

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Martin, Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret, House
other names/site number Clark House

2. Location

street & number 825 Kendall Drive NA not for publication
city or town Nashville NA vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Davidson code 37 zip code 37209

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 the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for 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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Richard H. ... 2/05/07
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other,
(explain:)

for Daniel J. Kilian Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 3/22/07

Martin, Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret, House
Name of Property

Davidson County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

LANDSCAPE/garden

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

LANDSCAPE/garden

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement: Wrightian

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE and CONCRETE

walls STONE and WOOD

roof METAL

other GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 who's components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations N/A

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1956-7

Significant Dates

1956-7

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Draper, Robert Bruce

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Martin, Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret, House
Name of Property

Davidson County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.04 Acres Nashville West

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>512161</u>	<u>3998595</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Scarlett C. Miles, Intern
organization Metropolitan Historical Commission date 10/02/2006
street & number 3000 Granny White Pike telephone 615-862-7970
city or town Nashville State TN zip code 37204

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Name John Richard Clark
street & number 825 Kendall Drive Telephone 615-823-1967
city or town Nashville State TN zip code 37209

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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Martin, Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret, House
Davidson County, Tennessee

Description

The Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret Martin House is located at Kendall Avenue in the west Nashville subdivision of Hillwood Estates. Situated on a gently sloping 1.04-acre lot and surrounded by trees, the 1956 house is an excellent example of the Modern Movement's Wrightian designs. In fact, Robert Bruce Draper, the architect who designed the house, studied with Frank Lloyd Wright. The two-story frame house has an irregular plan and is sheathed with brick and wide weatherboards. A multi-plane roof with a negligible slope and expansive use of glass reflect the modern styling of the house. An open floor plan, built-in storage spaces, and expansive fireplace are character-defining features of the interior. The Martin house retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

The grounds of the Martin house retain most of their original landscaping design. A stone wall, stacked by Dr. Martin and a helper, runs near the western elevation of the house and leads to stone stairs/terraces built into the yard at the northern corner of the home, beside the northeastern exterior wall of the carport. The driveway approach to the home remains intact and is a key feature in the design of the home and the property. The original paved drive runs across the front southern corner of the lot and leads into a carport on the northeastern elevation. Entrances to the Martin house are present from all elevations and from both levels of the house. The sloping front lawn is dotted with trees and the yard contains special varieties of day lilies and vinca greenery - hand-selected and planted by Mrs. Martin.¹ The setting is a contributing element.

In contrast to the Martin house, the neighborhood consists primarily of smaller mid-century traditional houses, many of which were once duplexes that now serve as single-family dwellings.² A few mid-century contemporary houses are also located on Kendall near the nominated house, presumably also intended as part of the "modern" neighborhood of Hillwood Estates.

The Richard Martin family purchased the lot in April 1956, and by August 1956 architect (Robert) Bruce Draper completed the design for the family's residence in the Hillwood Estates. The Martins took an active interest in the design of the house and requested some changes to the original plans. For example, Draper originally designed the carport alongside the master bedroom on the main level of the house.³ However, the Martins preferred to have the carport on the basement/lower level of the house. The Martins also altered the siting of the house upon the lot.⁴

The two-story house is covered in old growth redwood (cut vertically from the center of the log) siding and roman face brick. Raised patterns in the brick are an interesting detail. Nails used for the exterior and interior construction are exposed and appear as architectural details. The roof is metal and the foundation consists of standard footings and stone/concrete block. All of the windows and doorways have wood trim and framing. The roofline slopes up to the façade of the building, as is characteristic of Wright's designs.

¹ Margaret Martin interview by John Richard Clark, June 2006.

² Ibid.

³ Original architectural drawings in the possession of John Richard Clark.

⁴ Margaret Martin interview by John Richard Clark, June 2006. R. Bruce Draper by author, September 2006.

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The eaves are wide and overhanging. A unique feature to the exterior of the home is the inclusion of a wood doorstop into the brick wall at the exact level where the doorknob of the security door swings open to the exterior wall. Framing is Douglas fir.

The front or southeast façade has an irregular profile due to the cantilevered walkway, projecting block of the southern part of the second story, and wide overhanging eaves. The lower first level is sheathed in brick and pierced by several wood casement windows. A single leaf wood door is located at the juncture of the two blocks. A walkway with an open metal balustrade cantilevers over the first level and leads to an open stair that rises up to the second level entry. As on the first level, a single leaf entry is located at the juncture of the two blocks of the house; this is the primary entrance to the residence. Covered with wide redwood siding, the second level also has numerous wood casement windows. Second level corner windows, with no corner muntins, reflect the modern design influence seen throughout the house. The southern end of the façade is only one story and is the base for a screened-in porch and terrace on the southwest elevation.

The one story southwest elevation consists of wide redwood, brick foundation and terrace steps, and the screened-in porch. A corner casement window is seen here, as are three sets of double doors. The porch was designed as a screened porch and the screen panels are framed in redwood. While the slope of the roof is not evident from the southeast façade, it is noticeable on this elevation and the northeast elevation.

The northwest or rear elevation is only one story and is covered in wide redwood siding. Corner casement windows and a three-part window are visible here, as is the screened-in porch.

The northeast elevation is comprised of the carport, constructed of brick, on the lower level with the asphalt terrace above it. Siding on this elevation, which is two stories, is redwood. The brick exterior wall of the two-story fireplace is visible on this elevation, as are corner casement windows.

Out of the five Usonian floor plans, the Martin house most closely resembles the "polliwog" design. Characteristics of this plan found in the house include the presence of a central core for "public" use and a wing for more private functions. Many of the details in the house came about because the Martins took an active role in the construction. Dr. Martin completed most of the woodwork for the interior of the house, designing some decorative elements on his own, and completing much of the built-in furniture designed by Draper. Today, the rooms feature the original Honeywell tap lights and many doors in the house retain the original latch-style doorstops attached to the floor. Several lighting fixtures, such as the square, recessed lights within the ceiling molding, are also original. The interior features old growth redwood from Oregon and northern California. As with the exterior, elements were constructed out of single beams cut from the center of the log.

Located on the main level, the living room is entered through the principal door of the southeast façade. Within the exterior security door, the interior door is constructed of wood with a large ribbed glass panel. The front entry leads into a narrow hallway comprised of horizontal wood paneling. The living room opens off to the southwestern side of the hallway. The entry to the living room features a built-in clock, designed

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Martin, Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret, House
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by Dr. Martin, which continues to keep correct time.⁵ The northeastern wall of the living room consists almost completely of a floor to ceiling brick fireplace with a shallow brick mantel.

The angled roof is clearly visible in the ceilings in the house. The southern wall of the living room has mitered windows at both corners (northeast and southeast) with vertical paned windows located alongside the corner windows. The vertical windows open to the outside. A wood cornice wraps around the corner windows and features minimal decorative woodwork. A flat wood panel attached to the ceiling also defines the perimeter of the room and follows the line of the ceiling in shape and angle. Characteristic of Wright's designs, the living room has built-in seating in the southeastern corner of the room. The northern wall of the living room features a built-in bookshelf and cabinet/drawer unit, as well as a built-in speaker system with complete original speakers and wiring. At the top of this unit, a pergola-like, lattice-style structure extends along the northern wall of the living room, including over and across the pathway from the living room into the dining area. There is a recessed strip lighting that casts an amber-colored glow upon the ceiling. The northeastern corner of the built-in shelves and cabinetry also contains a built-in night-light. Floors in the living room are slate and extend into the dining room and kitchen. Originally, the floors were carpet (living and bedroom areas) and tile (kitchen).⁶ The slate floors were installed after the second owners purchased the home in 2000. The casement windows in this room also feature pull-down roll-screens that are built-in to the window frame. These window screens are fully functioning. Architectural drawings state that the screens were to be deluxe Pella Rolscreens by the Rolscreen Co., Pella, Iowa.⁷

The dining room is located on the southwestern side of the home. As is characteristic of organic architecture, the living room and dining rooms are open to each other and are not separated by visual or physical barriers. A screened-in porch opens off of the dining room and is accessible by three sets of single-paned glass double-doors. The southern wall of the porch opens with full-length sliding screens onto a small brick terrace. The terrace features a low brick wall with a built-in brick planter. A small brick stairway leads from the southern side of the terrace out into the property.

The northeastern wall of the dining room opens into the galley kitchen. A sliding wood door separates the kitchen from the dining room when needed. The southern side of the passage features a built-in cabinet (closed with a single folding, louvered door) above a set of drawers. The drawers have stone drawer pulls. These drawers also contain slots for easy utensil organization. The northern side of the entry features pass-through shelves, which open through to the kitchen above a set of closed-back shelves. According to the present owners, the kitchen was remodeled with updated appliances around 2002 (prior to their purchase of the home). Despite the installation of modern appliances, the kitchen retains the original galley design.

⁵ Margaret Martin interview by John Richard Clark, June 2006.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Original architectural drawings in the possession of John Richard Clark. The screens are reported by the current owner to be the first of their kind produced by the Pella company, according to his conversations with Pella Corporation. They reportedly pre-date model numbers for window screens of this type. Also, according to the owner, the house never had radiant heat as many Wright houses had.

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Above the sink, located on the northwestern wall of the kitchen, a square-paned window flanked on either side by vertical rectangular windows looks out upon the northwestern portion of the property.

The northeastern end of the galley kitchen opens into the entry hallway. This end also features a pantry enclosed by double folding, louvered doors of wood panels with stone pulls. A small closet is contained in the southwestern wall of the hallway, between the northern wall of the living room and the southern wall of the kitchen. At the end of the entry hallway, a door leading to the outside is located on the southwestern wall, while the hallway angles right (to the north) toward the sleeping quarters.

As is typical of Wright's designs, the bedrooms in the Martin house are modest in size. Located at the eastern end of the home, the master bedroom has an exit that leads out onto the asphalt terrace above the carport. Within the master bedroom, there is a mitered window on the southeastern corner with a built-in cornice above. In the center of the ceiling hangs a large square light fixture that is divided into four smaller squares by a wood grid. The master bathroom is accessible from the central hallway and also from the master bedroom. From the master bedroom, one enters into a room that contains a sink and "shub" (smaller scale combination shower and tub) all retaining original tile. The cabinetry in this room is original and features stone drawer pulls and wood paneling that wraps around the perimeter of the ceiling and is set in from the wall, in similar fashion to the other rooms in the home. A vertical window of frosted glass helps to illuminate the room. The floor is tiled in travertine stone, imported from Florence, Italy. Dr. Martin used the remnants of this stone to fashion drawer pulls for most of the built-in furniture in the home, particularly in the dining room and bathrooms.⁸ A door separates the two portions of the bathroom, while a frosted pane window allows light to pass through. The second room features a toilet and sink/cabinet, and is accessible from the main hallway. The mirrors in both portions of the bathroom feature built-in shelving, recessed lighting, and vanity lighting encased in a wood box. All woodwork was completed in wormy chestnut.⁹ Two additional bedrooms are located on the northwestern projection of the main level. The northern bedroom has a corner window in the northern corner and a vertical window on the northwestern wall. The southern bedroom has a corner window in the southern corner and a vertical window on the southwestern wall. Both windows have paneling around the perimeter of the ceiling, recessed square lighting, and drapery cornices. The angle of the roof is apparent in all three bedrooms. The bedrooms are carpeted.

The downstairs level is accessible by a stairway from the dining room, located between one built-in furniture piece and the backside of the northern wall of the living room. The staircase is an open staircase similar to that on the southeast façade. The flooring in this portion of the house is tile, and is not original. The living room area features an expansive brick fireplace wall on the northeastern side of the room. Within this brick wall is a small square firebox. A small brick ledge runs along the lower portion of the brick wall. The living room area has a coffered ceiling. As in many of the rooms on the main level, wood paneling is attached to the ceiling and runs around the perimeter of the room. The wall along the north side of the staircase and walls in the lower level hallway are constructed of horizontal wood panels. In addition to the living room

⁸ Margaret Martin interview by John Richard Clark, June 2006.

⁹ Ibid.

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area, the downstairs contains a spacious office, utility room (laundry, HVAC, etc.), bathroom, bedroom, and large workshop. The bathroom features the same wormy chestnut and travertine marble found in the upstairs bathroom. The bedroom was originally completed in wormy chestnut, but a previous owner removed this.¹⁰ The lower level also contained a mirrored room where the Martins' daughter could practice ballet.¹¹ The mirrors are no longer in the home. Outside entrances to the lower level are located within the workshop (leads to the carport) and in the hallway located behind the fireplace. Windows on the lower level are on the southeast façade and are a mixture of square single-pane windows and vertical paired windows of the same dimension as the square windows. The main level cantilevers over the lower level on the southeastern façade. On the southwestern elevation, the lower level is built into the hill.

Some renovations have been made throughout the years, most apparent in the modernization of appliances in the galley kitchen, roof repairs, and replacement of floor surfaces and some wall materials. The current owners have not made any changes to the home. The Martin house retains its architectural integrity.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

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Martin, Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret, House
Davidson County, Tennessee

Statement of Significance

Constructed between 1956-7 in a new subdivision in west Nashville, the Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret Martin House is being nominated to the National Register under criterion C for its local architectural significance. Designed by one of Frank Lloyd Wright's students, Robert Bruce Draper, the house reflects the organic or Usonian principles espoused by Wright. The use of corner windows, large windows, multi-plane roof, open floor plan, and natural materials all reflect the ideas of the post-World War II Modernist Movement. The contemporary style of the house clearly shows how Wright influenced Draper. The Martins worked with architect Draper and changed some house details to fit their needs. Built on a prominent lot in the new Hillwood Estates, the setting also contributes to the eligibility of the property.

Frank Lloyd Wright (1870-1959) is regarded as "America's most innovative, creative, and brilliant architect."¹² In 1932, Wright established the Taliesin Fellowship in Spring Green, Wisconsin, an apprenticeship program, where architecture students learned from Wright through practice. For these apprentice architects, "doing" architecture often involved working on the construction project for a contractor. Architects, Wright believed, needed to learn something about building as part of their training.¹³ In addition to working on various design projects with supervision by Wright or a senior apprentice, the students performed various duties in construction and maintenance around the Taliesin estate.

Robert Bruce Draper was born in 1927. He spent most of his childhood in Gainesboro in Jackson County, Tennessee, but moved to Detroit, Michigan after completing the eighth grade. He volunteered for the United States Navy in 1943 or 1944 and served as an aerographer on the U.S.S. Iowa for slightly over one year. After his discharge from the Navy, Draper was enrolled in the University of Chicago and planning a career in meteorology. As part of a requirement for a humanities course, Draper was touring around Chicago when he saw Wright's famous Robie House (1909) and the course of his life was forever changed. He asked his humanities professor if the architect who designed the Robie House was still practicing. Upon learning that Wright was indeed still practicing, in addition to training architects through the Taliesin Fellowship, Draper made the journey to Taliesin to ask for an opportunity to study with the famed Frank Lloyd Wright. His first project with Taliesin was a house in South Bend, Indiana. With Wright's permission, Draper went to South Bend to actually work on the construction as well. Other notable projects include work on Fallingwater (routine updates), Johnson's Wax Research Tower, and Florida Southern Auditorium. After two years as an apprentice (from about 1948-1950), Draper left Taliesin and went to work in Chicago for a firm called PACE Associates (Planners, Architects, and Consulting Engineers). One of Draper's assignments with PACE included creating construction documents (or "working drawings") for a design by Mies Van Der Rohe. After about one year, he started work for a firm called Barancic and Conte, also a mixed firm. Shortly thereafter, Draper moved to Nashville, Tennessee to continue his career as an architect. He still lives in Nashville.

¹² "Shavin, Seamour and Gerte, House." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. Section 8, Page 5.

¹³ Bruce Draper interview by Christine Kreyling and author, August 23, 2006.

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In Nashville, Draper joined the firm of Brush Hutchison and Gwinn. Later, Draper worked for the firm of Marr and Holman. He eventually opened his own firm. Between 1953 and 1974, Draper designed for only about fifteen residential properties, including some renovations. Most of his work was in commercial and institutional architecture, specifically schools. In his school designs, Draper combined innovative materials, such as Cor-Ten steel (which doesn't rust) and heavy chain downspouts, with educational trends, such as team teaching, into his pod-style designs. His work can be found across Davidson, Wilson, Robertson, and Putnam counties in Tennessee. Notable designs of Bruce Draper, in Nashville, Tennessee, include the First Unitarian Universalist Church (1963) located at 1808 Woodmont Boulevard. Draper considered his more important designs were for educational properties, rather than residential properties.¹⁴

Greatly influenced by the residential architecture that they had seen in California and Miami, Dr. and Mrs. Richard Martin knew that they wanted a "contemporary" style house of their own. While contemplating such a design, Dr. Martin learned about Bruce Draper and his training with the famed Frank Lloyd Wright. The Martins contacted Draper and commissioned him to design a house for them in west Nashville, near the Veterans Hospital where Dr. Martin worked as the chief psychologist. The Martins were living in the Brookside Court Apartments (housing for World War II veterans) near land that was quickly becoming subdivided into the Hillwood Estates. As part of Section 6 of the subdivision, the Martin house would eventually be the first house at the entry of Hillwood Estates on that particular side. Although the neighborhood was reportedly designed to be a community of contemporary residential designs, it appears that only a few of these contemporary homes were built at the time. The remainder of the neighborhood consists mainly of mid-century traditional homes. Thus, the Martin house brings a unique characteristic to the area.

During the latter part of his career, Frank Lloyd Wright's design philosophy focused on the development of the Usonian House. Wright conceived the Usonian House to be affordable and accessible to the average citizen. He wanted it to be easy to construct and simple to maintain, without sacrificing the quality and beauty of an architect-designed home. Usonian plans also responded to changes in family economics and roles and responsibilities between the Depression and the World War II. The open floor plans of Usonian Houses considered the homeowners' needs for simplification with maintaining cleanliness and routine upkeep of the home and reinforced the growing informality of the family home that was becoming more prevalent in the mid-twentieth century.

In order to bring these ideals to the citizenry, Wright's plans combined ideas about the simplicity of construction and innovations in modern technology (such as heating and cooling) with a belief in elimination of the unnecessary (e.g., materials, labor, space). While the designs also retained some distinctive characteristics of Wright's earlier career, such as built-in furniture, they remained true to Wright's attempts to simplify the life of the homeowner. For example, use of the same building materials on the exterior and the interior of the house satisfied Wright's desire to build organic architecture, yet also eliminated the need for paint.

¹⁴ Scarlett Miles, State Review Board meeting, January 24, 2007.

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Draper does see his work as an extension of the principles of Wright. He does not use the term “Usonian,” and does not recall Wright actually using that term during his training at Taliesin. Rather, Draper explains that Wright trained the apprentices in a process, not a style. Thus, Draper prefers to refer to his work as organic architecture, another term used by Wright. As Draper explains, organic architecture “develops from an idea.” He adds, “It’s a development and natural growth from defining the spaces, what’s going to be used in them, and figuring out what is the best way to do it.”¹⁵ Elimination of visual barriers, such as muntin bars in windows, helps eliminate the feeling of being in a confined space. Referring to the interior of the Martin house, he says, “The space just flows and you flow with it. There’s no barriers.”¹⁶ He also explains that there is no decoration, per se, with organic architecture. Unlike so many houses that simply consist of decorative elements applied to the openings on a box, with organic architecture, it is built and everything just fits; it’s the manner in which everything is put together.

The Martin house exemplifies many of the characteristics of the organic (Usonian) house. It is also an example of the clients exerting their wishes in the creation of their dream home. As a result of his training with Wright, Draper had very specific intentions for his plan of the Martin House. However, Dr. and Mrs. Martin also had specific wishes for their ideal home. In the story of the Martin House, the balance of give and take between architect and client is apparent. It also represents the maintenance of functionality, which was present in many other types of homes during that time (e.g. the ranch house), within an architect-designed residential property.

The two-story house, constructed of redwood and brick, is situated on its irregular pie-piece-shaped lot to take advantage of the slope of the land and the view of the wooded neighborhood. Nestled back into the corner of the lot, the house retains a feeling of privacy. An abstracted version of Wright’s “polliwog” plan, the house is shaped like a compact “S,” with the main living area and workspace in one branch connected by an interior hall to the bedroom branch. The living room, screen porch, and terraces extend in different directions outward above the lower level. These extensions help to connect the house and its interior spaces to the outdoors. The corner windows, in combination with the vertical casement windows, expand the view of the natural setting which surrounds the house.

Wright’s goal of incorporating nature, low-cost production, and high-quality building into the design of a house for a relaxed lifestyle is clearly visible in the house that Bruce Draper designed for Dr. and Mrs. Martin. The living area is open and expansive, yet secure and peaceful. The large fireplace is certainly a focal point in the living room and the large built-in furniture piece, with the expansive woodwork above, helps connect the living and dining areas.

One cost saving technique of Wright’s involved designing homes that allowed for natural heating and cooling through cross ventilation and radiant heat. Wright “oriented the Usonian Houses – as he did all his houses – so that each of their rooms would receive sun at appropriate times during the day.”¹⁷ Draper

¹⁵ Bruce Draper interview by Christine Kreyling and author, August 31, 2006.

¹⁶ Bruce Draper interview by author, September 22, 2006.

¹⁷ McCarter, 256.

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Martin, Dr. Richard and Mrs. Margaret, House
Davidson County, Tennessee

incorporated this technique into the design of the Martin House, as well. Although the Martins ultimately changed the siting of the house, the effects are still present. Enhanced by the cool shade from the trees on the lot, the casement windows and roll-screens allow the homeowners to rely on the breeze to cool the house when air conditioning isn't truly necessary. The roof of the Martin House slopes to allow water to run off adequately without the need for gutters or downspouts. The wide eaves of the roof also help to shade the home.

Wright sought to achieve organic architecture through the careful consideration of site and environment in designing a structure, carrying exterior materials through to the interior, and connecting the interior with the outdoors. Boundaries between the indoors and outdoors were dispelled through the use of glass walls (including panels of windows and doors) where solid walls were typically located and by providing open exterior areas (porches and patios) outside of the interior floor plan. Though the Martin House does not feature expansive walls of windows, those windows that are present in the home are positioned at the corners of the rooms, helping to broaden the view beyond the typically square box.

In organic Usonian houses, the floor plan was open, and the various living and work areas of the home were interconnected. Although these spaces are not combined into one open area, Draper incorporated the concept into the Martin House by leaving these areas free of barriers to promote continuous flow of activity. The kitchen is located behind the built-in bookcase in the living room and is still within hearing distance of the living area. The kitchen is modest and efficient, but a large window combination connects the cook with the outdoors.

Wright also created the feeling of expansive space within the Usonian Houses through the use of the sloping ceiling. Draper carried this technique through the entirety of the Martin House. The roof and ceiling in the rear of the house begins at a lower height at the kitchen and back bedrooms. It then opens up and beyond the windows on the façade of the house ending as wide overhanging eaves projecting over the outside walls. The ceilings in most rooms also feature wood paneling wrapped around the perimeter of the room.

The Martins selected that lot, Lot 73 in Section 6 of the subdivision, because they thought it would “appeal to a contemporary sort of style house.”¹⁸ While the lot does fit their organic or Usonian influenced house, other homebuilders did not follow their lead and the large majority of houses in the subdivision are traditional. The Martin's house is a fine example of the “non-traditional” designs promoted by Frank Lloyd Wright and his former student, Bruce Draper. There is only one Frank Lloyd Wright designed house in Tennessee, the National Register-listed Gertie and Seamour Shavin House in Chattanooga. As of this date, there has been no comprehensive survey in the county or state of this type of organic/Usonian design.

¹⁸ Margaret Martin by John Richard Clark, June 2006.

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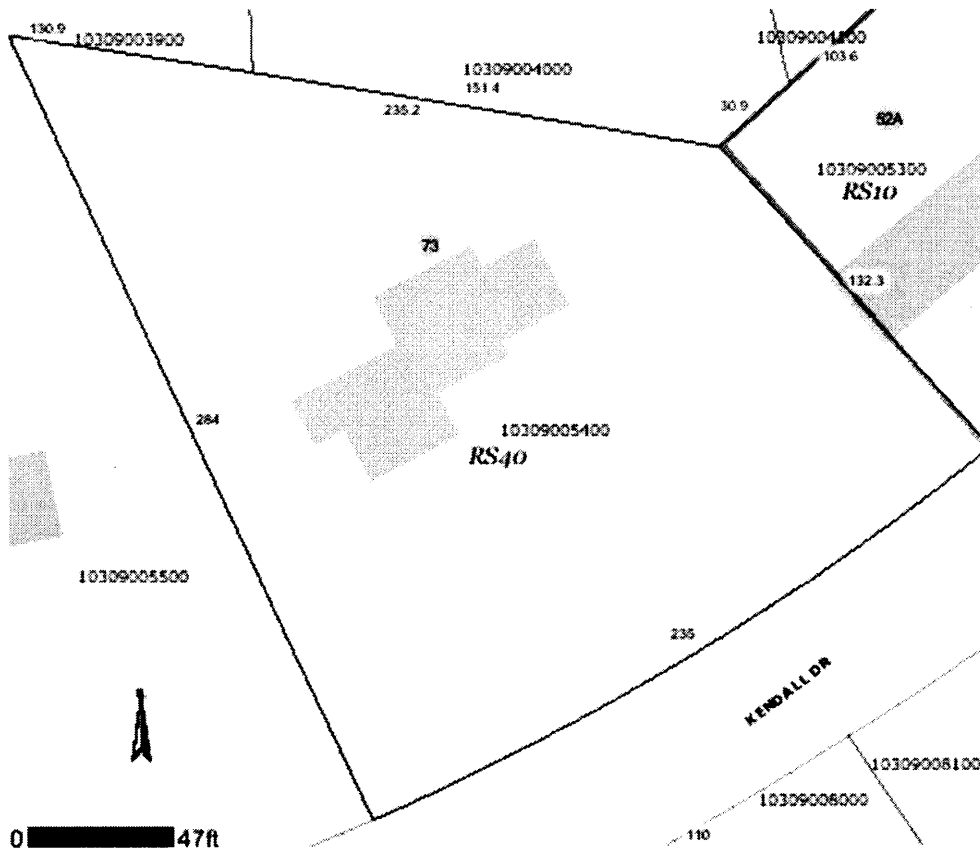
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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The boundary of the Martin House is shown on the attached Davidson County Property Map. It is parcel 10309005400.

The boundary includes all the land on which the Martin House is located.



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Photographs

Martin House
Kendall Drive
Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee
Photos By: Rick Clark
Date: December 2005, September 2006, and December 2006
CD: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

Architectural Drawing for Dr. R. F. Martin Residence by R. B. Draper, Architect, 9-7-56
#1 of 16

Facing northwest, southeast façade
#2 of 16

Facing northwest, southeast façade
#3 of 16

Facing west, view of house from east
#4 of 16

View of exterior staircase, facing west
#5 of 16

Facing southwest, northeast elevation
#6 of 16

Facing south, view of house from north
#7 of 16

Facing southeast, northwest elevation
#8 of 16

Facing northeast, southwest elevation
#9 of 16

Interior, living area; view of fireplace
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Built-in furniture, lighting, and clock; fireplace
#11 of 16

Built-in shelves, cabinetry
#12 of 16

Living area
#13 of 16

Living area, from dining room
#14 of 16

Southeast bedroom
#15 of 16

View of interior staircase, downstairs living area
#16 of 16