had in any reasonable distance from the school.”<sup>20</sup>

The Literary Fund served Monroe County’s educational system until the Virginia state government in Richmond deemed the funds more useful to the “military defense of the state.”<sup>21</sup>

Once West Virginia established itself as an independent state, of which the people of the Waiteville area clamored to join, the region began its first free school system. The school system in Monroe County post-1863 would be free for all students, although it would continue to be segregated along racial lines until 1954.<sup>22</sup>

Monroe County’s school districts were established in 1872 into six units: Union, Wolf Creek, Second Creek, Springfield, Red Sulphur and Sweet Springs.<sup>23</sup> Waiteville became a part of the Sweet Springs District.<sup>24</sup> Each district had its own Board of Education consisting of three elected officials. Each of the districts were then divided into sub-districts which were to have at least 50 youths between the ages of 6 and 21 for which a teacher was assigned to instruct “orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, and geography”.<sup>25</sup> It was up to the elected officials to “establish schoolhouses and supply them with the necessary fixtures for comfort, health, good order and progress of pupils.”<sup>26</sup>

Teachers in the new state of West Virginia were accepted as qualified if “the county superintendent shall have reasonable evidence that he or she is of good moral character, and loyal to the government of the United States. Profanity, obscenity and intemperate habits shall always be held to exclude from the privilege of an examination...”<sup>27</sup>

Monroe County also gained its first institution of higher education at the turn of the century. Alderson Junior College provided opportunities for those interested in pursuing normal degrees and was run by a Baptist denomination. Established in 1901, the college was coeducational and provided education in “business, home economics, music and expression.”<sup>28</sup> As West Virginia’s

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Taylor, 53.

<sup>24</sup> Clyde Crosier, *History of Education in Monroe County*, West Virginia, 1796-1940, as found in *Highlights of the History of Monroe County Schools, 1799-1999* by the Monroe County Bicentennial Committee, 1997, 2,3.

<sup>25</sup> Fred Taylor, *Historical and Educational Development of Monroe County*, 53, 54.

<sup>26</sup> Taylor, 54.

<sup>27</sup> *West Virginia Acts*, Chapter 137, Article 20, 1863 as found in *The Historical and Educational Development of Monroe County*, by Fred Taylor, 55.

<sup>28</sup> Taylor, 17.

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Normal schools began graduating highly qualified teachers, the quality of education in West Virginia also increased. In 1903, West Virginia passed a state law which required all children between the ages of seven and sixteen to attend school while a truant officer ensured attendance.<sup>29</sup> This new law aided in the increased school attendance within the county.

According to local history, the first attempt to consolidate eight small one-room schools in the WV portion of the Potts Valley began with the construction of Waiteville School, ca. 1916 on Hepler Hill, approximately one-half mile north of the current 1950 school building.<sup>30</sup> Much is unknown about the original school building and only one photograph remains in public circulation (Figure 1).

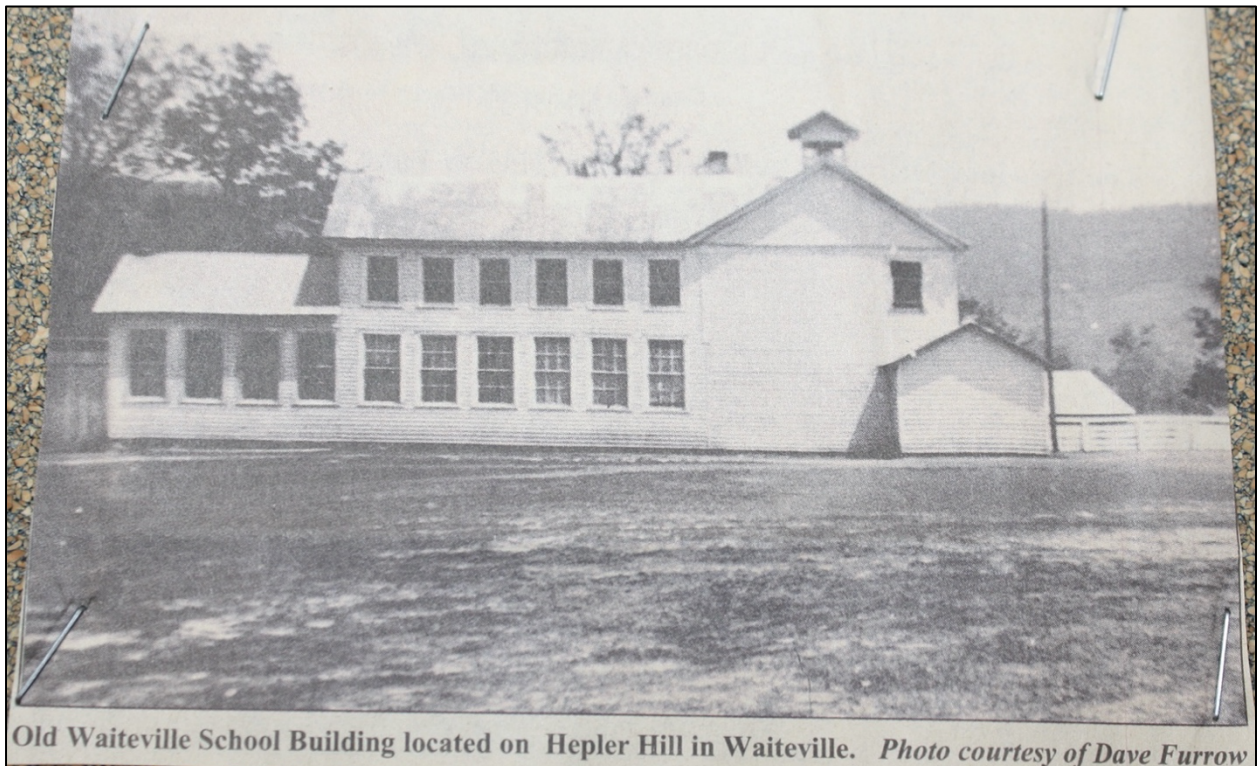


Figure 1. Photograph of Old Waiteville School as reprinted in the *Monroe Watchman* newspaper and now displayed in the Waiteville Community Center.

The photograph shows a two-story tall frame structure with a rear ell. A slight Greek Revival influence appears in the classical lines of its architecture. The photograph only illuminates one elevation of the building, however, large 6/6 double hung sash wood windows line the rear ell while the building is clad in wood siding and a metal roof. The cupola on top of the school, as seen in the original photograph, may be the current cupola that now sits atop the Waiteville

<sup>29</sup> *School Law of West Virginia*, Article 8, Section 1, 1903, as found in Taylor, 70.

<sup>30</sup> Janet McDaniel, Email message to the author, December 7, 2022. Consolidated schools may have included Forest Run School, Trestle Grove School, Fair Oaks School, Pleasant Grove School, Patton School, Laurel Branch School, Sugar Grove and Grand View School as indicated in Monroe County Bicentennial Committee's *Highlights of the History of Monroe County Schools 1799-1999*.



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Community Center. While the original school building had large windows on the rear ell, it did not include electricity, indoor plumbing or bathroom facilities.

Schools in the early twentieth century were often influenced by the ideals of the Progressive era which emphasized how education improved both the individual as well as positively affected society. The impact of socio-economic changes in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were also found in successful architectural/educational endeavors which began considering the effect of heating, ventilation and noise control on the student population.<sup>31</sup> New designs suggested as much as half of the exterior wall area should include windows which extended nearly from floor to ceiling on two sides of the classroom to allow natural light to flow into the classroom.<sup>32</sup> Although understanding of such elements were still rudimentary, artificial heating and lighting would become more important in the mid- 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1918, with the first World War behind them, the US Federal Government's Bureau of Education published the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* to prepare for the changes in society, which included population differences, more leisure time and an increase in scientific knowledge.<sup>33</sup> Educational efforts included encouraging adherence to democratic principles and other "typical" American citizenship ideals.<sup>34</sup>

The State of West Virginia continued to encourage secondary education and many Monroe County students began extending their educational career beyond the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. By the mid-1920s, five communities in Monroe County had high schools to accommodate the growing populations including Peterstown, Gap Mills, Greenville, Union and Waiteville.<sup>35</sup>

In 1933, following the state's lead, Monroe County's six individual school districts would be consolidated into one county system due to the economic issues of the Great Depression. As a result of the consolidation, and in addition to a revamp of the curriculum, the number of graduating students from high school doubled although the number of individual schools decreased.<sup>36</sup> In 1933, there were 65 one-room schoolhouses in Monroe County although a number of them were closed down soon thereafter as a new law required at least 18 students in daily attendance.<sup>37</sup>

As county mandated bus transportation made access to schools a bit easier, the consolidated school efforts also transformed the look and utility of more modern school buildings. Efforts to

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<sup>31</sup> Baker, Lindsay, *A History of School Design and its Indoor Environmental Standards, 1900 to Today* (National Institute of Building Sciences, 2012), 5,  
<http://architecturalnetworks.research.mcgill.ca/assets/nationalinstituteofbuildingsciences-min.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> Modern School Houses; being a series of authoritative articles on planning, sanitation, heating and ventilation (vol 1), (New York, NY: The Swetland Publishing Company), 8 as found in Baker, *A History of School Design*, 7.

<sup>33</sup> Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education: A Report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education (United States: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918), 2.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>35</sup> Crosier, 3.

<sup>36</sup> Crosier, 5.

<sup>37</sup> Taylor, 88.

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prevent health defects such as bad posture and poor eyesight were extended through new efforts in heating and ventilation, electricity and plumbing.<sup>38</sup>

Monroe County was also afflicted by several fires which devastated several schools in the region. As a result, a survey was made of the existing schools identifying which ones may possess fire hazards.

In October, 1949, the Monroe County School Board identified three schools that would be the focus of their building efforts the following year: Waiteville, Sinks Grove and Sarton. While Sinks Grove and Sarton were to each have just two classrooms and a lunchroom, Waiteville would include classroom space for both the elementary and the high school students. These three schools were selected because of the hazardous conditions at the present school building locations and the new structures would be constructed with fireproof materials.<sup>39</sup>

The original Waiteville School was not easily accessible for the neighboring students. With the decision to construct a more modern facility in Waiteville, the Board of Education sought to purchase property to accommodate the new school. Only one month later, the Board of Education purchased a 12-acre tract of land from the heirs of William Clarkson with plans to utilize four acres for the school and to sell the remainder of the land.<sup>40</sup> At the first meeting of 1950, the Board of Education finalized the sale of eight acres of land in Waiteville to Cary C. Crosier as well as authorized the appointment of an architect to design the new school buildings at Waiteville, Sarton and Sinks Grove.<sup>41</sup> By February 9, 1950, Charleston architect Henry T. Elden was selected as the designer for the three new school buildings.<sup>42</sup> At this same meeting, a delegation from Waiteville also requested an additional classroom be added to the design for a total of five classrooms.<sup>43</sup> The Board of Education also closed eight other school buildings in the county due to declining enrollment.<sup>44</sup>

Mid-century schools benefitted from the technological innovations developed during the Second World War with the October 1949 issue of *Architectural Forum* magazine dedicated to sharing new ideas regarding classroom acoustics, lighting, heating and ventilation.<sup>45</sup> Noting the effects of the baby boom on educational facilities, one editor suggested, “children, not tanks, planes or bombs- were the greatest output of the U.S. during World War II. These war babies, seven million of them, began hitting the first-grade last year, have taxed every school facility...”<sup>46</sup> The

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<sup>38</sup> Taylor, 87.

<sup>39</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, Thursday, October 4, 1949.

<sup>40</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings: Waiteville School Site Purchased,” Thursday, November 16, 1949.

<sup>41</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, Thursday, January 5, 1950.

<sup>42</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, Thursday, February 9, 1950.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. The schools closed due to low enrollment included Buena Vista, Bunker Hill, Curry, Dewey, Chestnut Grove, Mountain View, Rich Creek and Sugar Grove.

<sup>45</sup> Baker, History of School Design, 10.

<sup>46</sup> Baker, History of School Design, 11.

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need for new school facilities affected not only Monroe County, but was abundant throughout the United States.

While the local *Monroe-Watchman* newspaper didn't report on the construction of the Waiteville School, oral histories suggest that the building was constructed by local community members including William Bradley, general contractor, Charles McCormick, electrician, Roy Crawford, Dexter "Dex" Harless and Lowell Porterfield.<sup>47</sup>

Although it seemed like the Waiteville School did not receive much fanfare when it opened, the new building served as a crucial element in the local community. The front gabled, concrete block structure contained large steel windows to accommodate fresh air and natural light into the facility. A cafeteria and kitchen were established in the basement of the building with access to the exterior as well as windows for ventilation and light. The new school also had indoor rest rooms and a storage closet for additional items.

While the building itself may appear unremarkable in its design, it does represent a transitional design between the one room school and mid-century modern school buildings. The small, gabled footprint is reminiscent of the rural one room schoolhouse, while the individual classrooms, large lighting and ventilation system as well as its fireproof design and indoor plumbing focused on providing a more modern educational experience. The one-story concrete block school with large "metal window/wall systems" became a typical architectural element in mid-century educational design.<sup>48</sup>

Waiteville's mid-century design also had other benefits over traditional multi-level buildings including using new building technology such as concrete block to inexpensively and quickly construct the school.<sup>49</sup> Single level buildings also allowed quick evacuation in cases of emergency, which the Monroe County Board of Education was cognizant of with its recent building fires.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, the metal framed bank of windows allowed continuous light and fresh air into the classrooms although in the winter months, the coal-fired furnace in the basement could ease the thermal discomfort. Post-war technology also improved lighting with the development of fluorescent light bulbs, which, when used in conjunction with natural light, provided more illumination than previous classrooms had.<sup>51</sup>

Although Waiteville School was constructed with modern technology and materials, its classrooms were still laid out in a traditional manner with a blackboard on one wall, the teacher's desk at the front of the room and student desks organized in rows. This layout, similar to late 19<sup>th</sup> century designs, suggested that the teacher's rule was absolute, and the focus remained on

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<sup>47</sup> Janet McDaniel, August 13, 2022, verbal conversation.

<sup>48</sup> Baker, *History of School Design*, 11.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Baker, 12 and "New Peterstown High School Destroyed by Fire," *The Beckley Post-Herald*, April 29, 1950.

<sup>51</sup> Baker, 14.

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classroom order.<sup>52</sup> Even as boosters of modern designs encouraged the adoption of new school layouts, promoters were careful to draw a parallel to the nostalgic experience of the one-room schoolhouse, saying, “the latest development in elementary school architecture embodies the intimate and personal qualities of the little red schoolhouse of our forefathers.”<sup>53</sup>

As of April 1951, Monroe County included five high schools (Gap Mills, Greenville, Peterstown, Union and Waiteville) as well as seventeen elementary schools which included the Alderson Negro School.<sup>54</sup> Within the coming years, many of these schools would close down or be consolidated into a county-wide school system.

During the first year of the new Waiteville School’s operation, 1950-1951, F.D. Crim was the principal in charge of the school.<sup>55</sup> Mrs. Daisy Surface taught grades 1-3 while Mr. Jesse McCormick students in grades 4 and 5.<sup>56</sup> Grades 6 through 8 were taught by Mrs. Gotto Guy while Hovey McCormick and Ace Beamer taught grades 9 through 12.<sup>57</sup> In order to care for the building, the Monroe County Board of Education hired James S. Porterfield as janitor.<sup>58</sup>

By November, 1950, the school observed Education Week which included singing “America the Beautiful,” Era McCormick reciting a scripture, the Lord’s Prayer, a welcome by seven students from Mr. McCormick’s class, a flag salute, a poem recitation called, “It Couldn’t Be Done” by Shirley Dunbar, and assorted skits and readings.<sup>59</sup> There was a brief mention regarding student complaints on the care of the building, but the conversation was tabled until the following month.<sup>60</sup>

During the peak of its heyday, Waiteville School had five teachers and one principal educating 87 students, however, like much of West Virginia, Monroe County experienced a population decline post 1950 and Waiteville also experienced a drop in the number of students attending school locally.

For eight years, the Waiteville school’s five classrooms catered to students in grades 1-12, however, in fall of 1958, students in grades 9-12 began attending Gap Mills High School. Waiteville then catered to students in grades 1-8 through the spring of 1964. From the fall of 1964 to the spring of 1967, it served grades 1-3. The school year of 1962/1963 saw the removal of a dedicated principal for the school. Finally, from 1964 to 1967, Waiteville school had 10 children or less attending class until its closure in 1967.

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<sup>52</sup> Ogata, Amy, “Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural History*, Vol. 67, No. 4, December 2008, 563.

<sup>53</sup> Press Release, Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY CE11.1.75 1/1 as found in Ogata, 567.

<sup>54</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings,” April 5, 1951.

<sup>55</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings,” April 5, 1951.

<sup>56</sup> Waiteville School Roster for 1950-1967,” document compiled by Janet McDaniel, unpublished, 2022.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings,” Thursday September 7, 1950.

<sup>59</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings,” Thursday, November 15, 1950.

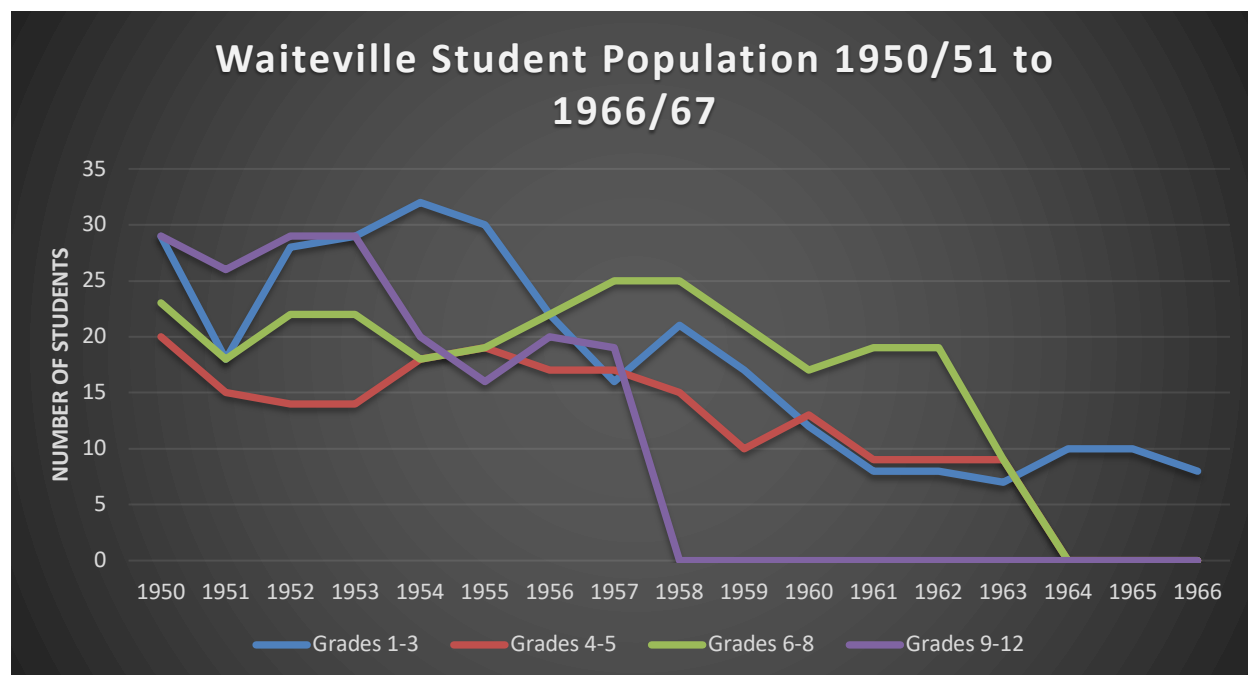
<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

Waiteville School  
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The following chart illustrates the population decline among students attending Waiteville School during its seventeen years of operations (Figure 2).<sup>61</sup>

Figure 2. Waiteville Student Population



By April, 1967, West Virginia passed a state ruling that said first class high schools must have a minimum of 10 teachers. This ruling would classify Gap Mills and Greenville as second-class schools which would cause issues for students who wished to pursue college degrees.<sup>62</sup> The Monroe County Board of Education sought to eliminate the “second class” high schools and instead consolidate students into Peterstown or Union High Schools. As a result of this “process,” five elementary schools would also be closed including Fairview School and Waiteville School, whose students would transfer to Gap Mills. Rock Camp School would also close with students attending Greenville Elementary School. Finally, Lindside School would also close with students divided between Greenville and Peterstown.<sup>63</sup>

Beginning in the 1967-1968 school year, Waiteville’s elementary students were bused to Gap Mills Elementary School and the building officially no longer remained in use as a school.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Chart information illustrated in Figure 2 is based on the documentation in the Waiteville School Roster for 1950-1967 by Janet McDaniel.

<sup>62</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings,” Thursday, April 27, 1967.

<sup>63</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, Thursday, “Board of Education Proceedings,” April 27, 1967.

<sup>64</sup> “Consolidation of High Schools Proposed by Board in Monroe,” *Beckley Post-Herald/the Raleigh Register*, April 29, 1967.

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Although many parents and residents spoke out against the consolidation movement, citing transportation problems, confusion and teacher dissatisfaction, the *Monroe Watchman* newspaper reported that the consolidated school plan was “operating smoothly.”<sup>65</sup> In 1967, the goal was to have two high schools with equal enrollment and three junior high schools with equal enrollment.<sup>66</sup> Peterstown and Greenville Junior High Schools had 184 pupils while Gap Mills Junior High School had 175 students. Peterstown High School had 276 students.<sup>67</sup> Five elementary schools remained in Monroe County in 1967 including Ballard, Gap Mills, Greenville, Peterstown and Union. Enrollment in county schools had continued to decrease from the previous year by 67 students.<sup>68</sup> Eventually, all the county schools were consolidated into one high school in 1994- James Monroe High School.<sup>69</sup>

Since the Monroe County Board of Education no longer had a need for the Waiteville School, it was slowly transformed into a community center. In 1975, members of the Monroe County Board of Education helped local leaders establish the Waiteville Community Center, Inc. (WCC) and sold the property to the WCC in 1989. A plaque in the WCC identifies donors who raised \$4,000 to buy the building from the Monroe County Board of Education.

Since the close of the school in 1967, the building remains the center of the Waiteville Community, serving as a gathering space for funerals, community dinners, voting, emergency shelters/services and family reunions. The Waiteville Community Center, Inc. also hosts class reunions every year to document and preserve the memories of students who attended Waiteville School.

While the building no longer officially serves as a school building, the structure symbolizes the strong desire of Monroe Countians to educate their children and is still strongly associated with the mid-century educational development of the Waiteville community.

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<sup>65</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings,” Thursday, September 14, 1967.

<sup>66</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, “Board of Education Proceedings,” Thursday, September 14, 1967.

<sup>67</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, Thursday, September 14, 1967. Union High School’s student population count was obscured by an ink blot.

<sup>68</sup> *The Monroe Watchman*, Thursday, September 14, 1967.

<sup>69</sup> History of School Consolidations, 10/10/17, as found in <https://www.wvssac.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/School-Consolidation.pdf>, accessed 11/26/2022.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Baker, Lindsay. *A History of School Design and its Indoor Environmental Standards, 1900 to Today*. National Institute of Building Sciences, 2012.

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*Monroe County Bicentennial Committee. Highlights of the History of Monroe County Schools 1799-1999*. Union, WV: Monroe County Bi-Centennial Committee, 1997.

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“Board of Education Proceedings.” October 4, 1949.

“Board of Education Proceedings: Waiteville School Site Purchased.” Nov. 16, 1949.”

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“Board of Education Proceedings: To Condemn Land for School.” January 5, 1950.

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“Board of Education Proceedings.” September 7, 1950.

“Board of Education Proceedings.” November 15, 1950.

“Board of Education Proceedings.” April 5, 1951.

“Board of Education Proceedings.” April 27, 1967.

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Taylor, Fred L. “*Historical and Educational Development of Monroe County*” PhD dis., West Virginia University, 1949.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 4 acres and 128 square rods

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_ (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 17N Easting: 551293 Northing: 4147326



Waiteville School  
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2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary description is the legal property description as listed in Monroe County Deed Book 90, Page 6.

“Beginning at a point in Potts Valley Road, corner to LaFon’s lot and running with the center of said road, S. 8 ½ E. 23 ½ poles to a station in turn of said road, thence running with the said road, S. 55 W. 28 poles to a station in the center of said road, (a stone marker near edge of road) thence leaving the road and running with the lands sold this day to Carry Crosier and Lima Crosier, his wife, N. 12 W. 37 ½ poles to a station near an ash sapling (marked by a stone). The last course was protracted, corner to same and with the same and LaFon’s lot B. 86 ½ E. 26 poles to the beginning and containing 4 acres and 128 square rods, being the same more or less.” Also known as lot 2 of the Subdivision of the W.H. Crosier property.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The proposed NRHP boundary includes the former Waiteville School and the immediately adjacent grounds that were historically associated with the school as were identified on the original property deed.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Sandra Scaffidi, Architectural Historian  
organization: Practical Preservation  
street & number: 1 Avalon Road  
city or town: Fairmont state: West Virginia zip code: 26554  
e-mail sandra@practical-preservation.com  
telephone: 304-314-3773  
date: October 31, 2022

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5- or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Waiteville School/Waiteville Community Center

City or Vicinity: Waiteville

County: Monroe

State: West Virginia

Photographer: Sandra Scaffidi

Date Photographed: August 12, 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 18- North and east elevations, photographer facing southwest

Photo 2 of 18- South elevation, photographer facing north

Photo 3 of 18- West elevation, photographer facing east

Photo 4 of 18- North elevation, photographer facing south

Photo 5 of 18- Detail of the façade, photographer facing southwest

Photo 6 of 18- Interior, central hallway, photographer facing east

Photo 7 of 18- Detail of typical classroom, photographer facing northwest

Photo 8 of 18- Detail of typical classroom, photographer facing northeast

Photo 9 of 18- Detail of former classroom transformed into community kitchen,  
photographer facing northeast

Photo 10 of 18- Detail of former classroom, photographer facing northwest

Photo 11 of 18- Auditorium/classroom, photographer facing west

Photo 12 of 18- Auditorium/classroom, photographer facing east

Photo 13 of 18- Detail of child-size urinal, photographer facing northeast

Photo 14 of 18- Lower-level kitchen and cafeteria, photographer facing west

Photo 15 of 18- Image of former coal furnace, photographer facing southwest

Photo 16 of 18- Non-Contributing outbuilding, photographer facing southwest

Photo 17 of 18- Modern playground, located south of the school, photographer facing south

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**Figure Log**

Figure 1 of 6- Photograph of Old Waiteville School as reprinted in the *Monroe Watchman* newspaper and now displayed in the Waiteville Community Center.

Figure 2 of 6- Chart Depicting Waiteville Student Population

Figure 3 of 6- Resource Location Map (USGS Map)

Figure 4a of 6- Photo Location Map (Exterior photos)

Figure 4b of 6- Photo Location Map (First floor photos)

Figure 4c of 6- Photo Location Map (Lower-level photos)

Figure 5 of 6- NRHP Boundary Map

Figure 6 of 6- Historic USGS Map (1931)

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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Photo 1. North and east elevations, photographer facing southwest



Photo 2. South elevation, photographer facing north



Waiteville School  
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County and State



Photo 3. West elevation, photographer facing east



Photo 4. North elevation, photographer facing south

Waiteville School  
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV  
County and State



Photo 5. Detail of the façade, photographer facing southwest



Photo 6. Interior, central hallway, photographer facing east



Waiteville School  
Name of Property

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County and State



Photo 7. Detail of typical classroom, photographer facing northwest



Photo 8. Detail of typical classroom, photographer facing northeast

Waiteville School  
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV  
County and State



Photo 9. Detail of former classroom transformed into community kitchen, photographer facing northeast



Photo 10. Detail of former classroom, photographer facing northwest



Waiteville School  
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV  
County and State



Photo 11. Auditorium/classroom, photographer facing west



Photo 12. Auditorium/classroom, photographer facing east

Waiteville School  
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV  
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Photo 13. Detail of child-size urinal, photographer facing northeast



Photo 14. Lower-level kitchen and cafeteria, photographer facing west



Waiteville School  
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV  
County and State



Photo 15. Image of former coal furnace, photographer facing southwest



Photo 16. Non-Contributing outbuilding, photographer facing southwest



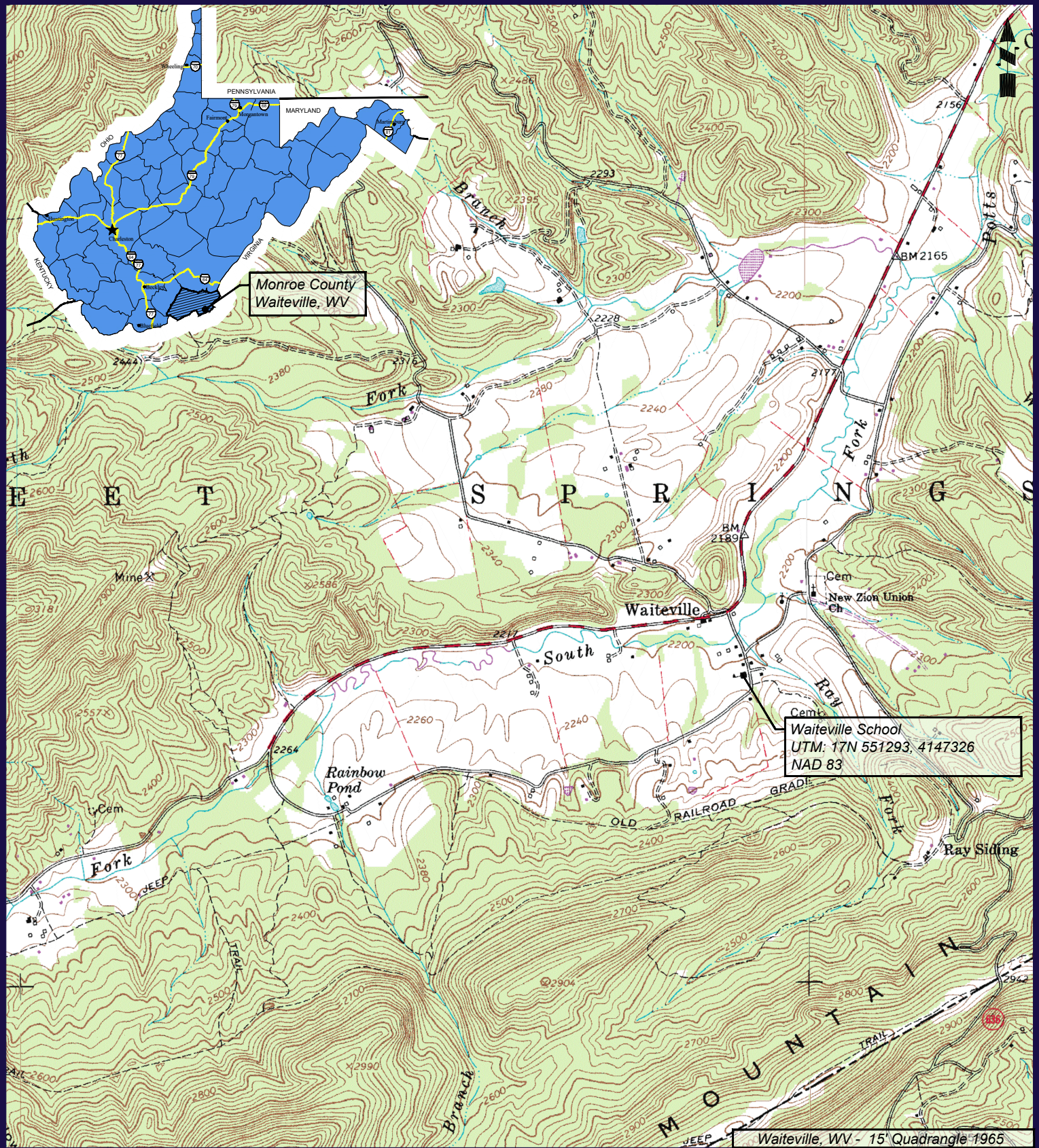
Waiteville School  
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV  
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Photo 17. Modern playground, located south of the school, photographer facing south





PRACTICAL  
PRESERVATION

**Figure 3**  
 Resource Location Map  
 Waiteville School  
 Waiteville, Monroe County, West Virginia

Scale: 1 in = 2,000 ft

11/30/22



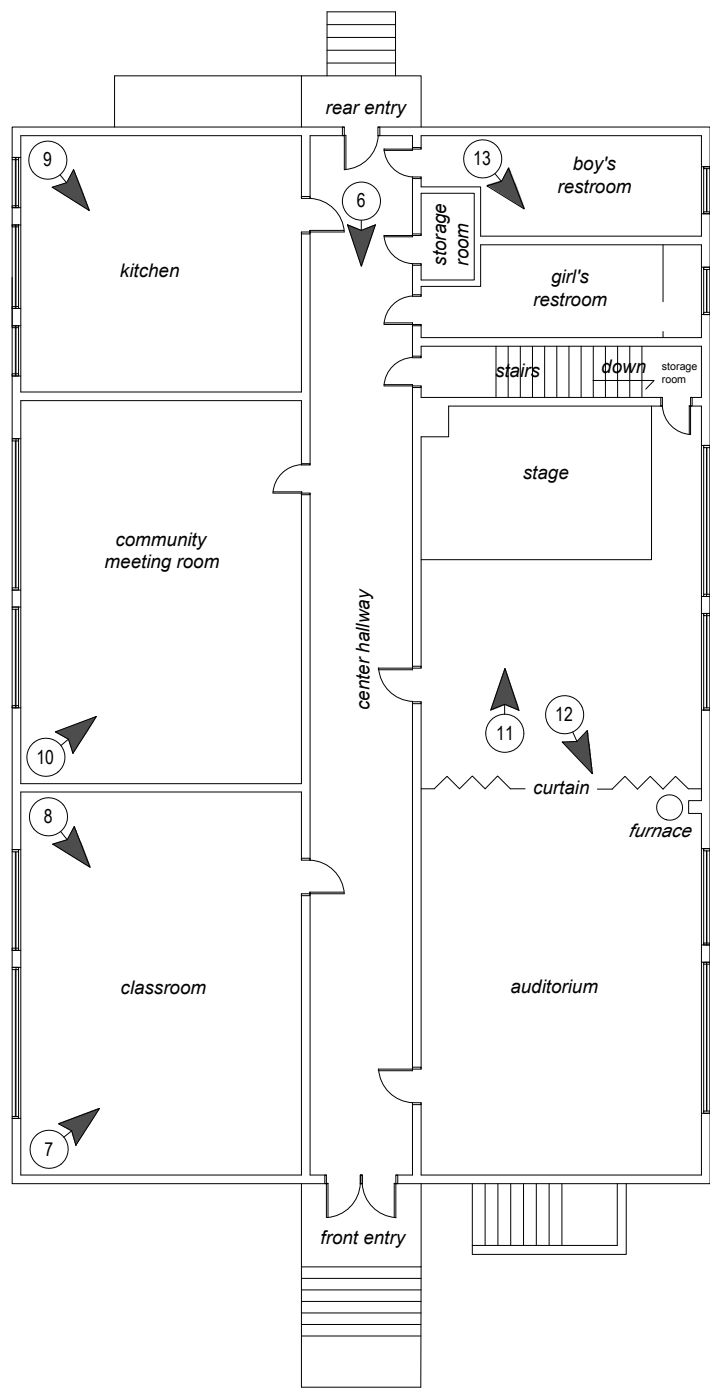


PRACTICAL  
PRESERVATION

**Figure 4a**  
Photo Location Map 1 of 3  
Waiteville School  
Waiteville, Monroe County, West Virginia

Scale: 1 in = 50 ft

11/30/22

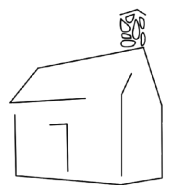
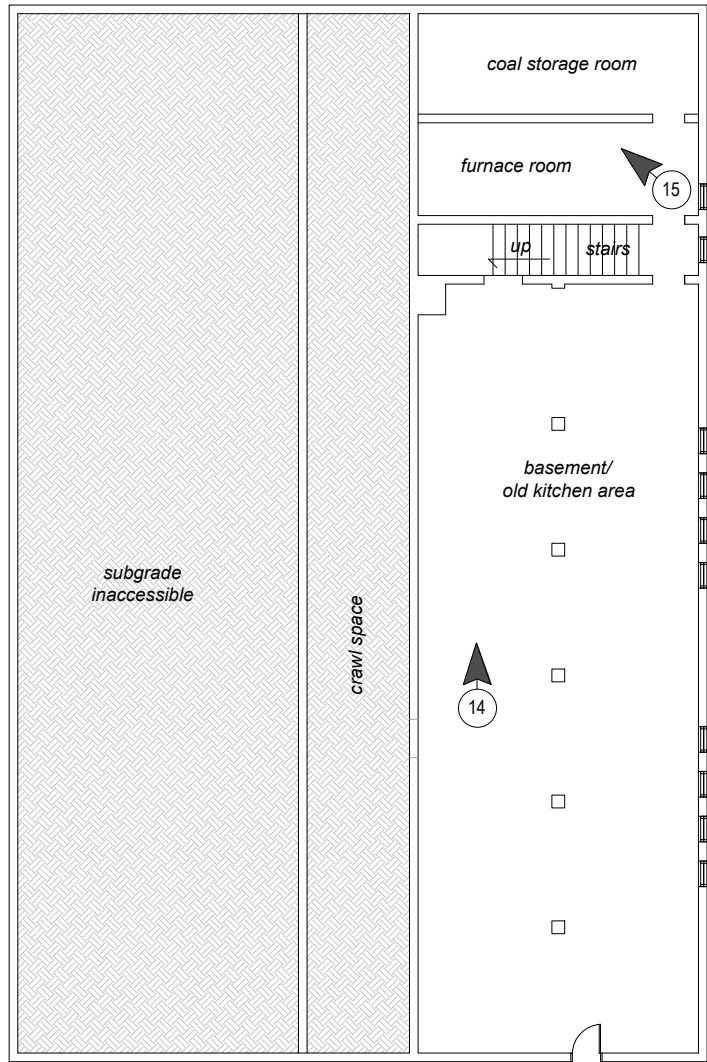


PRACTICAL  
PRESERVATION

**Figure 4b**  
Photo Location Map 2 of 3  
Waiteville School  
Waiteville, Monroe County, West Virginia

Scale: 1 in = 15 ft

11/30/22



PRACTICAL  
PRESERVATION

**Figure 4c**  
Photo Location Map 3 of 3  
Waiteville School  
Waiteville, Monroe County, West Virginia

Scale: 1 in = 15 ft

11/30/22





Notes:

1. Property boundary shown is from Monroe County digital tax map. For the Waiteville Community Center metes and bounds description see deed book 0185, page 0564.
2. Aerial image shown was extracted from Google Earth. Google image dated November 2019.



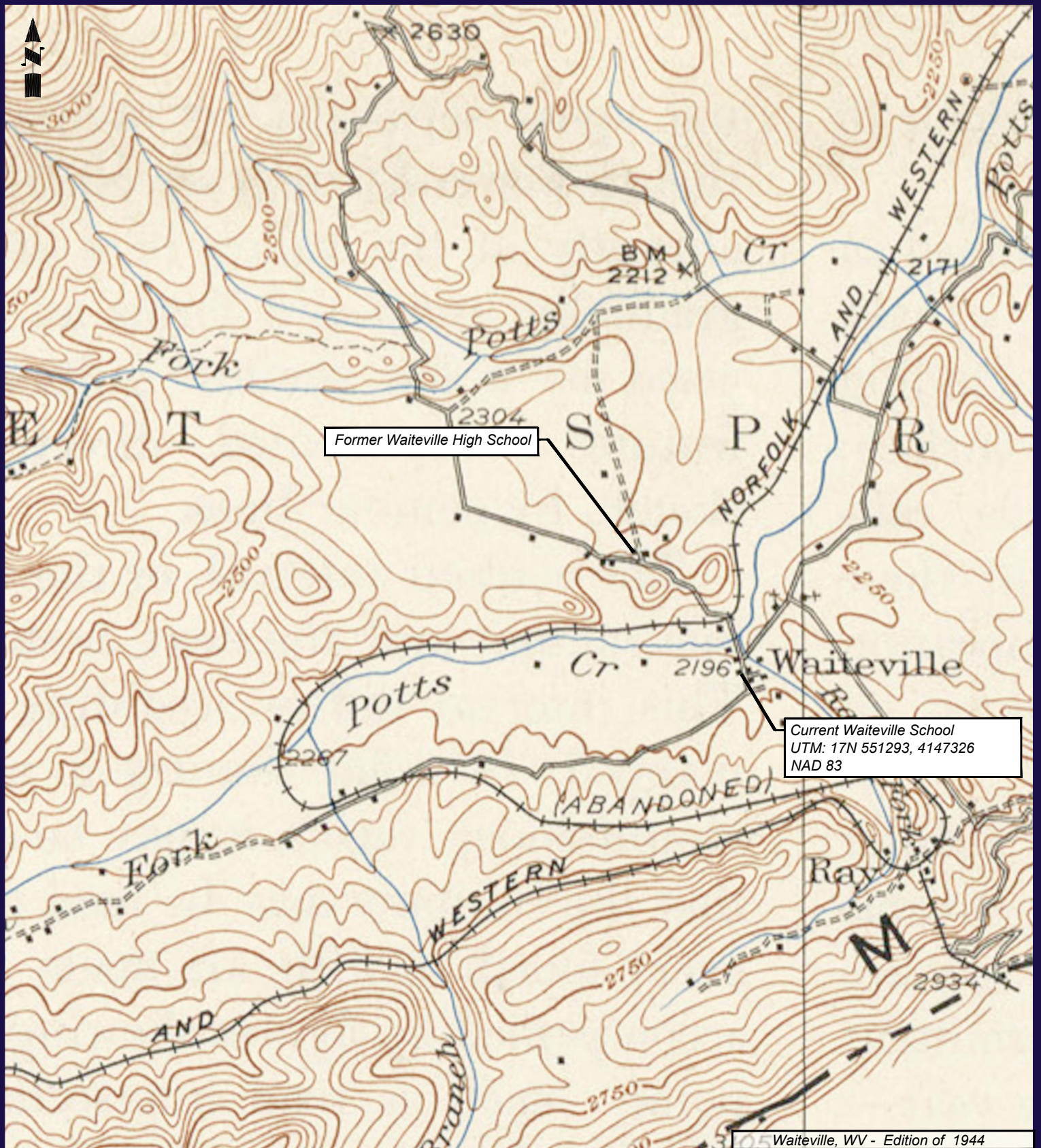
PRACTICAL  
PRESERVATION

**Figure 5**  
NRHP Boundary Map  
Waiteville School  
Waiteville, Monroe County, West Virginia

Scale: 1 in = 100 ft

11/30/22





PRACTICAL  
PRESERVATION

**Figure 6**  
 Historic USGS Map (1931)  
 Waiteville School  
 Waiteville, Monroe County, West Virginia

Scale: 1 in = 2,000 ft

11/30/22