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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Oak Grove Community House
Other Names/Site Number: Oak Grove Legion Hut
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & Number: 414 James Street
City or town: Oak Grove State: LA County: West Carroll
Not for Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets, meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Phil Boggan 12-7-15

Signature of certifying official/Title: Phil Boggan, State Historic Preservation Officer **Date**

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title: **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

✓ entered in the National Register on 1-26-2016 due to weather-related Government shutdown
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other, explain: _____

1-27-2016

Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

	Private
x	Public – Local
	Public – State
	Public – Federal

Category of Property (Check only **one** box.)

x	Building(s)
	District
	Site
	Structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Social: Meeting Hall

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Social: Meeting Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.): Other: Rustic

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
foundation: concrete blocks
walls: pine wainscot, chinked log construction
roof: asphalt shingles
other: Original brick fireplace and hearth, exposed electric conduits, wooden porch on two sides

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.)

Summary Paragraph

The Oak Grove Community House is located in Oak Grove, West Carroll Parish, Louisiana. It is a one-story, horizontal log construction meeting hall with a porch wrapping three sides of the building and was designed in a variation of the Rustic style that was popularly used on buildings constructed during the 1930's, primarily those associated with the Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration. The Community House is located within the Oak Grove City Park, which was part of the overall Civil Works Administration project that funded the construction of the park and the Community House. The building has a cross gable roof of asphalt shingles, a large brick chimney on the eastern side, a T-shaped floor plan, original six-over-six wood windows, shingles applied in the gables as well as just below the porch, exposed rafter rails, and original five-panel wooden doors. The interior features an exposed wooden ceiling structure, wood floors, log and horizontal plank walls (all stained), and the original brick fireplace on the eastern wall. Very few changes have been made since the building was constructed in 1933-34 and for these reasons, the Oak Grove Community House remains eligible for listing on the National Register.

Narrative Description

The Community House was a project, along with the park itself, by the Civil Works Administration (Project Number 62-L-13) and was constructed from November 1933 until February 1934. It is located three blocks north of downtown Oak Grove in a mostly residential area. It has continued to be used as a community meeting place since it was constructed and the park has also been continually used by the community and parish.

It is a one story building, which is the only part of the CWA project that is still in existence in its original configuration. The building is constructed of chinked logs and plaster on the exterior and has stained horizontal board walls on the interior, exposed roof and ceiling beams, and pine flooring on the interior. The building has covered wooden porches on 3 sides and has been modified for handicap access on the north end of the porch.

South Elevation (see photo 1)

This elevation is considered the façade as this is where the main entry to the Community House is. On the right side of the elevation is the main entry with a single six over six double hung wooden window to its left. The center of the elevation is clad in vertical board and batten siding and features two six over six double hung wooden windows. The far left side also has one single window and one door.

West Elevation (see photo 6)
The left 1/3 of this elevation has an original door with screen door that provides access to the kitchen area and is located under a shed corrugated metal porch roof. The majority of the elevation is constructed of the same chinking and logs found throughout the building. There are two six over six double hung wood windows on this elevation, currently boarded over with plywood with air conditioning inserts. The gable end is clad in wooden shingles and features one large gable fan, also covered with plywood (visible on the interior).

North Elevation (see photos 4 and 5)
This elevation has a covered porch overhang on the left 1/3 of the elevation. An original entry door and a single six over six double hung wood window are found on this portion of the elevation. A wooden handicap ramp has been added to the porch on this elevation. The center of this elevation is the projection where the kitchen is located. It features four evenly spaced six over six double hung wood windows. Three of the four are currently covered with plywood with one of these having an air conditioning unit inserted within the plywood. The gable end is clad in wooden shingles. The far right 1/3 of the elevation features a small covered porch over a door that provides access to the kitchen. The original door and screen door are intact. The very edge of this side of the elevation, as well as the corners of the central projection, is clad in vertical board and batten siding.

East Elevation (see photos 2 and 3)
This elevation features the exterior of the brick chimney and fireplace. On each side of the chimney is a single six over six double hung window, currently covered with plywood as air conditioning units have been inserted within the plywood. The gable end is clad in shingles and the porch roof has exposed rafter tails.

Interior (see photos 10-19)
The interior has horizontal board walls on partition walls for the most part as well as a couple other select walls and board ceilings in the projection along the south elevation. The kitchen has an acoustic tile ceiling and board walls. The walls of the main space, except for the partition wall separating the kitchen from the space, have the exposed log walls. All wooden surfaces are stained. The original 5 panel wooden doors remain throughout. The windows have bi-fold shutters on them currently. The ceiling and roof structure of the main space is exposed to the roof peak. The wood floors are original. The fireplace on the east end of the building is constructed of clay brick and is still fully functional as a wood-burning fireplace. It has a simple rectangular mantel. There is a small kitchen on the north wall, a supply storage area in the northeast corner, and 2 interior toilets on the south end of the building. The fixtures in the kitchen and bathrooms have been updated from the originals, but the function of has not changed. A brick chimney for a coal burning cooktop is still extant in the kitchen. The original heaters still stand in the southwest and southeast corners. The electrical system is all located through conduit attached to the walls versus being run within the original wood logs.

Alterations and Integrity

While the park and community house were designed as one project, the park itself has been altered due to continual use by the city with the addition of new tennis courts, basketball courts, playground equipment, walking trails, picnic pavilions, and exterior restrooms. The original tennis courts are no longer in the park and the roadways have been re-designed within the park. The new additions to the park, while necessary for modern day use of the park, have affected and impacted the historic design and look of the park as a whole. For this reason, only the community house is being nominated for listing. The park is still significant as a development during the CWA period, but it is not eligible for listing under Criterion A due to the modern additions.

The Community House itself has received very few alterations over the years with the main changes being cosmetic. The kitchen space has been updated with more modern materials on the floors and ceilings as well as the fixtures as have the bathrooms. Modern lighting fixtures have also been added. Besides that the majority of the original features that made the community house important both historically and architecturally are intact. It retains integrity of location, setting, design, feeling, association, workmanship, and materials, and remains eligible for listing on the National Register.

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.)

x	**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.
x	**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:

	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.): Social History, Architecture

Period of Significance: 1933-34

Significant Dates: 1933-34

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion D is marked above): N/A

Architect/Builder (last name, first name): Civil Works Administration

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance under Criterion A and C is 1933-34, reflecting the year that the building was constructed as well as the years that the Civil Works Administration operated.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): N/A

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.)

Built in 1934, the Oak Grove Community House is significant at the local level under Criterion A: Social History and Criterion C: Architecture. The Community House is an excellent example of the Rustic Style, used in many Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration projects throughout the Great Depression. Its exposed log construction, exposed rafters, and brick fireplace are all important features found in Rustic style buildings of the 1930s. It is also significant under Criterion A for its association with the documented work relief activities of the Civil Works Administration within West Carroll Parish. The period of significance under Criteria A and C is 1933-34.

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

Brief history of West Carroll Parish and Oak Grove

West Carroll Parish is home to the recently listed World Heritage Site, Poverty Point, which dates to over 2000 years ago and served as the central trading grounds for the Lower Mississippi River Valley's Native American populations. Located only 27 miles south of Oak Grove, this site represents the earliest settlers and primarily, the only settlers of the parish until the early 1800s.

While the rest of Louisiana saw many French and Spanish settlements in the 16th, 17th, and 18th, centuries, northeast Louisiana didn't see many true settlers until the early 19th century. In 1807, a minister named Moses Floyd settled on the west bank of Bayou Macon at the southern end of the parish, about a mile north of Poverty Point. The settlement that grew around Floyd's home became known as Floyd. This town eventually became the parish seat of the newly formed Carroll Parish. Originally part of Ouachita Parish, Carroll Parish came into existence in 1855 when the population of the western portion of the parish had grown significantly due to its cotton and timber economy. Floyd grew as settlers flocked to the new parish seat. When the Civil War began in 1861, the residents of Floyd sided with the Confederacy and the residents on the eastern side of Bayou Macon signed oaths of allegiance to the United States. This divide was the beginning of the formation of today's East and West Carroll Parishes. Following Reconstruction, a bill was introduced to divide Carroll Parish in East and West Carroll.

Once West Carroll Parish was formed, it still thrived on the cotton and timber industries. With the advent of the railroad, towns began to develop throughout the parish including Pioneer, Forest, Oak Grove, and Kilbourne. In 1909, Oak Grove was officially incorporated. Six years later, a vote was taken to move the parish seat from Floyd. Oak Grove, located in the northern end of the parish, and Pioneer, located in the southern end, were the two main contenders. Winning by a small margin, Oak

Grove became the new parish seat. In 1917, a new parish courthouse was opened (still standing today).

Throughout the early decades of the 20th century, Oak Grove continued to grow based on its continued agricultural economy. Following World War II, new industries and businesses moved in to add to the town's economic structure. With the 1960s and 1970s, a modern hospital, nursing home, and a new garment factory were constructed. With all of these new developments, the downtown continued to be bustling until the 1980s. Even with this decline, the downtown of Oak Grove was able to survive and today, it is once again thriving. Agriculture still reigns supreme as the main economic driver in Oak Grove and West Carroll Parish with corn, rice, cotton, and sweet potatoes being the main crops.[1]

Criterion A: Social History - History of the CWA and the Oak Grove Community House

Since it was built in 1934, the Oak Grove Community House has been in continual use as a community center for the town of Oak Grove. The local American Legion Post 53 meets there each month, the town council and Chamber of Commerce use the building for town hall information meetings, and local residents use it to host reunions and family celebrations.

The Civil Works Administration

The Civil Works Administration was created on November 9, 1933, and was initially intended to be a short term program until the Works Progress Administration officially kicked in. With the goal of putting 4 million unemployed people to work, the CWA consisted mainly of projects sponsored by the individual state governments. This goal was surpassed with 4.2 million employed by the middle of January 1934.[2] The majority of the projects undertaken were road projects, sanitation improvements, repair or construction of public buildings including schools, national park improvements, real estate property surveys, library, art, and theater projects, and archaeological excavations.[3] Over 1/3 of the 180,000+ projects were the road and highway projects and the second largest number of projects were for schools including improvements and new buildings and employing teachers for youth and adult education. 1000 airports and 3500 playgrounds were built as well by the CWA.[4]

Other programs developed at the same time during the winter of 1933, such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), focused on providing relief to people in the form of handouts, but the CWA aimed to create jobs to pay wages and stimulate the economy. The winter of 1933-34 was predicted to further worsen the effects of the Great Depression. While handouts were certainly welcome and helpful, the creation of jobs and paid wages were vital as well. As the CWA was a federal program, anyone employed through the CWA would be a Federal employee. Half of the jobs would go to those already in relief programs while the other half of the jobs was delegated for those who needed work. This resulted in a large increase in pay for both parties involved, almost tripling their weekly incomes.

The CWA in Louisiana

[1] "A Brief History of West Carroll Parish." *West Carroll Parish Chamber of Commerce*. www.westcarrollchamber.org. Accessed November 3, 2015.
[2] "This Week in History: November 7-13, 1933, The Civil Works Administration." *The Schiller Institute*. http://schillerinstitute.org/educ/hist/eiw_this_week/v1n35_nov7_1933.html. Accessed November 3, 2015.
[3] "The Civil Works Administration." *University of Washington Libraries.* https://content.lib.washington.edu/civilworksweb/essay.html. Accessed November 3, 2015.
[4] "This Week in History: November 7-13, 1933, The Civil Works Adminstration."

The CWA in Louisiana ran from November 20, 1933, through March 29, 1934 – a mere 4 months – but it had a great impact on the state creating 2,493 projects and employing over 170,000 people who earned more than $11,000,000.[5] As the winter of 1933 approached, it was clear that the Public Works Administration (PWA), which was intended to provide jobs over this time period, was not going to be ready. The CWA's role was to fill this void until the PWA was ready. The CWA was essentially a short lived band aid program that led to many projects, including the creation of the Oak Grove Community House.

The hopes for the program were high as seen in the words of Harry L. Hopkins, administrator of the CWA:

> "I believe CWA will stand out, even when WPA has become past history, like a precocious child in a family of slower going but more substantial children…WPA exceeds CWA in scope, volume, and efficiency. Without what we learned through our CWA in scope, volume and procedure, labor problems, supervision, planning and resources of the community, we could never have had WPA."[6]

Prior to the creation of the CWA in Louisiana, the economy was primarily agricultural and was hit hard by the recession starting in the 1920s. Unemployed laborers and farmers turned to public relief agencies, which really had very little relief to supply. It wouldn't be until the summer of 1932 when the state of Louisiana formed the Unemployment Relief Committee (URC). The URC provided relief to urban laborers and rural farmers and those helped were put on work relief. Those unable to perform physical labor were given direct relief. Projects undertaken by the URC included road projects, drainage and grading of parks and public properties, and drainage of low places and ponds for mosquito control.[7] The URC was taken over by the Emergency Relief Administration (ERA) in May of 1933. There were no major clear differences between the URC and ERA except that the majority of the funds for the ERA were state funds. The URC, while a state agency, received most of its funding from the Federal government. This transition to the ERA was the start of increased Federal aid to the state of Louisiana. Further Federal relief came with the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and more help came with the PWA and CWA.

The CCC was created in March of 1933 and when it ended, almost 2.5 million young men nationwide had gone through the program. The program in Louisiana began in April of 1933 and by the end of the month, 650 men left for training in Florida. The removal of the young men from Louisiana for training at CCC camps reduced the number of persons on state relief rolls, helped to preserve and improve forests and outdoor areas, and it also left the relief rolls full of older, less physically fit men to do the physical labor that was leftover. Most of these older men tended to be those who worked on ERA and later, CWA, projects.[8]

As previously stated, by the time the CWA was created in November of 1933, the PWA projects had not taken off. There were no PWA projects in the state of Louisiana at that time. Everything was still in the planning stages. This is why the CWA became so important, even though it was such a short lived program. It served to fill a hole left by the lag in the start of PWA projects.

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[5] Virgil L. Mitchell. *The Civil Works Administration in Louisiana: A Study in New Deal Relief, 1933-1934*. Lafayette: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1976; pg. 1.
[6] Mitchell, pg. 6.
[7] Ibid. pg. 13.
[8] Ibid, pg. 17.

The CWA was organized in that the state overall and each parish had an administrator and clerical staff, an engineer, and an unpaid advisory council. Projects were advanced by the administrator and investigated by the engineer. The council would then provide an opinion as to the social and economic value of the proposed project. If everyone agreed on the project, it would be sent for approval at the state headquarters. The state engineer would review it for technical correctness in terms of engineering, the state advisory board would again review its value, and the head of the CWA program would make the final approval for the project. Once approved, work could start as soon as they had enough men organized to do the job.[9]

The projects completed in Louisiana by the CWA included general construction and beautification projects including streets, roads, sidewalks, bridges, canals, bayous, general drainage, parks, cemeteries, buildings, and airports. Additional projects included sanitation projects like rodent control, mosquito eradication, and the construction of sanitary privies and cattle dipping vats.

The park projects done by CWA, like the Oak Grove Community House and surrounding park, often included drainage projects as part of the work order. This work helped to improve the health conditions of the community as well as the overall physical appearance of the park itself. The park work gave jobs to unemployed local citizens and also created pleasant public places for the local community. In the state as a whole, there were 63 park projects costing over $2,000,000 in 33 parishes. Of these, 19 were completed by CWA, 38 were transferred to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) when CWA ended, and only 6 were not completed.[10] One of those transferred to FERA was the Oak Grove project as is clearly noted on its paperwork (see Figure 2). Besides the Oak Grove Community House and Park, in West Carroll Parish, there were 31 CWA projects resulting in 1,018 working positions paid $30,464.45 in wages.[11]

The CWA also completed other public building construction including new schools, renovations to existing schools, and the construction of 13 new airports in the state. There were also 18 projects done in 14 different parishes to improve adult education and to reduce illiteracy. It can clearly be seen that the CWA had a positive impact on several different aspects of life in the country and Louisiana.

Not only did the program provide jobs and paid wages to the unemployed of Louisiana, but it also helped to lift morale and helped give the citizens of this state and the country a little bit of hope for the coming year. It also helped to give more responsibilities back to the individual states in providing more than just aid to its citizens – providing useful employment. Searle F. Charles, one of the national leaders of CWA, stated:

> "CWA did have a tremendous psychological influence among men who had the opportunity to work for money rather than stand in line for it, and some say this in itself made the CWA worth the cost."[12]

Frank Walker, head of the National Emergency Council, iterated the CWA's impact by saying:

[9] Mitchell, pg. 28.
[10] Ibid, pg. 69.
[11] Ibid, pg. 116.
[12] Ibid, pg. 45.

> "You have every reason to be proud of CWA and its administration. It is my considered opinion that this has averted one of the most serious crises in our history. Revolution is an ugly word to use, but I think we were dangerously close at least to the threat of it."[13]

With a primary purpose of providing employment over the winter of 1933-34, the CWA certainly accomplished that. Its projects, which employed over 150,000 Louisianans helped to achieve positive results and made the winter months, which it was believed would continue to be bleak and intolerable, bearable.

History and Development of the Park

At the time of the construction of the Oak Grove Community House and Park, West Carroll Parish had a population of 13,895 and only 20% of the parish was no receiving relief. As discussed in the history of the parish (and the state for that matter), the majority of the parish was reliant on agriculture. Logging and timber were also major industries. Both of these industries were affected by the Great Depression and the CWA projects that were done in the parish helped to employ over 1000 people. These projects provided necessary buildings that met the demands of public use and also utilized construction skills of builders and masons who were hurting for employment.

Prior to the CWA project, the park was an undeveloped piece of land that had been donated by the Bank of Oak Grove for use as a park. However, it went undeveloped until the Civil Works Administration project came to be. The project created the road to the park, the tennis courts, and the community house, and cleared trees from the property. The CWA project turned the land into a real, viable park.

While the park and community house were designed as one project, the park itself has been altered over time due to continual use by the city with the addition of new tennis courts, basketball courts, playground equipment, walking trails, picnic pavilions, and exterior restrooms. The original tennis courts are no longer in the park and the roadways have been re-designed within the park. The new additions to the park, while necessary for modern day use of the park, have distracted and impacted the historic design and look of the park as a whole. For this reason, only the community house is being nominated for listing. The park is still significant as a development during the CWA period, but it is not eligible for listing under Criterion A due to the modern additions.

The Community House provided a community center for the Boy Scouts, family and church groups, and other private and public organizations to assemble. Although the building is referred to locally as the "Legion Hut", the 1934 filed statement extracted from the Parish Court records, clarifies the building's identity as a Public Community House that was built for the use of all public organizations. Nationwide, many Legion huts were constructed as WPA projects as they were generally a good fit for these types of projects. However, it is clear that in Oak Grove, the American Legion Post wanted to make it evident that the Community House was not theirs alone. An affidavit from March 12, 1934, shortly after the building was completed, states:

> "That in their official capacity as Post Commander and Post Adjutant, respectively, of Chas. H. Catron American Legion Post No. 53, they wish to hereby make it perfectly clear that the Oak Grove, Town Part, Community House, Tennis Courts, and roadways, all of which make up the CWA Project Number 62-L-13, is strictly a Public Park and Public Community House for use of the public in general and that the same is in no sense a Legion Park or Legion Building, except insofar

[13] Mitchell, pg. 45.

> as the American Legion would (sp) be permitted to hold meetings in the Community House, or in the Park, on the same footing as would the Boy Scouts of America, Oak Grove Lions Club, Bayou Macon Association, Parent-Teachers Association, or any public gathering….The Legion has worked and will continue to work with every public-spiriting movement and shoulder to shoulder with any and all organizations whose aim is the upbuilding of the community in which we live."[14]

According to the official CWA paperwork for the park and community house, the work to be undertaken was "park improvements, legion hut, tennis courts, street grading, bridges, and ditches."[15] The total cost was $4,563.85 and the administrator for the state was John C. Fridge. Work began on December 15, 1933 and was expected to be finished February 15, 1934. 21 unskilled laborers, 1 labor foreman, 1 timekeeper, 3 carpenters, and 1 other skilled laborer (unreadable) were employed on the job and were paid a total of what looks to be $3500. Other costs were for the materials and equipment rental.[16]

The building was immediately used after it was completed as seen in a newspaper article from June 21, 1934 that stated:

> "Annual inspection of Chas. H. Catron post of the American Legion here will be held Tuesday night in connection with a regular meeting at the Oak Grove Community center, located in the town park, according to announcement made by Adjutant L.L. James."[17]

The Oak Grove Community House stands as a reminder of the Civil Works Administration in West Carroll Parish. The CWA sought to create jobs for the unemployed people of the United States and helped to fill a void left by the delay in the PWA projects beginning. Because of this program, the Oak Grove Community House still stands today as a testament to the efficacy and positive impacts to the Federal and statewide relief programs created during the Great Depression. It has continuously served as a meeting place for local citizens and their civic organizations as well as a place for various other recreational activities and services.

Criterion C: Architecture - Rustic Architecture of the WPA Period in Louisiana

In addition to its significant relationship to the Civil Works Administration, the Oak Grove Community House is also significant as a prime example of a Rustic style (sometimes referred to as WPA rustic) community building in Oak Grove and West Carroll Parish.

Log architecture has a long history both in the United States and in Louisiana. Its exact origins are not nailed down, but there are several theories as to who introduced log architecture in the US. The various theories posit that it came from Swedish and Finnish settlers in Pennsylvania as well as Scotch-Irish settlers in the Carolinas and Appalachia. It is generally believed that the style came to Louisiana through its Scotch-Irish settlers in the Florida (southeast near Mississippi) parishes and in the upper half of the state above Alexandria. These settlers often came to Louisiana from the Upland South including West Virginia, Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky, and they most often arrived here in the 1820s and 1830s.[18]

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[14] W, S, Pollard, and L. L. James. *Community House and Park*. 12 Mar. 1934. Affidavit. West Carroll Parish Clerk of Court.
[15] "Application for Approval of Civil Works Project." CWA Project 62-L-13. 1/13/34.
[16] "Notification of Approval of Civil Works Project." CWA Project 62-L-13. May 14, 1934.
[17] "Legion Inspection is Slated to Be Held on Tuesday Night Here." *The West Carroll Gazette*. June 21, 1934. Print.
[18] Jonathan and Donna Fricker. "Log Construction in Louisiana." Historic Context prepared for the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation, March 2012.

This style of architecture came back into style c. 1870 through the 1930s and was termed "rustic." This applied generally to hunting cabins, ranger stations, and other log buildings. They often included log siding, peeled logs, rough cut lumber, indigenous stone, and overhanging roofs with exposed rafters and porches. They used native materials and designs and were intended to blend in with their settings. The National Park Service was not immune to this architectural trend and they began to use it for its lodges and camps in national parks. This trend continued with Federal and state programs during the Great Depression such as WPA, PWA, CCC, and CWA.[19] These buildings tended to be utilitarian and simple. The rustic style lent itself easily to this simplistic design.

The Oak Grove Community House certainly exhibits the main characteristics of this style as it has log construction, the use of peeled logs and chinking, a wide overhanging roof, exposed roof rafters, and wide porches on three sides. It does not utilize indigenous stone, mainly because there wasn't a whole lot of indigenous available stone in the area, it does use local handmade bricks for its chimney and fireplace. The interior is also very typical of rustic architecture and is made entirely of local stained wood. A fundamental characteristic of the WPA/Rustic style was "the expression of an enduring, rustic, functional fortitude."[20] With its typical rustic style setting located within a wooded park, the Oak Grove Community House certainly fits within this ideal of a rustic and functional fortitude.

Rustic Architecture in Louisiana

Currently, there are two buildings listed on the National Register in Louisiana that can be classified as rustic architecture from this same time period. The Bernice Civic Clubhouse was constructed in 1938 in Union Parish and is a one story frame building. It was listed on the National Register in 1994. Its floorplan is very similar to the Oak Grove Community House, but it does differ in that it is clad in horizontal weatherboard siding and not with logs and chinking. Also, its original wood windows were replaced with metal windows. The Bernice Civic Clubhouse (see Figure 4) dates from a later period and was not built in association with any Federal or state programs to deal with relief from the Great Depression.[21]

The other listed resource in the rustic style is the Alexander State Forest Headquarters Building, constructed in 1935 by the CCC in Woodworth (see Figure 5). It was listed on the National Register in 1987. In 1933, a CCC camp was established in the Alexandre State Forest where the workers developed the site, built fire lanes and bridges, provided for drainage, established nurseries, and constructed buildings, including the Headquarters Building. This building is constructed of logs and features a full width front porch. It also has a wide overhanging roof.[22] Recently, the building as moved from its original location to the Southern Forest Heritage Museum in Long Leaf (approximately 10 miles south of Woodworth).

There has not been an official statewide survey done to establish exactly how many WPA/rustic style buildings remain in the state. At least one other rustic style building is known of that is not listed in Homer – an American Legion Hut. It is hard to tell if the building was constructed with its stone

[19] National Register of Historic Places, Newton County Legion Post No. 89 Hut, Decatur, Newton County, Mississippi, #07000148.
[20] National Register of Historic Places, American Legion Hut, Cherokee County, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, #06000798.
[21] National Register of Historic Places, Bernice Civic Clubhouse, Union Parish, Bernice, Louisiana, #94000374.
[22] National Register of Historic Places, Alexander State Forest Headquarters Building, Rapides Parish, Woodworth, Louisiana, #87000771.

cladding on the columns and main exterior walls or if it was an older building updated in the rustic style (see Figure 6).

Based on the above information about the rustic style in the state of Louisiana and other extant examples, it is clear that the Oak Grove Community House is a prime example that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the style. It has received only minor cosmetic alterations in secondary spaces (kitchen and bathrooms) and stands today as an excellent example of a community building constructed in the typical rustic style that has served the town of Oak Grove and West Carroll Parish for over 80 years.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

See Above.

9. Major Bibliographical Resources

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

"A Brief History of West Carroll Parish." *West Carroll Parish Chamber of Commerce*. www.westcarrollchamber.org. Accessed November 3, 2015.

"Application for Approval of Civil Works Project." CWA Project 62-L-13. 1/13/34.

Barnet, Sidney. Personal Interview. 23 August 2014.

Bomberger, Bruce. "The Preservation and Repair of Log Homes: Preservation Brief 26." National Park Service Technical Preservation Services. http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/26-log-buildings.htm. Accessed October 2015.

Fricker, Jonathan and Donna. "Log Construction in Louisiana." Historic Context prepared for the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation, March 2012.

Kaiser, Harvey. "The Adirondack Rustic Style. " The Old House Journal, Vol XI, No 1, January/February 1983

"Legion Inspection is Slated to Be Held on Tuesday Night Here." *The West Carroll Gazette*. June 21, 1934. Print.

McKoin, Florence Stewart. *Between the Rivers: A West Carroll Chronicle*. Baton Rouge: Claitor's Law Books and Publishing, 2002.

Mitchell, Virgil L. *The Civil Works Administration in Louisiana: A Study in New Deal Relief, 1933-1934*. Lafayette: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1976.

National Register of Historic Places, Alexander State Forest Headquarters Building, Rapides Parish, Woodworth, Louisiana, #87000771.

National Register of Historic Places, American Legion Hut, Cherokee County, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, #06000798.

National Register of Historic Places, Bernice Civic Clubhouse, Union Parish, Bernice, Louisiana, #94000374.

National Register of Historic Places, Newton County Legion Post No. 89 Hut, Decatur, Newton County, Mississippi, #07000148.

"Notification of Approval of Civil Works Project." CWA Project 62-L-13. May 14, 1934.

Pollard, W. S., and L. L. James. *Community House and Park*. 12 Mar. 1934. Affidavit. West Carroll Parish Clerk of Court.

Smith, John Wesley. Personal Interview. 23 August 2014.

"The Civil Works Administration." *University of Washington Libraries.* https://content.lib.washington.edu/civilworksweb/essay.html. Accessed November 3, 2015.

"This Week in History: November 7-13, 1933, The Civil Works Administration." *The Schiller Institute*. http://schillerinstitute.org/educ/hist/eiw_this_week/v1n35_nov7_1933.html. Accessed November 3, 2015.

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:

__x_ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
__X_Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): ___N/A_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than 1 acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 32.865040 Longitude: -91.384875

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
North central part of the Oak Grove City Park, located 3 blocks north of Main Street (LA Hwy 2 extension) and 6 blocks from LA Hwy 17. The boundary is 100' around the community house. To encompass just the house and not the surrounding park (see boundary justification for this reason). See submitted boundary map for clarification.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundaries chosen are a 100' radius around the house. As the park surrounding the house, designed at the same time as the community house, developed, the original tennis courts, bridges, and roads were altered to accommodate the use at the time. Today, there are several resources of modern construction necessary today, which do impact the original design and setting of the park. For this reason, a radius has been drawn 100' around the community house to serve as the boundary to only include the house itself.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Noel Haynes; National Register Staff
organization: Oak Grove City Council/William Carroll Daughters of the America Revolution
street & number: PO Box 1197
city or town: Oak Grove state: LA zip code: 71263
e-mail: ronnoel@bellsouth.net
telephone: 318-428-2748
date: 22 March 2015

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.)

Photographs
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 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: Oak Grove Legion Hut
City or Vicinity: Oak Grove
County: West Carroll
State: Louisiana
Name of Photographer: Jessica Richardson
Date of Photographs: May 2015

1 of 19: Main façade of the building; camera facing north.
2 of 19: East elevation of the building; camera facing northwest.
3 of 19: Northeast corner of the building; camera facing southwest.
4 of 19: Rear elevation of the building; camera facing south.
5 of 19: Northwest corner of the building; camera facing east.
6 of 19: West Elevation of the building; camera facing east.
7 of 19: Close-up view of the log and chinking; camera facing west.
8 of 19: Close-up view of the log construction and side porch; camera facing north.
9 of 19: Close-up view of the side porch; camera facing north.
10 of 19: Interior, view of main meeting space; camera facing west.
11 of 19: Interior, view of an original heater; camera facing northwest.
12 of 19: Interior, view of another original heater; camera facing southwest.
13 of 19: Interior, view of main meeting space; camera facing east.
14 of 19: Interior, view of former coal stack in kitchen space; camera facing east.
15 of 19: Interior, view of door leading to bathroom; camera facing southwest.
16 of 19: Interior, view of space off main meeting space; camera facing southeast.
17 of 19: Interior, view of main meeting space; camera facing northwest.
18 of 19: Interior, close-up view of fireplace; camera facing northeast.
19 of 19: Detailed view of interior log construction and how electricity has been applied to it.

List of Figures

Figure 1. Newspaper article from June 21, 1934 concerning a meeting at the Oak Grove Community House; Image courtesy of *The West Carroll Gazette*.

Figures 2-4. Scans of CWA paperwork; images courtesy of the Records of the Works Progress Administration at the National Archives.

Figure 5. Affidavit dated Mach 12, 1934 concerning the use of the Oak Grove Community House; Image courtesy of the West Carroll Parish Clerk of Court.

Figure 6. Bernice Civic Clubhouse; Image courtesy of Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Figures 7-8. Alexander State Forest Headquarters Building; Image courtesy of Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation and

Figure 9. Homer Legion Hut building; Image courtesy of Louisiana Main Street program.

THE WEST CARROLL GAZE

Legion Inspection Is Slated to Be Held on Tuesday Night Here

Annual inspection of Chas. H. Cathen post of the American Legion here will be held Tuesday night, in connection with a regular meeting, at the Oak Grove community center, located in the town park, according to announcement made by Adjutant L. L. James.

The inspection is to be under the supervision of a post department officer. The post will be graded on attendance, observation of the manual of ceremonies and members present wearing caps and buttons.

Several other important items will be taken up at the meeting and a full attendance is urged.

Rites fo r Mrs. J. T. Hill Held Wednesday P. M.

Funeral services for Mrs. J. T. Hill well-known ward five resident, were

Firs

The firs reported brought t by W. F. C. P. Vi short dis tween Oa Mr. Pu the cotto was found

Funer Vic

Funeral 45, autom Providenc Oak Gro noon, wh E. F. Bro of God, a sisted b of the Cl Mr. Ra Sunday

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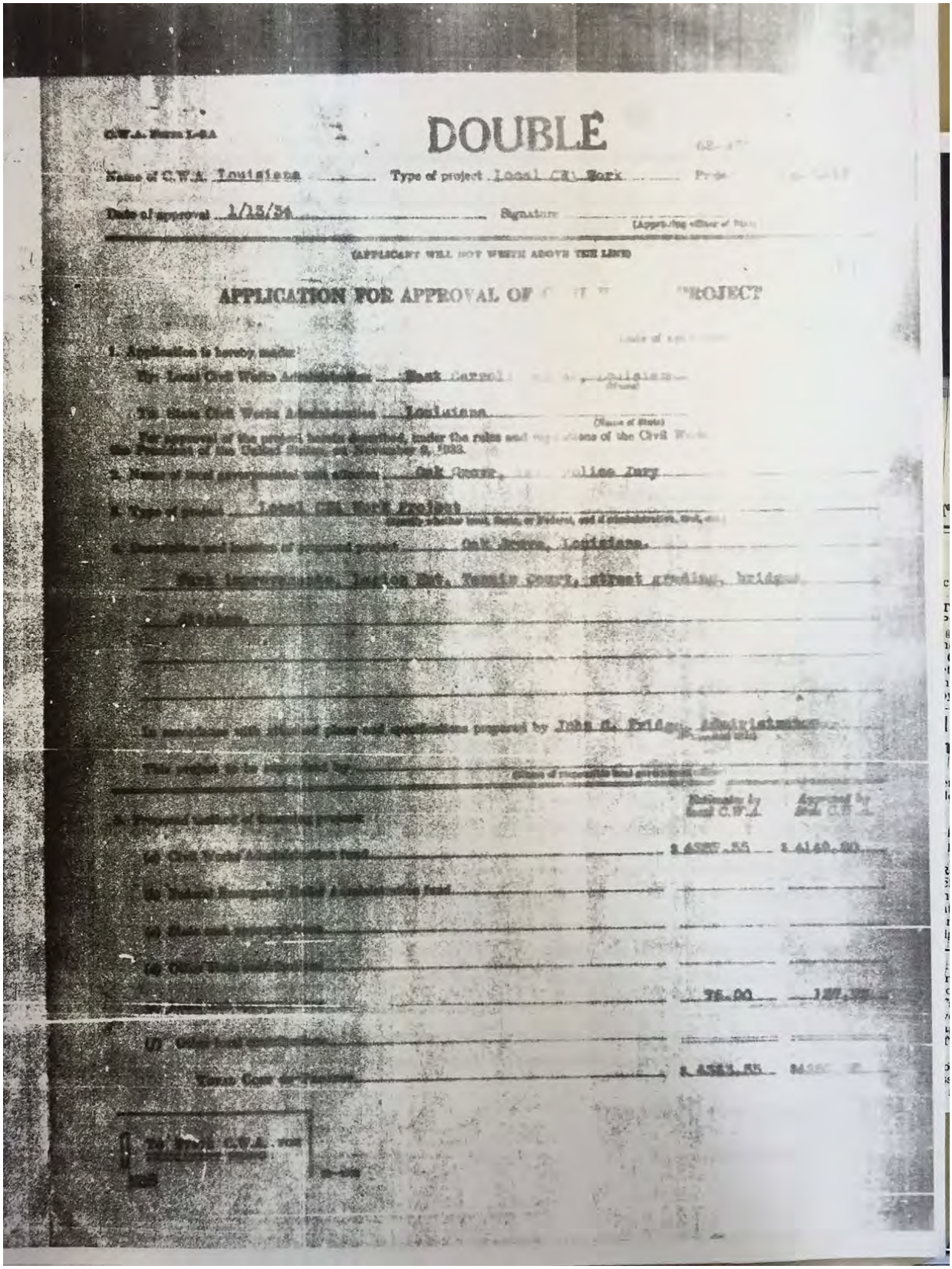
Figure 1. Newspaper article from June 21, 1934 concerning a meeting at the Oak Grove Community House; Image courtesy of *The West Carroll Gazette*.



DOUBLE

Name of C.W.A. Louisiana Type of project Local Civil Work

Date of approval 1/15/34 Signature

(APPLICANT WILL NOT WRITE ABOVE THIS LINE)

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF PROJECT

1. Application is hereby made:

By: Local Civil Works Administration West Carroll, Louisiana

To: State Civil Works Administration Louisiana

2. Name of local government unit affected: Oak Grove, West Carroll Jury

3. Type of project: Local Civil Work Project

4. Description and location of proposed project: Oak Grove, Louisiana.

Park improvements, lawns, tennis court, street grading, bridges, sidewalks.

In accordance with plans and specifications prepared by John G. Bridges, Administrator

This project to be supervised by

5. Proposed method of financing project

	Estimate by Local C.W.A.	Approved by State C.W.A.
(a) Civil Works Administration fund	$ 4587.55	$ 4160.00
(b) Federal Emergency Relief Administration fund		
(c) State and municipal funds		
(d) Other local contributions		
	76.00	187.55
(f) Other local contributions		
Total Cost of Project	$ 4563.55	$ [illegible]

To Local C.W.A. for [illegible]

Figures 2-4 (3 pages). Scans of CWA paperwork including a section drawing; images courtesy of the Records of the Works Progress Administration at the National Archives.

FINAL ALLOTMENT NOTICE

Form E-6

March 7, 1934

NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL OF CIVIL WORKS PROJECT

New Orleans, La.

TO THE PARISH ADMINISTRATOR OF [illegible] PARISH

98

PROJECT NO. [illegible] RECEIVING NO. [illegible]

DESCRIPTION [illegible] the town of Oak Grove, Louisiana

Dear Sir:

The above project has been approved for the following amounts. You will immediately notify the sponsors of the project and your Advisory Committee to this effect.

Total Labor Cost CWA	$ [illegible]
Total Material Cost CWA	[illegible]
(Equipment Rental, Teams and Trucks) CWA	
Other Costs CWA	
Local or State Contributions:	
Money	187.75
Services Rendered	
Material Supplied	
Total Cost of Project	$ [illegible]

Before any materials are to be purchased by the CWA, satisfactory evidence that the Local Community has supplied the amount of material shown above as their contribution, must be furnished the State CWA Purchasing Agent.

This approval authorizes expenditure for labor as indicated below:

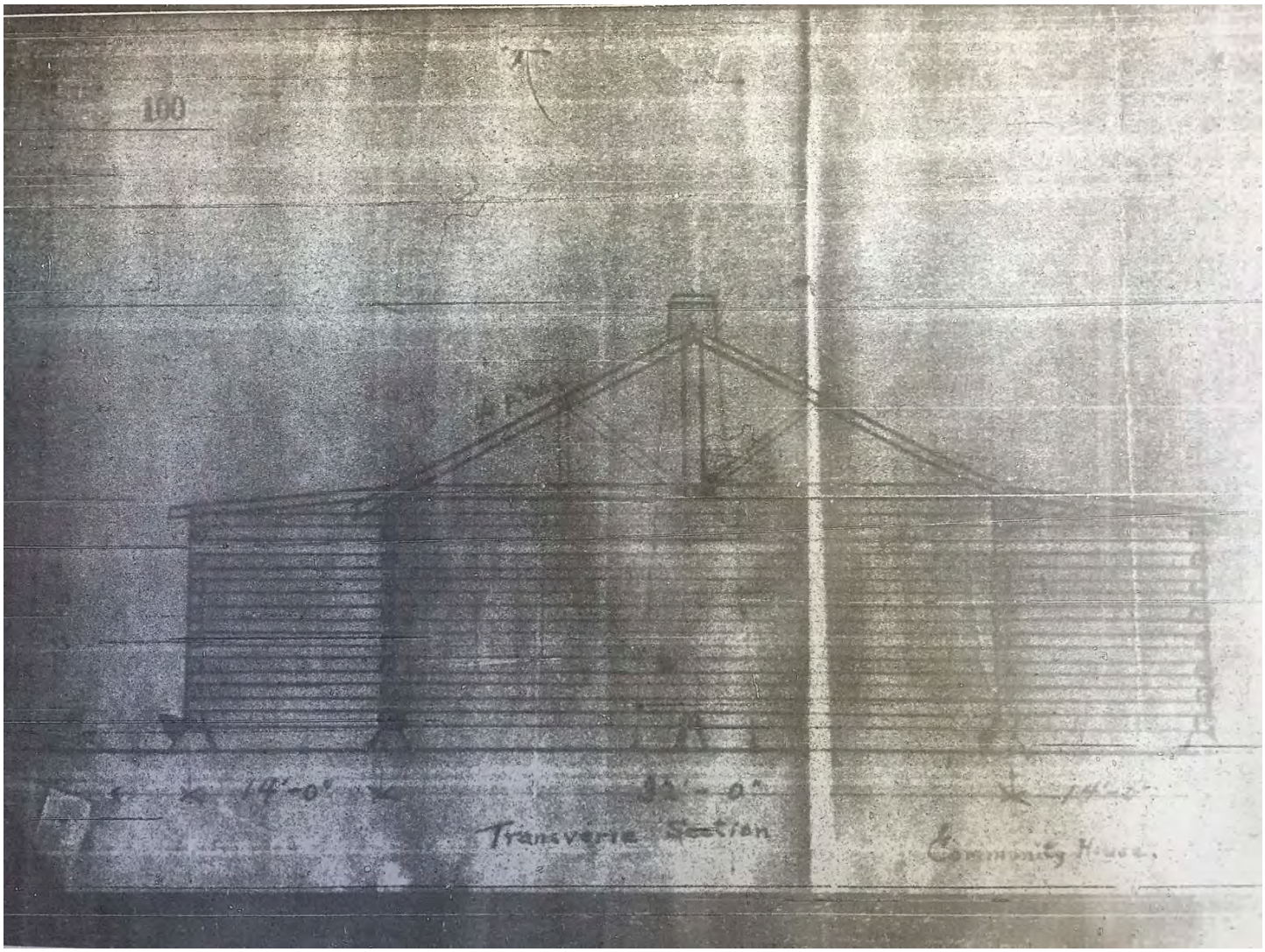
	No. of Man	Man Hours	Rate	Total Cost
Unskilled Labor	[illegible]			[illegible]
Labor Foreman	1			[illegible]
Timekeeper	1			[illegible]
Truck Drivers				
Skilled Labor				
Carpenters	4			[illegible]
Bricklayers	1			[illegible]
Total Labor Cost				$ [illegible]

FEDERAL CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

A. J. Magoulis

Assistant State Chief Engineer

cc-Parish Comptroller
Accounting Department
Purchasing Department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Transverse Section

576

D.R. # 17451 Conveyor Book I

1/376

File No. 17451

W. S. POLLARD &
L. L. JAMES

TO - Affidavit

COMMUNITY HOUSE & PARK

STATE OF LOUISIANA,

PARISH OF WEST CARROLL.

BEFORE ME, a Notary Public in and for the Parish of West Carroll, State of Louisiana, personally came and appeared Wm. S. Pollard and L. L. James, residents of Oak Grove, Louisiana, who upon being duly sworn deposes and say:

That in their official capacity as Post Commander and Post Adjudant, respectively, of Chas. H. Catron American Legion Post No. 53, they wish to hereby make it perfectly clear that the Oak Grove, Town Part, Community House, Tennis Courts, and roadways, all of which made up the C. W. A Project Number 62-L-13, is strictly a Public Park and Public Community House for use of the public in general and that the same is in no sense a Legion Park or Legion Building, except insofar as the American Legion whoud be permitted to hold meetings in the Community House, or in the Park, on the same footing as would the Boy Scouts of America, Oak Grove Lions Club, Bayou Macon Association, Parent-Teachers Association, or any public gathering.

This statement is made, as above stated, to correct any misunderstanding that may have arisen and to clarify the position of The American Legion. The Legion has worked and will continue to work with every public-spirited movement and shoulder to shoulder with any and all organizations whose aim is the upbuilding of the Community in which we live.

WM. S. POLLARD
Commander, Chas. H. Catron Post # 53

L. L. JAMES
Adjudant, Chas. H. Catron Post #53

Subscribed and sworn to before me, Notary this 12th day of March, 1934.

JOEL B. DICKINSON

Filed and recorded Mar. 12, 1934.

A true record.

Mrs. Joel B. Dickinson
DY. CLERK AND RECORDER.

-oOo-

Figure 5. Affidavit dated Mach 12, 1934 concerning the use of the Oak Grove Community House; Image courtesy of the West Carroll Parish Clerk of Court.

Figure 6. Bernice Civic Clubhouse; Image courtesy of Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Figures 7-8. Alexander State Forest Headquarters Building; ; Image courtesy of Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation and Southern Forest Heritage Museum's website.

Figure 9. Homer Legion Hut building; Image courtesy of Louisiana Main Street program.

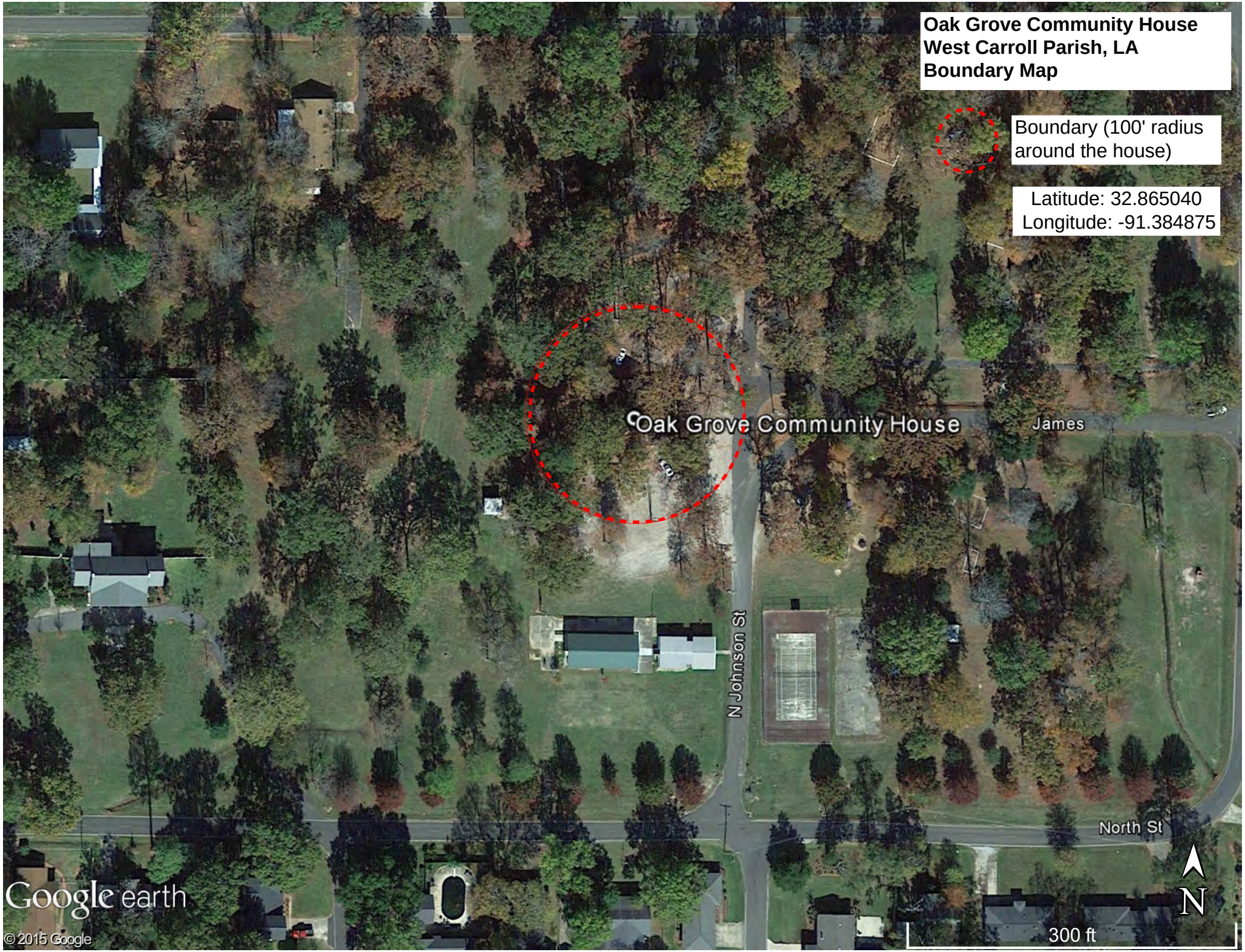
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Oak Grove Community House, West Carroll Parish, LA

Latitude: 32.865040 Longitude: -91.384875

Oak Grove Community House, West Carroll Parish, LA

Latitude: 32.865040 Longitude: -91.384875


Oak Grove Community House
West Carroll Parish, LA
Boundary Map
Boundary (100' radius around the house)
Latitude: 32.865040
Longitude: -91.384875
Oak Grove Community House
James
N Johnson St
North St
N
300 ft
Google earth
© 2015 Google

Oak Grove Community House
West Carroll Parish, LA
Photo Sketch Map
*****Not to Scale*****

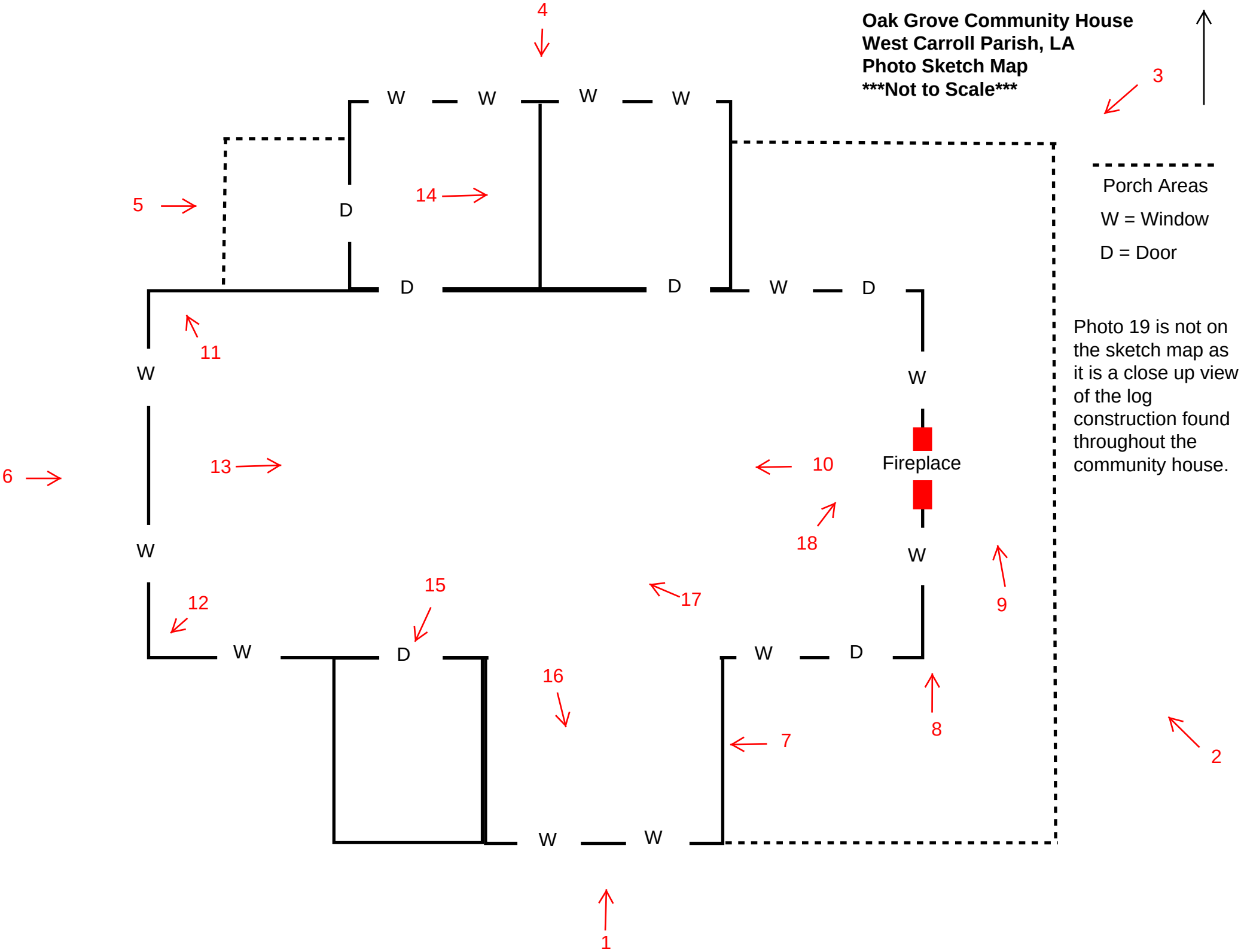


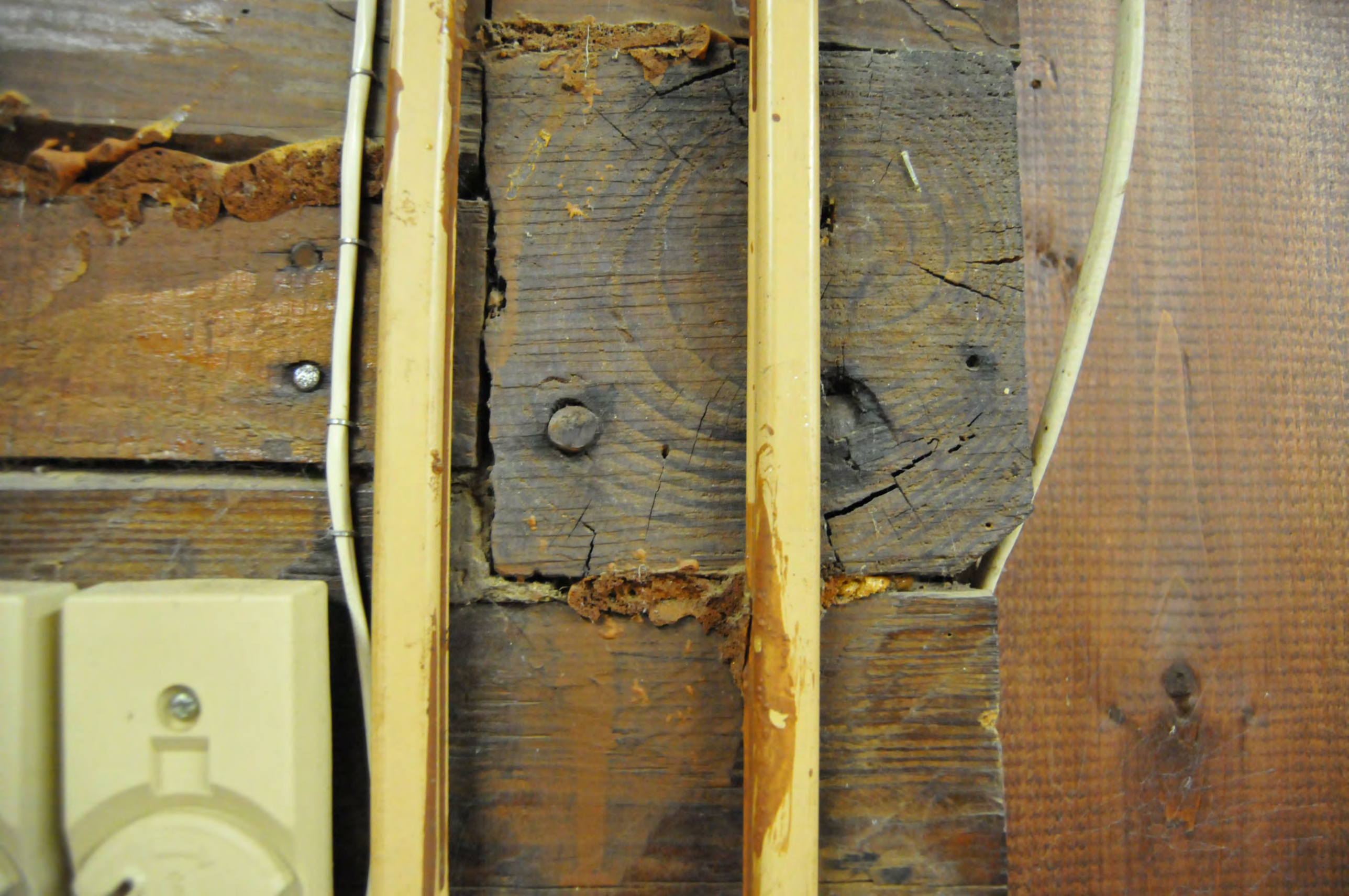
Photo 19 is not on the sketch map as it is a close up view of the log construction found throughout the community house.

PARKING

REN
MON.-
CALL
NIGHTS

Coke

Coca-Cola
CLASSIC
Coca-Cola
CLASSIC
diet
COKE
Sprite
Dr
Pepper

MEN
NO SMOKING

Coke
Coca-Cola