

# c. 1760-1803 Pleasant Oak



## An Old Friend

3665 Old River Trail  
Powhatan, VA 23139



## The Story of Pleasant Oak c. 1760–1803

Pleasant Oak tells the story of early American craftsmanship and rural life in Virginia. Built around 1760 and 1803 by Reverend Samuel Woodfin—farmer, blacksmith, and preacher—the home has evolved over time, yet retains its original heart. From hand-hewn beams and Flemish bond chimneys to its modest dormers and pine floors, Pleasant Oak is a rare survivor of its era. Nestled off a cedar-lined lane, the house and grounds offer a tangible connection to a life of faith, labor, and enduring legacy.

Pleasant Oak began as a modest but well-built home between 1760 and 1803. Its earliest form, a side-passage, single-pile plan with central chimney, reflects the practical elegance of colonial Virginia construction. Over the next two centuries, thoughtful additions expanded the house, each echoing the spirit of the original structure with Flemish bond brickwork, gabled dormers, and 9/9 windows.

The home's first known resident, Reverend Samuel Woodfin, was a Baptist preacher, blacksmith, and farmer who acquired over 300 acres in the 1700s. He and his wife, Obedience Gathright, raised six children here. Though modest by today's standards, Woodfin took great pride in his home, referring to it as his “mansion” in his will—a reflection of the labor and craftsmanship it embodied.

Pleasant Oak retains many of its original elements: hand-sawn beams, pine flooring, 9/9 and 6/9 windows, and original chimneys with corbelled shoulders. Later additions in 1940 and 2001 were made with care to preserve its historic character, making it not only a home but a living record of vernacular architecture.

The grounds include a frame smokehouse—a quiet reminder of the property's long history. Pleasant Oak is a rare example of how a working family in early America lived, worked, and built a legacy that still stands today.

*When bricks are shaped by hand, great trees cut down and hewn into beams, nails forged one by one, and floorboards carved with an awl, the result is more than a house; it is a home built with intention, resolve, and enduring craftsmanship.*



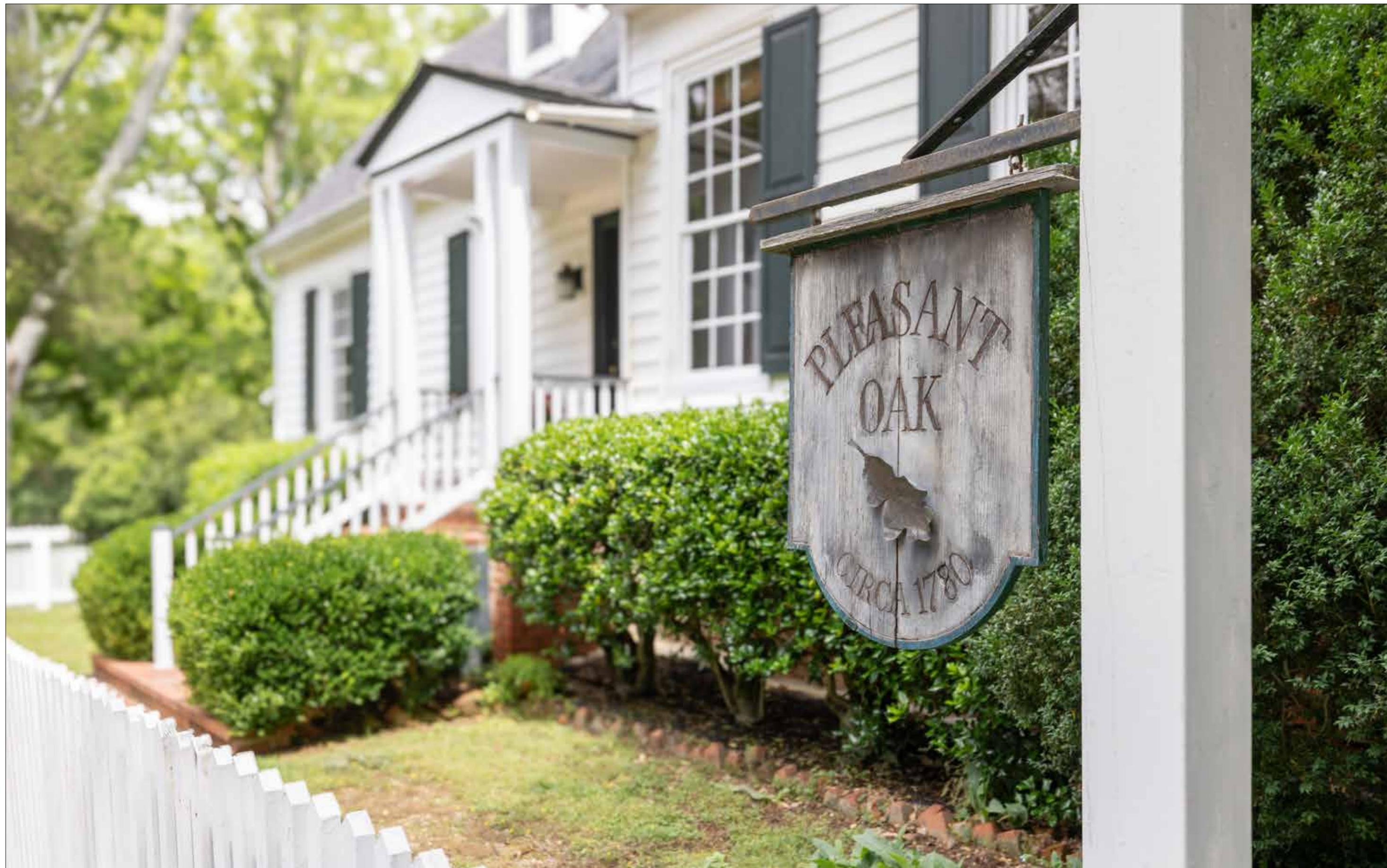


## The Horse & Stagecoach Approach

This tree-lined path once served as the original approach to Pleasant Oak welcoming visitors by stagecoach and horseback. Towering cedars and native plantings frame the gently curving drive, offering a glimpse into a bygone era of gracious arrivals and timeless Southern hospitality. The filtered light and shaded understory would have provided a cool reprieve for travelers and their horses. This preserved landscape still echoes with the quiet dignity of its 18th- and 19th-century past, inviting you to step back in time with every step.



The present-day gravel drive gently winds alongside the original historic approach, bordered by mature trees and thoughtfully maintained landscaping. This tranquil passage through dappled light and open green space offers a serene welcome to Pleasant Oak, blending the beauty of the natural surroundings with quiet echoes of the property's storied past.





## **Architectural Origins Pleasant Oak**

Pleasant Oak was initially built in a traditional two-over-two-room layout, centered around a massive brick chimney that anchors the home. The central staircase rises directly to the upper level without a landing, a hallmark of early American design. While the chimney once served a fireplace on the main floor, no fireplace openings are upstairs. The house rests on a sturdy brick foundation, further reflecting the craftsmanship and permanence of its original build.

A gabled dormer at the front, and a shed dormer at the rear add architectural interest to the roofline. A pedimented front porch, supported by paired square columns, offers a welcoming introduction to this enduring example of early craftsmanship.



## Worn Pine & Quiet Grace

The central entry hall of Pleasant Oak reveals the elegance of simplicity. Wide-plank pine floors worn smooth by generations, along with original window frames and hand-planed woodwork, remain intact. The staircase, characteristic of 18th-century design, rises directly to the upstairs rooms without a landing, reflecting the side-passage layout of the original two-over-two plan. Natural light filters through the six-over-nine window, casting a warm glow over this space, serving as an entryway and gathering room for over two centuries. In this hall, craftsmanship and continuity meet, giving an unaltered glimpse into early American domestic life.





## The Front Parlor

An early addition to Pleasant Oak, completed prior to 1802, expanded the home's footprint with a parlor and upper room on the east end, anchored by a double-shouldered Flemish bond brick chimney. Beneath is a full basement; some portions possibly predating the addition speak to the layered evolution of the home.

In the late 1940s, Pleasant Oak underwent a thoughtful renovation, introducing modern amenities while preserving its historic character. That renovation retained the original heart pine floors and hand-planed trim. Bathed in natural light from original windows, the front parlor reflects Pleasant Oak's graceful adaptation over time.



## Original Rooms

This room is part of the original 18th-century structure at Pleasant Oak, once likely used as a private chamber or secondary sitting space. While the vertical wood paneling and decorative tiled hearth were added during the 1940s renovation, the footprint and proportions remain unchanged. The original heart pine floors and the adjacent stairway, leading directly to the upper rooms without a landing, reflect the home's early side-passage plan. The room tells a layered story of preservation and adaptation, where modern touches were introduced while the underlying structure remained faithfully intact.



## Staircase to Private Upper Rooms

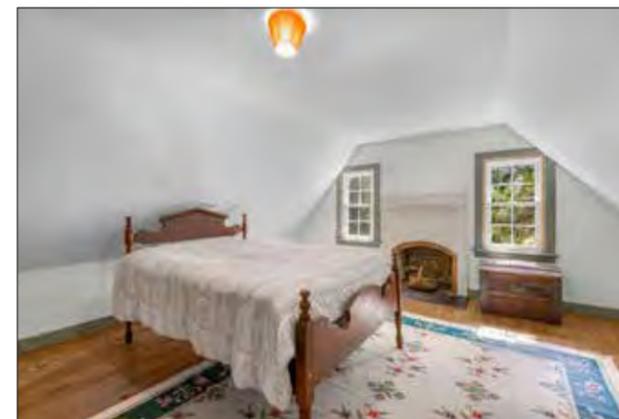
At the top of the staircase, this view reveals the modest scale and unembellished beauty of Pleasant Oak's upper rooms. With no landing or hallway, each room opens directly from the stairs, a typical design in 18th-century side passage homes. The handcrafted pine floors and visible rooflines reflect a time when construction was guided by necessity, resourcefulness, and craftsmanship. This quiet, tucked-away space carries forward the honesty of its construction and the enduring spirit of those who first called Pleasant Oak home.



This upstairs bedroom is one of the original two upper rooms in Pleasant Oak's 18th-century floor plan. Tucked beneath the steeply pitched roof, the room is defined by its sloped ceilings, hand-planned wood trim, and simple symmetry. While there is no fireplace opening here, the chimney mass is visible in the room's form. Warm brick was a source of radiant heat from the hearth below. With pine floors underfoot and soft natural light from the double windows, the space remains remarkably true to its colonial origins: quiet, humble, and enduring.



This second upper room, opposite its twin across the chimney mass, completes the original two-over-two floor plan of Pleasant Oak. Tucked beneath the steep roofline, the space is characterized by its cozy scale, visible angles, and simple, painted trim. A trio of low-set windows adds charm and natural light, while the original pine floors and door frames reinforce the home's handcrafted heritage. This room, likely used as a bedroom, study, or storage space over the centuries, has retained its quiet authenticity preserved with care just as it was originally built.



This bedroom, added during the 1800s parlor expansion, is located directly above the parlor and reflects the thoughtful evolution of the home's original design.

## Light-Filled Passage to Later Additions

This bright and welcoming passage that once served as the kitchen in the 1940 addition now connects to the new kitchen and family room. Sunlight streams through generous windows, creating a warm, cheerful atmosphere highlighting the wood floors and classic trim. This space seamlessly flows between old and new, gracefully linking the home's historic charm with its modern comforts.



## Renovation History

In the late 1940s, Pleasant Oak underwent a thoughtful renovation, introducing modern amenities while preserving its historic character. A new kitchen with a shed roof was added to the north side, and a bedroom and two bathrooms were constructed on the west end, connected to the original house by a hall.

## Blending Past and Present: The 2001 Renovation

The north-side addition introduced a new kitchen, family room, bedroom, bathroom, screened porch, and side porch. Designed to complement the home's historic character, the addition features 9-over-9 windows, pine flooring, and a gable roof in harmony with the original structure. During the same renovation, updates to the 1940s addition included window replacements and converting the former kitchen into a laundry room.



### Modern Living Meets Historic Charm

Custom cabinetry with glass doors, kitchen island, and soft crown molding echo the tones and textures of the original house. A gas fireplace and handpainted cupboard doors above add to the charm. Tall windows and French doors flood the space with natural light and connect the interior to the gardens and wooded landscape beyond. This space maintains the scale and warmth of the early home, ensuring that every addition becomes part of the greater whole and quietly extends the legacy of Pleasant Oak.





From the family room, step directly into the expansive screened porch for relaxation and a seamless flow between indoor and outdoor living.



## Spacious Primary & En-Suite with Garden Access

The primary bedroom offers a spacious and serene retreat, filled with natural light and timeless warmth. Hardwood floors, classic trim, walk-in closet and multiple windows create an inviting atmosphere. A cozy sitting area, ideal for a reading nook or home office, adds flexibility to the space, while the ensuite bath ensures privacy and convenience. A door leads to a small patio that opens into the gardens, offering a peaceful spot to enjoy morning coffee or unwind at the end of the day. This suite blends comfort, charm, and a quiet outdoor connection.





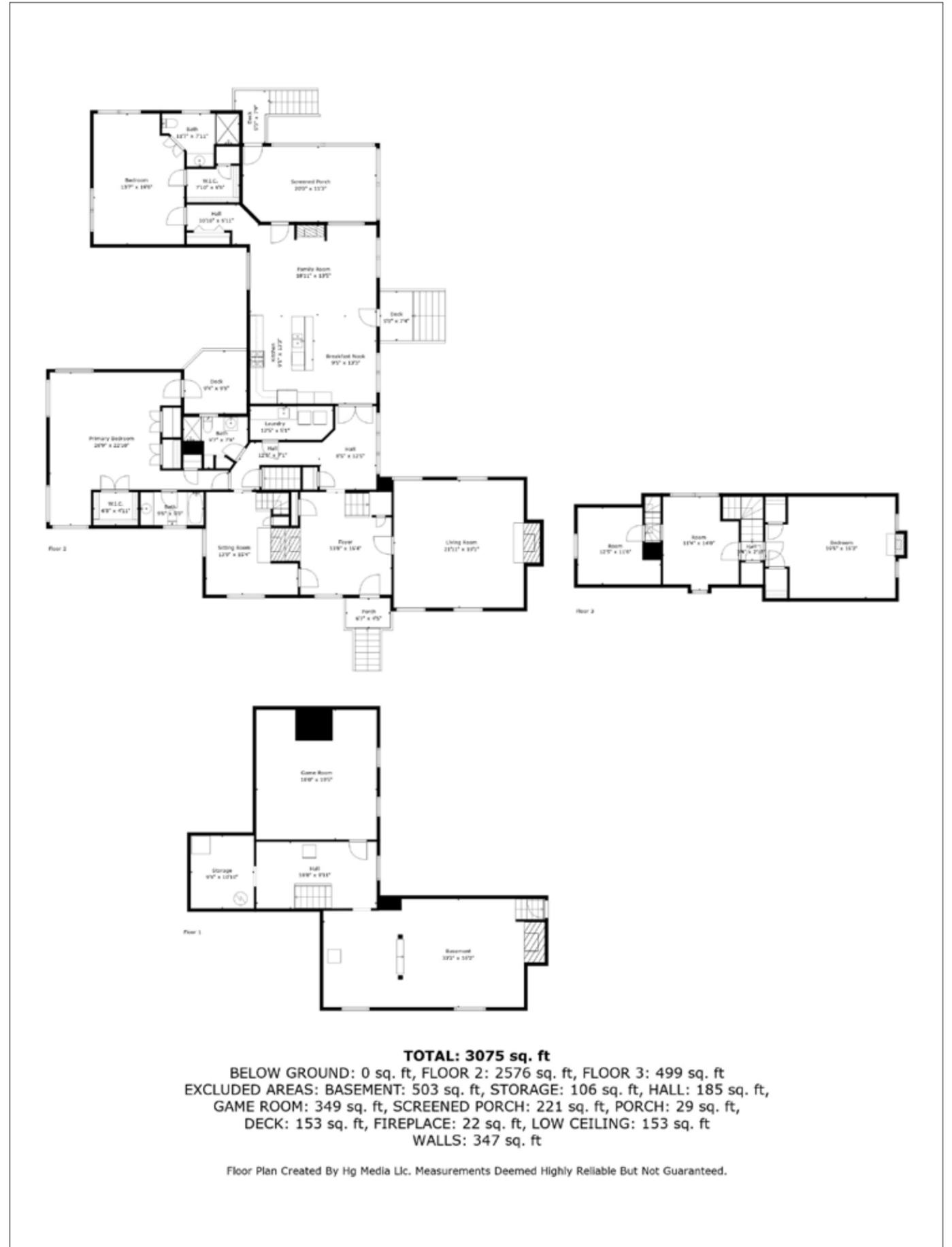
## **Bright and Comfortable Second Bedroom with Ensuite**

This charming second bedroom offers privacy with its ensuite bath, making it ideal for guests or family members. Large windows bring abundant natural light, highlighting the classic details. The spacious layout easily accommodates twin beds or a larger arrangement, while the private bath adds convenience and a touch of luxury. It is a peaceful and inviting space for restful nights and relaxing mornings.









## At a Glance

Address: 3665 Old River Trail, Powhatan, VA 23139

**Acreage:** 26.18

**Square Footage:** Finished: 3,212 / Unfinished: 1,524

**2024 Taxes:** \$4,569 - based on 43.85 acres; to be adjusted.

**Zoning:** A10 Agricultural

**Internet:** Firefly Fiber Optic

**Three wells.** Two located in the front yard (one is the original hand dug well no longer in use) and another under the primary bedroom used for irrigation. The newest well pumps up to a holding tank.

**Sewer/Septic:** Septic Tank

**Average utility bills:** Electric: \$160/month

**Heat:** Dual fuel heatpump with propane backup.

**Central Air:** Heat Pump

**Propane:** Cooking, gas logs, and the big furnace in the main part of the house.

**Generator:** It is a portable generator that is turned on with a key and is hooked up to the breaker box. You must manually turn on the breakers for what you want to power up.

**Conveys:** Armoire in kitchen, generator.

There is a sump pump in the basement. During heavy rain there can be some water intrusion..

There is no heat or central air to the original upper bedrooms.

There a water treatment system currently not in use.

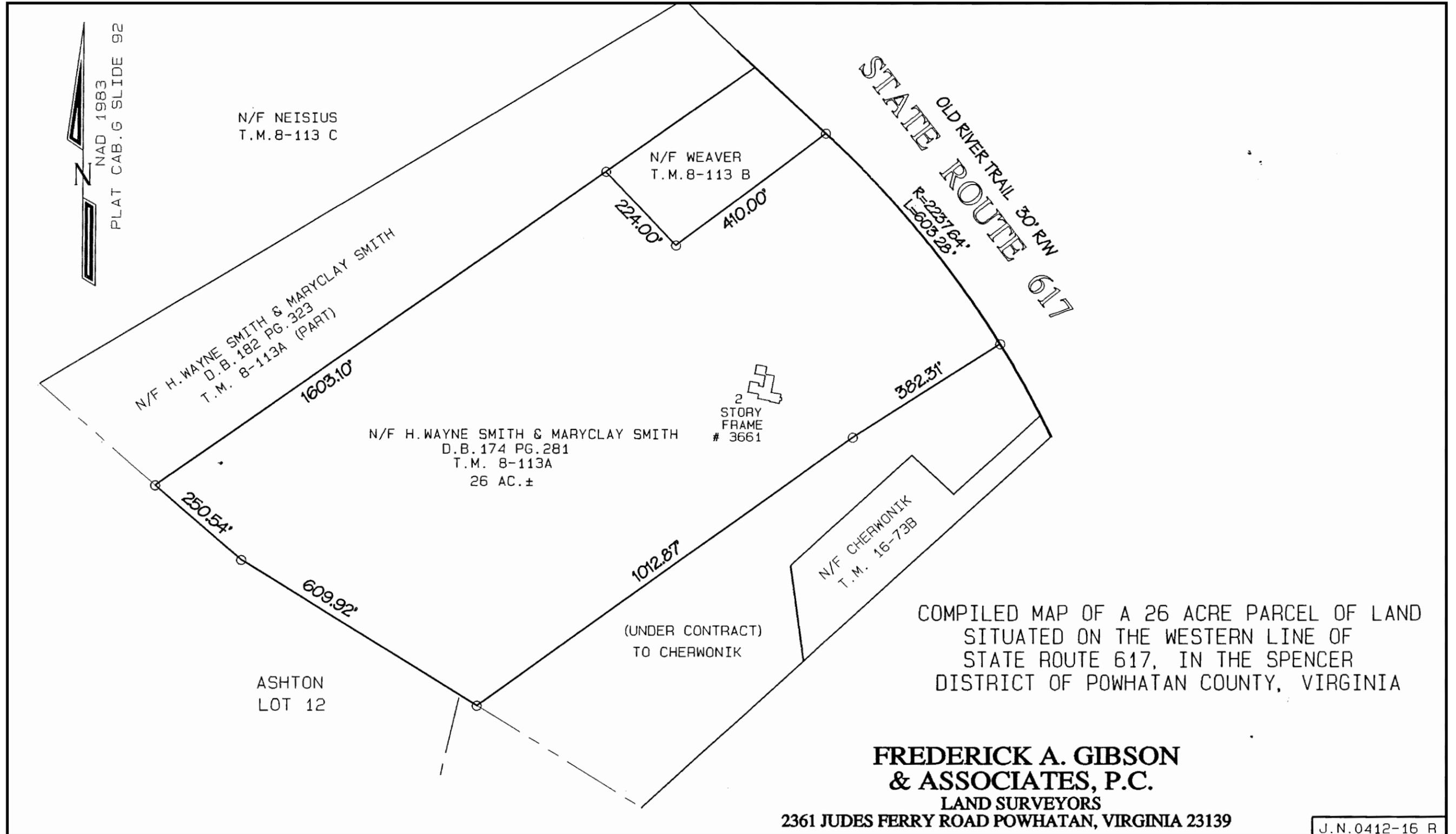


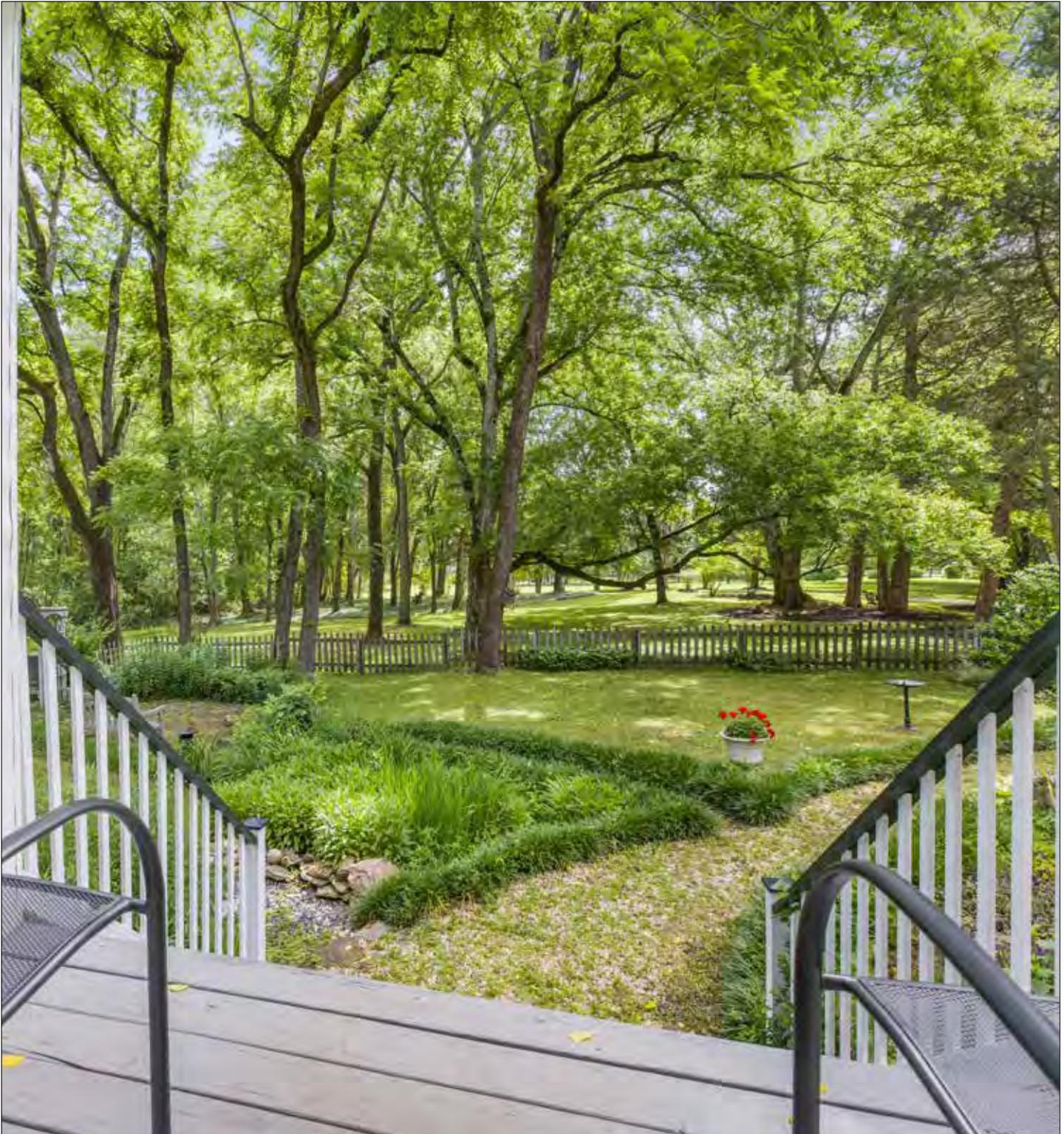
Nestled along one of Powhatan's most scenic byways, 3665 Old River Trail offers a rare combination of rural beauty and convenient access. Surrounded by rolling countryside and mature forests, this private and peaceful setting is just 30 minutes from the cultural and culinary scene of Richmond and 10 minutes from the town of Goochland, an hour from Charlottesville and within easy reach of Williamsburg and the coast.

Local favorites like Fairfield Coffee & Eatery, The Café at Maidens, and the four-generation County Seat Restaurant provide cozy spots to dine, while 1933 Public House and nearby Mexican, Chinese, and sushi options offer variety. Maxey's Store and historic taverns round out the area's unique charm and convenience.

The nearby James River and expansive Powhatan Wildlife Management Area invite outdoor recreation, while surrounding farms, vineyards, and equestrian estates add to the area's appeal.

**Preliminary Survey  
Final Version Pending.**





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