

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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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 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. 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 Curran, Charles & Mary Louise, House

Other names/site number Curran Apple Orchard Park

2. Location

street & number 4009 Curran Lane N/A not for publication

city or town University Place N/A vicinity

State Washington code WA county Pierce code 053 zip code 98466

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 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 ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
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 this 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

3.7.12

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not incl. previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
1	2	buildings
1		sites
	1	structures
	0	objects
3	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Functions or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE /
agricultural field**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

RECREATION AND CULTURE /
outdoor recreation**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD / plywood; CONCRETE; GLASS

roof SYNTHETICS / plastic

other BRICK; METAL / iron

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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CHARLES & MARY LOUISE CURRAN HOUSE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION SITE

Built in 1955, the house sits on the highpoint of a sloping parcel of just over seven acres in University Place. At the time of construction, the neighborhood of University Place belonged to unincorporated Pierce County. In 1994, University Place incorporated as a city of almost 8 square miles bordered by Puget Sound and the communities of Tacoma, Lakewood and Steilacoom. The Curran House and associated orchard now belong to the City of University Place and form the Curran Apple Orchard Park. Bordered by Curran Lane to the west, Rock Road to the southwest, Grandview Drive to the southeast, and 93rd Avenue to the northeast, the park also features two small storage buildings and an outdoor stage to the northeast of the house. Both the stage and the storage buildings are contemporary additions to the property.

The house's driveway is accessible from Curran Lane (formerly Ridge Road). The main door also fronts Curran Lane, but most of the window walls in the house face northwest and northeast, overlooking the apple orchard occupying most of the property. Originally, the Curran House provided approximately 1,550 square feet of living space for the Charles and Mary Louise Curran family.

The site features an altered, curvilinear planting bed outlined with brick adjacent to the front door. Other Price designed houses had rectangular planters.

EXTERIOR

A poured concrete foundation acts as the base for the L-shaped footprint of the house. The flat roofed, single story post-and-beam structure rises from a semi-finished basement level which is partially exposed due to the sloped site. Exterior walls are exposed concrete or clad with painted exterior grade hardboard panels on the basement level. On the main (upper) floor, exterior walls are clad with overlapping textured plywood sheets on most surfaces, with the exception of hardboard panels or new horizontal Hardyboard veneer below the smaller windows. Wide overhanging eaves and exposed beams add to the horizontal, anchored feel of the massing. The roofing is a relatively recent installation of single-ply membrane. Two skylights and a wide, low brick chimney perforate the house roof. A breezeway connects the house to a rectangular carport to the southwest. The carport sits on a finished concrete slab and is open at either end. Textured plywood forms the southwest side wall of the carport, and a wooden screen runs along the northeast side. Between the carport and the house, a tall cabinet provides storage space

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

SITE

Built in 1955, the Curran House sits on the highpoint of a sloping parcel of just over seven acres in University Place. At the time of construction, the neighborhood of University Place belonged to unincorporated Pierce County. In 1994, University Place incorporated as a city of almost eight square miles bordered by the Puget Sound and the communities of Tacoma, Lakewood and Steilacoom. The Curran House and associated orchard now belong to the City of University Place and form what is today called the Curran Apple Orchard Park. Bordered by Curran Lane to the west, Rock Road to the southwest, Grandview Drive to the southeast, and 93rd Avenue to the northeast, the park also features two small storage buildings and an outdoor stage to the northeast of the house. Both the stage and the storage buildings are contemporary non-contributing additions to the property.

The home's driveway is accessible from Curran Lane (formerly Ridge Road). The main door also fronts Curran Lane, but most of the window walls in the house face northwest and northeast, overlooking the apple orchard occupying most of the property. Originally, the Curran House provided approximately 1,550 square feet of living space for the Charles and Mary Louise Curran family.

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A poured concrete foundation acts as the base for the L-shaped footprint of the house. The flat roofed, single story post-and-beam structure rises from a semi-finished basement level which is partially exposed due to the sloped site. Exterior walls are exposed concrete or clad with painted exterior grade hardboard panels on the basement level. On the main (upper) floor, exterior walls are clad with overlapping textured plywood sheets on most surfaces, with the exception of hardboard panels or new horizontal Hardyboard veneer below the smaller windows. Wide overhanging eaves and exposed beams add to the horizontal, anchored feel of the massing. The roofing is a relatively recent installation of single-ply membrane. Two skylights and a wide, low brick chimney perforate the house roof. A breezeway connects the house to a rectangular carport to the southwest. The carport sits on a finished concrete slab and is open at either end. Textured plywood forms the southwest side wall of the carport, and a wooden screen runs along the northeast side. Between the carport and the house, a tall cabinet provides storage space

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under cover of the breezeway. The cabinet is sided with textured plywood sheets identical to those on the main house.

The breezeway, which is missing an original wooden screen at the kitchen patio, visually and physically leads to the formal front entry. However, with the missing screen, the breezeway is also open to the informal entry at the kitchen. Both entries face Curran Lane, but the kitchen entry is obscured from the street by the carport and storage cabinet. The formal front entry, however, is at a visual crux from the street. The front door sits in the corner of two intersecting, perpendicular sections of the house. Originally, the bright orange front door combined with intact, rectangular colored glass lites at the entryway further emphasized this public access point to the house by contrasting with the natural earth tones of the exposed beams and exterior walls. The exaggerated width and low mass of the brick chimney above adds to the visual focal point.

INTERIOR

The layout and programming of interior spaces consists of two distinct areas – the main floor and the basement. The basement consists of a finished family room with fireplace, an original bedroom, an added bathroom, and utilitarian, unfinished spaces. The main floor consists of the primary living spaces.

On the first floor, inside the front door, there is no defined vestibule. An open floor plan provides visual connection between primary main floor spaces, specifically the front entry, the living-dining area, and the kitchen. Large windows continue sightlines to the exterior, particularly in the living-dining area (north corner of main floor). While not as large, even the kitchen windows provide views to the southeast (across the breezeway) and across the property to the northwest.

Ahead and to the left of the front entry, the living-dining space is dominated by a free-standing brick fireplace. Open to both long sides and with an open pass-through firewood storage, this fireplace has a storage closet in the southeast east. Wrapped by a wide metal band, the cantilevered brick hearth stretches from the firebox to the wood storage slot. The fireplace wall rises through the ceiling and partially divides the space into the smaller dining and larger living spaces.

A wooden deck is reached through a wooden door in the northwest window wall, effectively extending the living-dining space to the exterior. At the time of construction, the Curran House sat alone, with no neighboring houses in view of the deck. Thus, the deck provided semi-private outdoor living space as well as a view. The deck's original railing has been replaced with a modern, less open version. From the example of other Robert B. Price designed houses, the deck railing likely had

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continuous upper and lower rails with widely spaced vertical cross members, forming horizontal rectangles. The deck has a trapezoidal plan, extending to an acute point at the north end. The wooden bench is an addition.

The kitchen-laundry area, which is accessed either from the informal entry door off the breezeway or through the dining room, provided space for food preparation and general household operations. A breakfast bar extends along a portion of the southeastern wall. The laundry space retains the original sink but is missing a washer and dryer.

Directly adjacent, the kitchen retains the original layout, including a U-shaped counter with drawers. Double-sided, pass-through hung cabinets are intact and, along with the counter, function as partial dividers from neighboring spaces. Original, elongated can light fixtures have been replaced.

To the right of the front entry, an open stairwell descends to the basement. A pair of green and blue light fixtures, suspended over the stairs, are original features. Beyond the stairwell, the main floor corridor extends to the southeast and provides access to three bedrooms and two bathrooms. While the bathrooms have no exterior windows, each has one skylight which allows for some natural lighting. The other main floor rooms all have exterior windows, including floor-to-ceiling glazing in the living-dining rooms.

Originally, the living-dining area and bedrooms all had deep brown asbestos floor tiles with muted speckles. Currently wall-to-wall carpeting overlays this tile in all but the fireplace closet. Kitchen flooring is a replacement roll type. Bathroom #1 also has recent flooring. Bathroom #2 has linoleum flooring which is consistent with the 1950's, and the same material forms the top layer of the built-in desks in bedrooms 1 and 2.

Walls on the main floor are comprised of gypsum board, a precursor to drywall. Interior doors are single leaf, hollow core types. Ceilings in the main floor spaces, with the exception of the bathrooms, consist of light stained wood decking supported by darker stained wood beams. The beams extend past the outer walls of the house, forming wide overhanging eaves. Bathroom ceilings are painted gypsum board interrupted by a nearly centered skylight.

Leading to the basement, the wooden stairs have been covered with contemporary carpeting and handrails have been added. At the bottom of the stairwell, a doorframe and door have been added recently, allowing the basement and main floor to be separated as needed.

On the basement level and to the left (northwest), the basement family room is the less public version of the main floor's living room. The fireplace from the main

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floor is repeated in this basement space, except the firebox is only open to one side. Again, there is a storage closet and an elevated hearth. The family room has exterior window walls and a door to the paved below-deck patio, connecting the room with the outdoors both visually and physically. Behind the fireplace, the furnace room and an unfinished, earthen floor room house the mechanical systems for the house.

Directly across from the bottom of the stairs is Bedroom #4, which belonged to Charles "Chuck" Jr. Windows stretch across the exterior wall, providing natural light to this space. Originally the room had built-in bunk beds, desk and a cork bulletin board. Finishes included gypsum board walls, and exposed dark stained wood beams in the ceiling. Portions of original baseboard trim are intact, but are now painted orange. The door features a similar orange color under added paint layers. Alterations include the addition of a plywood closet, new carpeting, and changes to the wall adjacent to the family room.

The bedroom, the corridor and the family room all have added wall-to-wall carpet. The basement layout is intact apart from the addition of a bathroom along the corridor between the stairs and the storage room. According to family members, the basement bathroom is a later addition, from a time when the family anticipated relatives to possibly move into the house. The relatives never moved in, but the bathroom was finished anyway. At the southeast end of the basement corridor, a large storage room features a band of windows in the northeast wall, a concrete floor and exposed, unfinished walls.

Despite some changes to finishes and the addition of walls to the basement area, the house retains a high level of integrity conveying its original design, and layout.

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.)

Property is:

- ☐ **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

1955

Significant Dates

1955

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation**Architect/Builder**

Price, Robert Billsbrough (Architect)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

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

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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 Engineering
- ☐ Record# _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Charles & Mary Louise Curran House is historically significant under criterion "C" as a property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of its period of construction, the 1950s, and represents the work of a master architect, Robert Billsbrough Price. The home, completed in 1955, was featured in a variety of advertisements for the Georgia-Pacific Company and was an early application of the newly developed Texture One-Eleven siding. Architect Robert Billsbrough Price, who at the time began to push the architecture envelope in the up-and-coming community of University Place, had strong connections to the rapidly developing and expanding plywood industry. The period of significance for the property begins and ends at the date of construction for the home, 1955.

The community of University Place and neighboring Narrows area of Tacoma was a relatively isolated area that did not draw many residents before the mid-20th century. However, in the early 1890s the area was chosen as the location for the recently established University of Puget Sound (at the time named Puget Sound University). The future looked bright. The school had purchased 420 acres for a new campus, but financial difficulties in 1893 forced the University to forfeit the land prior to establishing a campus and the University never made the move. The name however stuck, and the area continued to be known as University Place. For another 100+ years it remained an unincorporated rural part of Pierce County. (The City of University Place was officially formed on August 31, 1995)

Suburban development of the area would eventually come after the first Narrows Bridge, connecting west Tacoma with the Kitsap Peninsula, opened in July 1940. However just months later, in November 1940, the bridge collapsed. It took another ten years for a replacement bridge to be built stalling development in the area. Once completed, the bridge spurred a residential building boom in the immediate area north and south on the Tacoma side of the bridge. The Curran House was one such home.

At the time of construction, the setting for the nominated house featured woods and a growing apple orchard. The Curran family was looking for such a lot where they had easy access to transportation network, yet could enjoy the peacefulness of a larger lot where they could establish a small hobby farm and raise a family.

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Born in 1909 in Pratt, Kansas, Charles Curran, Sr. attended the College of Puget Sound along with his future wife. After graduation, Charles and Mary Louise Curran married in 1938. As did many people of their generation, they learned the value of frugality, self-sufficiency and resourcefulness from living through the Great Depression, traits that affected the location of their future home and the design of the dwelling. Charles worked as the secretary-treasurer for the Bakery Drivers & Salesmen Union until his retirement in the late 1970's. A lifelong Rotarian, Charles also belonged to the University Place School Board from 1947 - 1971. Charles passed away in 1998. Mary Louise is retired and lives in ____.

Once Charles and Mary Louise found a suitable lot, they began to look for an architect who could design them a modern home to meet the needs of their growing family. Among the several hundred residents of University Place in the early 1950's were architect Robert Billsbrough Price and his wife, Joan. The Prices had founded an architectural firm in Tacoma in 1949 and the Curran's became an early client.

Robert Billsbrough Price

Robert Billsbrough Price became perhaps one of the most prolific architects in the Tacoma area from the 1950s to the 1970s. Born April 13, 1915 in Tacoma, Price attended local schools and began his formal architectural training at the University of Washington in 1941. His schooling however was interrupted by WWII. Like many recruits who had architectural training, Price's skills were put to use in the construction field. He became the Public Works Officer for the U.S. Naval Training Center in Corpus Christ Texas, before being shipped overseas. Rising to the rank of Lieutenant, Price eventually served in England, Pearl Harbor, Australia, India and China (1942-1946).

Once the war was over, he returned to the University of Washington to continue his architectural studies, receiving a Bachelor's degree in Architecture in 1946. Wanting to further his studies, Price moved to Cambridge, MA and enrolled in the master's of architecture program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. At the time the school was a one of leaders in introducing modernism to a new generation of students. Learning under the tutelage of instructors like Alvar Aalto and Gyorgy Kepes, this avant-garde education had a profound influence on Price.

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Upon graduation in 1948, Price returned to Tacoma and gained practical experience by working for architect James C. Gardiner. After acquiring his state architectural license he opened his own independent practice in 1949. Commissions quickly flooded the office, which by 1956 had grown to six design professionals. The office included Price's wife, Joan, who was also a licensed architect and was responsible for many of the interior designs of the firm's projects. In 1956, the firm and Price, who by then was age 41, were featured in Progressive Architecture magazine. The magazine noted that the firm was the youngest firm to date to have been featured by the publication, a notable achievement.

Price's work spanned a variety of building types from single family homes, to banks and public buildings. He specialized in educational projects and designed a number of schools in the Puget Sound area from the late 1950s through the 1970s. These included Sherman Elementary School in Tacoma (1954); John S. Baker Junior High School in Tacoma (1955); George R. Curtis Junior High School in University Place (1957); Puyallup Jr. High School (c. 1959); Mount Tahoma High School in Tacoma (1961); Aberdeen Senior High School (c 1960); Olson Physical Education Building at Pacific Lutheran University (1969); and the Recreation Pavilion at Evergreen State College in Olympia (1973).

Other projects included the Church of Christian Science in Olympia (1950); Ginkgo Petrified Forest Museum (1956); the Harbine Monroe House in Gig Harbor (1958); Sky Terrace Apartments (1961) in Tacoma; the World of Commerce & Industry Building at the Century 21 Exposition (1962); Temple Beth El (1968); Tacoma Fire Station No. 1 (1968); the Tacoma Bicentennial Pavilion (1976), the Tacoma Pierce County Family YMCA (1976); and several apartments for the Tacoma Housing Authority.

Price was active in a variety of community, social, and civic affairs. He was a member of the Tacoma Society of Architects, the Tacoma Art League, Allied Arts, the Washington and Southwest Washington Chapter of the AIA, and the Washington State Council of Architects. He also served as a member of the National Committee of AIA Department of Education and Research, and a member of the Tacoma Building Code Committee.

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During his prolific career, Price received 59 national, regional and local awards for design excellence. Among his award winning projects was the Tacoma Fire Station No. 17 (1955); the Joe Long Jr. House on American Lake (1956); Hoyt Elementary School in Tacoma (1958); and his own architectural office (1963). Many other projects were featured in a variety of magazines including Sunset, House & Garden and Architectural Record.

Such achievements led Price to become the first architect in Tacoma to be inducted in the AIA College of Fellows in 1966. Price continued working until the mid late 1970s when he retired. He passed away in Tacoma on September 10, 1981. His wife, Joan continued to work as an architect until her retirement in 1990. She passed away in 2005.

Early in his career, Price had an interest in using modern, affordable building materials, particularly plywood. While this was not unusual in the housing boom of the post-World War II era, the firm's location made it particularly valuable. The Douglas Fir Plywood Association was headquartered in Tacoma, and Price provided the Association with many designs, which they used in their marketing. He also supplied drawings and images of his work to the Georgia-Pacific Company who for a short-time was based in Olympia.

The practice Price founded grew quickly, due in part to the popularity of their designs, the close ties they built with the Tacoma Society of Architects and Tacoma Master Builders' Association (TMBA), and the firm's mindfulness of their clients. Their designs were the thoughtful, organized, and comfortable with intelligent site planning. In one article, Price denied following any one particular school of thought. In his words, *"to become simply a disciple of one of the 'greats' has no merit, much as I may admire and appreciate his work."* Thus, Price emphasized one of the tenets of American modernism – namely, the rejection of historic precedents.

While Price's firm completed numerous custom house designs for the more affluent clients, he also provided "middle-class" house designs for a variety of builders and developers.

One of his earliest projects was a model home, the "Home of Ideas" (1101 N. Jackson), for the 2nd Annual Tacoma Home Show in 1950. Built to educate and

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inspire attendees on the emerging possibilities for contemporary residences, the house exhibited cutting edge ideas on modern house design and building materials. Floor-to-ceiling windows in the south and west walls allowed for extensive natural light as well as linking the interior and exterior. A brick "fireplace wall" occupied one half of the living room's gable end wall and was noted as a special feature of the design. The fireplace had an elevated hearth and a simple rectangular firebox opening, similar to the Curran House fireplaces. Ceilings and some interior walls were of cedar while the living room floor featured pecan wood in a parquet pattern.

Materials and labor for the construction of the home came from member firms and individuals of the Tacoma Master Builders' Association. The week-long exhibition drew hundreds of visitors from at least six states and tours of the "Home of Ideas" were extended beyond the end of the home show due to popular demand.

For the next several years Price continued to provide model home designs for the Tacoma Housing Association and other builders. Among the notable designs is the TX101 model home (1802 N. Shirley Street) for the Tacoma Master Builders Association in 1954, and the 1959 "Calypso" model house for the Glenwood Acres subdivision in Lakewood, referred to by Price as the TX102 model.

The TX101 name is a shortened version of "Tacoma Experiment—Year of the Washington State Centennial Plus One." In order to appeal to the target audience of young married couples with two children, Price was asked to keep the building costs low, the details simple, and use standard building materials so the houses *"could be sold competitively with the typical Speculative Builder's house of the area."* At the time, the TX101 house achieved these goals. According to Price's firm, *"The finished product accomplished these two results. It showed the public that good contemporary design could be had for the same or less money, and it showed our builders that a well planned and detailed house could be constructed economically and sold competitively. The house sold two weeks after completion for \$17,500, [which] included the property, the house (1,550 sq. ft.), appliances, patio and paving, fences, lawn and planting."*

The 1959 Calypso model home is a striking modern dwelling which offered no windows to the street and little landscaping in the front yard. Instead, the flat roof residence was oriented towards the fully landscaped backyard. Published in a variety

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of home magazines for the next seven years, the house was the 1959 honor award winner for the AIA-Sunset Western Home Award contest.

Residential Design Evolution

Price was one of the first to utilize the emerging modern "Pacific Northwest Contemporary" style in the Tacoma area.

The Modern Movement began in Europe in the 1920s as an optimistic belief that science and the new technologies of industrialization would produce a genuine "modern age" architecture of universal principles. Much of this revolutionary philosophy emanated from a core group of young designers and artists in Europe such as Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier.

The evolution of Modern architecture began with the "International Style," a term coined in 1932 by an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The influential exhibition highlighted aspects of European architecture of the 1920s which represented a new direction and attitude towards architectural form. The first principle, "Architecture as Volume," dealt with the creation of space by floors of a columnar structure, which allowed for flexibility in plan. The second principle, concerning regularity rather than axuality, stemmed from the structural ordering of the building. The third principle mandated the avoidance of applied decoration, which was seen as an attempt to eliminate superficiality.

Despite the exhibition and recognition by the architectural community in the United States, these new design principles were limited by lingering provincial tastes and the debilitating impacts of the Depression. However, in the years following World War II, Modern architecture in the United States became a widespread ideological approach. Unprecedented economic prosperity, combined with a renewed availability of materials, new construction methods, and technical innovations, sparked a building boom across America, and Modern design reigned supreme. True to the origins of the Modern Movement, many mid-century architectural achievements were often experimental in their goal, using design to change the environment of everyday life, the Curran House is one such example.¹

¹ Modernism 101, DOCOMOMOWEWA, <http://www.docomomo-wewa.org/modernism.php>. Accessed 2 April, 2010.

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Such features included skylights. In the Curran House, both main floor bathrooms have skylights, although they have a lesser degree of finish than expected. Price favored the use of extensive glazing both for natural lighting and for making interior spaces feel larger, continuous with the natural setting. The structural post-and-beam system usually employed in his houses allow for large expanses of fixed single pane windows, or window walls.

Carports are another feature of mid-century houses in the Northwest, not just in Price residences. The popularity of carports was due in part to the rapid increase in private automobile ownership after World War II. The traditional enclosed garage, deemed unnecessary due to the region's mild winters (west of the Cascade Range), underwent similar modernist redesigns as houses. According to Price's archives, the TX101's carport serves a practical as well as aesthetic role. That is, a carport "permits the convenience of entering or loading the car while under cover." To balance the loss of an enclosed garage, a "convenient storage area is provided at the end of the car shelter. The carport screen wall is perforated to add both light and texture." The Curran House has a similar storage area between the carport and the house, and the carport screen wall is intact. The breezeway connecting the house and the carport extends the above mentioned shelter against the typical rain of the Pacific Northwest.

A signature aspect of Price's single family homes of the 1950's is the connection between the kitchen and the living-dining area. According to archives of the Price firm, the kitchen functioned as the "heart of the plan," from where "the housewife mother can watch the children in the patio, ... serve indoor and outdoor meals with a minimum of steps, visit with guests in the living-dining area even when preparing or serving dinner, and enjoy the outdoor view..." When compared with residences of that period, the open floor plan became increasingly common but mostly in architect designed houses. Ranch Style house designs published in the 1950's still retain garages and a more traditional, divided floor plan.

The Curran House also featured an innovative building material: Texture One-Eleven siding, better known today as T-1-11 siding. It was introduced to the American consumer market in 1954; and the Curran House and other Price designs were featured in a variety of early advertisements for the material.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

CHARLES & MARY LOUISE CURRAN HOUSE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 8 of 9

The manufacture of plywood began in 1905 when a sheet was put on display as a curiosity item at the Lewis & Clark Exposition in Portland, OR. Seeing the utility of the new material it was first used for vegetable crates, and was soon taken up by door manufactures. After WWI, plywood was sold for other uses, but door manufactures were still the chief supply of the material.

In the 1920s plywood was discovered by the automobile industry and was used extensively as floor boards and interior paneling. To keep up with the demand, many plants ran 24 hrs a day. However, growth of the industry was about to occur ten-fold. Stories persist that in 1928 Don Davis, a plywood distributor, came up with the idea to market plywood as a wall material. While visiting a summer cottage Davis noticed buckling paper-board on a wall of a cabin and decided that plywood could be sold to the housing market. He contacted Ed Westman of Washington Veneer Co. in Olympia, WA who jumped on the idea of producing a panel specifically for wall use. Through Davis' strenuous promotional efforts, hundreds of thousands of samples of fir plywood were sent to builders and architects, and Washington Veneer started to receive orders for 1/4" thick 4'x8' sheets wallboard in carload lots. An industry was born.

Slightly hampering the effort however was the lack of a waterproof glue, which would allow the use of the material in an exterior application. In 1933 a research program was started to find waterproof glues that would allow exterior grades of fir plywood. In 1935 a glue was discovered that would work and exterior use of plywood became possible. Other innovations followed and the industry's trade association, the Douglas Fir Plywood Association was organized in Tacoma. The same year saw the adoption of the first commercial standards for fir plywood. In 1938 the joint industry grade-trademark "plyscord" was introduced. By the 1955 the industry had grown to 100 plants, producing over 4 billion board feet of plywood annually. New types of plywood appeared overnight during the early 1950s. These included WedgeWood (a textured plywood by Georgia Pacific); T & G plywood (which allowed for easy connections), exotic wood plywood, plastic faced plywood, brushed plywood, striated plywood, and embossed plywood.

It was during this era of innovation that Texture One-Eleven siding was developed. It was a design formulation that was made by the Douglas Fir Plywood Association

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

CHARLES & MARY LOUISE CURRAN HOUSE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 9 of 9

who was awarded a patent (No. 71642271) on November 24, 1953. The design quickly came to the market and was sold by a number of manufacturer's as "*An exciting new panel material, combining line and texture.*" It was marketed as split-proof and puncture-proof and made with 100% waterproof glue immune to water, weather, heat or cold. Other advertisements noted that its was "*easily applied and its shiplap edges permit continuity of groove pattern without evidence of joints.*"

The Georgia Pacific Co. heavily marketed with the new Texture One-Eleven siding style in combination with their GPX plywood, which was an exterior grade plywood with a resin fiber face. Their multi-page ad in American Builder magazine National Association of Home Builder Conference Issue featured the Curran House and other Price designs.

Conclusion

The Curran House combined the best of Robert Billsbrough Price's model house designs and exhibited special traits seen in some of his custom built residences. And while the Currans did not fit the typical client profile for the speculative builder houses of the era (young couples with two young children), nor did they belong to the affluent class, the home serves as an excellent reminder to the design thoughts and philosophies of the mid-century modern architects during the 1950s. The Currans were a middle-class family, interested in developing their property into a small urban fruit farm. They had three children (ages 4 to 16 in 1955), chickens, one or two beef cattle and at least two horses. With the apple orchard already partially in place, the new house was destined to be a modern farmhouse. For example, the unfinished basement space served as storage for the apple harvest and Charles Curran, Sr. sold apples from the carport. Mrs. Curran kept a large vegetable garden west of the carport. Apricot and cherry trees provided other types of fruit for household consumption.

The Currans' appreciation for efficiency matched well with Price's design philosophy of using the latest building technologies to create an affordable modern dwelling as evidenced by the use of Texture One-Eleven siding. The home showed the American consumer what the possibilities were, and what form new modern dwelling might take.

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National Park Service

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CHARLES & MARY LOUISE CURRAN HOUSE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 9 Page 1 of 3

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CHARLES & MARY LOUISE CURRAN HOUSE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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National Park Service

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PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 9 Page 3 of 3

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10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property** 7.33 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

1	<table border="1"><tr><td>10</td></tr></table> Zone	10	<table border="1"><tr><td>5</td><td>33</td><td>310</td></tr></table> Easting	5	33	310	<table border="1"><tr><td>52</td><td>29</td><td>798</td></tr></table> Northing	52	29	798	3	<table border="1"><tr><td>10</td></tr></table> Zone	10	<table border="1"><tr><td>5</td><td>33</td><td>316</td></tr></table> Easting	5	33	316	<table border="1"><tr><td>52</td><td>29</td><td>510</td></tr></table> Northing	52	29	510
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5	33	198																			
52	29	559																			

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See Continuation Sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Brett Santhuff & Karen Benveniste</u>	(edited by DAHP staff)
organization	<u>University Place Historical Society</u>	date <u>June 2011</u>
street & number	<u>4622 Wayneworth St. West</u>	telephone <u>(253) 565-3211</u>
city or town	<u>Univeristy Place</u>	state <u>WA</u> zip code <u>98466</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

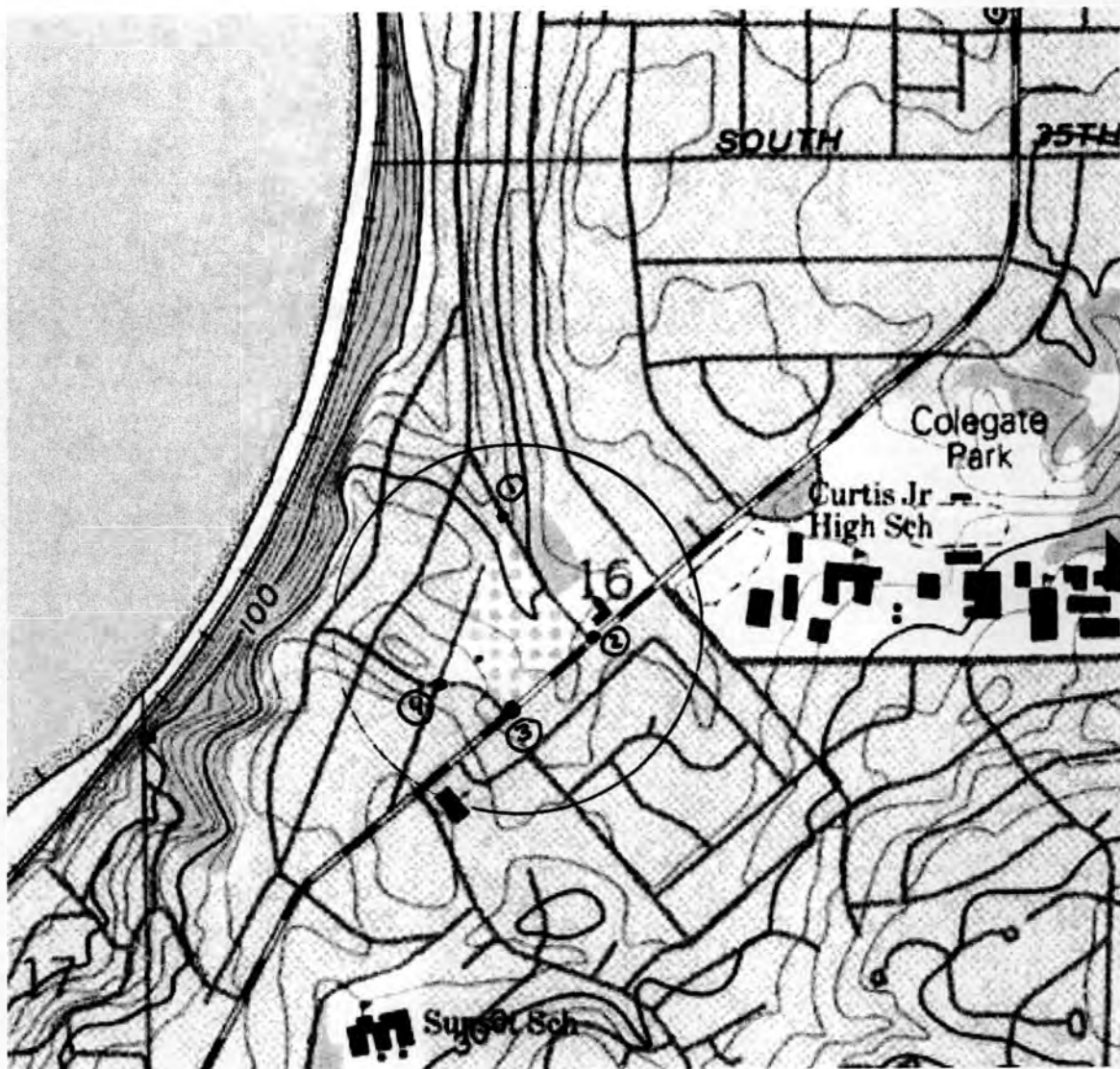
Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

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

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

name	<u>City of University Place</u>		
street & number	<u>3715 Bridgeport Way W #B</u>	telephone	<u>(253) 566-5656</u>
city or town	<u>University Place</u>	state	<u>WA</u> zip code <u>98466</u>

USGS Quad Map



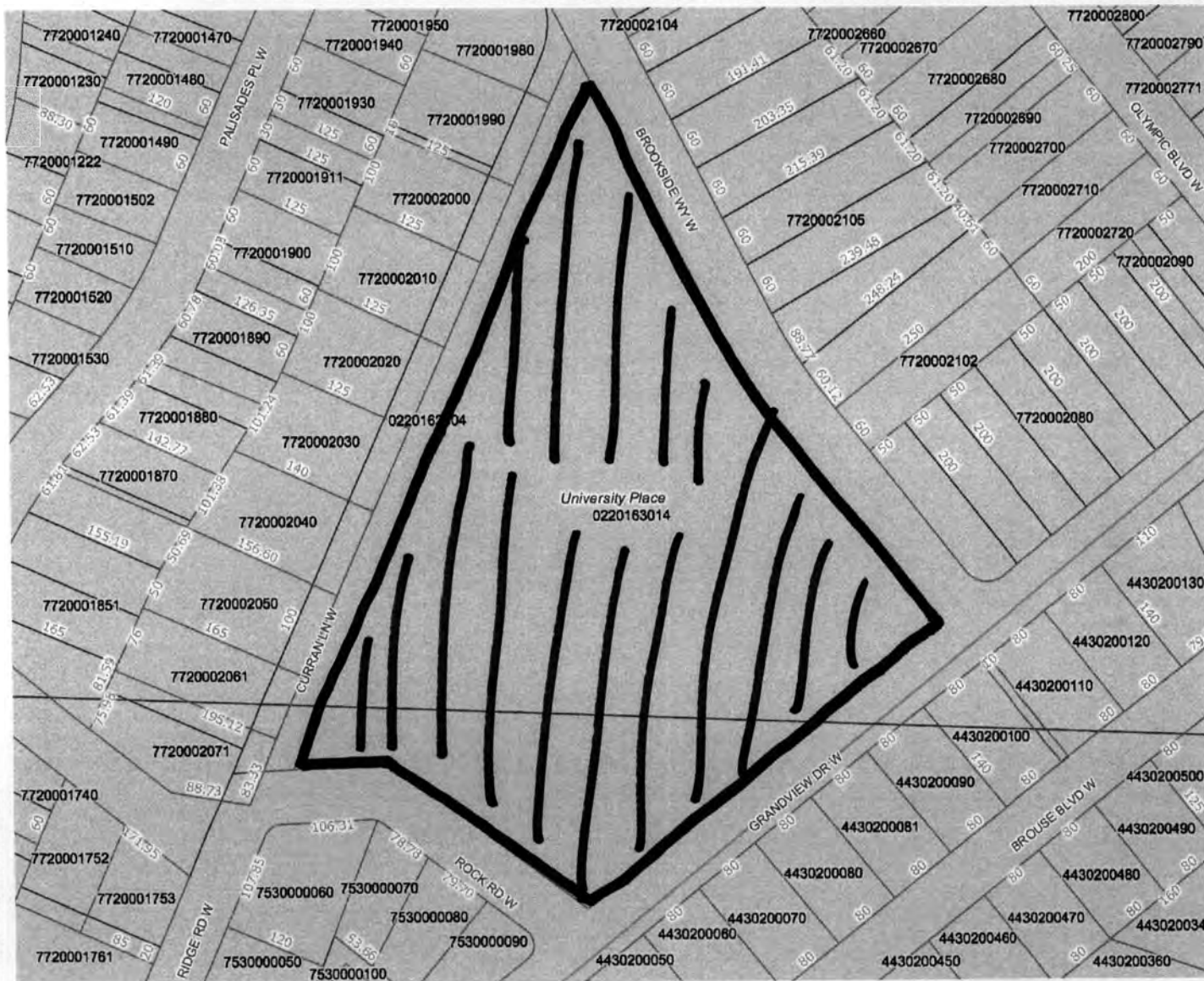
Charles & Mary Louise Curran House and Orchard

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| 1) 10 5-33-310E | 52-29-798N |
| 2) 10 5-33-444E | 52-29-625N |
| 3) 10 5-33-316E | 52-29-510N |
| 4) 10 5-33-198E | 52-29-559N |

Curran House | Site Map



0 55 110 220 330 440 Feet

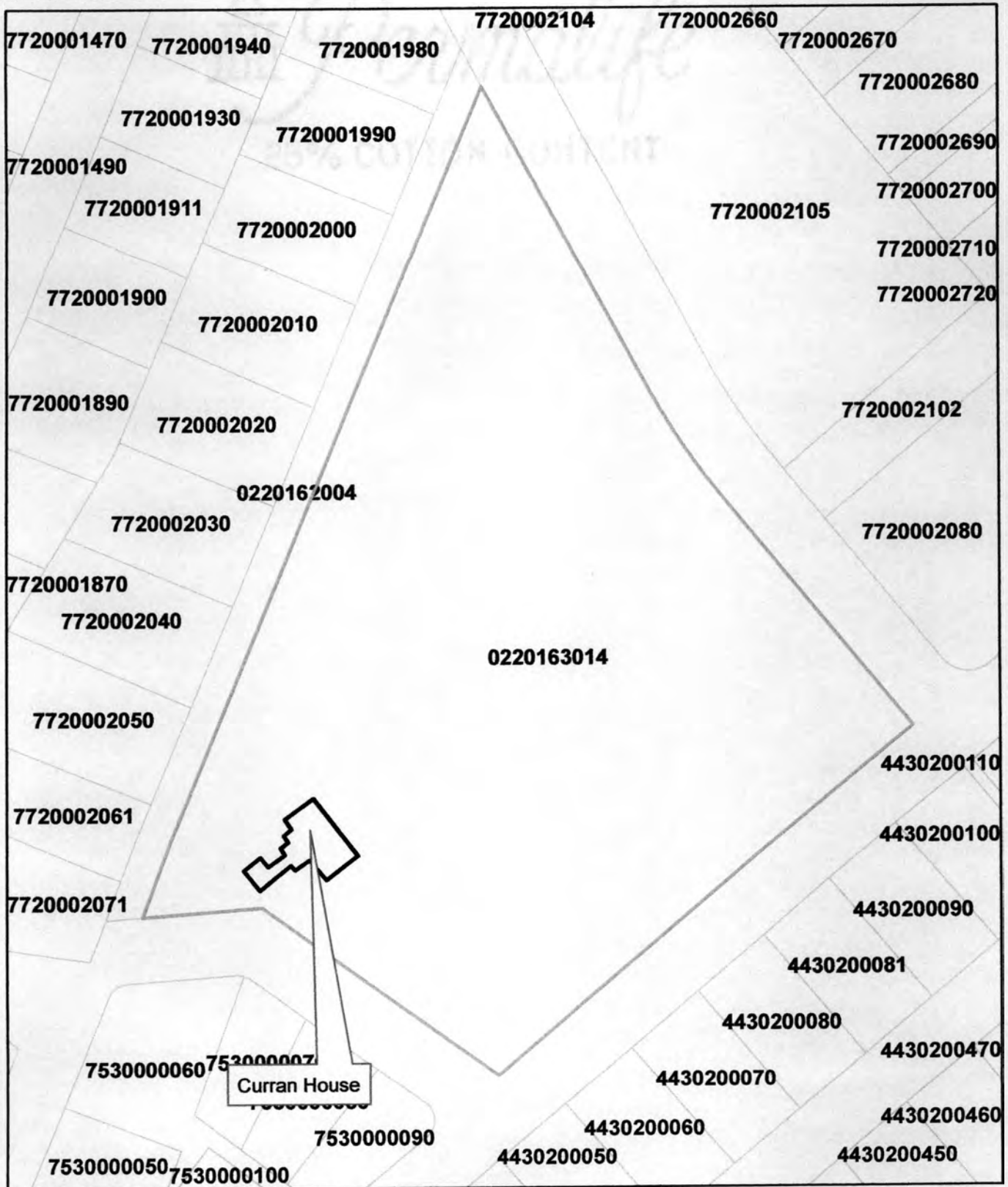


- Tax Parcels**
- Base Parcel
 - Condominium
 - Other
 - Boundary
 - Boundary Dimension Labels
- Roads**
- Interstate
 - Limited Access State Routes
 - Other State Routes
 - Ramps
 - Major Arterial
 - Collector
 - Local Access
- Pierce County Basemap**



Curran House | Parcel Map

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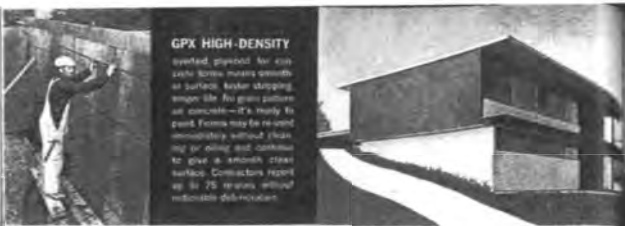


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Georgia Pacific Plywood Co. Advertisement
Practical Builder Magazine (NAHB Issue) – January 1960



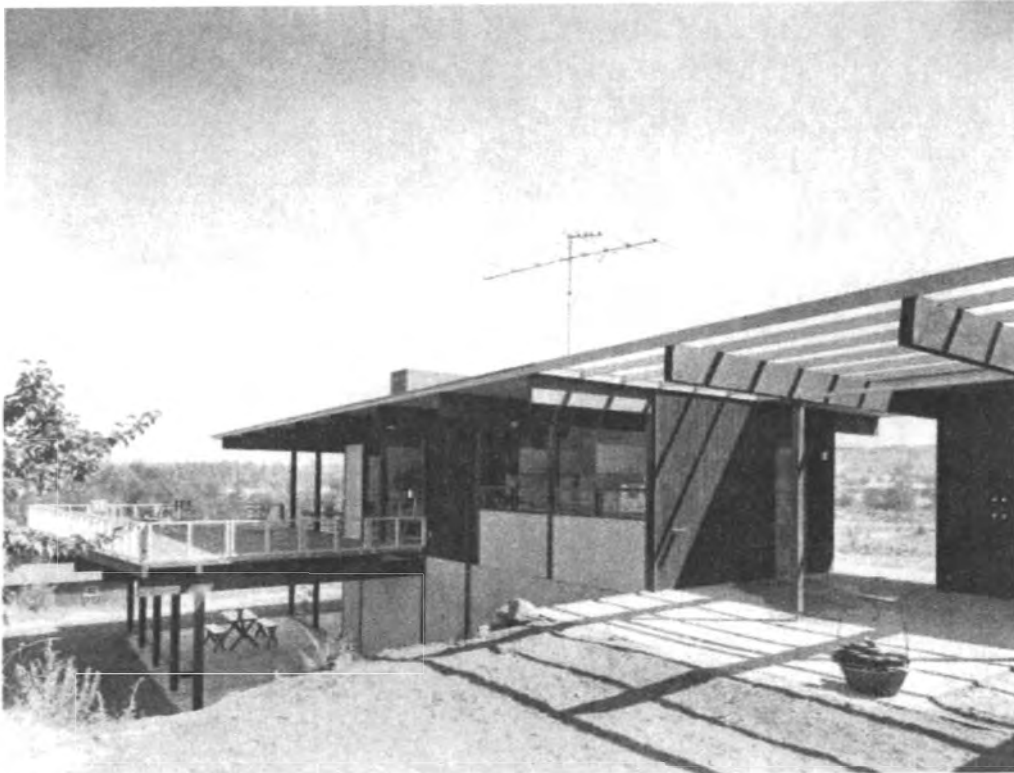
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Texture One-Eleven
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...the exciting new panel material that combines line and texture

Texture One-Eleven is a new type of siding material that combines the appearance of natural wood with the durability of a synthetic material. It is available in a variety of colors and textures to match your home's exterior. For more information, contact your nearest distributor or write to Texture One-Eleven, Inc., 1000 North Main Street, Portland, Oregon 97227.

Advertisement for Texture One-Eleven siding - DFPA
Image from Practical Builder Magazine – Sept 1954



Curran House – NW corner showing patio and deck, Aug. 30, 1956
Photo courtesy of the Tacoma Public Library – Richard Studio Collections – Series A101074-2.



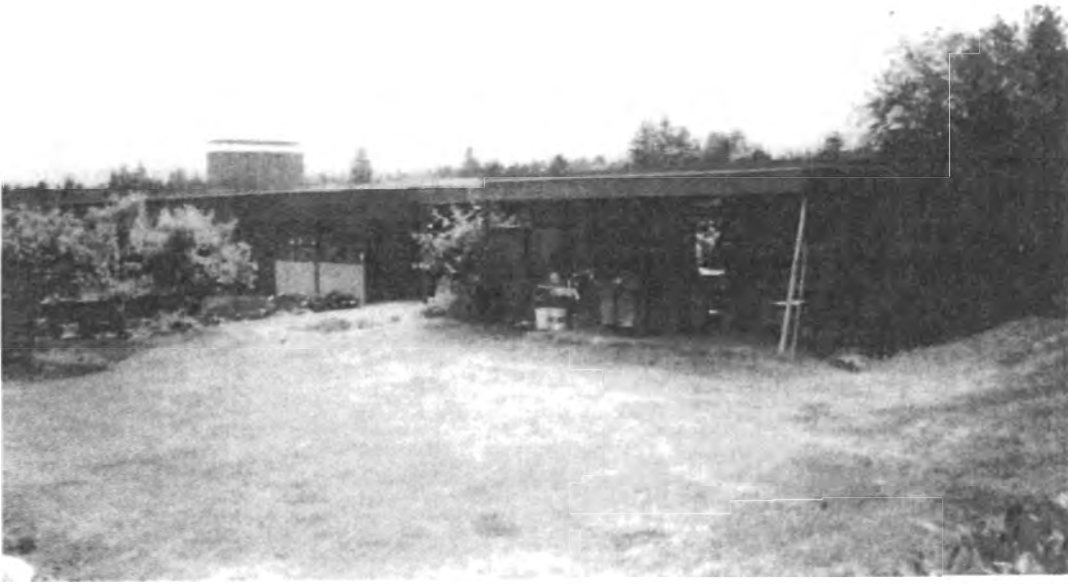
Curran House – SE corner daylight basement, Aug. 30, 1956
Photo courtesy of the Tacoma Public Library – Richard Studio Collections – Series A101074-4.



Curran House – SE corner daylight basement, c. 1975
Photo courtesy of the Curran Family



Curran House – West façade showing daylight basement, c. 1975
Photo courtesy of the Curran Family



Curran House – West façade showing rear patio behind garage, c. 1975
Photo courtesy of the Curran Family



Curran House – Main entry facade, c. 1975
Photo courtesy of the Curran Family



Mary & Charles Curran (home in background behind apple trees) – c.1980
Photo courtesy of the Curran Family



Charles Curran – c. 1960
Photo courtesy of University Place
Historical Society

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Curran, Charles and Mary Louise, House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WASHINGTON, Pierce

DATE RECEIVED: 1/20/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/21/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/07/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/06/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000088

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3.7.12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN
UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA
PIERCE CO.

KAREN BENVENISTE
MAY 2011

"SOUTH / MAIN"
FACADE
1 OF 9



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN
UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA
PIENCE CO.

· KAREN BENVENISTE
· MAY 2011

"WEST FACADE"

2 OF 9



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN
UNIVERSITY PLACE WA
PIERCE CO.

KAREN BENVENISTE
MAY 2011

"NORTH FACADE"

3 of 9



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN.
UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA
PIERCE CO.

KARENA BENVENTE
MAY 2011

"EAST FACADE"

4 of 9



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN.
UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA
PIENCE G.

KAREN BENVENISTE
MAY 2011

"VIEW FROM ENTRY
TOWARDS
KITCHEN"

5 of 9



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN
UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA
PIERCE CO.

KAREN BENVENISTE
MAY 2011

"STAIRWALL
WINDOW AND
LIGHTS

6 of 9



CURRAN HOUSE

4009 CURRAN LN

UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA

• PIERCE ~~CO~~ CO.

• KAREN BENVENISTE

• MAY 2011

• VIEW INTO KITCHEN &
AND LAUNDRY

7 of 9



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN
UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA
• PIERCE CO.

• KAREN BENVENISTE
• MAY 2011

"MASTER BEDROOM"
BUILT. MRS

8 OF 9



CURRAN HOUSE
4009 CURRAN LN
UNIVERSITY PLACE, WA
PIERCE CO.

KAREN BENVENISTE
MAY 2001

" VIEW FROM KITCHEN
INTO DINING & "
LIVING RM."

9 of 9

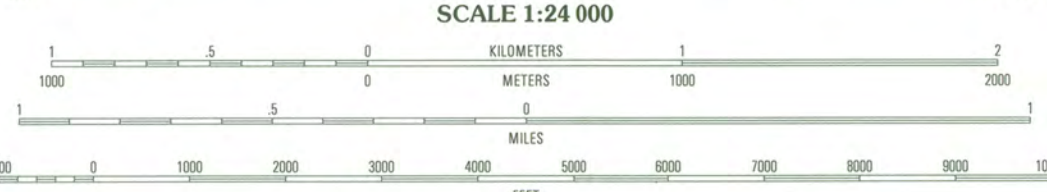


Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Topography compiled 1947. Planimetry derived from imagery
taken 1990 and other sources. Photinspected using imagery
taken 1997; no major culture or drainage changes observed.
Public Land Survey System and survey control current as
of 1993. Boundaries, other than corporate, verified 2003.
Contour and land elevations have not been revised
and may conflict with other content.

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and
1:100,000 scale grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 10
10 000-foot ticks: Washington Coordinate System of 1927
(south zone).

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27
and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable
from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software.
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map.

UTM GRID AND 2003 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
(TO CONVERT ELEVATIONS TO THE NORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM OF 1988, ADD 3 FEET)
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

1 Fox Island
2 Gig Harbor
3 Tacoma North
4 McNeil Island
5 Tacoma South
6 Nisqually
7 Fort Lewis
8 Spanaway

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway
hard surface
Secondary highway
hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or
improved surface
Unimproved road

Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

STEILACOOM, WA
1997

NIMA 1478 II NE-SERIES V891





STATE OF WASHINGTON
Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
1063 S. Capitol Way, Suite 106 - Olympia, Washington 98501
(Mailing Address) PO Box 48343 - Olympia, Washington 98504-8343
(360) 586-3065 Fax Number (360) 586-3067

January 10, 2012

Paul Lusignan
Keeper of the National Register
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" Street NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

RE: Washington State NR Nominations

Dear Paul:

Please find enclosed new National Register Nomination forms for the:

- **Charles & Mary Curran House – Pierce County, WA**
- **Dr. William & Frances Axtell House - Whatcom County, WA**

Should you have any questions regarding these nominations please contact me anytime at (360) 586-3076. I look forward to hearing your final determination on these properties.

Sincerely,

Michael Houser

State Architectural Historian, DAHP
360-586-3076
E-Mail: michael.houser@dahp.wa.gov