

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Weistar, Frederick House

other names/site number The Stone Cottage

Name of Multiple Property Listing N/A

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

2. Location

street & number 515 Chestnut Street not for publication

city or town Chester vicinity

state Illinois county Randolph zip code 62233

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B x C D

[Signature] 05-03-18
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Illinois Department of Natural Resources/SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
x 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:) _____

[Signature] 10/15/18
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

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

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

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

| <u>Contributing</u> | <u>Noncontributing</u> | |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 0 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | site |
| 0 | 0 | structure |
| 0 | 0 | object |
| 1 | 0 | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation and Culture: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Two-door house

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone

walls: Stone

roof: Metal

other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The Frederick Weistar House (locally known as The Stone Cottage) at 515 Chestnut in Chester, Randolph County, Illinois occupies a lot on the northeast corner of Chestnut and Taylor Streets (see Figures 1 and 2). The building was constructed for Frederick Weistar (builder unknown), ca. 1859 (established by land deeds) as a one-story with a basement, four-bay dwelling, a side-gable roof and constructed of load-bearing irregular rough-cut limestone. The dwelling features interior gable end brick chimneys on the north and south elevations. A front porch is centered and extends for two bays, covering two symmetrically placed original entry doors. The original wood and glass panel doors with three-light transoms are flanked by original one-over-one double-hung windows (see Photos 1- 7). The interior of the house is intact with original wood flooring, wood trim around windows and baseboards, picture molding, wood ceiling, staircase and some of the plaster walls (see Photos 9-13). The dwelling was occupied and functioned as a house until 1990. It was later purchased by Randolph County. The Chester Tourism Commission became involved with the Frederick Weistar House and began the rehabilitation of the dwelling in 2010 for the adapted re-use as house museum. The grounds and interior were cleaned up, new guttering and a standing seam metal roof (March 2012) were installed, as well as re-pointing of the limestone walls. In addition, the interior removal of the wood plank ceiling and plaster walls in the east room was completed for safety reason and to show visitors the construction techniques of the building for its era.

The Frederick Weistar House is an excellent example of a two-door façade dwelling. The house exhibits German Vernacular influence with the two-door façade; due to the limited information on the history of the house, it is possible the two-door entry could possibly be from another origin, but the architectural features leans more toward German influence. Character defining features related to German Vernacular influence are the symmetrical form and fenestrations, stone walls, double entrances, flat arches over windows, gable end chimneys and simplify of design. The dwelling's original form (two rooms wide and one-room deep), construction, design and materials are intact and clearly convey the overall sense of their original function and sense of time when construction.

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Location and Setting

The Frederick Weistar House at 515 Chestnut Street located in downtown Chester is near the county courthouse, city government and commercial buildings (see Figures 1 and 2). Located on a slopping corner lot, the house fronts Chestnut Street to the south with a small front yard that is boarded by a concrete sidewalk. The house is parallel to Chestnut Street. The front of the lot is level with the streetscape and drops off to the rear section of the lot (see Photos 4 and 6). The front section of the yard is covered in gravel and large flat stones. A cedar tree is located on the west section of the front yard. The lot extends north-south to the street located behind the house, Mulberry Street. The west section of the lot slopes to the rear with a small parking area accessed by Chestnut Street. The east elevation faces Taylor Street. A concrete retaining wall runs the length of the east elevation and wraps around to the front elevation extending to the south facade corner of the house (see Photo 6). There is a small section of green space on the east elevation that extends to the backyard which has a large tree. The backyard has a rolling topography. To the west is a grassy vacant lot with residential in the distance. Directly across Taylor Street to the east is a parking lot with a residential beyond. To the north is a heavy wooded area.

Overview

The Frederick Weistar House is a small rectangular limestone building with a two-door façade and exhibits some German Vernacular characteristics. It is one-story in height with a full walk-out basement and a standing seam metal side gable roof. The long side of the dwelling is parallel with Chestnut Street, a common characteristic of the vernacular building type based on German traditions and is two rooms wide and one room in depth. Exterior ornamentation is all but non-existent, except for the porch which spans a portion of the façade and features turned and scrolled-sawn elements. The interior features the original wood flooring, wood trim, wood ceiling, ceiling beams, plaster walls and layout. The dwelling retains its original elements and footprint and articulates the characteristics of the two-door building type.

The Dwelling

Exterior

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The one-story rectangular dwelling is constructed of rough-cut limestone with a two-door entrance, a side gable roof with a standing seam metal roof, interior gable end brick chimneys and a limestone foundation (see Photos 1-8).

South elevation (Façade)

The façade features four bays – two original, centered entrances flanked by original one-over-one double-hung windows. The deep inset entrances hold the original wood and glass panel doors (painted a light green) with original hardware, wooden surround and three-light transoms. The doors are separated by a section of the stone wall and sheltered by a porch with a concrete deck. The porch features four spindle posts with decorative brackets in the corners, the only exterior ornamentation. The porch post supports a slight sloping shed roof clad in metal. Windows on the façade are the original or early period one-over-one double-hung with stone sills and flat stone arch above the windows. A wooden cornice wraps to the side elevations; wooden cornices are found on this building type but are rare¹. The house is sited very close to the sidewalk, a characteristic of the German Vernacular building type (see Photos 1-1, 2, 3, 7 and 8).

North elevation (rear)

The north elevation is two-stories in height (basement and main level). Centered on the elevation are matching double entrances like those found on the façade. Each entrance features the original wood and glass panel door with wooden surrounds and three-light transoms and is deeply inset. Presently, there is no access from the exterior for the double entrances (north elevation) on the main level of the house. Across both entrances is a wooden flower boxes. Directly below the entrance door to the north is a small window with a stone sill; the window has been covered over. On the basement level are entrances at the east and west sections. The east entrance holds a wood and glass paneled door and the west holds a solid wood plank door. (See Photos 4-6).

East elevation (faces Taylor Street)

The east elevation features an original centered one-over-one double-hung window with a stone sill and lintel. The lower level holds two original four-light windows with stone sills and lintels. A large cedar tree is located between the house and the concrete retaining wall that runs the length of the property on the east elevation and wraps to the south façade corner (see Photos 2 and 6).

¹ Charles van Ravensway. *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri: A survey of a Vanishing Culture* (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 1977), 229.

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West elevation

Located on the main level of the west elevation is an original one-over-one double-hung window with a stone lintel and sill. A small rectangular window with a stone lintel is located at the north corner of the elevation (see Photos 3 and 4).

Interior

The interior of the Frederick Weistar House is two rooms on the main level with a staircase providing access to the basement level that consists of two rooms. The two room, two-door layout does not have a central hall, a feature of the German Vernacular domestic building type found in the United States. The design improved the efficiency of the floor plan by eliminating the central passageway and the installation of a single partition wall dividing the space in half. The dividing wall is constructed of brick with a coat of plaster. The doorway between the two rooms is framed in wood trim with a solid paneled wood door with original hardware (see Photos 9, 11 and 12) (see Figure 3).

The west section of the interior features one large open room with original wood flooring, base boards, wood trim and the original wood plank ceiling (planks run north-south). The original plaster walls are intact, and a picture railing extends the perimeter of the room. All the window openings retain the original wood trim and are deeply inset. Located to the right of the entrance door is the doorway leading to the second room to the east (see Photos 9 and 10).

The east section of the interior is a bit larger in size than the west section and retains the original wood flooring, base boards and wood trim. Directly in front of the main entrance of this room is a staircase that goes to the basement. The original wood staircase railing with narrow flat spindles is intact. The room is open and has an original or early period closet in the northwest corner of the room that is connected to the staircase. The closet juts out from the wall and has one large bottom section with a smaller upper section and retains the original or early period hardware. Similar to the west area of the home, the windows are inset within the wall and display the original trim. Only a small portion of the original plaster remains in this room. Much of the plaster had deteriorated and was removed. The outer interior walls are limestone and the one interior wall is brick. The original wood plank ceiling was removed due to the condition and the original ceiling beams are exposed with a wood planking above. The doorway to the

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west section of the house is located to the left of the main entrance, near the staircase (see Photos 11, 12 and 13).

The basement level has a small landing at the bottom of the staircase and is flanked by doorways to the rooms located on the east and west sections (see photo13). The original wood paneled doors with hardware retained the original wooden door surrounds. Each room has limestone outer walls with a brick interior wall (see Photo 14). The west room has a brick floor and the east room as a wood floor (see Figure 4).

Alterations/Changes

The Chester Tourism Commission in consultation with Carol Dyson, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, replaced the deteriorated roof with a standing seam metal roof in March 2010. In 2013, the commission consulted with Dyson and John Leeke, preservationist, for the restoration of the windows. The window restoration was completed by Dick Greminger of Rivertown Windows, Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. The windows were restored between 2013-2014. The wood plank ceiling in the east room was badly damaged from the deteriorated roof and was removed and has been left exposed to show the construction technique (2013). The plaster walls in the east room had cracked and most sections had fallen to the floor. It was decided to leave the ceiling exposed to show the construction technique of the era when the house was built. In addition, the missing plaster was not replaced for the same reason. The walls retain some of the original plaster, some pieces of the wall paper throughout the years and is use in its current form to teach visitors how buildings are constructed and change over time (see Photo 12). The wood plank ceiling in the west room was repaired in 2013 (see Photo 10). The building was re-wired in 2014 and track lighting was installed in 2014 to the east room. In 2015, the commission hired a local painter who specializes in historic buildings to repair the plaster walls in the west room and to conduct tests to determine the original or early period paint color of the west room, wood trim and doors. In 2016, the painter had determined the doors and window casings were originally wood-grained and the west room wall color was a pale yellow (current paint color). The commission hired the painter to restore the doors and window casings and the west room walls to their original color. At some point during the rehabilitation process, the wood floors were cleaned and restored.²

A two-story L-shaped addition (rear elevation) was constructed for the August Philipp family ca. 1863 (dated by land deeds and increased value of the house) on the east section of the house with a one-story addition on the west section (rear elevation). These additions were removed in 1996 due to a

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deteriorated and hazardous condition. Prior to ca.1863, the house likely had a full-width porch on the rear elevation and it was removed to construct the addition in ca. 1863. A small one-story building was located on the far northeast corner and is no longer standing. The function of the one-story building is not known nor is it known when it was removed.

Integrity

The Frederick Weistar House is well preserved and retains architectural elements that characterize the two-door façade building type with German Vernacular influence. These elements can be seen in the form – two rooms wide and one room in depth, a side gable roof with interior chimneys, two centered, deep inset entrances with wood and glass paneled doors, flat stone arches over windows and minimal ornamentation. The west room retains the original features. While the original plaster walls and wood plank ceiling had to be removed in the east room due to safety issues, it still conveys its sense of function and era in time with the original layout, windows, wood trim, flooring and staircase intact. The dwelling's original form, construction, design and materials are intact, and they clearly convey the overall sense of their original purposes (single-family dwelling) of the era in which it was constructed.

² Brenda Owen.

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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

Ca. 1859

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Frederick Weistar House, 515 Chestnut Street in Chester, Illinois, is locally significant under the National Register of Historic Places Criteria C in the area of Architecture. The dwelling is an architecturally significant example of a mid-nineteenth century domestic architecture embodiment of the two-door facade building type, constructed ca. 1859 for Frederick Weistar (Wester, Western, Weston, Weistar).³ The dwelling is a notable example of a regional one-story limestone house construction with a two-door entrance, side gable roof with interior gable end chimneys and built into the hillside (bank house). The building is a well-preserved example of vernacular domestic architecture of the 1850s era, illustrated through both original exterior and interior details found throughout this dwelling. The Frederick Weistar House represents vernacular building traditions that endured in the built environment due to the simplicity of its design and the influence of German building traditions adapted to a regional area in Illinois. It is the only limestone block, two-door, domestic building of its type in Chester. The period of significance is 1859, the approximate year the house was constructed.

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

American Two-Door Domestic Dwellings

In the United States vernacular houses with two façade doors were constructed in several states. Double door entrances were built in the south, Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Midwest region and west of the Mississippi in the prairie states. The evolution, origins and function of the two-door façade dwelling has an extended history in the United States and European countries, as well as the Caribbean. In the United States, there is documentation of two-door dwellings dating to around 1780 and extending to 1920s in Northern Virginia. This house type was built until the 1940s in Texas and Kansas. German immigrants were well known for building two-door dwellings but settlers from other countries did as well.⁴

Besides the German settlers, the Dutch were known for a two-door house more native to western European. The Dutch house centered on either a one or two room house. The two-door house in some United States southern states contribute its origins from the Caribbean or in the Appalachian mountain region. The French Maison bicellulaire or the Anglo Saxon long house are also steeped in European origin. Whether it be the Dutch house type, the Caribbean, Appalachian, German or other European two-door types, the form,

³ The construction date ca. 1859 was determined by land deeds and the value of the property of each sale transaction from 1850 until 1859 when the property's value experienced a significant increase from \$120.00 to \$650.00; Weistar had several different variants of spellings documented as confirmed by data provided by a family tree on Ancestry.com, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>; accessed 10 November 2016); Records (census, land records, family trees, etc.) documented various spellings of the name Weistar.

⁴ Dennis Domer. "Genesis Theories of the German-American Two-Door House," *Material Culture*, Vol. 26 No. 1, 1994, 1.

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arrangement, size, overall construction and materials were diverse because of the location, economic situation, who built it, personal preference, and the obtainability of local materials.⁵

A vernacular American two-door house has been the discussion for many historians and architectural historians. There are various theories on the origin and function of the two-door dwelling. Some of those theories are based on proximate connection (related to economic reality, building style/type movement, expansion of a dwelling to meeting the growing needs of a family or circumstance, environment conditions and construction needs) and a few are based more on ancestral. Those theories discussed in the following context were put forth by Fred Kniffen, James Shortridge, Henry Glassie, Henry Kauffman and Dennis Domer, and vary in philosophy.

The theories establish a range of conceivable justifications for the American vernacular two-door domestic dwelling. One theory is the saddlebag theory. This theory states the two-door house is the product of the expansion of a house. By adding a room onto the existing house, Fred Kniffen concluded a second door was needed for access to the additional room. By adding a second entrance door, a door would not have to be constructed in the existing side/end elevation wall. This would result in a “two-pen, central chimney log saddlebag house.”⁶

James Shortridge’s theory is the dogtrot. Shortridge’s theory is based on the origins of the two-door I-house building type. He theorizes the two-door I-house evolved when a single pen, log cabin house with one door was enlarged. When timber was not available to construct a cabin in a longer length, a single pen cabin was constructed. Then another single pen cabin was constructed built beside the existing pen – a doorway was constructed within each pen to provide interior access between the two. The two single pens were united under one roof. In his theory, the log dogtrot progressed to the clapboard with balloon framing when these construction materials became available. The purpose of the second door he concluded was pointless.⁷ While his theory is reasonable and may have been the case with some dwellings, it does present some challenges. For the most part, the dogtrot was constructed with two doors leading to the passage, not to the two individual pens. The dogtrot was more commonly found in the south, some in the mid-west and would not explain the two-door domestic dwellings located elsewhere.⁸

Henry Glassie established, the Georgian theory. The two-door vernacular house is commonly found in Pennsylvania (which has a highly concentrated German population) of which Glassie based his theory. During

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Fred Kniffen. *Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion*, “Annals of the Association of American Geographers,” Vol. 55, No. 4, 1965, 562.

⁷ James Shortridge. *Kaw Valley Landscapes*, (Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1977, 97-98.

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the 18th century, Glassie concluded the German-American continental plan house or the Flurkuchenhaus house was transformed to reflect the Georgian style house. He theorized the German-Americans wanted to assimilate and be accepted as equals to the English-Americans that built dwellings with single entry doors on the façade, architectural details with a central hall plan. To achieve the symmetrical, design the German-Americans preferred, they would balance out the façade with two doors instead of having a single door. Like the English-Americans they enhanced the dwelling with dual gable end chimneys and architectural details. According to Dennis Domer, Glassie did not include any field data to support his theory. For this theory to work, data would need to be collected representing how many houses were converted to the Georgian style trend, as well as how many continental plan houses did not undergo change. Overall, one could argue that adding a second door did not produce the designed appearance of the Georgian style. It could be argued the German-American continental plan house is a fusion of German tradition design and a newer trending style.⁹

Another theory is not based upon building type or adapting to new design concepts but rather a cost-effective way to build a house. Henry Kauffman felt the two-door dwelling in Pennsylvania evolved in the early 19th century for financial reasons. Kauffman based his theory on the cost of building materials. He theorized that to conserve of construction as building materials were expensive, German Americans constructed a house without the central hall plan. Kaufmann felt the two-door entry was more practical and was not done for visual preference. In addition, Kauffman felt the two-doors served a purpose; one door for private family space and the other for receiving guest or public space for gatherings and visiting. This theory does present some issues, building materials in the 19th century was less expensive than before with milled lumber available.¹⁰

Finally, the last theory is based on the ancestral concept by Domer. This theory seems relate more with the Frederick Weistar House than the previous four theories. Domer theorizes the two-door American vernacular domestic dwelling derives its origins from ancestral roots (German) and puts forth this concept does work for the German American dwellings from the Atlantic to the Prairie plains. Domer concluded that the German-Americans who migrated to the United States built houses with two-doors based on their ancestral history. He argues its ancestral construction and design methods met the needs of German-Americans. To understand his theory, one must look at the origins of two-door house in the cultural landscape of Germany, the Wohnstallhaus, house-barn or Ernhaus dating back to the 14th century, a two-story, one room deep with three sections. This type of building sheltered people and animals under one roof, not just in Germany but also throughout Europe. The earliest form of this building type only had one entry door, but in the 19th century

⁸ Domer. 4-5.

⁹ Henry Glassie. "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building," *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol 7 (University of Chicago Press on behalf of the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Inc.), 1972, 42-44.

¹⁰ Henry Kauffman. "The Riddle of the Two Front Doors," *Pennsylvania Dutchman* Vol. 6, Winter 1954-55, 27.

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a total separation of space between the living and barn area gave way to a second entry door. The house-barn from the 14th century slowly expanded throughout Germany and by the 19th century it was commonly found on the cultural landscape.¹¹

There was a smaller version of the house-barn which consisted of a house with two sections, a domestic space and work space. Many scholars believe this house-barn type is older than the Wohnstallhaus. These house-barn types were widespread and commonly found into the 20th century. The German-Americans who migrated from Germany would have been familiar with this two-door building type, permitting for a variant of it on the American cultural landscape from Pennsylvania to Kansas and Texas. Especially given the fact some of the house-barn transition into the sole function of a house in 19th century Germany. The evolution of the house-barn occurred due to separate buildings constructed to house animals on the farmstead, the popularity of the parlor and improvements in cooking ovens and chimneys. While the house-barn interior function adapted to the changing times and needs of its owner, the two-door entry was retained - an indication of its ancestral history.¹²

A few of the house-barn building type still exist in the Pennsylvania dating back to the 1700s. It is thought most house-barns were converted into domestic dwellings; another tradition taken from ancestry history of building history of Germany.¹³

The vernacular American two-door dwelling can be found in several variations from one-story to two-story. The various mass and forms can create different functions for the rooms. The smaller dwellings like The Frederick Weistar House usually were expanded by adding rooms onto the back of the house or an ell. The front rooms served as a formal parlor for receiving guest while the other room was reserved for the privacy of the family. Dwellings that had more than one level, a staircase was located in the private family room to provide access to the other private areas of the house. This is true of the east room the Frederick Weistar House, of which the staircase provides access to the lower level. When additions were added on to the rear of the house, normally the kitchen was relocated to one of the rear rooms.¹⁴ While it is unknown what the additions of The Frederick Weistar House were utilized for, it is likely the kitchen may have been relocated to the addition (ca. 1863).

The layout of the two-door domestic dwelling in the cultural landscape of American often included an interior door that separated the two front rooms, as wells as a central wall dividing the rooms. As with the Frederick Weistar House this design holds true. The interior door allowed for the residents to shut one room off if

¹¹ Domer. 10.

¹² Ibid., 10-11

¹³ Ibid., 17.

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needed but also allowed for ventilation by leaving the door open. Over time with changes in cultural trends in the United States, some home owners removed one of the two outer doors or blocked it with the use of furniture. Another change was remove on the interior dividing door. In other cases, the door was removed, and the threshold was enlarged. Fortunately, the Frederick Weistar House still retains the original two-door entrance and interior door.¹⁵

A two-door facade house with German Vernacular influence was not always built by someone of German origins but someone familiar with the building type and wanted a two-door façade house. This seems to be the case with the Frederick Weistar House. The first owner, Frederick Weistar was born in Switzerland in 1814.¹⁶

Vernacular Architecture

The term vernacular as it relates to architecture, refers to buildings constructed by or influenced by builders or by property owners who settled in Illinois and other areas of the United States, who brought their building traditions with them. The building types referred to as vernacular did not have a high-style or an awareness of style trends, but more of a regional traditional building type. Vernacular architecture is usually modest and unpretentious with a mixture of traditional and sometimes more modern styles, or a fusion of various styles. Over time, the people who came to Illinois and other area of the United States instinctively implemented concepts from styles, designs and building techniques from their homeland, as well as their regional areas they resided in the United States.

Most German-influenced buildings were of brick construction. While houses constructed of stone are not as common as brick or frame constructed houses, influenced builders did use stone if it was a locally available building material.¹⁷

The primary characteristics that distinguishes a dwelling with German vernacular influence from other folk houses or vernacular houses is the use of a mass plan, window lintels or arches, lack of details except for the cornice line, dual gable chimneys and usually sited parallel with the street and very close to sidewalk or street on a deep lot, as with the Frederick Weistar House. Most German vernacular houses have a mass plan being two rooms wide and two rooms deep.¹⁸ The Frederick Weistar House is only one room deep but still fits within the mass plan of German vernacular domestic architecture. Most German vernacular dwellings are modest in size, one and one-one-half stories in height but some were constructed as two or two-and-half stories.

¹⁴ Ibid., 20-25.

¹⁵ Ibid., 23.

¹⁶ Ibid., 26.

¹⁷ Charles van Ravensway. *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri: A survey of a Vanishing Culture* (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 1977), 179.

¹⁸ Ravensway. 179

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Windows commonly were designed with a segmental-arched as seen on the façade of the Frederick Weistar House or straight lintels (side elevations). Double-hung sash windows were used in the second half of the 19th century with wooden casements in the first half. Windows light were usually six-over-six or two-over-two or one-over-one as seen in the Frederick Weistar House.¹⁹ Front doors were commonly recessed within a deep door frame; door frame surround was often paneled to match the doors as seen in the cottage.²⁰ Typical of this style is the side gable roof with flanking chimney found at both ends, as seen in the Frederick Weistar House.

It was the Pennsylvania Germans who moved and settled in the mid-west that carried to the west, including Illinois and carried on the ancestral tradition of the two-door dwelling type.²¹ Illinois German immigrants are documented as residing in most of the 102 counties of Illinois, with Randolph County (including the Chester community) comprised of 37.1 percent immigrants (Germans and other foreign immigrants). The first Germans to migrate to Illinois arrived in the 1830s. German immigrants from other areas of the United States and from Germany chose to settle in the Illinois for a few reasons. Illinois compared to other states was more economically viable, appealed to their sense of ethical values and it was a non-slave state.²² Overall, it is estimated over five million people came to the United States from Germany.

The Frederick Weistar House Ownership History

The land to establish the town of Chester was surveyed by Samuel Smith, founder of Chester. The town of Chester was previously known as Smith's Landing. Smith laid out the town with a designated area of land for the Randolph County Courthouse. Originally, the county seat was in Kaskaskia as well as the first state capital of Illinois. After a severe flood in 1844, it was decided to move the county seat to Chester. In the 1847 county election, the county seat was moved to Chester, hence the need for Smith to designate land for the county courthouse. The lots in the surrounding area of the courthouse were reserved for residential property. Seth Allen, a justice of the peace, owned \$12,000 in real estate property according to the 1850 census records and owned the land that holds the Frederick Weistar House.²³

Dating of the original construction of the Frederick Weistar House and the additions was achieved by the research of land deeds and United States Census records. The land the Frederick Weistar House occupies was originally subdivided by Allen. The legal description of the property is as follows: 367/626 91-79-267 472/678 Lot 20 472/681 Allen's Sub. Div. Lots 81 82 Smith's Survey of the Town of Chester (515 Chestnut

¹⁹ Ravensway. 186,231-235.

²⁰ Ibid., 186-187.

²¹ Ibid., 26.

²² Emilie M. Eggemeyer. "From Germany to America: A Comparative Study of Small Town German Vernacular Architecture in the Midwest," Thesis, 2009, 1 and 19.

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Street). According to an April 13, 1848 land deed, Allen deeded the property at 515 Chestnut to John and Samuel Lybarger, brothers, for \$150.00.²⁴ According to an 1850 census, Samuel was eight years old, making him six years old in 1848; John was 12 years old in 1850, making him 10 years old in 1848 at the time of the land transaction. The land deed was not recorded until August 1849. It is not clear why Allen would deed the property to the minor Loybarger brothers. To further complicate the understanding of this transaction, a land deeded dated November 9, 1855, stated Allen sold the property at 515 Chestnut Street to Isaac and Louise Nelson for \$150.00.²⁵ The deed does not acknowledge the Loybarger brothers, nor was a deed found denoting Allen reacquiring the property.

The land records noted two more property transactions before a significant change in property value occurred, an indication when the house was approximately built. The following table documents the chain of ownership of the Weistar House:

| Property Owner | Date of Purchase | Purchase Price (if known) |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Louise Nelson | November 9, 1855 | \$150.00 |
| Frederick Weistar | May 21, 1858 | \$120.00 |
| August and Henriette Philipps | January 31, 1863 | \$650.00 |
| August, Ernest and Elizabeth Philipps | October 10, 1863 | \$100.00 |
| Ernest and August Philips | October 10, 1863 | \$100.000 |
| Samuel and Eliza Servant | February 15, 1864 | \$900.00 |
| Edmond St. Vrain | September 16, 1872 | \$923.00 |
| Ellen S. Ray | February 11, 1880 | \$1500.00 |
| A. G. Gordon | November 19, 1895 | \$1200.00 |
| Margaretta Schmidt | October 31, 1899 | \$1200.00 |
| H. S. and Ida Burbes | December 18, 1905 | \$1200.00 |
| Louis and Agnes Kuhrtz | May 9, 1934 | ----- |
| Margaret Busch | June 10, 1936 | ----- |
| Bonnie A Gardella | ----- | Inherited |
| Judy Yankey | September 29, 1988 | ----- |
| Randolph County Commissioners | 1995 | ----- |

²³ "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 02 January 2017).

²⁴ Land Deed. Recorder of Deeds, Randolph County Courthouse, Chester, Illinois. Deed was provided by Brenda Owen.

²⁵ Ibid.

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Conclusion

The Frederick Weistar House is an excellent example of a two-door facade, domestic dwelling as exhibited in the stone construction, two-door façade entry, the flat lintels and arches over the windows, simplistic in design, and the porch. The Frederick Weistar House is the only representation of a stone constructed, two-door facade house in Chester.

This one-story limestone dwelling retains a significant amount of original materials. Although the ca. 1863 addition was removed due to its unsafe and deteriorated condition, the original thick limestone blocks walls, two-door entry with wood panel surrounds and transoms, the wood panel doors (interior and exterior), the one-over-one double-hung (original or early period) wood sash windows, smaller wood frame windows, the footprint and interior layout are original, and the house retains a high degree of integrity.

The interior of the dwelling also retains a significant amount of original materials including wooden floors, brick floor (lower level), wood trim, picture molding, wood plank ceiling, staircase, brick divider wall and the two-door wooden closet.

The Frederick Weistar House is a good example of this type, and the only one of its kind in Chester. The house still retains the integrity of workmanship, design, materials, feeling, association, original location and represents well the period of significance of ca.1859, and meets the requirements for placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

Weistar Frederick House

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Domer, Dennis. "Genesis Theories of the German-American Two-Door House," *Material Culture*, Vol. 26 No.1, 1994.

Eggemeyer, Emilie M. "From Germany to America: A Comparative Study of Small Town German Vernacular Architecture in the Midwest," Thesis, 2009.

Glassie, Henry. "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building," Winterthur Portfolio, Vol 7, (University of Chicago Press on behalf of the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Inc.), 1972.

Kauffman, Henry. "The Riddle of the Two Front Doors," Pennsylvania Dutchman Vol. 6, Winter 1954-55.

Kniffen, Fred. *Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion*, "Annals of the Association of American Geographers," Vol. 55, No. 4, 1965.

Land Deed. Recorder of Deeds, Randolph County Courthouse, Chester, Illinois. Deeds provided by Brenda Owen.

Ravensway, Charles van. *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri: A survey of a Vanishing Culture* (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 1977).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Chester, Randolph County, Illinois, New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1899, 1906, 1911 and 1948.

Shortridge, James. *Kaw Valley Landscapes*, (Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1977).

United States Census. Database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 02 January 2017).

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|---|----------|-----------|
| 1 | <u>37.904395</u> | <u>-89.828865</u> | 3 | _____ | _____ |
| | Latitude | Longitude | | Latitude | Longitude |
| 2 | _____ | _____ | 4 | _____ | _____ |
| | Latitude | Longitude | | Latitude | Longitude |

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

The property is bounded by Taylor Street to the east, Chestnut Street to the south, Mulberry Street to the north and West Buena Vista Street to the west, Chester, Randolph County, Illinois. Property as described by legal description: 367/626 91-79-267 472/678 Lot 20 472/681 Allen's Sub. Div. Lots 81 82 Smith's Survey

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

All property historically associated with The Frederick Weistar House, 515 Chestnut Street, Chester, Randolph County, Illinois.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Terri L. Foley, Historic Preservation Consultant date 06-07-2017
organization Contractor telephone 573-382-8590
street & number 8812 Sedgley Drive email tfoley@zoho.com
city or town Wilmington state NC zip code 28412

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: The Frederick Weistar House
City or Vicinity: Chester
County: Randolph **State:** IL
Photographer: Terri L. Foley
Date Photographed: 09-16-2016

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

Photo 1 of 14:

- 1 of 14: Façade elevation, looking north.
- 2 of 14: East and façade elevations, looking northwest.
- 3 of 14: West and façade elevations, looking northeast.
- 4 of 14: North (rear) and west elevations, looking southeast.
- 5 of 14: North (rear) elevation, looking south.
- 6 of 14: East and north (rear) elevations, looking southwest.
- 7 of 14: Two-door entrance and porch on façade, showing wood panel door surround and transoms, looking north.
- 8 of 14: Decorative trim detailing of the porch, looking northwest.
- 9 of 14: Interior, west room, showing front entrance door, interior door, wood flooring, wood plank ceiling, wood trim and picture molding, looking southwest.
- 10 of 14: West room, looking north, showing north entrance door.
- 11 of 10: Interior, east room, showing original staircase, closet, brick interior wall, north elevation door, wood flooring and trim, and ceiling beams.
- 12 of 14: East room, looking southwest, showing limestone walls, front entrance door and interior doorway.
- 13 of 14: East room. Looking north, showing staircase access to lower level.
- 14 of 14: Lower level west room, looking northwest, showing stone walls, wood joist and wood slat exterior door.

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.

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List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.

Figure 1: GIS Location Map. Source: Bing Maps.



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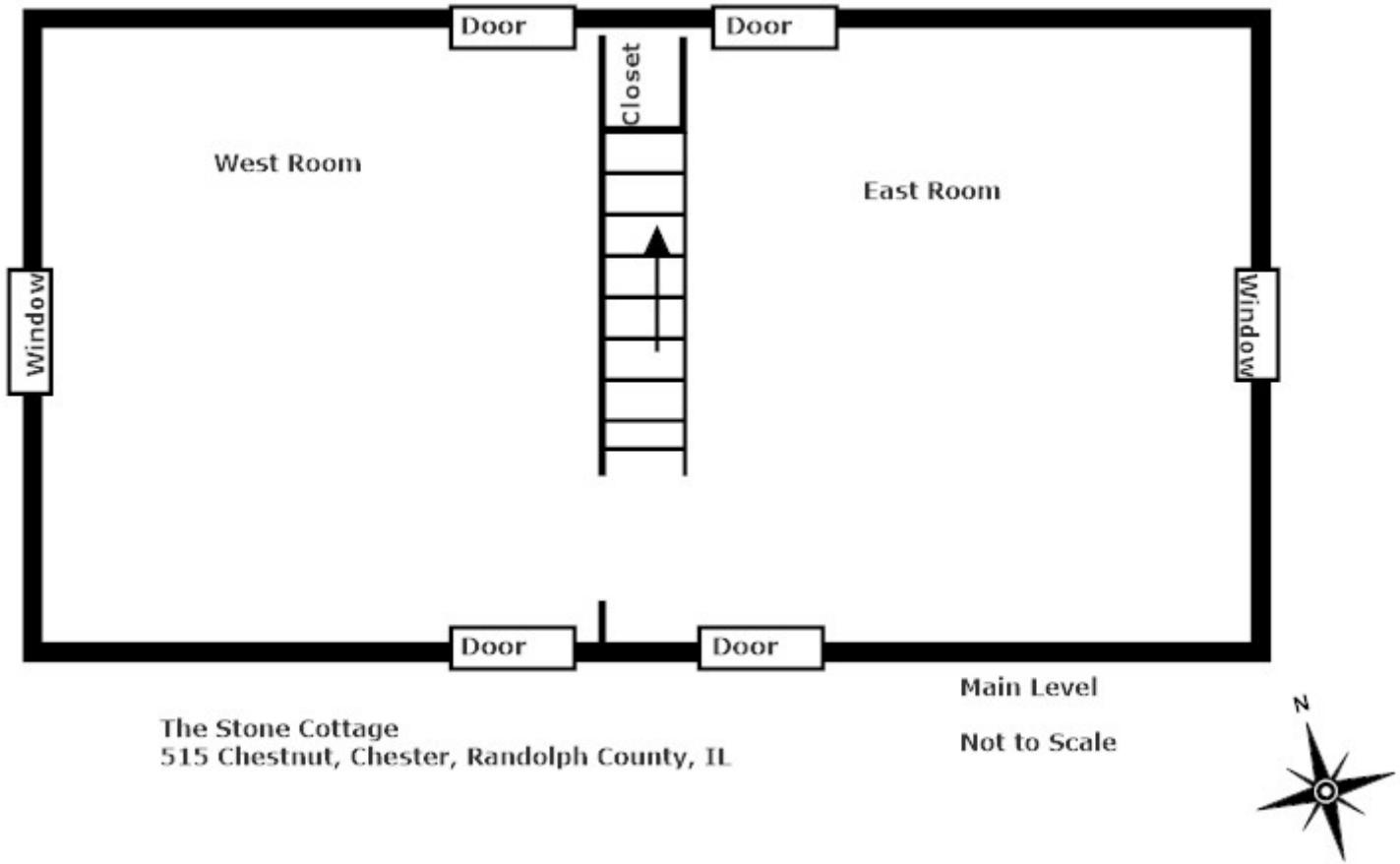
Figure 2: Local Location Map. Source: Bing Map.



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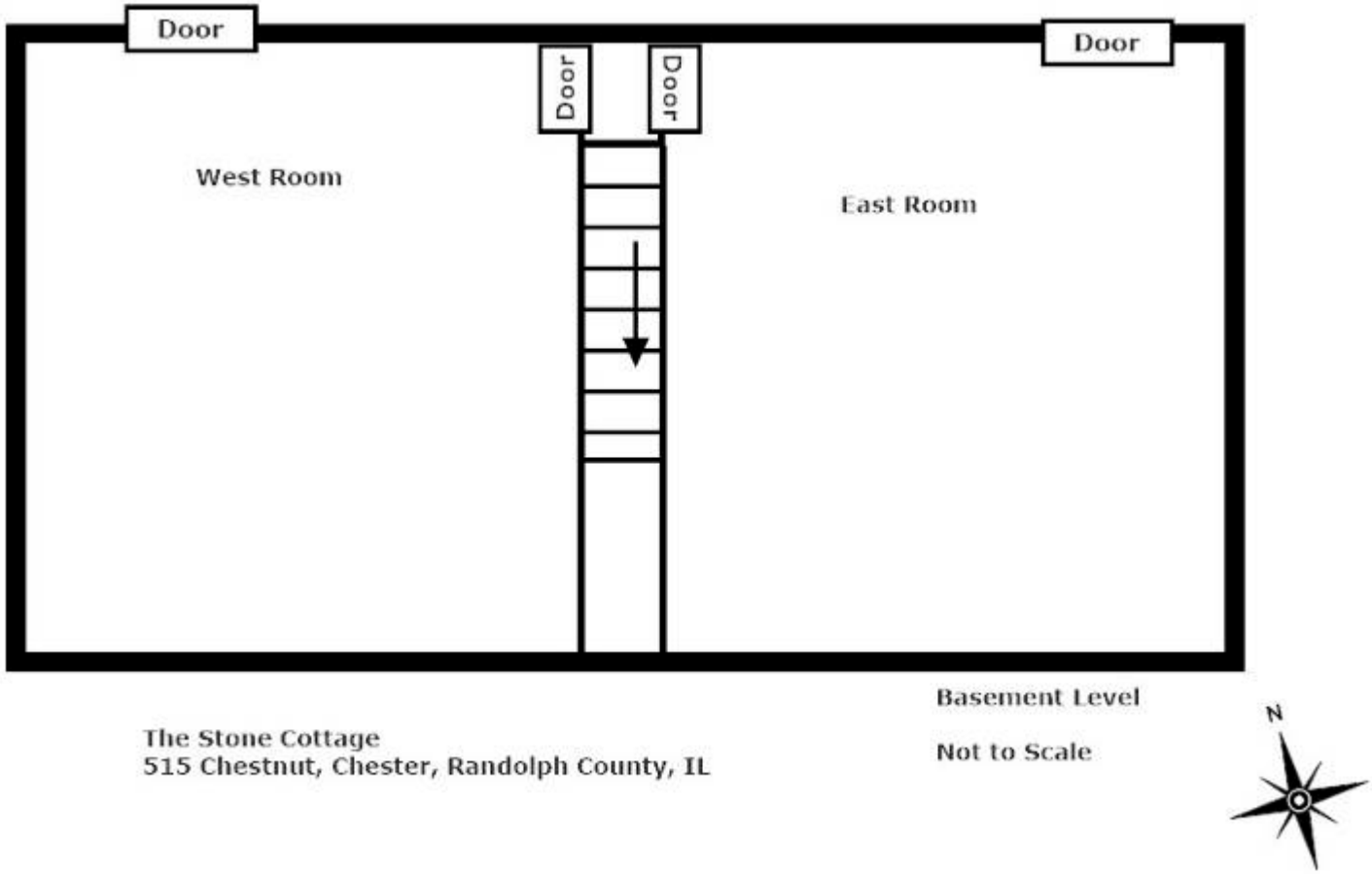
Figure 3: The Frederick Weistar House Floor Plan – First Floor. Source: Terri L. Foley.



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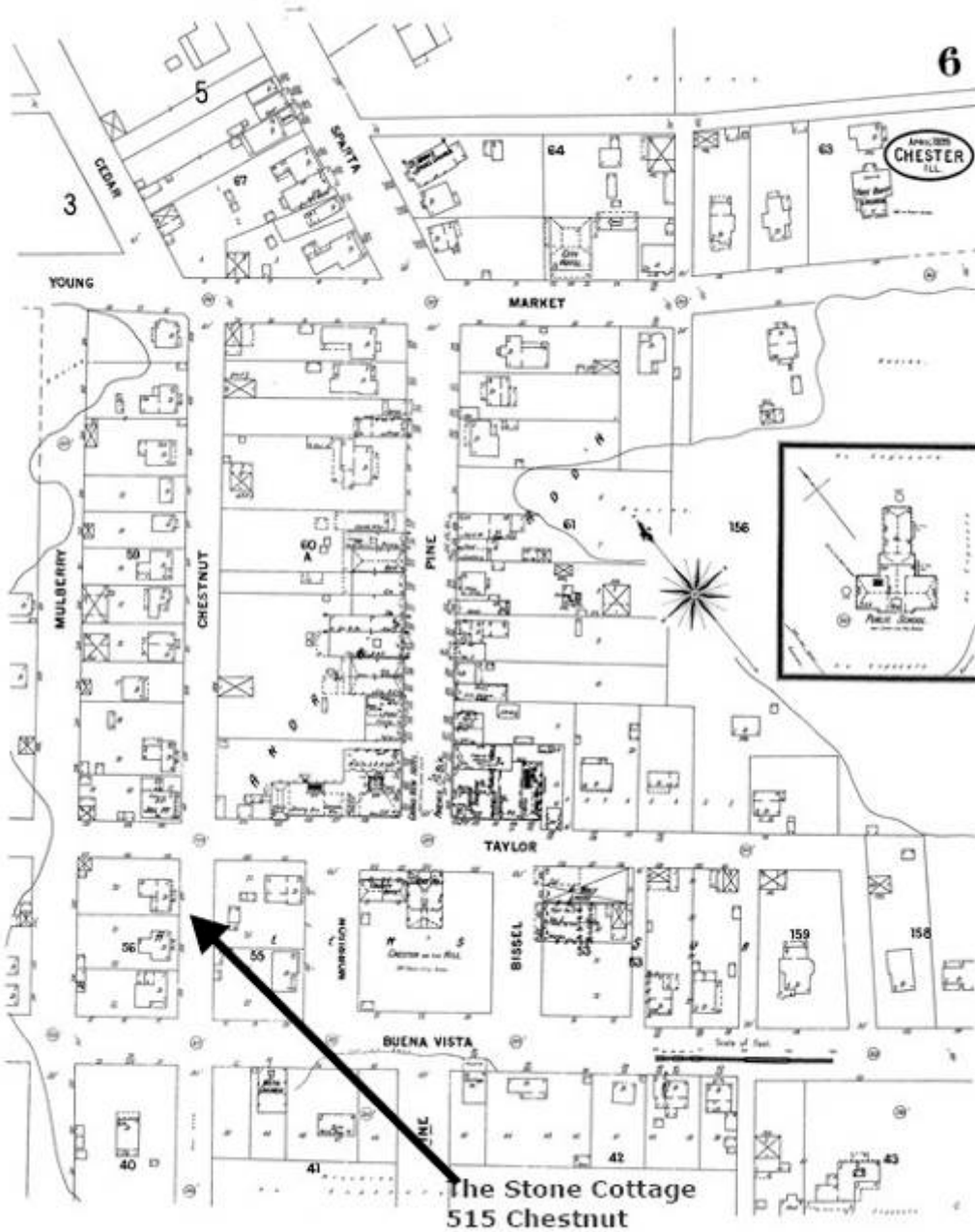
Figure 4: The Frederick Weistar House Floor Plan – Lower Level. Source: Terri L. Foley.



Weistar Frederick House
Name of Property

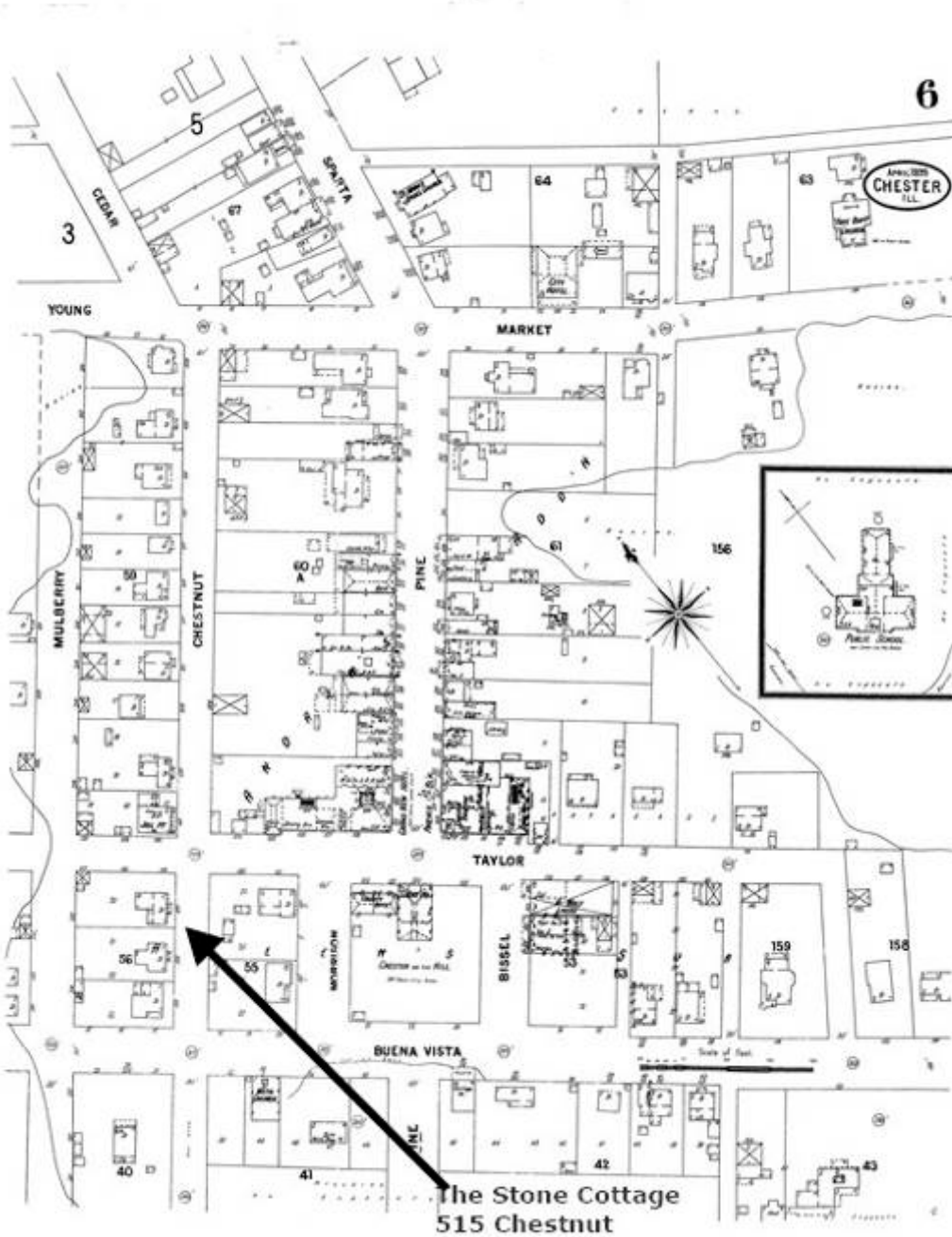
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Figure 5: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Chester, Randolph County, Illinois, New York, 1899



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Figure 6: Historic Photographs of the Frederick Weistar House, date unknown. Source: Brenda Owen.









GREEN
OFFICE







ILLINOIS
150



ST
OF
SHERIFF SHANNON



Stone Cottage
1850
in Loc. 28 donated to
John & Samuel Lybarger
Descendants of
Revolutionary War
Patriots
Ludwick Lybarger
and
Jean Baptiste Monceuil

















HEIR
TOMATO KITCHEN
AMERICA'S FAVORITE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 5/10/2018 Date of Pending List: 5/30/2018 Date of 16th Day: 6/14/2018 Date of 45th Day: 6/25/2018 Date of Weekly List: 6/15/2018

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 6/15/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Control Unit Discipline _____

Telephone _____ Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
www.dnr.illinois.gov



Bruce Rauner, Governor

Wayne A. Rosenthal, Director

May 3, 2018

Ms. Barbara Wyatt
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Wyatt:

Enclosed are the disks that contain the true and correct copies of the National Register nomination recommended for nomination by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council at its February 23, 2018 meeting and signed by the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer:

Old Fire Station, Chester, Randolph County
Chester F. Weinrich House, Chester, Randolph County
Frederick Weistar House, Chester, Randolph County

Also enclosed is the true and correct copy of the National Register nomination recommended for nomination by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council at its February 24, 2017 meeting and signed by the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer:

Hotel Belleville, Belleville, St. Clair County

Please contact me at 217/785-4324 if you need any additional information. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Heckenkamp".

Andrew Heckenkamp, Coordinator
Survey and National Register program
Illinois State Historic Preservation Office
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

enclosures