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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL
REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Model Electric Home

other names/site number Martin, Grant and Endora D., House

2. Location

street & number 1516 Sunset Road N/A not for publication

city or town Chattanooga N/A vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Hamilton code 065 zip code 37405

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Hays 6/10/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Delores Byers 7/15/93
Date of Action

Model Electric Home
Name of Property

Hamilton County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Tudor Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other BRICK, WOOD, CONCRETE

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity 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: N/A

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

September 12-20, 1925

Significant Dates

1925

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: Sears, W. H.

Builder: Tolley, R. Lee Company

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Tennessee Historical Commission
Middle Tennessee State University
Center for Historic Preservation

Model Electric Home
Name of Property

Hamilton County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References Chattanooga, TN. 105SE
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	116	656340	3882610
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gail Reed

organization Center for Historic Preservation date 1-15-93

street & number Box 80, MTSU telephone (615) 898-2947

city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37130

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Mr. and Mrs. Edward Blake

street & number 1516 Sunset Road telephone (615) 267-4927

city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37405

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Narrative Description

The Model Electric Home is located at 1516 Sunset Road in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee. The home, located in the Riverview area, is built in an English Tudor Revival style. The two story front gable and wing home which fronts Sunset Road on the west, and whose rear facade is on Riverview Avenue, was built in 1925, as a Model Home by the Electric League of Chattanooga, with W.H. Sears as architect, and the R. Lee Tolley Company as builder.

The front or west facade of the home is dominated by a prominent steeply pitched cross gable roof. The house is constructed of hollow tile walls covered in stucco and painted white. Wood trim, in the form of decorative half timbering, is found on the second story exterior. All windows are original and all but three are steel casement windows with concrete sills. As with most windows in the Tudor Revival Style, they are grouped into strings of two or three, with small fixed panes present above the main windows. The raised basement is of brick, as is the chimney on the south side of the house. The roof, with overhanging eaves, is of composition shingle and is approximately fifteen years old.

The front of the home is approached from the fieldstone driveway on the south. A stone mailbox at the front on Sunset Road is original. A stone walkway leads to a glazed brick and concrete open patio. A glazed brick and concrete step on the north side of the patio leads to a recessed porch or vestibule, which is decorated with fifteen wood spindles in front and a panel of wood spindles to the right of the front door. The front door is wood, with a panel of 6 lights at the top. An original outdoor light fixture hangs to the right of the front door, between the door and the wood panel. A large steel casement sash or vent with two single and one double openings is located in the center of the wing, to the south of the front door. A steel casement window to the north of the front door is located on the first floor of the gable front.

The house has 2" by 10" floor joists on 16" centers, oak floors throughout. The first floor has been carpeted. All walls and ceilings are plaster. The original steam heated boiler has been converted to gas. The house originally had

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

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steam-heat radiators. The radiators were removed at an unknown date.

The south side of the facade has a large double steel casement window on the first floor at the southeast corner and two small steel casement windows on either side of the brick chimney, which have been plastered over from the inside. A large steel casement window is located to the east of the chimney on the second story. The second floor is decorated with applied wood resembling half-timbering in the Tudor Revival Style. The raised brick basement has three steel casement windows, one to the west of the chimney and two to the east of the chimney.

The first floor of the rear or east elevation has a double pair of steel casement windows on the southeast corner followed by one single steel casement window. In 1979, a family room was added to the rear facade on the main floor. This addition projects out over the original raised brick basement, forming a covered carport, which leads into the original built-in garage. An original screen on the back door of the eastern elevation remains. This rear door leads into the basement from the ground level to the south of the garage and carport. The 1979 addition was constructed in the Tudor Revival Style of the home and does not detract in any way. A pair of 1:1 double sash wood windows are located on the south side of this addition and two separated 1:1 double sash windows are located on the east side. A door leads from a projection on the west side of the 1979 addition to a raised wood deck, completed the same year on the north facade of the house. Stairs lead up to the deck from the ground level on the east side. Wood lattice work covers the bottom of the deck and also provides a tall screen, which hides the deck from the front or west side. Mature trees and landscaping also provide privacy to this area.

The ground floor of the north elevation has a wood door, covered with an aluminum storm door leading from the kitchen to the deck. An 8:8 double sash window is located to the west of the door and looks out to the deck. A double pair of steel casement windows is found on the west side of the wood lattice screen on the northwest corner of the north elevation. On the second floor, an 8:8 double sash wood window is located on the east side, a 6:6 double sash wood window in the center of this three bay facade, and finally,

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

a cast iron casement window on the north west corner with 24 lights.

The interior room arrangement of the first floor consists of a living room with fireplace, sun room, dining room, center hall, butler's pantry, half bath, kitchen, and family room. The second floor room arrangement consists of a hall, three bedrooms with walk-in closets, and two baths, one of which is original to the house. There is an attic and basement. The basement is divided into furnace room, servant's room, laundry area, and garage. The garage ceiling and kitchen floor is poured concrete 6 inches deep. The kitchen has been modernized and has a built-in stove and dishwasher. In 1947, a half bath was added on the first floor where the breakfast room was originally located (See floor plan). The back porch on the north side of the house was brought into the kitchen and the rear steps removed. A deck was added here in 1979. In 1974, central air conditioning was installed on the second floor. In 1979, a bath was added on the rear under the roof adjacent to the master bedroom in the southeast corner of the second floor. Pipes to this bath had to be placed on the exterior of the house, but they were cleverly disguised with a wood cover, blending in with the half-timbering. The family room was added in 1979 in the rear of the first floor with an entry from the kitchen, or from the outside deck.

Posted near the circuit box at the head of the basement stairs are two original sheets of paper. One is an instruction sheet for use of the electrical circuit box, the other, lists the original colors and paints used throughout the house. The wiring is all original, but the circuit box has been replaced by the current owners.

The living room is entered from the front door. New plaster and crown moulding was added here in the 1980's. The original moulding in the living room was picture moulding and therefore smaller than the present crown moulding. The woodwork is original as is the fireplace, which is built of tile, with a wood mantel. Small windows on either side of the fireplace have been plastered over on the inside, and boarded over on the outside. This room measures 14', 10" wide by 22', 10" long. The front door measures 3', 4". One large steel casement window is on the west side. An entry closet on the north side of the living room lights automatically when opened. This was one of the advertised features of the Model Home.

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

The sun room, measuring 12' X 9', is entered from the living room on the southeast part of the house. Three steel casement windows are located across the east side, and two steel casement windows on the south side. The original electrical outlets are located in this room on the north wall. The original wiring is intact. One outlet was used to provide electricity for an electric cigar lighter which had its own stand. This room was also wired to give radio connections between the rooms.

The Dining Room, which measures 14', 10" X 13', 10", is located to the left when you enter the home, on the northwest corner of the house. The original plaster had a raised pattern, but now has wall paper and wainscoting, which measures 2', 9", and was added in the 1980's. Steel casement windows are located on the west side and north side of this room. The windows are covered with the original metal venetian blinds. A swinging door on the east side of the room leads into a butler's pantry, (which is a hall or passage way) with built-in glass cabinets on both sides. A half bath, added in 1947, is located on the north side of this passage way and the kitchen is located at the end of this hall on the east side of the house. The butler's pantry and bath were originally part of the breakfast room. The built-in cabinets are original. The kitchen was enlarged by bringing in the back enclosed porch in 1947. The original walk-in pantry remains in the southwest corner of the kitchen. A wall projection behind the present refrigerator in the kitchen, (measuring 4" deep; 2', 2" wide; and 4', 11" tall) marks the place where the original refrigerator was located. The original brass door chimes are hanging on the west kitchen wall. Off the kitchen, the Family Room was added in 1979.

A door on the east wall of the kitchen leads to a small center hall where an original built-in telephone cabinet is located. The original light fixture hangs from the ceiling. The walls retain their original plaster with raised pattern in the stair well. Stairs lead to the basement on the east side of the hall, and to the second floor on the south side. The wood stairs, in the Arts and Crafts Style, have a double landing and sawn balusters. A steel casement window, 6:6:6, is located in the stairwell at the second landing.

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A large central hall leads to three bedrooms, each with walk-in closets which light up when opened and a bath. The bedroom on the northeast side has an original metal box containing a fire escape chain ladder with directions for its use.

The bath on the north side of the house on the second floor is the only original bath in the house. The bath has been redecorated, but originally had 3 X 5 inch green tile from the floor to ceiling and a black and white octagonal shaped tile on the floor, which has been removed. An original wood 6:6 double sash window is located on the north wall of the bath.

The master bedroom on the south side of the second floor had a storage room on the east side, which was converted to a second full bath and closet in 1979. The window on the south side of this bedroom has a solid pane of glass today, because of the use of a window air conditioner before 1979. The ceiling slants on either side of the front (west) steel casement window in this bedroom.

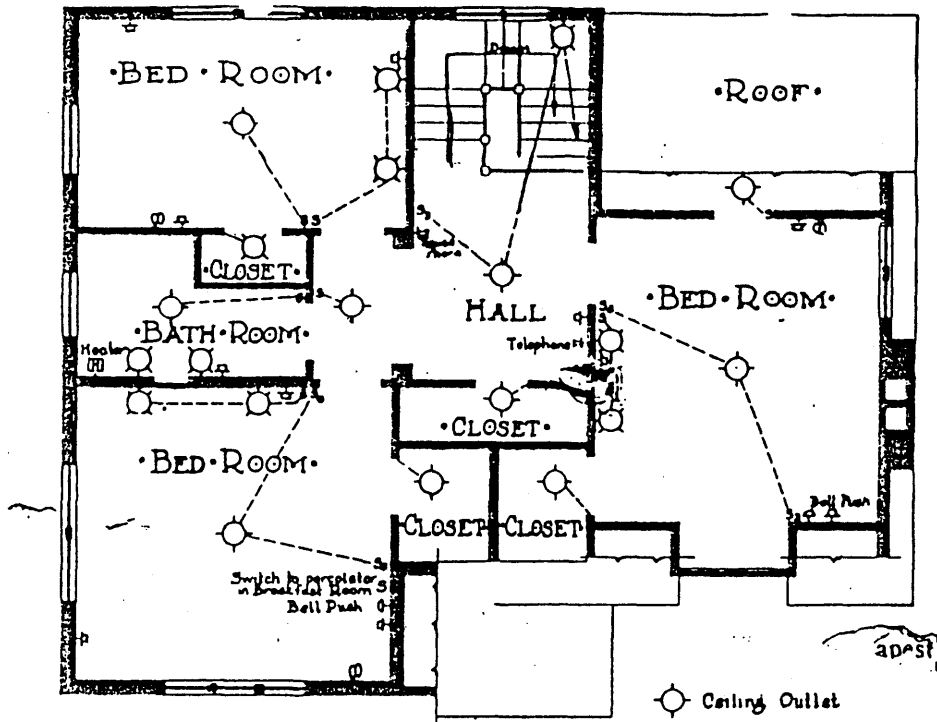
The landscaping, part of which is terraced, is original. Mature trees and rocks form a beautiful setting for this home. Steps lead down the back of the lot to Riverview Drive. An old wood arbor still stands in the rear. The only change that has been made by the present owners is the installation of a fish pond on the north side of the house, which can be seen from the deck. There are no other buildings on the property. The property retains its original 1925 boundaries.

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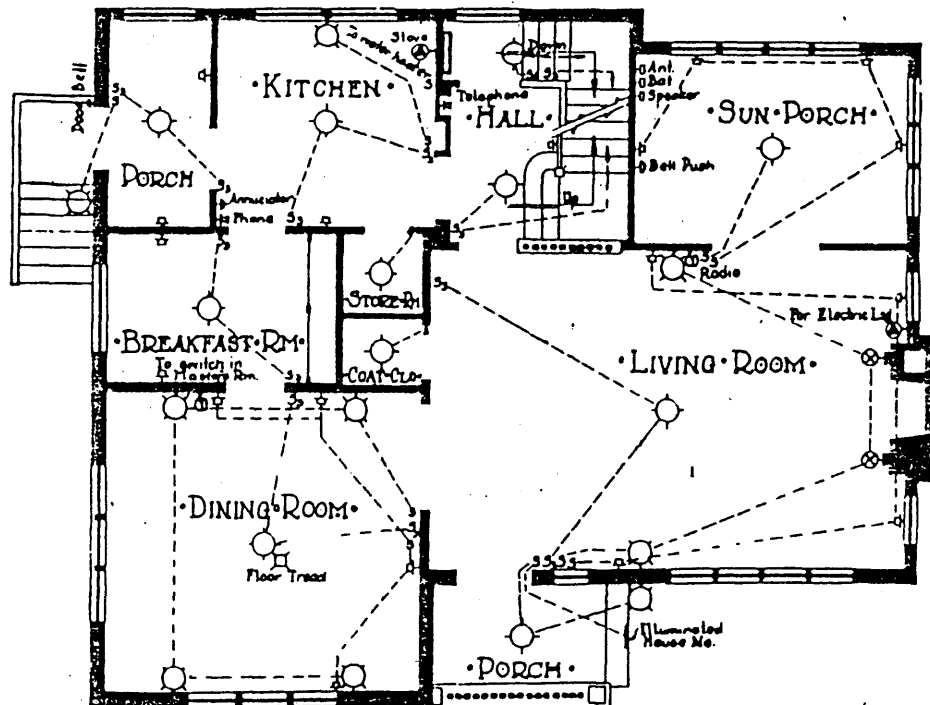
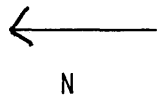
Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee



•SECOND FLOOR PLAN•

- Ceiling Outlet
- Wall Bracket Outlet
- ⊕ Convenience Outlet
- ⊙ Bell Push
- ⊗ Radio Outlet

1925 Floorplan
Copied from
original Electric
League brochure



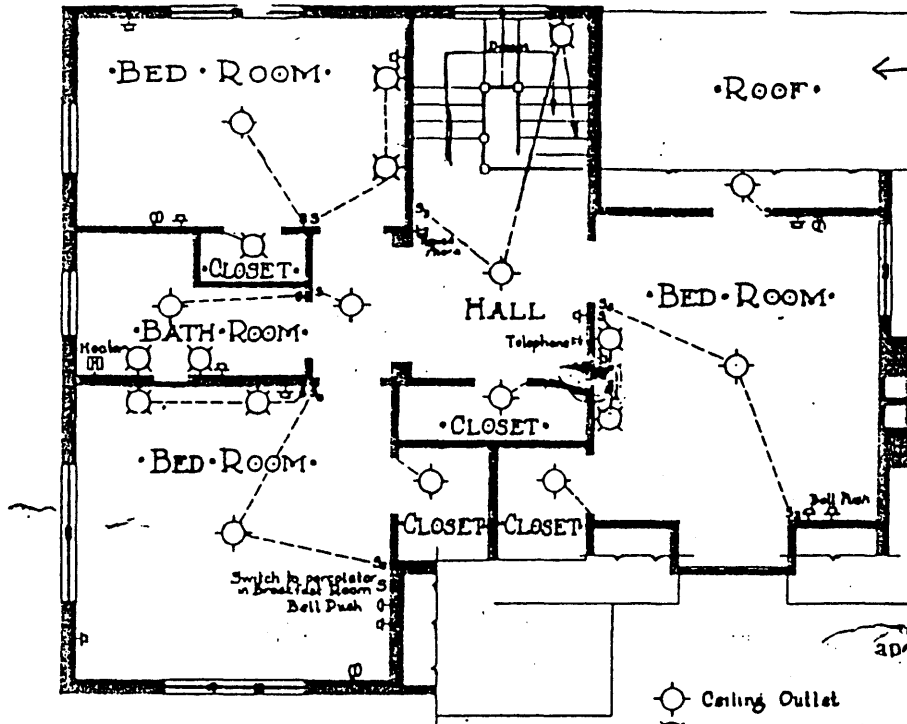
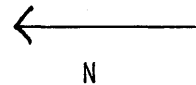
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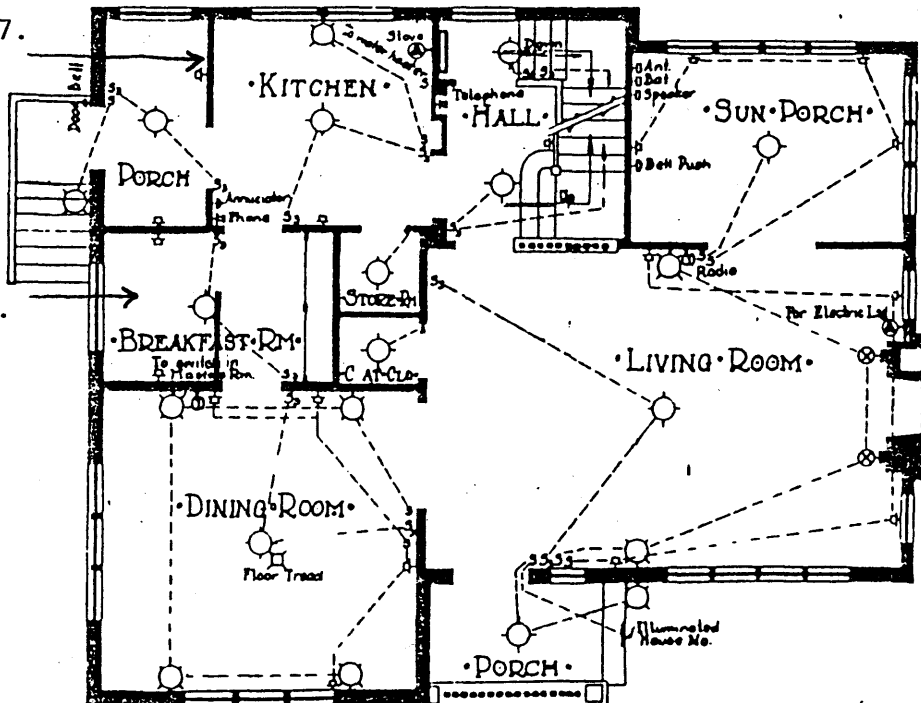
1993 Floorplan



•SECOND FLOOR PLAN•

- Ceiling Outlet
- Wall Bracket Outlet
- ⊕ Convenience Outlet
- ⊖ Bell Push
- ⊗ Radio Outlet

Porch added to the kitchen in 1947.
One wall removed.



Bath added in 1947.
One wall added to enclose area.

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Narrative Statement of Significance

The home at 1516 Sunset Road in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee, is being nominated under Criteria A. The property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history in the area of Commerce. This home was built by the Chattanooga Electric League in 1925 to promote the member's products. Building progressive or modern homes was a movement that while aimed at providing a better life style, was done primarily "as a means of establishing new markets for their products." (Yesterday's Homes For Tomorrow, p. 16). In this case, the Chattanooga Electric League was promoting new electrical products to the public by building a model home for their display. This home was deliberately designed as a model for the impending electrification of middle-class homes throughout Chattanooga. Interestingly, the "high tech" experiment in living was clothed in a rather conservative architectural revival of that same time, the Tudor Revival Style.

In building the Model Home in the Riverview Section, the League chose a neighborhood that had been developing as an upper middle class neighborhood since shortly after the turn of the century. The present owner of the home knows of several homes that were built before the Model Home on his street, so the Model Home was not the first to be built in the area. The homes in Riverview are built on large well-landscaped lots in an area that rises in gentle slopes across the Tennessee River from the city of Chattanooga.

From September 12th to September 20, 1925, the Electric League of Chattanooga, Tennessee showcased their Model Electric Home at 1516 Sunset Road in the Riverview Section. In presenting Chattanooga's Second Electric Home to the public, the Electric League sought to plan and carry out an exhibit on a "purely educational basis." (The Electric League of Chattanooga, The Model Electric Home, 1925). This exhibit was to serve as a practical guide for people who were building new homes or remodeling old ones.

An original brochure about the Model Home published by the Electric League of Chattanooga was found by the current owners under the tile or floor boards in 1979, when they were adding a second bath upstairs. This home was

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

advertised as the second model home built by the Electric League. To date, no information has been found about the first model home.

On Saturday, September 12, 1925, the Chattanooga Electric League placed an advertisement in The Daily Times of Chattanooga, Tennessee. This advertisement appeared in the newspaper on the opening day of the exhibit. The League stated their purpose for the exhibit was "for the benefit of present and perspective owners of homes in Chattanooga." The ad stated that the League, through an arrangement with the Tennessee Electric Power Company, would inaugurate bus service during the exhibit, which would operate between the Electric Home and the end of the Riverview car line. Persons who desired to visit the home by street car would be met at the end of the Riverview line and bussed to and from the home free of charge. Directions were given to the home and it was stated that "no articles or appliances will be offered for sale and no admission will be charged."

Each day of the exhibit an ad was run in the newspaper. One ad on September 17, pictured the dining room of the home. Promoting the exhibit as educational, the League stated that "We want you to think of this home as one that is model in every way and yet well within the reach of the average home owner. It is built, wired, and furnished with the utmost consideration for beauty, comfort, and convenience." An ad on September 19 headlined, "Only Saturday and Sunday Left to Visit the Model Electric Home in Riverview." A picture of the bathroom was featured in which it was said, "Custom has long linked together Saturday night and the bathroom, so when you visit the Model Electric Home today be sure and see this important room. Upon inspection you will have to admit that it would be a delightful place to perform the proverbial Saturday night rites."

Prizes were given away every day during the exhibit and prize winners were announced in the newspaper. Several electrical companies in their advertisements during the week of the exhibit also invited the public to attend the open house in Riverview. The Tennessee Power Company in an ad on September 17, 1925, invited the public to attend their "Electric Cooking Matinee" at their salesroom on Market and Sixth Streets. The company stated also in this ad that "A visit to the Electric Home will help you in furnishing your new home."

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

The Chattanooga Electric League was composed of the following companies:

Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Co.
Terrell Electric Company
Chattanooga Electric Co.
American Lava Co.
F. P. Sweet
The Tennessee Electric Power Co.
Mills and Lupton Supply Co.
General Electric Co.
Clark Electric Co.
W. C. Teas Co.
Scott Bros.
Southeastern Electric Co.
Rennick Electric Co.
Fred Cantrell Co.
The Curtis Co.
Brown Bros.

The Model Electric Home at 1516 Sunset Road, was to demonstrate the most convenient and economical use of electrical service and was equipped with the latest lighting systems, wiring, and electrical appliances. Like most advertisers of the 1920's, the builders were promoting beauty, comfort, and convenience to the public.

In their promotional brochure, the Electric League advertised the following appointments to be found in the home at 1516 Sunset Road:

adequate lighting in every room; outlets in various rooms placed to anticipate various furniture arrangements; a fire-proof switchboard box which controlled the various circuits throughout the house; closets which lit up when the door opened; radio connections between the rooms; an illuminated house number and porch light; an electric doorbell; electric self-winding clock on the fireplace mantel; torchieres on the mantel; electrically wired secretary; ceiling fixtures and wall brackets; handy switches and outlets; an electrically wired tea wagon; a cigar lighter; outlets and call buzzer under the dining room table; an illuminated fish bowl; a coffee maker in the kitchen

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

which could be switched on from the upstairs bedroom; an electric range; water heater switch in kitchen; ironing board and outlet for iron; telephone system; call bells; buffer for polishing silver; electric dishwasher; exhaust fan; special lighting over the kitchen sink; refrigerator; electric bottle warmer; toy range and electric train; air heater in bath; electric shaving mug; bracket lights on either side of the bath mirror and bed; boudoir lamp; violet ray, vibrator and warming pad; electric drill and bench grinder; electric soldering iron, and a battery charging outlet in the garage.

The brochure of the Electric League included a chart which listed appliances and the cents per hour charged for their usage. The brochure also gave ideas for decorating and furnishing the modern home. A floor plan of the home was included in the brochure.

Electricity was a major technological improvement that affected homes in the 1920's. The value of electrical household appliances produced in the U. S. increased from \$23 million in 1915, to \$83 million in 1920, and to \$180 million in 1929. The Commerce Department announced that whereas only 16 percent of the population had lived in dwellings with electric lights in 1912, that figure rose to 63 percent in 1927.

Advertisements proliferated as producers began to promote their products more boldly. G. E. ads linked "The Suffrage and the Switch." Advertisers exploited people's fears of being out of date. Almost all ads, including the brochure from the Chattanooga Electric League, challenged the mother and housewife to make good choices of products for her home. (Wright, Building The Dream, p. 208).

Eager to tap new markets in the 1920's, private corporations--among them U. S. Steel, Republic Steel, the Homosote Company, General Electric, and Westinghouse--developed increased interest in housing as a means of establishing new markets for their products. In 1934, G. E. and Architectural Forum Magazine sponsored a competition to design a home for a prototypical American family which attracted more than 2,000 entries from around the country.

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

(Jandl, Yesterday's Houses of Tomorrow: Innovative American Homes, 1850-1950, p. 15-16.) The Electric League of Chattanooga seemed to anticipate this kind of promotion by almost ten years, in erecting their Model Home at 1516 Sunset Road in 1925.

In choosing the Tudor Revival Style as a style of architecture for their Model Home, the Chattanooga Electric League built a style that was very popular in the 1920's. The Home Owners Service Institution of New York printed a book entitled: The Book of a Thousand Homes in 1923, and the English Tudor or cottage house with a stucco exterior was featured with several plans similar to the one at 1516 Sunset Road. The advertisements stated that this plan "is quite impressive in character and particularly well suited for location on a fairly large lot in a suburban district." This would seem to be the attraction of the Tudor Revival Style home in placing it in the Riverview Section of Chattanooga. Similar Tudor Revival Style home plans were published in the House Page of the New York Tribune in 1923, and received favorable comment. This home was described with a stucco exterior, utilizing sweeping roof lines, and was entered through a small vestibule porch. The plans included a large living room with fireplace and a sun porch at the back. (Henry Atterbury Smith, 500 Small Houses of the Twenties, p. 26-27). Again, this is an apt description of the Model Home built by the Chattanooga Electric League.

The Tudor Revival Style was a dominant style of domestic building used for a large proportion of early 20th century houses throughout the U. S. Most of the work published in The House Beautiful Magazine had an acknowledged debt to other architectural and social reform movements in the U. S., whose leaders were fond of the style in the early 20th century. The majority of the homes favored by the editor of this magazine strongly resembled the Tudor cottages built for workers in English garden cities. In the early part of the 20th century, most Americans turned away from radical house forms toward more traditional ones. Some historians have claimed that women, innately drawn toward more conservative historical architectural styles, were by this time able to have a stronger say in the choice of a home. It was in this trend, that the Chattanooga Electric League chose the Tudor Revival Style home for their model in order to showcase the latest electrical features which would bring health, comfort, and convenience to people wishing to purchase them. As one of the League's advertisements

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Hamilton County, Tennessee

stated: "Electricity washes clothes, irons them; washes dishes; cleans carpets, rugs, and upholstered furniture; cooks your meals; supplies refrigeration and in many ways gives the housewife more leisure and comfort."

The exterior walls of the home are hollow building tile covered with stucco. The tile, an incombustible product of burned clay, was originally used as a fireproofing cover on steel beams. When it became apparent that the huge spans of steel could not withstand the ravages of fire, a light fireproofing material was sought. Hollow tile was adopted, and successfully performed its duty in this capacity. Its use however, was not long confined to this respect, as it soon found its place in the construction of foundations, walls, partitions, and floors. It was used extensively in this time period (1920's) for the construction of homes, churches, hospitals, schools, factories, and farm buildings. The U. S. government used this material in World War I because of its economical and versatile construction possibilities. It was advertised in the 1920's as only costing five percent over a similar frame construction. Because the tile came in larger units, it increased the speed of construction and needed no painting. The voids created in hollow tile block formed several layers of dead air, which insulated the interior from the outdoor elements. It created a thermos bottle effect, keeping the home warmer in winter and cooler in summer. Because the walls are dry, bacteria and germs could not survive and vermin could not penetrate the hard burned walls (according to promotions). The walls could be left plain or bare or could be covered with stucco or brick. Stucco applied would not peel, chip, or crack. No water could penetrate its way between the stucco and the tile wall to freeze and crack the finish (again, the promotions). According to an advertisement for Hollow Tile, the homes of hollow tile "stand as an inspiration of progress in any community and uplift to the standards of living--a most economical form of permanent construction." (Smith, 500 Small Homes of the Twenties, p. 312). In choosing this material for the Model Home in Chattanooga, the builder, R. Lee Tolley and Company, was applying a building material which was safe, convenient, and healthy. This was an important element in promoting progressive or modern homes in the 1920's. It is not known at this time if this was a common building technique in Chattanooga in 1925. Additional research is needed after

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the survey is completed to place hollow tile construction in Chattanooga into context.

The lot on which the Model Electric Home is located was purchased by the builder, R. Lee Tolley on March 4, 1925. It is assumed that the builder proceeded to build the Model Home in the months following this purchase. The home was ready for the exhibit sponsored by the Chattanooga Electric League on September 12, 1925. The home's architect was listed in the promotional brochure as William Hatfield Sears. Sears was born March 8, 1875, at Prebie, New York and was educated in public schools, at Colgate Academy, and Columbia University from which he graduated in 1904. In 1908, with Snelling and Potter, he was responsible for the Staten Island Terminal in New York City. From New York, he moved to Atlanta and was employed by George Thompson that same year. In 1907, he went to Chattanooga to work for Reuben H. Hunt. From 1908 until 1913, he was in partnership with a Mr. Huntingdon. He later worked independently, and was probably doing so when he designed the Model Home for the Electric League. (Herndon, Joseph L., "Architects in Tennessee Until 1930: A Dictionary." Ph.d. dissertation, Columbia University, 1975, p. 161).

The R. Lee Tolley Company sold the home to Grant and Endora D. Martin on February 1, 1926. It is not known whether or not the Martins visited the Model Home when it was on display the previous September. It is also not known if the Martins purchased all of the electrical appliances displayed in the house. It is known that when the current owners moved to the house in 1963, the cigar lighter and stand which was originally placed in the sunroom was stored in the basement. The Martins sold the house on March 4, 1942, to Richard S. Bicknell and his wife, Mattie Schreiber Bicknell. On March 15, 1950, Grier and Josephine Lloyd purchased the house from the Bicknells. The present owners of the property are Edward W. and Barbara R. Blake, who purchased the house on May 16, 1963, from the Lloyds.

This Tudor Revival Style home is a good example of homes which were built for middle class families in the 1920's in a suburb setting. The Tudor Revival Style was popular during this time period and continued to be popular through the 1930's in America. It is interesting that the Electric League of Chattanooga chose to display their electrical wonders in a traditional style home. It was a home that they must have felt would appeal to the average middle class

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family in 1925. Further research is needed before architectural significance can be established.

One historian, David Nye, states his thesis in Electrifying America. He believes that Americans used power to reinforce privacy, corporate power, and individualism. In any case, for many Americans, electricity promised a kind of secular salvation: better health, more leisure, and a future of abundance. This is what the Chattanooga Electric League was promoting in their Model Home. It sounds very much like the American dream.

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Hamilton County, Tennessee

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Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Model Electric Home
1516 Sunset Road
Chattanooga, TN
Hamilton Co.

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Model Electric Home, located at 1516 Sunset Road is shown on the accompanying tax maps, 127-P and 127-Q, parcel number 14.

Boundary Justification

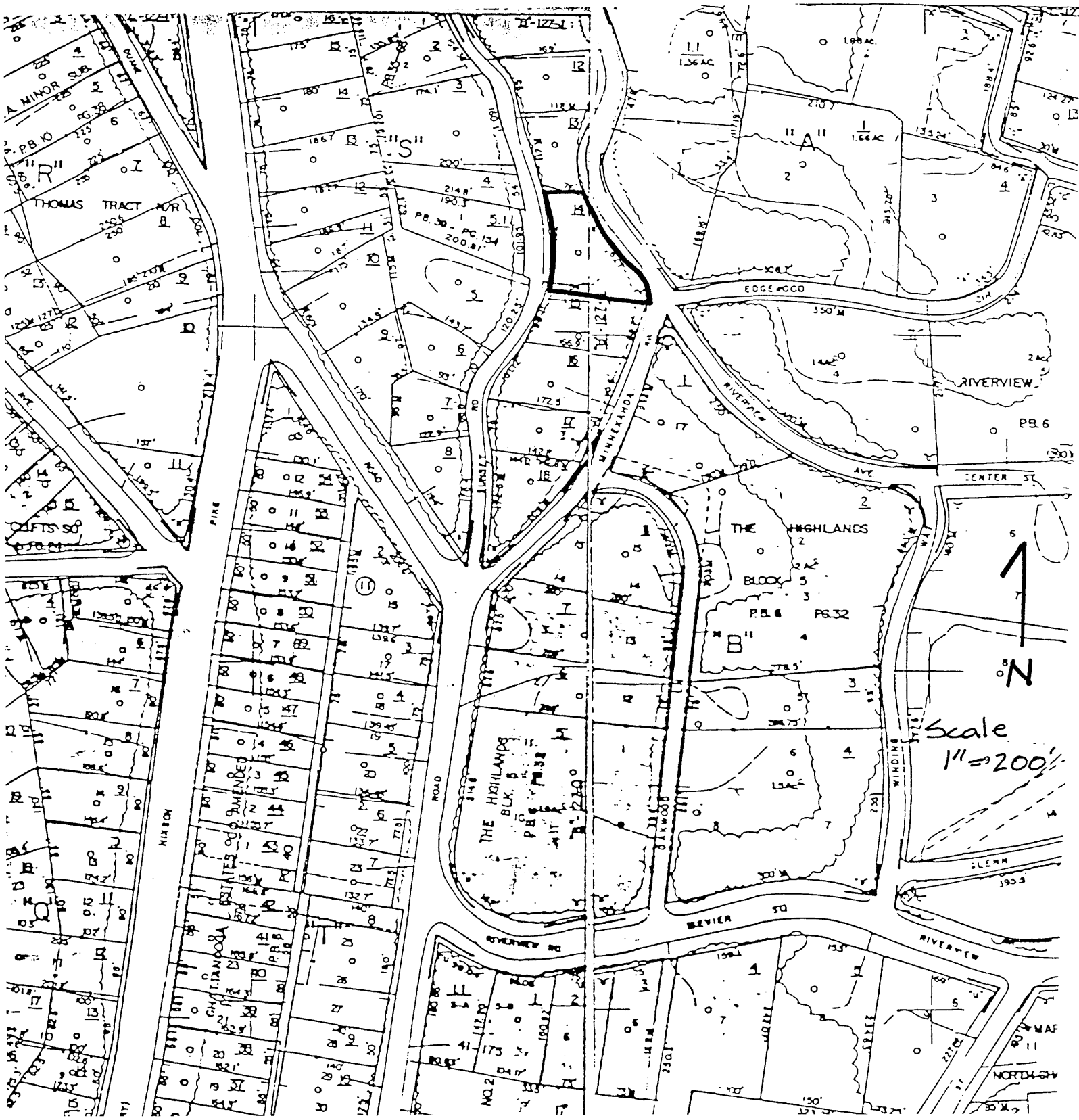
The nominated property includes the house at 1516 Sunset Road in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and all surrounding land historically associated with the property. It is bounded on the west by Sunset Road and on the east by Riverview Avenue and on the north and south by property lines.

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**Model Electric Home
Hamilton County, TN**

Model Electric Home
1516 Sunset Rpad
Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee
Photo By: C. Van West
Center for Historic Preservation
Box 80, MTSU
Murfreesboro, Tennessee
Date: October 1992
Neg: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

West Facade, facing east
1 of 20

West and south elevations, facing northeast
2 of 20

Window detail, west facade, facing east
#3 of 20

South and east elevations, facing northwest
#4 of 20

East elevation, facing west
#5 of 20

North elevation, facing south
6 of 20

North and west elevations, facing southeast
#7 of 20

Interior, living room, facing southeast
#8 of 20

Interior, sunroom, facing southeast
#9 of 20

Interior detail, original electrical outlets in sunroom, facing
north
#10 of 20

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Interior detail, original electrical outlets in sunroom, facing east
#11 of 20

Interior detail, original electrical outlets in hall, facing north
#12 of 20

Interior, entry hallway, first floor, facing east
#13 of 20

Interior, stairway, facing southeast
#14 of 20

Interior, kitchen, facing west (original door chimes)
#15 of 20

Interior, service hall, facing east
#16 of 20

Interior, upstairs hall, facing southeast (original light fixtures)
#17 of 20

Interior, bedroom, facing northeast
#18 of 20

Interior, bedroom, facing northwest
#19 of 20

Interior detail, bedroom, original fire escape kit, facing northwest
#20 of 20