NPS Form 10-900
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

OMB No. 1024-0018

320

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: Chambers, Oscar, House
Other names/site number: Coffman House, Site #SB1432
Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 3200 South Dallas Street
City or town: Fort Smith State: Arkansas County: Sebastian
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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 _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility 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 _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide _X_local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B _X_C ___D

[signature] 3-23-16

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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 Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register Automatic

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action: 6.7.2016

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.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
	1	structures
1		objects
3		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_ MODERN MOVEMENT/Mid-Century Modern _

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _Wood, Glass, Asphalt_

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 Oscar Chambers House is a one-story Mid-Century-Modern house with partial basement located in a modern residential subdivision of Fort Smith, Arkansas. The house rests on a continuous cast-concrete foundation and is sided in wood vertical-board siding. Fenestration in the house mainly consists of casement windows or large sliding-glass doors. Most of the house is topped by a gable roof covered in asphalt shingles, although the den portion of the house is topped by a hip roof with a skylight in its peak. The house sits on a generous wooded lot in the Druid Hills Estates Subdivision, which allows for a large courtyard on the east side of the house and large setbacks from the streets. In addition to the main house, the site also contains a playhouse, also designed by Ernie Jacks and built at the same time as the house, and a metal lattice radio tower. Large decorative planters line the sidewalk to the front door.

Narrative Description
Located at 3200 South Dallas Street in the Druid Hills Estates Subdivision of Fort Smith, the Oscar Chambers House is a one-story Mid-Century-Modern house with partial basement. The main floor of the house houses the living and dining areas, kitchen, den, and bedrooms, while the lower level houses the game room, mechanical areas, and utilitarian areas. The plan of the house is roughly a U-shape which forms a courtyard on the east side away from the streets.

Fenestration throughout the house mainly consists of casement windows or large sliding-glass doors. The walls of the house are sheathed in vertical wood siding and are sheltered by wide eaves of the gable roof. Most of the house is topped by a gable roof covered in asphalt shingles, although the den portion of the house is topped by a hip roof with a skylight in its peak.

The Chambers House sits on a generous wooded lot at the corner of South Dallas Street and South 32nd Street. The house actually sits on four lots, giving the house large setbacks from the streets. In addition to the main house, the site also contains a wood-frame playhouse, which was also designed by Ernie Jacks and built at the same time as the original house, and a radio tower in the back yard. A line of large decorative planters also lines the sidewalk from South Dallas Street to the house's front entrance.

MAIN HOUSE – Contributing

Front/North Façade

The north façade of the north leg of the U-shape is divided into three large bays. The eastern bay is the north side of the den and is dominated in the center by a large brick chimney. On each side, the chimney is flanked by two stationary, single-pane, floor-to-ceiling windows that are separated by steel beams. The middle bay of the north leg of the U-shape is recessed and on the far left is the main entrance, which has a solid wood door with metal kickplate, with a single-pane transom window above it. To the left of the door is a stationary panel that mimics the design of the front door while to the right of the door is a line of ten stationary, single-pane, floor-to-ceiling windows that are separated by a mixture of wood posts and steel columns. The western bay of the north leg of the U-shape is the north side of the living room. Like the den, it is dominated in the center by a large brick chimney. On each side of the chimney the wall is devoid of fenestration.

The north side of the south leg of the U-shape, on the upper floor, is fenestrated its entire length by 26 casement windows that are separated by wood posts or steel columns. (The steel columns divide the windows into groups of eight, with an extra window on the east side of the eastern column and one on the west side of the western beam.) The lower floor is the north side of the carport, and it has large sections of brick foundation with four openings providing access and cross ventilation to the carport space.

Side/West Façade

Beginning at the north side of the house, the west side is fenestrated by three sets of large plate-glass sliding doors in the living room and the nook to the north of the kitchen. Each set of sliding doors is flanked on each side by a single-pane narrow rectangular floor-to-ceiling window. The southern two sets of sliding doors lead out to a brick terrace with a wood screen and brick retaining wall on its west side. A wood pergola also provides shade to the terrace, and a brick stairway descends from the terrace to the lawn.

To the south of the terrace, the wall is supported by four steel columns, and each column is flanked on each side by a single-pane casement window with a smooth panel below it. These casement windows provide light into the kitchen, the prep area, and one of the bathrooms. The

wall on this section of the façade has two planes – the bottom plane of the wall is recessed slightly from the top section of the wall. Both planes are sided in vertical wood board siding.

The southernmost bay of the west façade, which is the gable end of the bedroom wing, is devoid of fenestration.

Rear/South Façade

The south side of the north leg of the house's U-shaped plan consists of the south side of the den and dining room. The south side of the den is fenestrated in the center by a set of large plate-glass sliding doors. The set of sliding doors has a rectangular transom window and is flanked on each side by two single-pane narrow rectangular floor-to-ceiling windows with square transom windows. Each pair of windows is separated by a steel column.

The south façade of the dining room, which is recessed from the plane of the den, has a door at the eastern end that provides access to the house's central courtyard. To the west of the door, the wall is fenestrated in the center by a set of large plate-glass sliding doors. The set of sliding doors has a rectangular transom window and is flanked on each side by two single-pane narrow rectangular floor-to-ceiling windows with square transom windows. Each pair of windows is separated by a steel column. To the west of the west set of windows is another stationary plate-glass window.

The south façade of the south wing of the U-shaped plan is the bedroom wing on the main floor with the carport and some of the service areas on the lower floor. The west end of the lower floor has vertical wood siding and is fenestrated by four, equally-spaced pairs of casement windows that have smooth panels below them. The eastern portion of the lower floor has the carport which is divided into four bays by steel posts. Both ends of the carport have storage rooms that are accessed from the carport. The foundation wall at the east end of the carport is brick.

The upper floor of the south wing's south façade is spanned by a balcony with decorative wood railing that provides access into the bedrooms of the wing. At the west end of the façade are two sets of large plate-glass sliding doors. Each set of sliding doors has a rectangular transom window and is flanked on each side by two single-pane narrow rectangular floor-to-ceiling windows with square transom windows. Each pair of windows is separated by a steel column. In the middle of the façade is another set of large plate-glass sliding doors. Like the other sets, this set of sliding doors has a rectangular transom window and is flanked on each side by two single-pane narrow rectangular floor-to-ceiling windows with square transom windows. Each pair of windows is separated by a steel column. The sets of sliding glass doors at the west end are mirrored at the east end of the upper floor façade by two other matching sets of sliding glass doors.

Side/East Façade

The east façade of the house is divided into three main sections, the north leg of the U-shape, the bottom leg of the "U," and the southern leg of the "U." The east façade of the north leg of the "U" is the east side of the den. It is fenestrated near each end with a pair of floor-to-ceiling

stationary windows that are separated by steel columns. In addition, the east façade of the living room is also fenestrated by a pair of casement windows with smooth panels below that are also separated by steel columns.

The east façade of the main portion of the house faces the interior courtyard and consists of two levels. On the upper lever, there are four sets of large plate-glass sliding doors. Each set of sliding doors has a rectangular transom window and is flanked on each side by two single-pane narrow rectangular floor-to-ceiling windows with square transom windows. Each pair of windows is separated by a steel column. The lower floor consists of two sets of large plate-glass sliding doors. Each set of sliding doors has a rectangular transom window and is flanked on each side by two single-pane narrow rectangular floor-to-ceiling windows with square transom windows. Each pair of windows is separated by a steel beam.

The east façade of the southern leg of the "U" consists of the east end of the carport and the gable-ended bedroom wing. The east end of the carport consists of a brick wall with no fenestration that is recessed under the upper floor. The east end of the bedroom area is a blank wall with vertical wood siding.

PLAYHOUSE – Contributing

The playhouse is located to the south of the main house and is two stories in height. It is square in plan and rests on a cast-concrete foundation with walls sided in wood vertical-board siding. The hipped roof is covered in asphalt shingles and a skylight is located at the roof's peak. The west, south, and east sides have a centered solid wood door on the first floor, and a wood panel that opens on the second floor to provide light to the upstairs. The central bay is flanked on each side by small projecting walls. The north façade is identical to the other façades with the exception of having a single-pane window on the upper floor.

The interior of the playhouse consists of an open space on the first floor and a balcony that encircles the second floor. The open atrium in the center has ladders that allow access to the playhouse's second floor.

PLANTERS – Contributing

A line of four decorative metal planters line the east side of the sidewalk from South Dallas Street to the main entrance of the house. Each metal planter is supported by four pipe legs and is topped by a wide shallow metal bowl.

RADIO TOWER – Non-Contributing

To the rear of the house is a lattice metal radio tower that was used by Mr. Coffman for his HAM Radio hobby.

Integrity

The Chambers House has excellent integrity from the time that it was built in the early 1960s. Changes to the property, even on the interior, have been minimal so that the property very highly reflects its original design. The site also retains its associated site features, including planters, retaining walls, terraces, and pergola. In addition, the playhouse also reflects its original design, and has not been altered. When the house was built, it was one of the first houses built in the neighborhood. As a result, the setting has changed somewhat over the years as the other lots in the subdivision have been built on. However, it still reflects a suburban residential setting, which was the original intent of the developers.

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.)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1963-1964

Significant Dates
1963-1964

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Ernie Jacks, Architect
Clyde Cobb, 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 Oscar Chambers House, located at 3200 South Dallas Street, in Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance** for its importance as a good residential example of the Mid-Century Modern style of architecture. Built in 1963-1964, and designed by the architect Ernie Jacks, who had worked with Edward Durell Stone, the Oscar Chambers House represented a departure from the other homes in its neighborhood, which represent typical Ranch and Split-level designs of the 1960s and 1970s. Referred to as the Contemporary style in McAlester's ***A Field Guide to American Houses*** the Oscar Chambers House exhibits many of the characteristics of the style, including wide overhangs, contrasting wall materials and textures, and unusual window shapes and placements.

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

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

The first recorded white settlement in Sebastian County occurred with the establishment of the Fort Smith military post in 1817. Captain John Rogers is the first white settler recorded on the site of Fort Smith, having arrived shortly after the end of the War of 1812.[1] Although settlement in the Fort Smith area occurred in the early nineteenth century, settlement in other parts of the county did not occur until later in the 1800s. The creation of Sebastian County was approved by the General Assembly on January 10, 1851, and when the County Commissioners met at Jenny Lind in May 1851, they decided to locate the county seat on forty acres of land donated by Rueben Coker. They also decided to name the new seat of justice Greenwood.[2]

Though Sebastian County had been created by an act of the Arkansas General Assembly and signed by Governor John Seldon Roane on January 10, 1851, the permanent site of the county seat remained in contention both before and after the Civil War. The first courthouse, located near the geographical center of the county at Greenwood, was constructed in 1856-57 and was a two-story wood frame structure (prior to this, court was held in private residences). The county seat was moved to Fort Smith the following year, and returned to Greenwood two years later by majority vote of the county residents. In 1861, a compromise was reached by which the county would be divided into two judicial districts, with dual county seats located at both Greenwood and Fort Smith. This situation was reversed again in 1864, with Fort Smith again serving as the sole county seat, and restored again one year later. This exact sequence of events occurred again in 1868 and 1871, respectively, and was finally put to rest by the Constitutional Convention of

[1] ***History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas***, pp. 688-689.
[2] ***History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas***, pp. 696-698.

1874 which inserted into the new constitution a provision stipulating the division of the county into two judicial districts, with separate county courts, separate revenue, and separate fiscal responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the individual courts within each district.[3]

The origins of Fort Smith date back to the 1810s when Major William C. Bradford, Major Stephen H. Long and 82 riflemen set out from St. Louis to set up the fort. Although Bradford was taken ill at Arkansas Post, Long sailed up the Arkansas River and established the fort just before Christmas in 1817. Most of the garrison was moved west to Fort Gibson in 1824, but in the meantime, a few families settled in the vicinity of the fort. By 1829, a post office was established and John Rogers was the first postmaster.[4]

By 1842, when Fort Smith was incorporated by the State general assembly, the settlement had a population of almost 500 people. Throughout the nineteenth century, Fort Smith continued to grow, reaching a population of 964 in 1850. During the 1850s, the general assembly rechartered the community and a push was made to construct the Little Rock-Fort Smith highway. Transportation improved in Fort Smith in the late 1800s when the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad reached Fort Smith in 1879. In the early 1880s the St. Louis, Arkansas & Texas Railroad also reached Fort Smith, and the increased railroad transportation helped to spur on coal mining in the area. Factory development in Fort Smith increased in the first years of the twentieth century after several natural gas wells were drilled just south of the city in 1901.[5]

By the 1930s, Fort Smith continued to be an important city in the region. It was reported that:

> Although Fort Smith is the trading center of a large agricultural area, its principal income is from factories that normally employ about 5,000 workers and manufacture furniture, glass products, overalls, tents, scissors, brick, bedsprings, and other articles. Two smelters out Midland Boulevard refine zinc mined in southwest Missouri. Nearer downtown on the same thoroughfare are two glass factories, one producing flat glass and the other specializing in lamp chimneys, bottles, and similar small blown articles. Seven furniture factories, the largest group in Arkansas, line Factory Drive, reached from downtown by turning west on North I Street from North Second Street. Here workmen turn out furniture for every room in the average house.[6]

[3] Story, Kenneth. "Sebastian County Courthouse/Ft. Smith City Hall, Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1993.
[4] West, Elliott. ***The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas***. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication, p. 144.
[5] West, Elliott. ***The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas***. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication, pp. 145-147.
[6] West, Elliott. ***The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas***. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication, pp. 147-148.

Throughout the twentieth century, Fort Smith continued to expand to the south and east and several neighborhoods were platted throughout the century. The Druid Hills Estates Subdivision was one of the many subdivision added to the city, and it was platted on 6,300 acres of land that was owned by the Druid Hills Development Company, who had offices at 1622 North A Street in Fort Smith. The plat for the neighborhood was finished by April 1962, and the Engineer for the project was H. Lou Horne, Jr., of Dallas, Texas. Once the neighborhood was platted, development could begin and Oscar Chambers acquired Lots #29-32 of Block C of the development for the construction of a new house for his family.[7]

The house that Chambers had built was designed by architect Ernie Jacks. Jacks had graduated from the University of Arkansas in 1950, and initially worked for Edward Durell Stone, who had been an informal critic of the students in Jacks' class at the University. Jacks was involved with the design for the University of Arkansas Medical Center (now UAMS) in Little Rock. After spending sixteen months in the Navy, Jacks was released in San Diego. He was offered a job by Richard Neutra, although Jacks did not like Neutra, and ended up working with Craig Ellwood instead.[8]

Jacks later went to graduate school at the University of Oklahoma, where he worked with Bruce Goff, before coming back to Arkansas, ultimately managing the Arkansas office of Edward Durell Stone. Jacks also worked for Stone in Palo Alto, California, and New York City, before coming back to Arkansas to teach under John Williams at the University of Arkansas. Jacks became the Associate Dean of the Architecture program at the University of Arkansas before he retired in 1995.

It is unclear how Jacks landed the commission for the Chambers House, although it may have come about through Fay Jones who was completing some work in the Fort Smith area during the 1960s. The house that Jacks designed had to accommodate Chambers' large family and also fit into the slope of the site. Jacks designed a large house that incorporated lots of glass to foster interaction between the indoors and the outdoors. Jacks has indicated that the inspiration for the house came from his time working with Craig Ellwood and the work that was being done on some of the Case Study Houses in California. Jacks also indicated that the house is "small in scale" and "minimalist" in its design.[9]

The contract for the house was executed in the fall of 1962, and the design of the house was fleshed out during the winter of 1962 and 1963. Construction of the house began in 1963 and was completed the following year in 1964. The builder of the house was Clyde Cobb who lived in Oklahoma, but was well-known in the Fort Smith area for residential construction. In addition to the design for the house, Jacks also did a landscaping plan as well as furniture layouts for the house. The landscaping plan that Jacks designed was meant to enhance and soften the man-made architecture with natural architecture.

[7] Hartwig, Angela. ***Appraisal of Real Property Located at 3200 Dallas St., Fort Smith, AR 72903***. Fort Smith, AR: Burris Appraisal Co., 2015.
[8] Jacks, Ernie. Telephone conversation with the author. 11 January 2016.
[9] Jacks, Ernie. Telephone conversation with the author. 11 January 2016.

Jacks described Chambers as the ideal client to work for. Chambers gave instructions to Jacks on what he wanted, and then sent a check when work was done. Chambers was very hands-off during the process. The materials used for the house, including western red cedar siding and walnut trim, were top-notch materials.

The use of the Mid-Century Modern style for the Chambers House was not an unusual choice, since it was a style that was gaining popularity for modern buildings after World War II. The AIA reported in the early 1960s that a shift was occurring where people were starting to embrace modern architecture, especially for business buildings, but still even to a certain degree for homes. The book ***Mid-Century Architecture in America*** states:

> No sooner has America embraced the new architecture than it has blossomed out into richness and inventiveness that must, in retrospect, astound even its most daring prophets. Its stark, bare, and square austerity, largely a gesture of protest against over-decorative eclecticism, has given way to a less self-conscious expression.
>
> Taking up the fundamental tenets of the earlier "modern," a new modified modern with three basic characteristics has developed. These characteristics are:
>
> First, a totally new emphasis on the interior spaces of a building in terms of their usefulness, comfort, and beauty and their inter-relationship. In the past, rooms within a building were rigid compartments. Interior spaces are more flexible and sometimes can be divided at will. They open and flow into one another in a dynamic rather than static relationship.
>
> Second, there is a new indoor-outdoor relationship. The use (some complain the overuse) of glass has made it possible to bring nature's plants and greenery into the building, and extend the building out into nature. Planted plazas, interior courts, and terraces have brought nature even into our urban working environment.
>
> Third, our buildings appear lighter, often buoyant. Skyscrapers soar effortlessly into the air. Other buildings rest lightly on the ground as though to disturb it as little as possible. Even where they hug the earth and adapt to its contours, they avoid being massive and ponderous.[10]

The Chambers House reflects these characteristics of the style, especially the usefulness and inter-relationship of the interior spaces and the indoor-outdoor relationship, which is best manifested in the large sliding glass doors that span much of the east side of the house, allowing easy access to the terrace and courtyard. Furthermore, ***Mid-Century Architecture in America***

[10] Von Eckardt, Wolf. ***Mid-Century Architecture in America***. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961. pp. 21-22.

states that all of the AIA award-winning houses "…share an emphatic withdrawal from the bustle of the street and from ostentation as well." "If one word were to summarize the aspiration of American architecture at mid-century, that word would be 'liveability.'"[11]

The Chambers House also perfectly illustrates the description of the style in McAlester and McAlester's ***A Field Guide to American Houses***, which they call "contemporary." They describe the style by saying:

> This style was the favorite for architect-designed houses built during the period from about 1950 to 1970. It occurs in two distinctive subtypes based on roof shapes: flat or gabled. The flat-roofed subtype is a derivation of the earlier International Style and houses of this subtype are sometimes referred to as American International. They resemble the International in having flat roofs and no decorative detailing, but lack the stark white stucco wall surfaces, which are usually replaced by various combinations of wood, brick, or stone. Landscaping and integration into the landscape are also stressed, unlike the pristine white International house that was meant to be set upon the landscape as a piece of sculpture.
>
> The gabled subtype is more strongly influenced by the earlier modernism of the Craftsman and Prairie styles. It features overhanging eaves, frequently with exposed roof beams. Heavy piers may support gables. As in the flat-roofed subtypes, various combinations of wood, brick, and stone wall cladding are used and traditional detailing is absent. Both subtypes are most commonly one-story forms although two-story versions are not infrequent.[12]

After the home's completion, the Chambers Family only lived in the house a couple of years. Oscar Chambers was mainly an insurance man who owned companies that sold insurance to soldiers at Fort Chaffee. However, after only a few years, Chambers returned to Texas and donated the house to his church. However, the church only owned the house a short time before it was purchased by the Coffman family. The current owners bought the house in late 2015.[13]

The Chambers House really represents an outstanding of the Mid-Century Modern style of architecture in Fort Smith. The interrelation between indoors and outdoors, the lack of ornamentation, and the use of windows to allow privacy were hallmarks of the style. The house that Ernie Jacks designed really exhibits the characteristics of the style, and is an excellent example of the style.

[11] Von Eckardt, Wolf. ***Mid-Century Architecture in America***. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961. p. 22.
[12] McAlester, Virginia & Lee. ***A Field Guide to American Houses***. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1984, p. 482.
[13] Jacks, Ernie. Telephone conversation with the author. 11 January 2016.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

The design of the Oscar Chambers House is an excellent representation of the shift in residential design that was occurring across the country after World War II. The decorative pre-war revival styles, which were all the rage, were being pushed to the side by more functional and livable residential designs. Although some people after World War II still believed "that only shrunken colonial, Cape Cod ranches, or Cinderella homes properly represent the American way of life…a trend [had] now begun working the other way. …[It was] slowly becoming apparent to people that architects working with builders can give them better, more thoughtful design for their money."[14]

This post-World-War-II architecture moved away from an "over-decorative eclecticism to a less self-conscious expression." Expression, rather, was manifest through window placement and design, placement of the home in the landscape, and also through interior space arrangement. Also, the Mid-Century Modern style greatly espoused the relationship between the indoors and the outdoors (which was partly expressed through the window placement and design).

The style and its design also put more emphasis on privacy. Privacy played a role in the design, both on the exterior – large amounts of glass more often appeared on the rear of the property, making it private from the street – as well as on the interior. "The interior, too, emphasizes privacy for the members of the family from each other. The children's right to their noisy pursuits is recognized along with that of the parents ***not*** to hear Huckleberry Hound's televised antics."[15]

The Oscar Chambers House clearly reflects the design trends that were impacting residential architecture in the Mid-Century Modern style after World War II. The house lacks the applied ornamentation that was so often used prior to World War II, and uses window placement and a variety of materials to give visual interest and ornamentation. As McAlester and McAlester point out with respect to the style, the Oscar Chambers House has "no decorative detailing." Furthermore, it "lack[s] the stark white stucco wall surfaces, which are usually replaced by various combinations of wood, brick, or stone."[16]

The design of the Oscar Chambers House also reflects the increased relationship between the indoors and outdoors, as well as the issue of privacy in house design. The design of the Chambers House, with its sliding glass doors opening onto the courtyard, and large windows along the courtyard façades, encouraged residents and visitors to interact with the house's surroundings. The placement of the large windows away from the street also emphasized privacy for the house's occupants from the street.

Since the Oscar Chambers House is an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style designed by the Arkansas architect Ernie Jacks, it is being nominated to the National Register with **local significance** under **Criterion C**.

[14] Von Eckardt, Wolf. ***Mid-Century Architecture in America***. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961, p. 21.
[15] Von Eckardt, Wolf. ***Mid-Century Architecture in America***. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961, p. 22.
[16] McAlester, Virginia & Lee. ***A Field Guide to American Houses***. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1984, p. 482.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Von Eckardt, Wolf. ***Mid-Century Architecture in America***. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961.

West, Elliott. ***The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas***. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication.

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
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): SB1432

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 1 acre.

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:
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

[ ] NAD 1927 or [X] NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15	Easting: 372880	Northing: 3910361
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

Lots 29-32 of Block C of the Druid Hills Estates Subdivision. Parcel # 11996-0032-00003-00.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all of the land historically associated with the property.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
street & number: 323 Center Street, Suite 1500
city or town: Little Rock state: AR zip code: 72201
e-mail: ralph@arkansasheritage.org
telephone: (501) 324-9787
date: April 6, 2016

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 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: Chambers, Oscar, House

City or Vicinity: Fort Smith

County: Sebastian County State: Arkansas

Photographer: Callie Williams & Mason Toms

Date Photographed: August 18, 2015

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

1 of _27_. View of the den, looking northwest

2 of _27_. View of the dining room, looking northwest.

3 of _27_. View of the hallway next to the kitchen to the bedroom wing, looking south.

4 of _27_. View of the nook, looking east.

5 of _27_. View of the kitchen, looking south.

6 of _27_. View of the hallway in the bedroom wing, looking northeast.

7 of _27_. View of the balcony of the bedroom wing, looking east.

8 of _27_. View of the bathroom on the lower level with original Jacuzzi, looking south.

9 of _27_. View of the east and south façades of the den, looking northwest.

10 of _27_. View of the east façade of the courtyard area, looking west.

11 of _27_. View of the north and east façades of the bedroom wing, looking southwest.

12 of _27_. View of the south façade of the bedroom wing, looking northwest.

13 of _27_. View of the north and east façades of the playhouse, looking southwest.

14 of _27_. View of the interior of the playhouse.

15 of _27_. View of the south and west façades of the playhouse, looking northeast.

16 of _27_. View of the south and west façades of the bedroom wing, looking northeast.

17 of _27_. View of the west façade of the kitchen area and the patio with pergola, looking northeast.

18 of _27_. View of the west façade of the kitchen area and the north and west façades of the bedroom wing, looking southeast.

19 of _27_. View of the north and west façades of the living room area and the patio with pergola, looking southeast.

20 of _27_. North façade, looking south.

21 of _27_. North and east façades, looking southwest.

22 of _27_. West façades of the den and living room, looking southwest.

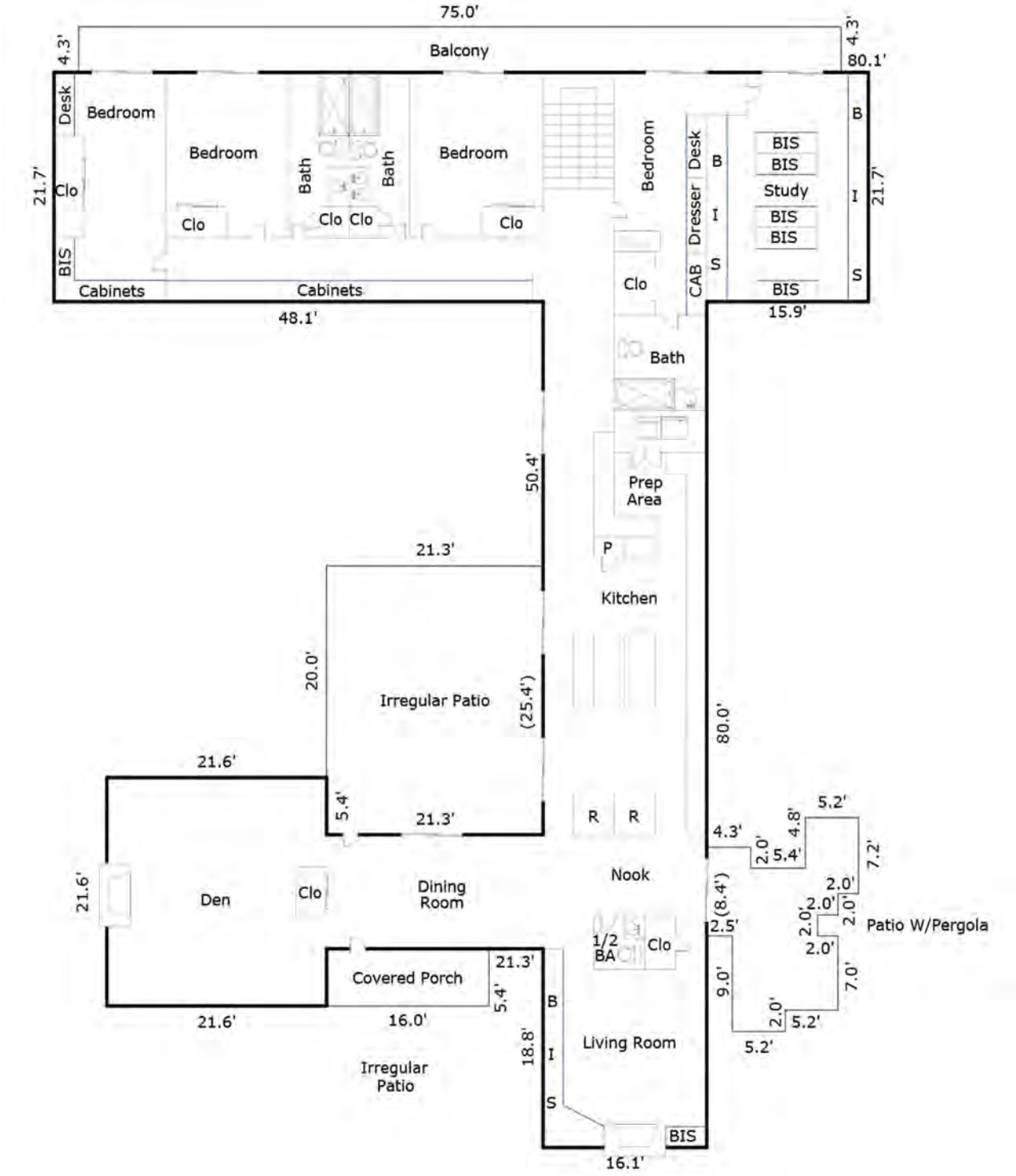
23 of _27_. Fireplace in the den, looking northwest.

24 of _27_. View of the living room, looking north.

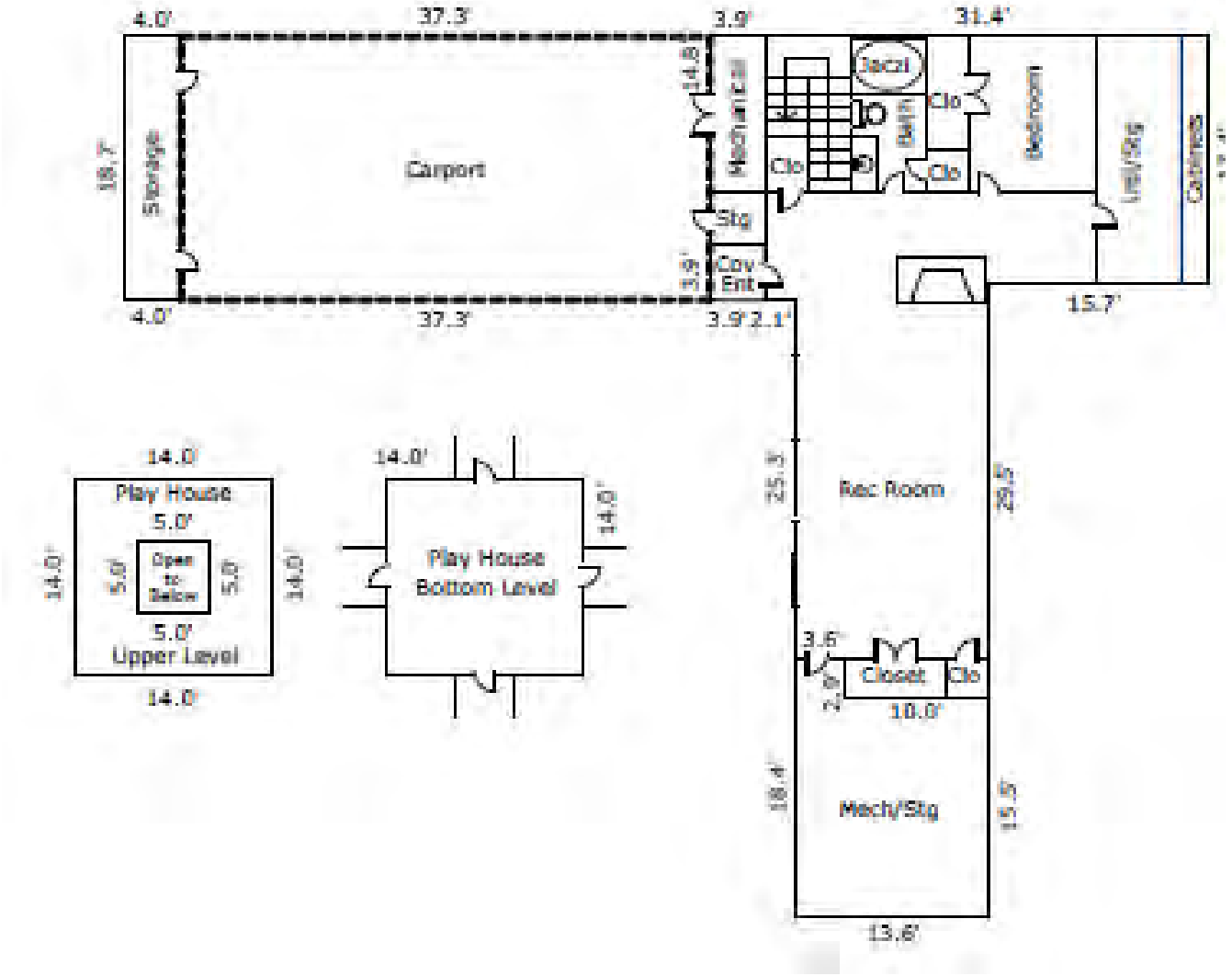
25 of _27_. View of the kitchen, looking southwest.

26 of _27_. View of the rec. room on the lower level, looking southwest.

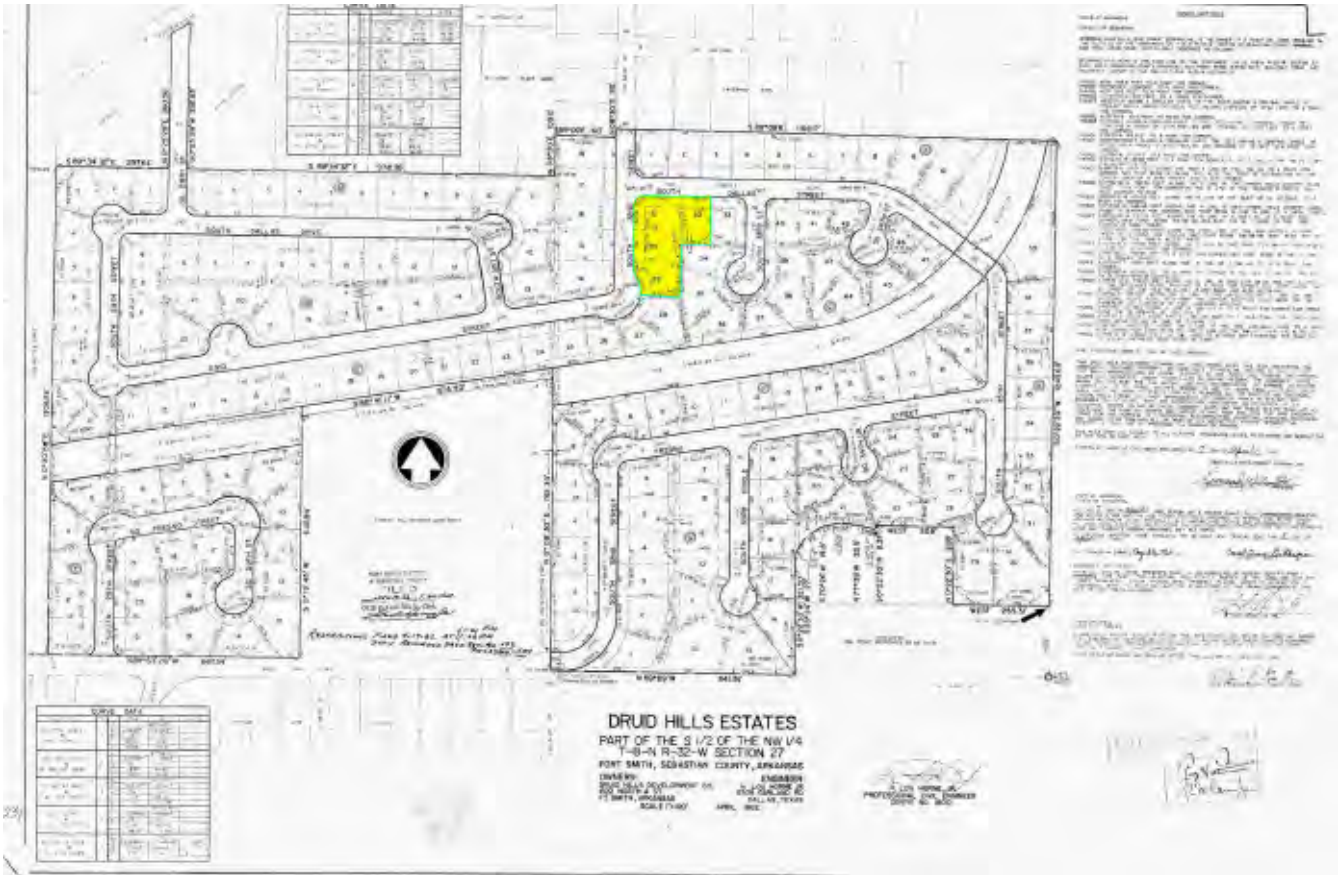
27 of _27_. View of the bedroom wing and carport, looking southwest.



Main floor plan of the Oscar Chambers House. (From: Hartwig, Angela. ***Appraisal of Real Property Located at 3200 Dallas St., Fort Smith, AR 72903***. Fort Smith, AR: Burris Appraisal Co., 2015.)



Lower level and Playhouse floor plans of the Oscar Chambers House. (From: Hartwig, Angela. ***Appraisal of Real Property Located at 3200 Dallas St., Fort Smith, AR 72903***. Fort Smith, AR: Burris Appraisal Co., 2015.)



Plat Map for Druid Hills Estates, indicating the location of the Oscar Chambers House. (From: Hartwig, Angela. ***Appraisal of Real Property Located at 3200 Dallas St., Fort Smith, AR 72903***. Fort Smith, AR: Burris Appraisal Co., 2015.)

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.).

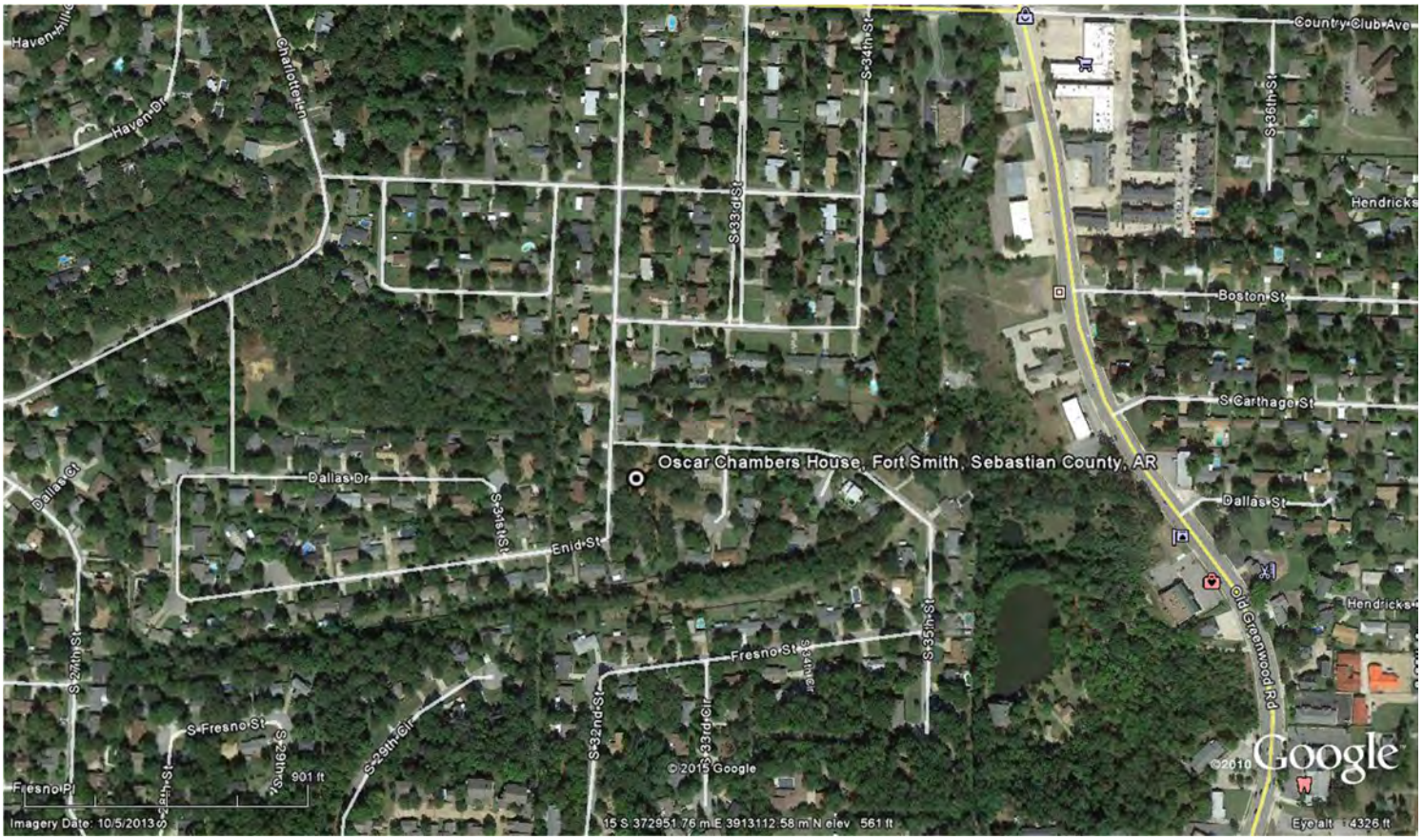
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

|----------180 feet----------|

Chambers, Oscar, House
Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas

15 372880E 3910361N

North



|----------901 feet---------|

Chambers, Oscar, House
Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas

15 372880E 3910361N

North

SUNBIRD

3200