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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: James M. and Leana B. Walsh House  
Other name/site number:  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 3701 Bonnie Road  
City or town: Austin State: Texas County: Travis  
Not for publication:  Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer Date 12/5/13  
Signature of certifying official / Title  
Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Jon Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

2.5.14  
Date of Action

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** Domestic=single dwelling

**Current Functions:** Domestic=single dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals=Mission / Spanish Colonial Revival

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Limestone, Concrete

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-9)

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations:** N/A

**Areas of Significance:** Architecture

**Period of Significance:** 1926

**Significant Dates:** 1926

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked):

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked):

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-14)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 9-15)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office (Texas Historical Commission, Austin)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): N/A

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreege of Property:** less than one acre

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

1. Latitude: 30.296146 Longitude: -97.782215

**Verbal Boundary Description:** Block 12, Lot 15A (resub lots 11-16), Walsh Place Division B, Austin, TX.

**Boundary Justification:** Nomination includes all property historically associated with the building.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Sujin Kim, Graduate Student (with Carlyn Hammons, THC Historian, June 2013)  
Organization: University of Texas at Austin, School of Architecture  
Address: 3370 Lake Austin Blvd. apt. E  
City or Town: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78703  
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Date: 12.14.2012

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheet Map-16 through Map-21)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets Figure-22 through Figure-23)

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## Photographs

Name of Property: James M. and Leana B. Walsh House  
City or Vicinity: Austin  
County, State: Travis County, Texas  
Photographer: THC Staff  
Date Photographed: July 17, 2013  
Number of Photos: 5

TX\_Travis County\_Walsh House\_0001

North (primary) elevation. Camera facing roughly southeast.

TX\_Travis County\_Walsh House\_0002

North (primary) elevation. Camera facing roughly southwest.

TX\_Travis County\_Walsh House\_0003

West elevation. Camera facing east.

TX\_Travis County\_Walsh House\_0004

East elevation. Camera facing roughly northwest.

TX\_Travis County\_Walsh House\_0005

The Walsh House (contributing, right) and garage (noncontributing, left) as seen from the intersection of Bonnie Road and Rockmoor Avenue. Camera facing southwest.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

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

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## Narrative Description

The Walsh House is located at the southwest edge of Tarrytown, a neighborhood in western central Austin, Texas. The neighborhood has historically been a peaceful, low-density residential area with a few commercial businesses. The house is located at the northeast corner of a block that is along Lake Austin. The site has a private garden in the west and a gentle sloping yard. The house is a one-story, limestone house that has a partial basement and attic. Each elevation has different window patterns responding to the interior functions, and there is a big chimney on the west side. The building is asymmetrical and can be divided into three parts: the east section, west section, and central porch. The east section has a low-pitched gable tile roof and is taller and narrower than the west part. The west section has a flat roof with a partially curved parapet and is much lower and wider than the east part. Binding the two different sections, the central porch's front has a very distinctive sculpted, curved parapet and corbel arch. These features all contribute to the building's architectural significance and are representative of the Mission Revival Style.

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## General Setting

The Walsh House is located at the southwest corner of Bonnie Road and Rockmoor Avenue. The house's primary façade faces approximately north, toward Bonnie Road, while the east façade faces Rockmoor Avenue. Both streets are fairly narrow residential corridors with abundant, mature tree canopy. The house itself sits approximately in the center of its large lot. A two-story building (noncontributing), constructed in 2003, stands immediately behind the house to the south and contains a garage, office, and additional living spaces.

The east side yard exhibits an irrigated lawn with heritage-sized live oak trees, and the west side yard exhibits xeriscaping and a small garden. The iron picket fence along the east and north property line was installed in the early 1980s. In 2009, an ornamental iron gate was added to the east side fence. Roughly stacked unmortared limestone mounds indicating simple boundaries between properties historically defined the west and south property lines. In 2006-2007 rock masons replaced the mounds with rock walls. The west side rock wall incorporates the historical stair-step styling of the original mounds and also has an arched opening that reflects the corbel arch with carved ornament found on the residence's central porch. In addition, the rocks composing the new south side rock wall were all gathered on site.

A quiet residential area surrounds the property to the north and east. For the most part, the neighborhood is filled with modestly sized, single-family homes dating from the 1940s and 1950s and constructed of wood, brick, or local limestone. There are some examples, though, of larger-scale modern residences that are incompatible with the historic character of the neighborhood—a trend that has increased in recent years.

To the west of the property, Bonnie Road terminates at Scenic Drive, beyond which lies Lake Austin. Walsh Boat Landing, a public boat ramp and small park (est. 1958), is located at this terminus. In fact, the large lot that stretches from the Walsh House to Scenic Drive is used as a gravel parking lot for vehicles and boat trailers. Lake Austin was created in 1939 when Tom Miller Dam was constructed to impound the Colorado River. The dam is located approximately 1000 feet southwest of the Walsh House. The shore between the dam and Walsh Boat Landing is home to various waterfront restaurants, water recreational facilities, and condominiums.

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## Exterior

The Walsh House is an asymmetrical one-story house with a basement and attic. The building's ground floor accommodates main living spaces, and the basement is equipped for HVAC and extra utility spaces. The site's topography, which descends to the south, has allowed the back of the house to have two entrances—one opens to the primary floor and another opens to the basement. Major building materials of the house are whitish limestone rubble and blocks, red Spanish roofing tiles, and painted-wood, multi-pane wood window screens. One of the really interesting facts is that the limestone is likely from a nearby quarry the Walsh family owned. The limestone used for the historic house displays a variety of cutting qualities. For example, the limestone blocks of the north façade (primary) are much more precisely cut than the other sides' blocks. The blocks for the central porch are square-cut and were laid in regular course. Other parts of the north facade, including window jambs and quoins, have square-cut blocks that have a slightly lower cutting quality than the porch. The other sides of the house have rough-cut limestone blocks and plastered rubble, but their window head, jambs and quoins were constructed of square-cut blocks. Some portions of the walls are galleted, with small stone chips embedded in the mortar joints. It appears that this technique was used to actually wedge larger stones into place in some areas, but simply for aesthetic detail in others.

The house is composed of two masses that have different functions. The gabled-roof east mass is comparatively narrow and taller and contains major private spaces. The flat-roofed west mass is wider and lower and has common spaces, such as a living room and kitchen. On the north main facade, the house's central porch is located between the two distinguished sections; it visually binds them.

Differences between the three parts and major character-defining features are mostly displayed by the main facade in the north. First of all, the east section appears almost two-stories tall and comparatively narrow and has a low-pitched gable roof. It accommodates a private room, two bathrooms, closets, a hallway, and a master bedroom; the east mass also has an attic. One of the character-defining features is that there are false windows on the north, south and east sides of the east section. They are above the real windows and have arches, and their horizontal proportions are the same as the real windows below. The east mass is constructed of white limestone, dark green painted wood window frames, wood sash windows, and red Spanish roofing tiles. The low-pitched gable roof has no projecting eaves. In addition, there are no special projections on the walls other than the false windows' sills. Heads of the real windows were constructed of single long stone blocks.

The west section is one-story tall and twice wider than the east section, and has a flat roof. Its west side has a massive chimney which is still in use and connected to a fireplace in the living room. The west edge of the north facade has a rising curve, and the north parapet has a Spanish-tile coping. The west section accommodates a living room, kitchen, dining room, and TV room. On the north side, there are two identical windows for the living room. Above the two windows, there are two small rectangular holes for a ventilating purpose. The north side has always had a small patio in front of its elevation, and new pink limestone balusters were added to this patio in 2003. Their profile and proportions reflect the design of the half balusters flanking the false windows on the north side. The west section also has the same material composition as the east section except for the coping of parapets. However, there are no false windows.

The porch is the most important part that defines the character of the house. The porch has the curved gable parapet with a quatrefoil ornament, having an approximately one-foot radius. The porch has two types of

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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openings: an ornamental corbel arch on the north side and a true arch on the west side. The west arch allows access to the patio. The limestone blocks used for the porch entry are the most elaborately cut ones, and their construction was also the most stringent; the porch's front wall is exactly symmetrical. Although the porch has a gable roof behind the front wall, only a small portion of eaves are seen. The door is a single wood door and has a fanlight above.

## **Exterior Detail**

The white limestone blocks, one of the character-defining features of the house, composes the entire wall system. The cut limestone blocks were chiseled and sawn. The construction method of the limestone is generally a regular-course work, but the stone has a variety of types—square-cut and rough-cut blocks and plastered rubble. Each wall has various-quality stone. For example, on the east side of the house, the base has the combination of tiny rubble and plaster, the middle area of the wall is composed of big rough-cut and square-cut blocks, and the upper part has middle-size, rough-cut stone.

## **Interior**

The current spatial characteristic of the interior space of the Walsh House is endless circulation. This circulation pattern was introduced in 2010 during a renovation led by Dick Clark Architecture. The wall between the dining room and the TV room originally had two framed windows, presumably for cross through ventilation of the home, but no connecting door. During this renovation the windows were removed and replaced with an arched opening thus connecting the dining room and interior TV room. Opposite this archway is another arch going into the central hallway that runs the length of the eastern portion of the house. On the south end of this hallway, the master bedroom was expanded into a niche library area and a master bath and closet were established. On the north end of this hall is a second bedroom, and off the hall is a large walk-in closet and an expansion of the home's original single bathroom. The master bedroom is directly connected to a corridor with a staircase to the basement and to the kitchen.

The kitchen can also be entered from the dining room or through an exterior door on the south elevation that opens to an exterior stair case and terrace that leads to the 2003 garage apartment. In 1996 the Dick Clark Architectural firm designed a modern kitchen which incorporated the mud/sun room off the upstairs rear door with the comparatively small original kitchen area. Although much of the original kitchen's cabinetry was repurposed off site, the original interior chimney that vented the downstairs coal furnace and the kitchen's stove is now used to vent appliances in the basement, and the small double hung casement windows in a row on both the south and west side have been kept. The double hung casement windows over the sink area were replaced by a more modern single window unit in the late 1970s.

The dining room, between the kitchen and living room, is additionally connected to the open TV room at the center of the house, which was originally an enclosed library before the renovation. The dining room also has a set of small windows on the west side wall like the kitchen. The living room next to the dining room has an original fireplace that is associated with the big chimney on the west side of the house. The living room has a couple of middle-size windows on the west side wall and another two windows on the north side; the west windows were replaced with stained-glass windows in 1980, but their opening size remained the same.



James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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The basement has an entrance at the ground level of the south elevation. The basement shows the original method of construction, as well as the preservation work that enables the old house to fit into the new requirement of the user. Only the south half of the basement is occupied space, and the rest stays in the status of natural soil mound; a low concrete wall prevents the landslip in the basement. The basement, which is exposed to the exterior, was made with consideration of the topographical character of the sloping site; the ground soil was not dug in a really excessive way. Because of the natural ground in the interior space of the basement, the structural mechanism of the foundation columns between the ground floor and ground, is clearly seen. The original foundation columns supporting the whole structure of the house are large raw timbers, some of which even look like natural trunks putting down roots. Some steel columns were also added to strengthen the entire structure of the house. The basement's ceiling openly shows the ground floor's materials: oak and pine tree flooring and pine tree timbers for supporting beams. The walls, on which there are no additional interior materials, plainly show the exterior wall materials. The room in which there was a coal heater is now used as storage. There is an interior staircase connecting the basement and ground floor; it reaches the small corridor between the master bedroom and kitchen.

#### **Non-Contributing Garage/Office (2003, Dick Clark Architecture)**

The new two-story modern building sits in the south backyard of the original house. The second floor has private spaces: an office, library, entertainment space, and terrace. On its first floor, a guest room that is equipped with a kitchen and bathroom takes a half of the floor and faces the west garden. There is also a garage that has a capacity of two cars. Because of the site's topographic character, the new building's second floor is directly connected to the ground floor of the original house by a small terrace. The scale of the new building is smaller than the original. The new one is covered with stucco; the sense of its existence is not so strong. In addition, although the garden around the house has some original large trees, most portions of the garden were completely changed in 2003. Blake and Big Red Sun, a landscape designers' group, designed a new pool, pond, terraced garden, and pavement patterns. These are not counted in the number of resources for the nominated property due to their relatively small scale and minor significance.

#### **Integrity**

The Walsh House retains an excellent degree of integrity, particularly in terms of location, materials, workmanship, design, association, and feeling. The introduction of new landscape elements somewhat affects the historic integrity of setting, but only to a minor degree. The construction of the additional building also affects integrity of setting, but because it is not physically attached to the historic house and because it is designed in a plain, unobtrusive manner, the overall effect is minimal. Though the interior of the home has seen some upgrades and reconfiguration, the overall character remains evident. The exterior exhibits integrity to an extraordinary degree. Though four windows have been replaced on secondary elevations (two on the south elevation above the kitchen sink and the two flanking the fireplace on the west elevation), they were fit into the existing openings and thus retain the dimensions of the historic windows. The impact on integrity is minimal. The low balusters around the front porch are a new introduction, but the new material is easily distinguishable from the historic material and their installation did not harm the original fabric of the house.

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## Statement of Significance

The Walsh House is an excellent local example of the Mission Revival Style as applied to a single-family residence, a relative rarity in Austin where other early twentieth century revivals were vastly more popular. Key character defining features include a curved, sculpted parapet which incorporates a blind quatrefoil window-like ornament; red tile roofs; a dominant porch with a corbel arch entry; wall ornament reminiscent of a blind arcade; multi-light windows; and thick masonry walls. Unlike most other Mission Revival residences in the Southwest, however, the Walsh House's exterior masonry walls are not covered in stucco. Instead, they are left bare, revealing a distinctive, vernacular method of construction which utilized an assortment of limestone materials ranging from precisely-cut large stones to small rubble or chips embedded into the mortar joints. The limestone building material lends additional significance to the property, as it was sourced from a quarry located a short distance from the house--likely the same quarry owned and operated by the Walsh family at the turn of the century. The house was constructed in 1926 in Walsh Place, a newly platted neighborhood which subdivided the original 100 acres that once supported the Walsh family's successful lime business.

The Walsh House was designated a City of Austin Landmark in 2001. As an excellent local example of the Mission Revival Style distinctively constructed of materials that reflect the history of the house's original occupant and immediate geographic location, the Walsh House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, at the local level of significance. The period of significance is 1926, the date of original construction.

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## The Walsh Family in Texas

Born in Ireland in 1837, William J. Walsh arrived in the United States sometime prior to the Civil War. After serving the Union, Walsh continued working for the United States government by manufacturing lime for building and repairing forts in Texas, including Fort McKavett. By the early 1870s, he found himself in Austin and purchased approximately 100 acres of land three miles west of the city along the Colorado River in 1874. The area was already well-known for its quality limestone. Scottish immigrant Peter C. Taylor had begun manufacturing lime (in present-day Reed Park) in 1871, and a small but thriving industrial complex developed around his kilns.<sup>1</sup> The area's abundance of limestone and cedar trees—which were necessary to fuel the kilns—made the area an ideal locale for such operations. Walsh also took advantage of the natural resources. He established the Mount Bonnell Lime Works Company in 1875.<sup>2</sup> The local lime manufacturing boom coincided with a period of exponential growth in Austin, which was spurred by the arrival of the railroad in 1874, and created the need for abundant building supplies and materials. Walsh did quite well in the lime business and began also to invest in real estate throughout central Texas.

The Austin Dam was completed on the Colorado River less than one-quarter miles south of the Walsh homestead in 1892, creating Lake McDonald and providing the citizens of Austin with a variety of recreational opportunities.<sup>3</sup> It is unclear how this development may have impacted Walsh's lime business, but in 1896 he

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<sup>1</sup> "Taylor Lime Kiln No. 1," Historical Marker files, Texas Historical Commission.

<sup>2</sup> Sources differ on the date of founding, but Walsh's advertisement in the 1879 city directory indicates that it was established in 1875.

<sup>3</sup> The Austin Dam was damaged in 1900 by severe flooding. A series of problems prevented full completion of a new, permanent dam until the late 1930s.

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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moved the entire business operation to Round Rock, approximately 15 miles north of Austin. He traveled regularly to the Round Rock kilns, but Walsh and his family continued to live above the Colorado River until 1903 when they moved permanently to Round Rock. Though the Walsh family made their permanent residence in Round Rock, they did not sell the old 100-acre homestead along the river in west Austin. They leased part of it to a local dairy farmer and various family members continued to use the old family home.<sup>4</sup> And, because Round Rock didn't gain a Catholic church until 1940, they continued to travel regularly to Austin for mass at St. Mary's. William Walsh died in 1908. His sons, led primarily by youngest son Edward, continued to operate the family's highly successful Round Rock White Lime Company until approximately 1950.<sup>5</sup>

### Walsh Place

Austin, like most Texas cities, saw its first suburban development around the turn of the century. The earliest of them, such as Hyde Park, Shadow Lawn, and Travis Heights, were located a short distance from the city's center along the streetcar routes. The rise of the middle class, the increase in automobile ownership, and a desire to distance one's family from the ills of the city, however, quickly led to the development of neighborhoods located farther from the city's center. In Austin, the first of these so-called automobile suburbs developed west of town. The suburbs of Enfield, Pemberton Heights, and Bryker Woods form the nucleus of that suburban development, a process which began in earnest in the 1910s.<sup>6</sup>

On January 27, 1915, William Walsh's heirs filed the first subdivision plat for Walsh Place, the 100 acres their father had purchased in 1875. Division A of Walsh Place was set up that year, and Division B was set up in 1924, though actual formal development didn't begin until the 1930s. Other nearby subdivisions were platted in the 1920s, including Westfield and Monte Vista. Together these subdivisions formed the early foundations for Tarrytown, an upper-class suburban development established by the Westenfield Development Company in 1934. Today Walsh Place is considered part of this exclusive neighborhood.

### James M. Walsh and the House on Bonnie Road<sup>7</sup>

In 1926, James Martin Walsh, the third oldest of William Walsh's five sons, moved his family from Round Rock to Austin, and constructed the nominated limestone house in Division B of Walsh Place, at the southwest corner of Bonnie Road and Rockmoor Avenue. It was one of the first houses in the area and was sited near other Walsh family properties, including the original family home,<sup>8</sup> located a short distance away along the lake, and the old kiln and quarry. James' sister, Kate, also had a house nearby (where the boat ramp is now located). Kate constructed a new home (extant) at 3714 Bonnie Road in 1939. Unfortunately, persons or firms responsible for the actual design and construction of James Walsh's home have yet to be conclusively identified. However, some Walsh descendants believe that Edward, the youngest of the five Walsh brothers, may have been the

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<sup>4</sup> Hanks, A. (2001). *Interview with Kathleen Belshan Howel*, Kate Walsh's nephew. Hanks Oral History Foundation

<sup>5</sup> Jane H. DiGesualdo and Karen Thompson, *Historical Round Rock, Texas* (Austin: Nortex Press, 1985): 279-285.

<sup>6</sup> These three historic suburbs were listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Old West Austin Historic District in 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Bonnie Road was known as Ash Street and Rockmoor was known as Scenic Drive until approximately 1939. Several of the streets in the area were renamed at this time. For clarity and consistency, this nomination will refer to streets using their current names.

<sup>8</sup> This home was dismantled in the late 1930s, and the stone was used to construct the house at 3714 Bonnie Road (extant) for William Walsh's daughter, Kate McGinnis. Hanks, A. (2001). *Interview with Kathleen Belshan Howel*, Kate Walsh's nephew. Hanks Oral History Foundation

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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draftsman for James' house on Bonnie Road, as well as for oldest brother William's house at 106 Bagdad in Round Rock, c. 1931. The two homes are remarkably similar in design, but the Round Rock home has been dramatically altered in recent years.

The 1927 Austin city directory indicates that there were three families living along Bonnie Road in addition to the James M. Walsh family. The 1930 census enumerated two more families, along with a half dozen others on Rockmoor, indicating that Walsh Place, Division B, was filling slowly but steadily. Living with James at the time of the 1930 census was his wife, Leana, and three children—Edith (22), Garland (21, overseer at Pat Walsh's ranch), and Ted (17). James was apparently still in the lime business; his occupation is given as assistant manager at Austin White Lime Company. The neighborhood was home primarily for middle class whites. By the time of the 1940 census, there were more than a dozen families living along Bonnie Road. James had apparently retired from the lime business, as his occupation is given as "partner" in a cattle ranch with his son Garland. The ranch was located near Round Rock, in Williamson County. James died in 1944. Leana continued to live in the house on Bonnie Road until her death in 1956. Their daughter Edith lived in the home until 1977, when it was sold to the current owner.

### **Architectural Significance of the James M. and Leana B. Walsh House**

The Walsh House is an excellent local example of the Mission Revival Style as applied to a single-family residence, a relative rarity in Austin where early twentieth century revivals such as Colonial, Tudor, and Classical were vastly more popular. The Walsh House is the only example in the immediate neighborhood. The survey conducted for the Old West Austin Historic District, a large residential area that developed contemporaneously with this one, found no examples of the Mission Revival Style. Of the more than 1400 homes surveyed, less than three percent of them exhibited the closely-related Spanish Colonial Revival Style. Significantly, however, these few examples bear the more traditional exterior wall covering of plaster or stucco, rendering the outer walls smooth. The masonry construction of the Walsh House, however, is bare and plainly visible, lending a more rustic quality to the design.

The Mission Revival Style originated in Southern California in the last decade of the nineteenth century and was inspired by California missions of the eighteenth century. It was the first architectural style to diffuse eastward from the west coast. Furthermore, the style shows the southwestern region's effort to create its own regional aesthetics of architecture to differentiate it from the typical Revival styles of the Northeast for both civic and residential architecture. However, residents recognized that eastern American architectural motifs did not reflect the characteristics of the semi-desert landscape or the Hispanic cultural heritage of their region, and the Mission Revival style began to be considered as a more authentic style for the southwest. This style shows southwestern architects' self-consciousness of and the public's agreement with the regional architectural expression in Mexican borderlands.<sup>9</sup> Unlike some of the other nineteenth century revival styles in which the antecedent style had no real examples in the locale, the Mission Revival was based upon adaptations of actual regional examples. Both Texas and California found a platform for their regional expressions at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where each employed Mission Revival styles for their State Buildings. However, California's building was more widely acclaimed than Texas' which may explain why it is thought of as the birthplace of the Mission Revival style.

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<sup>9</sup> Weitze, K. (1984). *California's Mission Revival*. San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books.

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Buildings designed in the Mission Revival Style got motifs directly from the materials and details of the colonial Spanish mission churches of the Southwest. In true nineteenth century eclectic tradition, however, the designs were not replicas. Rather, architects freely applied some of the commonly derived components, which eventually became character-defining features, including plain stucco walls, low pitched tile roofs, curved gable parapet, deeply shaded porches, bracketed eaves, arched openings and arcades, dark interiors, and so on. The style was in fashion mainly from 1885 to 1915, and its "instantly-recognizable" features were used for a large number of residential, commercial, and institutional buildings in the southwest. The Mission Revival Style, unfortunately, was popular for a short time and the number of remaining properties is small compared to other revival styles. However, its instantly-recognizable appearance has contributed to the characteristic atmosphere in southwestern cities in the United States.<sup>10</sup>

The Texas economy boomed in the first three decades of the twentieth century and cities and towns throughout Texas kept growing. The prosperity of industries such as cotton, lumber, cattle, and oil fueled cultural development and the economy. From the turn of the century to the 1920s, eclecticism was popularly accepted by architects and critics so that it enabled local architecture to reflect the context of its locale.<sup>11</sup> Although Regional Eclecticism in Texas did not have a strong movement equivalent to the one in California, it was influenced by what developed on the west coast and the greater southwest. Therefore, Texas architecture designed in the Mission Revival style, which is one of the most representative regional eclectic styles in Texas, shares lots of motifs and features with Californian Mission Revivals. However, there were some differences between the two regions' original Spanish missions. The missions in California had plastered adobe as the main material, but many of the Texas missions (with the exception of those in far West Texas) were constructed of plastered rubble with dressed stone trim.<sup>12</sup>

The popularity of the Mission Revival style might have been boosted in Texas by the transcontinental railroads serving the state. San Antonio, as known as the Alamo city, was one of the major stops on the Sunset rail route from Los Angeles, California to New Orleans, Louisiana. Southern Pacific Railroad allowed their own associated architect in San Francisco to design the San Antonio Station, also known as the Sunset Station. The station, built in 1902, represents the regional Mission Revival style in the Alamo city by its distinguishing curved gable parapet, fashioned after the Alamo's. Many buildings bearing similar motifs were sometimes designated as "Alamo Revival" or "Texian Style."<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the California style evolved into the distinguishing regional Mission Revival style of Texas based on the motifs from the state's most famous mission. The Mission Revival in Texas also indicates the relationship between Texas and other southwestern states, such as the cultural and commercial interchange.

The Walsh House possesses several key character-defining features of the Mission Revival Style, including the curved parapet which incorporates a blind quatrefoil window-like ornament, low pitched tile roofs, shaded porch with the corbel arch entry, and multi-light windows. In addition, the arched blind windows on the north and east sides are reminiscent of an arcade, another key Mission Revival characteristic. In true eclectic style, the Walsh House uses Mission Revival features selectively, for it does not have other key characteristics, such as

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<sup>10</sup> Weitze, K. (1984). *California's Mission Revival*. San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books.

<sup>11</sup> Henry, J. (1993). *Architecture in Texas 1895-1945*. Austin, Texas: The University of Texas Press.

<sup>12</sup> Henry, J. (1993). *Architecture in Texas 1895-1945*. Austin, Texas: The University of Texas Press.

<sup>13</sup> Henry, J. (1993). *Architecture in Texas 1895-1945*. Austin, Texas: The University of Texas Press.

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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wide bracketed eaves or stuccoed exterior walls. Instead, the house's exposed limestone exterior reflects the history of both its original owner and the surrounding neighborhood. Limestone was quarried throughout the neighborhood in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; James Walsh had family ties to and a career in this same industry. The limestone for his house likely came from the quarry his father owned just a short distance away.

The architect or builder for the house is not known with certainty. It's possible that the owner selectively chose elements from popular architecture magazines or pattern books, eclectically selecting and combining preferable elements. Rather than that weakening the house's authenticity, this would simply prove it to be a product of an approach that was very common in residential construction at the time. Regardless, the craftsmanship of the limestone represents a very distinctive vernacular construction method that is worth preserving.

As an excellent local example of the Mission Revival Style distinctively constructed of materials that reflect the history of the building's original occupant and immediate geographic location, the Walsh House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, at the local level of significance.

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Hanks, A. (2001). *Interview with Kathleen Belshan Howel*, Kate Walsh's neice. Hanks Oral History Foundation.

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“Taylor Lime Kiln No. 1,” Historical Marker files, Texas Historical Commission.

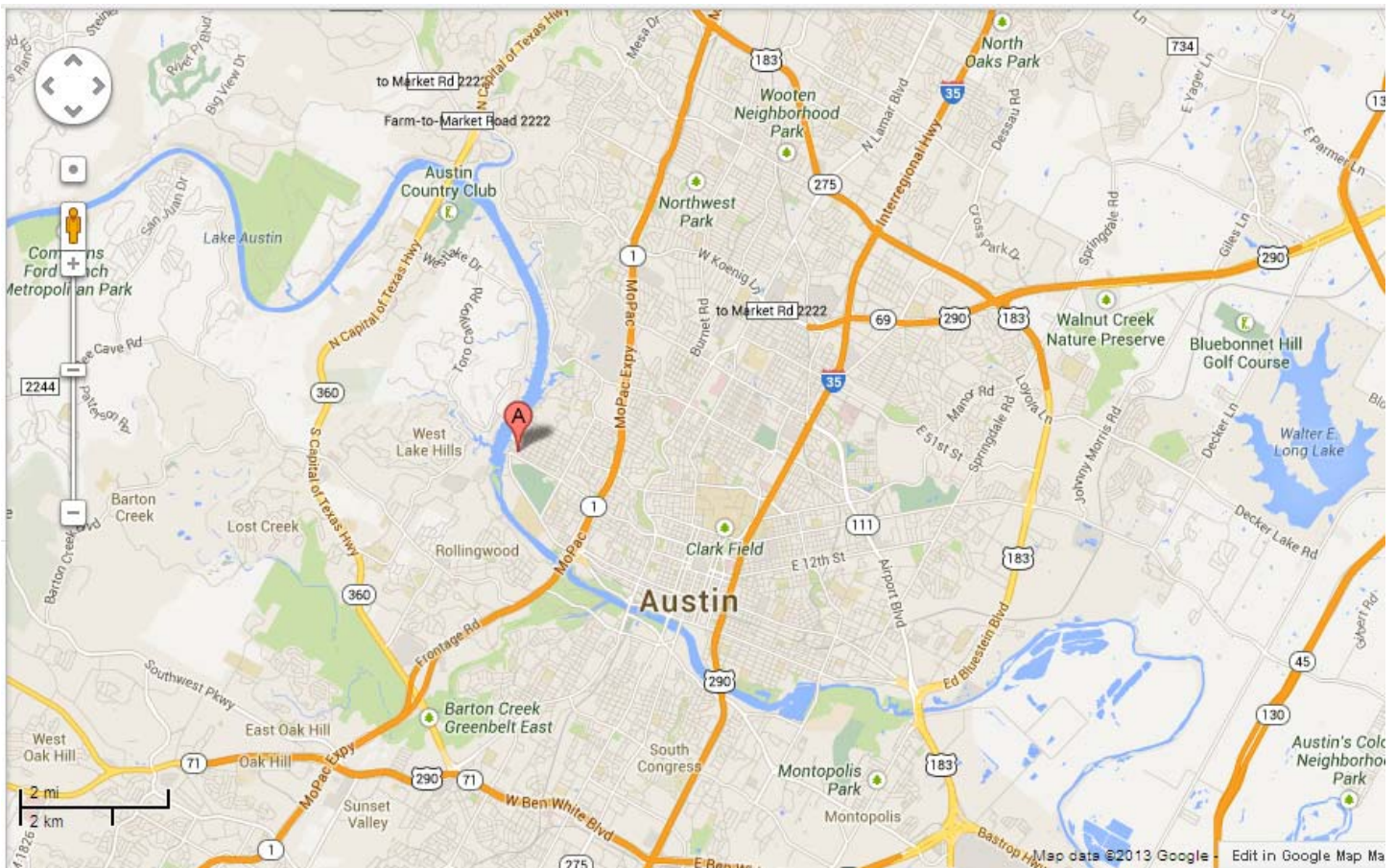
Weitze, K. (1984). *California's Mission Revival*. San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books.

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Map 1: Travis County (shaded) is located in central Texas.



Map 2: The Walsh House (Pin A) is located near the southern tip of Lake Austin, on the western edge of central Austin, approximately three miles west of downtown. (Google Maps, July 2013.)





James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Map 3: Scaled Google Earth map depicts locational coordinates for the nominated property. (Google Earth, July 2013.)



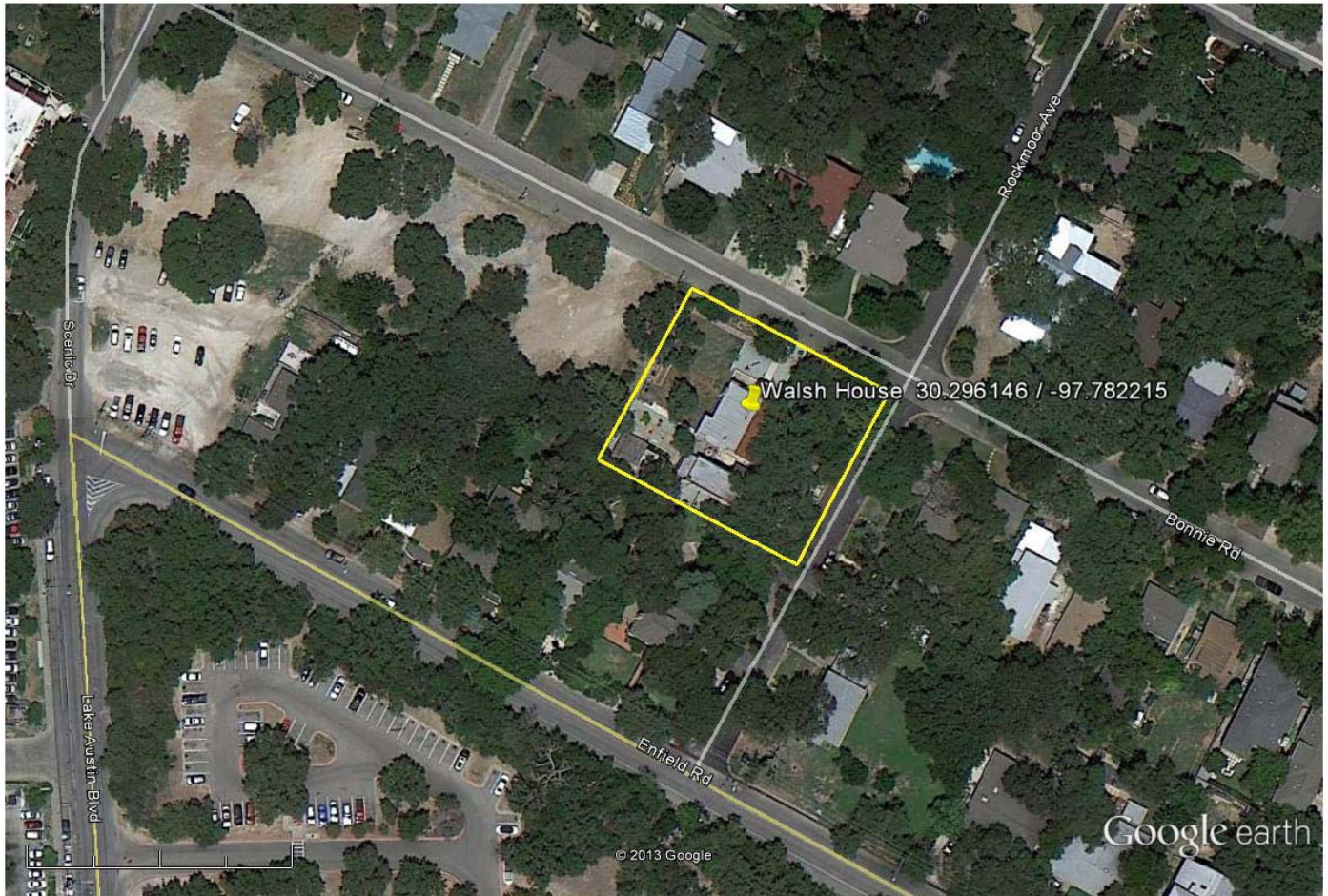
Google earth





James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Map 4: A close-in view of the same Google Earth map, depicting boundaries of the nominated property. (Google Earth, July 2013.)



Google earth



James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

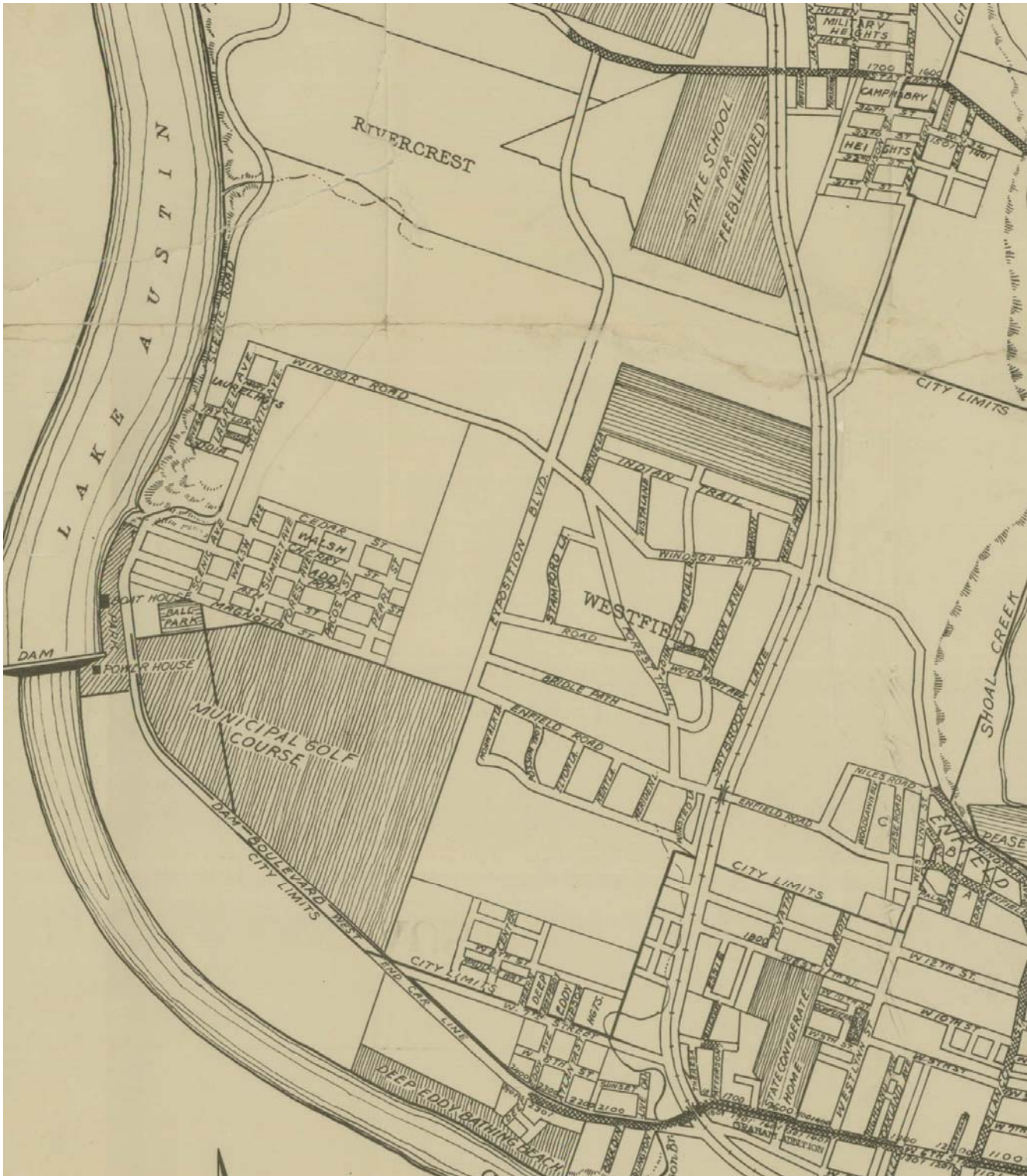
Map 5: William Walsh's original 100 acres (containing the family homestead and the quarry and kilns for his lime manufacturing business) was subdivided by his heirs in two phases. Google map used as base.





James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Map 6: This 1925 map of Austin depicts the relatively new addition of Walsh Place. Note also that the West End Street Car delivered passengers to the dam vicinity.



James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Map 7: Current floor plan of the Walsh House.



**Ground Floor Plan  
Walsh House, Austin, TX**

James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Figure 1: North elevation, c. 1928. The small outbuilding seen on left was removed in the late 1970s. Photo provided by Blake Tollett, from the Walsh family collection.



Figure 2: North elevation, 1931. Photo provided by Blake Tollett, from the Walsh family collection.





James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Figure 3: Walsh family members on front patio. Unknown date. Photo provided by Blake Tollett, from the Walsh family collection.



Figure 4: Undated historic photo of James Martin Walsh. Photo provided by Chris Walsh.











3701  
Brewer Way















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Walsh, James M. & Leana B., House  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Travis

DATE RECEIVED: 12/20/13      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/21/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/05/14      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/05/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13001160

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    2.5.14 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.

**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
*real places telling real stories*



TO: Edson Beall  
 National Park Service  
 National Register of Historic Places  
 1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)  
 Washington, DC 20005

FROM: *ch* Carlyn Hammons  
 Texas Historical Commission

RE: New Submission, National Register Nomination  
 James M. and Leana B. Walsh House, Travis County, TX

DATE: December 5, 2013

The following materials are submitted:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form and electronic locational data (in .kmz format) on CD. <i>ch</i> The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the <u>James M. and Leana B. Walsh House</u> to the National Register of Historic Places.
	Resubmitted nomination.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CD with five (5) TIFF photograph files.
	Correspondence

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do ) (do not ) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

