

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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: *Brown, Eric and Margaret Ann (Davis), House*

Other names/site number: *N/A*

Name of related multiple property listing: *N/A*

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



### 2. Location

Street & number: *2806 Taliesin Drive*

City or town: *Kalamazoo* State: *MI* County: *Kalamazoo*

Not For Publication:  *N/A* Vicinity:  *N/A*

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<i>Brian D Conway</i>	<i>3/3/16</i>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>MI SHPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

*Patricia Andrews*

Signature of the Keeper

*4/26/2016*

Date of Action

**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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic / Single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic / Single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Modern Movement - Wrightian**

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

**Foundation – concrete**

**Walls – concrete**

**Roof – asphalt shingles**

**Other – glass (windows)**

**- wood (window and door trim; soffit and fascia)**

**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.)

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**Summary Paragraph**

The Eric and Ann Brown House is a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Usonian house that was built in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1950-51. The house sits on a mostly wooded rectangular lot, approximately one acre in size, that slopes gently down towards a small lake. The Brown House is rectangular in shape, one hundred thirty feet long and eighteen to thirty-two feet wide at various points, and is generally oriented along a north-south axis. The house was built into the brow of a slight rise; thus, the long western side of the house affords a view down to the lake from nearly every room, and the uphill (eastern) side (also the street side) contains a series of eleven small clerestory windows at eye level spaced evenly along a long interior hallway. The house is constructed primarily of sixteen inch by twelve inch cast concrete blocks. The windows, doors, fascia and trim, as well as the interior ceilings, built-in furniture, and trim, are solid mahogany. The pitched roof was originally cedar shakes but is now asphalt shingles. There is a two-car carport, with a highly cantilevered roof, at the north end of the house next to the front door. Inside, the 2,684 square-foot house features five bedrooms and three and a half baths. The main living area employs an open plan, leading to a dining alcove and kitchen/”work space.”



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The vaulted ceilings throughout the house are constructed of overlapping mahogany boards. There is a large fireplace in the living room, and largely decorative fireplaces in two of the bedrooms. A long interior hallway extending most of the length of house on the eastern side connects the main living area with the five bedrooms, all but one of which (the so-called "maid's room") enjoy a view of the lake through large windows. Wright designed all of the original furniture for the house, which was executed in solid mahogany or in some cases mahogany plywood. Almost all of it, thirty-six pieces, remains with the house today.

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## **Narrative Description**

### **The Property**

The Brown House sits on a lot of approximately one acre in Parkwyn Village, a community now comprised of forty-two similarly sized lots, in southwestern Kalamazoo. When Parkwyn Village was formed in 1946, its forty-seven acres were farmland, resembling a treeless prairie. When construction began on the Brown House and a few other houses in 1950, the lot owners began to plant trees and shrubs throughout the development. Today, much of Parkwyn Village is filled with trees, shrubs and other vegetation.

Wright's original landscape plans for Parkwyn Village contemplated that the lot owners would plant native trees on their round lots and that the interstitial spaces between the lots would be planted not with trees but with low shrubs and bushes. In fact, from the beginning the owners planted trees and bushes throughout the development more or less indiscriminately, some even before Wright's landscape plans were finalized. Many of these trees and shrubs remain today, affording most of the houses considerable privacy. Consequently, when the round lots were "squared off" in 1953-54, not much changed in terms of the landscape except that the areas that had been association-owned interstitial spaces became the property of the individual lot owners who were free to maintain them, or not, as they chose. In any event, many lot owners chose to let the boundary areas of their lots grow wild, which is how many of the lots appear today.

As one of the founding families of Parkwyn Village, the Browns were able to select a particularly attractive site for their home -- one that slopes down to the west overlooking Lorenz Lake (also known as Little Asylum Pond). Initially, all the lots in Parkwyn Village were circular, as specified in the plat plans that Wright drew for the project. However, for practical considerations that emerged later (including the fact that the FHA at the time declined to approve mortgages for houses on circular lots), the lots were subsequently "squared off," eliminating the interstitial common areas between what had been the circular lots. Thus, today, the Brown House sits on a roughly rectangular lot bordered on the west by Lorenz Lake (and a large undeveloped common area known as Park No. 1), on the east by Taliesin Drive, one of the two main roads that wind through the development, on the south by the Levin House (one of the other three Wright-designed houses in Parkwyn Village), and on the north by a footpath adjacent to another lot occupied by a mid-century modern style house.

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**House Exterior**

The Brown House is a single story structure with a slightly pitched, highly cantilevered roof that is, generally speaking, rectangular. The house is one hundred thirty feet long and eighteen to thirty-two feet wide at different points. It is set well back from the street. It is constructed with walls primarily of concrete blocks measuring sixteen inches in length by twelve inches in width by three and one-half inches in depth. The outer walls of the house are two blocks thick with a one-and-a-half inch space between blocks, thus making for outside walls that are eight inches thick. In all, the Brown House encompasses approximately 2,684 square feet of living space. (Of the other three Wright-designed houses in Parkwyn Village, the neighboring Levin house is closest in overall size with approximately 2,560 square feet of living space. The Winn house has approximately 3,322 square feet of space if the enclosed porch and basement are counted; and the McCartney house, the smallest of the Wright-designed houses, has approximately 1,677 square feet of living space.)

The house is oriented lengthwise on a roughly north-south axis. It was built into the side of the upper slope; thus the clerestory windows that run nearly the length of the east side of the house are, from the outside, only about twelve inches off the ground, while the same windows on the inside are at eye-level (about five feet above the floor). By building the house into the side of the slope, the house has a very low-built appearance from the street (the east side of the lot), and a very horizontal appearance from the west side of the lot looking up the slope. The very low roofline on the uphill (east) side of the house means that it is very easy for anyone to step onto the roof.

From Taliesin Drive, the house is approached down a gradually sloping, fifty-foot pea gravel driveway with a retaining wall running the full length of the driveway on the south side. The retaining wall is constructed of the same concrete blocks used in construction of the house. The wall has three evenly spaced flush-mounted lights that provide illumination at night.

At about the midpoint of the house on the uphill east side, a door opens to a small passage that leads to some concrete steps up to ground level. The small passage is covered by a portion of the flat roof that also covers the "maid's room."

The roof originally was clad in cedar shakes. Within a few years, this type of roof proved impractical because the low pitch of the roof often prevented the roof from drying out after rain or snow and thus the cedar shakes rotted within a few years. The Browns subsequently replaced the cedar shakes with small stone pebbles anchored by tar. A recent (2010) extensive upgrade to the roof replaced the original steel supports (because the roof had sagged in places) and replaced the stone pebble finish with asphalt shingles. The roof is punctuated by three chimneys that extend from interior fireplaces. The main chimney is substantially unchanged from the original except that when the roof was replaced with asphalt shingles in 2010 flashing was added to the chimney, the chimney was painted with special paint to prevent absorption of water into the concrete, and a new chimney cap was added. The two smaller chimneys have been plugged and capped, but otherwise appear as they did originally.

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North Facade

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The north end of the house consists of a two-bay carport. A door in the carport opens to steps down to a small utility room that contains a gas-fired boiler and shelves for storage. Next to the carport is the main entrance, consisting of two narrow doors with sidelights, with a second narrow entrance off to one side.

West Facade

The west side of the house, which overlooks Lorenz Lake, features large windows and glass doors for most of its length, thus affording fine views from every room (except for the “maid’s room”). The three bedrooms along the west side of the house (i.e., the “master bedroom,” the “guest room,” and the “boys’ bedroom”) feature two, three or more large windows that when opened create an opening measuring forty-five inches x thirty-six inches. These large windows are useful in order to move large pieces of furniture into these rooms, as the interior hallway that runs most of the length of the east side of the house is too narrow to allow most furniture through the hallway and into the rooms.

There is a walled patio (twenty feet x eight feet) that is accessible only from the main living area through one of three full-length glass doors.

South Facade

The south end of the house contains a “father-in-law suite” that was added to the plans shortly after Wright began working on the house. This suite consists of an extra bedroom and bathroom (the only one with a bathtub) and the “maid’s room.” The “maid’s room” is the only room in the house with a flat ceiling (and flat roof above).

East Façade

In front of the east façade, lying among the heavy ground cover, are three large stones. Some years after the house was built, Eric Brown had these stones placed there in an area he referred to as his “Japanese garden”, a small area adjacent to the driveway that also includes a Japanese maple that he planted. Other large stones are visible along the driveway and around the house, but they were not part of Wright’s landscape plan either.

One of the most striking features of the house, visible to drivers and pedestrians on Taliesin Drive, is the long horizontal row of eleven clerestory windows that is positioned about twelve inches off the ground and twelve inches below the edge of the roof. The windows are exactly the size of the standard sixteen inch x twelve inch concrete block. The windows are spaced thirty-two inches apart, or after every two concrete blocks, for almost half the length of the house.

At the south end of the row of windows is an exterior door (opening into the long interior hallway). This entranceway is covered by an extension of the flat roof that covers the “maid’s room.” Because the door is below ground level, a small set of concrete steps leads from the east

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lawn down to the doorway. A built-in bench, also covered by the flat roof, abuts the wall just outside the doorway.

The roof of the “maid’s room” is the only flat roof on the house. It has drains on two sides to release any water that may accumulate on the roof. The remainder of the roof is gently pitched and regular throughout the length of the house.

### House Interior

In general, the interior of the house is delineated by exposed concrete blocks, glass windows and doors, and solid mahogany ceiling, walls and trim. The interior walls are either one block thick or constructed of solid mahogany boards. All of the wood in the house, including the soffits and fascia outside and the doors, windows, trim, cabinets, built-in shelves, light fixtures, and kitchen counter inside are mahogany. The Browns covered most of the main living area, as well as the dining area, main hallway and master bedroom, with solid off-white colored area rugs. (The current owners have replaced this carpeting with similarly sized area rugs that are light brown in color.) The Wright-designed furniture made for the house is mostly mahogany plywood. The cathedral ceiling was constructed of overlapping mahogany boards. The floor is a concrete slab laid out in a grid pattern of four foot squares. The house is heated by radiant heat from hot water circulating in copper pipes embedded in the concrete floor.

The rectangular shape of the house is generally oriented north to south, affording nearly every room a view to the west including Lorenz Lake. At the north end is the two-bay carport. The first room at the north end of the house is the foyer and main living area. Behind the main living area, on the east side of the house, is the kitchen. From the kitchen, a long hallway on the east wall extends the rest of the length of the house, with the master bedroom, the guest bedroom, and the boys’ bedroom (in that order) opening off of the hallway on the west side of the house. The hallway ends in a “father-in-law suite” at the south end of the house.

### Foyer

The front door, adjacent to the carport on the east side of the house, consists of two narrow full-length glass doors, each with an adjacent full-length glass sidelight, creating a very open foyer area. Inside, to the right of the front door, is a large three-door closet, with storage cabinets above. The foyer (approximately nine feet by ten feet) opens into the main living area.

### Main Living Area

On the north wall of the main living area (approximately thirty-eight feet by eighteen feet) is a built-in entertainment center. The Browns requested, and Wright designed, a series of cabinets to house a radio, a record player, and a television (though in 1950-51 televisions were not yet in common use). One corner of the living area was designed to hold a grand piano. The northwest corner of the main living area is lined with built-in shelves.

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The east wall of the main living area is dominated by a large (sixty-eight-inch wide) open fireplace. The bottom of the fireplace is recessed six inches (in depth) so that the fireplace could hold water with goldfish in the summer. Wright even included a drain in the fireplace to facilitate removal of the water. The fireplace is still recessed, though it has not held fish for many years. (Smaller fireplaces and chimneys serve the “master bedroom” and the “father-in-law suite.”) Over the years, the main living area fireplace saw extensive use, but problems with the draft limited use of the other two fireplaces, which today are unchanged though serving a mostly decorative function.

### Dining Area

Opposite the north wall of the main living area is the dining area. It is not a separate room, but rather just a corner of the main living area. In and around the dining area are three walls with built-in shelves. In the corner of the dining area is a south-facing door leading to the outside and a small concrete patio. Above the door on the outside is a mahogany box light (open at the top and bottom) that is identical in design to the built-in box lights scattered throughout the interior of the house.

### Kitchen / “Work Space”

Behind the fireplace is a narrow, galley-style, kitchen area (approximately eighteen feet by nine feet) that opens into the dining area. The kitchen area, which Wright called the “work space,” held the usual kitchen appliances, and a washer and dryer. The kitchen cabinets and kitchen counter are made of mahogany, like all the other wood elements of the house. Recessed lights above the stove were added relatively recently, probably around 2002 after the Browns left the house.

The kitchen has no windows, but it has a large skylight that helps to illuminate the kitchen area. The skylight consists of three forty-eight inch by forty-eight inch translucent plastic panels that are placed side-by-side over the center of the kitchen. The natural light provided by the skylight is considerably supplemented by fluorescent bulbs that line the perimeter of each of the square panels. It is not known whether the electric lights in the skylight were part of Wright’s original design.

### Hallway

Outside the kitchen, on the long east wall of the house, there is a hallway that runs the length of the house. Along the length of the long hallway is a continuous series of built-in cabinets, with and without shelves. The cabinets are sixty inches high and extend for forty-seven and a half feet down the hallway. The cabinets are lighted by single-bulb box lights spaced eight feet apart that are open at the top and the bottom, thus providing indirect hallway lighting above the cabinets and at the same time providing direct lighting down into the cabinets. Above the cabinets, evenly spaced thirty-two inches apart, are the eleven clerestory windows each measuring sixteen inches by twelve inches. The walls on either side of the hallway for most of its length are concrete block.

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### Master Bedroom

The first room off the hallway leading from the kitchen is the “master bedroom” (approximately twelve feet by thirteen feet). Inside the “master bedroom” is a door leading to a small bathroom. One wall has two built-in square box lights protruding from the wall spaced to accommodate a queen size bed. The room also features a fireplace, built-in closets, and built-in drawers beneath a built-in desk that extends the length of the west wall, above which are two large windows looking out on Lorenz Lake.

### Guest Bedroom

The second room down the hallway is the “guest bedroom.” It is smaller than the “master bedroom,” measuring about ten feet by twelve feet. It has a built-in closet. All the walls are made of overlapping mahogany boards arranged horizontally. The room has two large windows.

### Boys’ Bedroom

The next room down the hallway is known as the “boys’ bedroom” (approximately twenty-four feet by fourteen feet). Apart from the main living area, this is the largest room in the house. Originally Wright planned to have three small bedrooms, one for each of the Brown children. But Eric and Ann Brown required a larger room that the boys would share. Along the east wall of this room are large built-in closets. Opposite the closets, on the west, exterior-facing wall, are built-in desks and drawers. The desks face out the windows on the west wall. Five large windows (three that open) compose the upper portion of the west wall. Two sets of bunk beds filled an interior corner of the room, next to the closets. (These bunk beds are now stored in the basement utility room.) The north wall of the room is filled with five built-in bookshelves.

Directly across the hall from the door to the “boys’ bedroom” is an exterior door leading to concrete steps and the yard.

### Maid’s Room

Further down the hall on the east side of the hallway is the door to the “maid’s room” (approximately thirteen feet x ten feet). This is a small bedroom with a closet, built-in shelves, a built-in bench, large clerestory windows, and its own very small half bath. The ceiling (and roof above) are flat, the only flat roof on the house. The room has a noticeably low ceiling – only six feet five inches above the floor.

### Father-in-Law Suite

At the end of the hall on the east side is a small bathroom (the only one with a bathtub) and a bedroom that is known as the “father-in-law suite” (approximately sixteen feet by eleven feet). Wright added this room to the house plans at the Browns’ request after Ann’s mother died and it became apparent that Ann’s father would live with the Browns. This room has built-in



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bookshelves on three walls, a closet, a fireplace, two narrow vertical windows with interior shutters, and a large window that opens on the west side, offering a view of Lorenz Lake similar to the view from the other bedrooms.

### Furniture

Wright's architect's fee for designing the Brown House included plans for furniture for the house. Wright provided plans for the furniture as the house was nearing completion. The furniture was constructed of Honduras mahogany by a local contractor, and consisted of the following pieces:

Twenty-four Hassocks – These small stools were used in all the rooms of the house and could be moved from room to room as needed. Six of these hassocks were converted to dining chairs (by the addition of a back) because the Browns did not like the design of the dining chairs originally provided by Wright (which was a variation of Wright's "orgami" chair). Fourteen of the hassocks, plus the dining chairs incorporating six of the original hassocks, remain in the house.

Ten Modular Sofa Chairs – These simple chairs were placed in groups of two or three to form banquettes. They had seat cushions and back cushions. All of these chairs remain in the house.

Two Side Tables – These tables were in the shape of a long slender triangle with the top point cut off, supported by legs in the shape of a "Y." These tables are no longer present.

One Coffee Table – This coffee table is in the shape of a twenty-four inch by forty-eight inch rectangle, supported by a "Y" base. It remains in the house.

Three Cushions – Wright specified that three foam cushions be made for the main living area. These were twenty-four inches by twenty-four inches by six inches, and they were often found near the fireplace in the main living area. The cushions and the fabric have been replaced over the years, but there are three such cushions in the house.

One Dining Table – The dining table was a simple seventy-two inch by forty inch rectangle supported by a "Y" support at each end. The dining table remains with the house.

One Table Extension – This piece was designed as an extension to the dining table and would enable the Browns to seat two or three additional people at the table. It was twenty-four inches by forty inches. When not used as a dining table extension, the table would serve as a lamp table in the main living area. The table extension is no longer present.

Two Desks – Wright designed desks for two of the bedrooms. The desks were forty-eight inches by twenty-four inches and each had three drawers on the left side. Neither desk remains with the house.

Two Chairs – Presumably these chairs were designed for use with the desks. The smaller of the two chairs remains with the house; the other is no longer present.

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Two Sets of Bunk Beds – Two sets of bunkbeds originally were installed in the southeast corner of the Boys’ Bedroom. They measure seventy-nine inches (l) by forty inches (w) by fifty-nine inches (h). The bunkbeds remain with the house, though they are in storage in the small basement utility room.

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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.)

- 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

*C. Architecture*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

*1950-51*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

*1950*

*1951*

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

*Wright, Frank Lloyd*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

*N/A*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

*Wright, Frank Lloyd (architect)*

*Corning, David (builder)*

\_\_\_\_\_

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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 Eric and Ann Brown House meets National Register Criterion C as one of a relatively small number of Usonian houses (figures range from sixty to around one hundred) that were built throughout the country and, of those, it is perhaps one of the best preserved. The Browns lived in the house for more than fifty years, from 1951 to 2002, leaving it virtually unchanged. The second owners, Kathryn and Curtis Curtis-Smith, lived in the house from 2002 to 2012 and were also excellent stewards of the house, making only necessary structural repairs to the roof and minor kitchen and bath updates. Today the house remains virtually as Wright designed it and as the Browns lived in it, complete with nearly all the original Wright-designed furniture. It is a time capsule showcasing many of the architectural features that Wright pioneered in his mid-century modern house designs. In fact, an article in the March 1953 issue of the magazine *House + Home* featured the Brown House in its cover story and, in describing its design and construction, listed some twenty-five design elements that were Wright innovations and that subsequently became standard features of many twentieth century homes. The Brown House is an excellent example of all these architectural innovations in a single structure. The house is closely identified with its architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright took an active interest in the development of Parkwyn Village, visiting Kalamazoo several times between 1947 and 1951. On one occasion, when visiting the Parkwyn Village site, Wright was an overnight houseguest of the Browns. Wright and his wife had previously hosted the Brown family for several days at Taliesin West while Wright completed the initial plans for the Brown house. Eric Brown and Wright conducted a friendly correspondence over several years beginning in 1946. The Browns have been described as Wright's "perfect clients"<sup>1</sup> because they so eagerly solicited and accepted Wright's input on every design element of the house, from concrete blocks to door hardware to fabric colors.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview of Linda Brown, CD, *The Brown House, Fifty Years in a Frank Lloyd Wright Home*, produced by Glaser Productions (2002).

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

### *Statement of Significance*

#### *Eric and Ann Brown*

Eric Brown was born in Royal Oak, Michigan, on January 1, 1914. He graduated from Wayne University (now Wayne State University) and received his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School in 1937. After practicing law for a few years in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eric Brown joined the Kalamazoo law firm of Gemrich & Moser in 1941. Within a few years, Eric Brown struck out on his own, practicing law from his office in the American National Bank Building in downtown Kalamazoo.

Eric Brown married Margaret Ann Davis on May 31, 1939. Ann Brown was born in Plainwell, Michigan, in 1913. She attended Michigan State University and graduated from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, in 1935. She met Eric Brown after his graduation from law school while visiting a mutual friend in Minneapolis, and they were married after a brief courtship.

In July 1946, Eric and Ann Brown joined with five other like-minded families in establishing a Michigan not-for-profit corporation, the Parkwyn Village Association, for the purpose of building a “congenial housing community” in which to live and raise their families. (The name “Parkwyn” derives from the names of two major streets adjacent to the development, Parkview Avenue and Winchell Avenue.) Eric Brown was a young thirty-two year-old attorney when he first contacted Frank Lloyd Wright in September 1946 about the possibility of Wright’s designing Parkwyn Village and some of the forty or so houses the Association planned for it.

Eric and Ann Brown built their house in Parkwyn Village in 1950-51. They moved into the house with their three sons, Eric Jr. (“Ric”), Hayden, and James (then ages 11, 9, and 6, respectively) in May 1951. Eric Brown practiced law throughout his professional life. Apart from his work, he was a voracious reader, he appreciated the fine arts, and he was a member of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra and other groups in which he played the violin.

Ann Brown was a member of several music clubs, the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, and several other arts related institutions. She taught piano for many years in the living room of her house, which Wright specifically designed to accommodate the family’s grand piano (later two grand pianos), and she also occasionally performed and accompanied various solo artists. She and Eric were also among the founders of Planned Parenthood of South Central Michigan and were active in other civic organizations.

Eric and Ann Brown lived in the house until March 2002 when health issues forced them to move to assisted living quarters. Eric Brown died shortly thereafter in June 2002. Ann Brown died in April 2006.



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### *Subsequent Owners*

Kathryn and Curtis Curtis-Smith purchased the house from the Browns in 2002. Both were faculty members at Western Michigan University, she a French language instructor and he a composer-in-residence and professor of music.

Peter and Janet Copeland purchased the Brown House from Kathy and Curtis Curtis-Smith in June 2012 and currently reside there.

### *Frank Lloyd Wright*

Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) is probably the best known -- some would say the greatest -- architect this country ever produced. His fame and reputation owe as much to his outsized ego and forceful personality as to his architectural innovations and accomplishments over an unusually long and productive career.

So much is known and has been written about Wright's life and work that it is difficult to provide here even a generalized account of his life. However, for our limited purposes, in very broad terms, it is possible to categorize Wright's professional career into two distinct architectural phases: Many of Wright's earlier residential commissions, say from 1893 to 1930, are identified with the so-called "Prairie" school while many of Wright's later residential commissions, say from 1936 till his death at age 91 in 1959, are usually described as modern or "Usonian."

Wright's Usonian house designs formed a part of his larger concept for a decentralized urban/suburban utopian city -- which Wright termed "Broadacre City" -- in which, among other things, residents were allocated one acre for a house. Wright first articulated the concept in his provocative book, *The Disappearing City* (1932), and further refined it in subsequent writings and speeches. In Wright's Broadacre City, residential neighborhoods were mixed with commercial and agricultural property in one vast sprawling suburb. Residents traveled and connected primarily by car, which Wright saw as a modern democratizing invention.

The term "Usonian" derives from the expression "United States of North America" which in turn evolved from a trend in the early 1900's to use the acronym U-S-O-N-A to differentiate the United States of America from the Union of South Africa and from other countries in the Americas. In the 1930's, likely in response to the current economic depression, Wright pioneered a new and distinct style of housing that was organic (i.e., incorporating nature) but also economical and functional. Wright's objective was to create aesthetic yet affordable housing for the middle class. Wright adopted the term "Usonian" to apply to his new style of homes. Wright's first Usonian house was the Jacobs House (1936) in Madison, Wisconsin. Wright's Usonian houses were custom-designed homes that varied by the local environment and by owner preferences, but they were generally characterized by certain common elements: small size, single story, horizontal lines, brick or concrete block outer walls, concrete slab floors with radiant floor heating, limited storage, native construction materials, flat roofs, large cantilevered

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overhangs, natural lighting with clerestory windows, access to the outside from every room, and board and batten walls. Typically Usonian houses did not have garages, attics, basements or formal dining rooms. Kitchens, which Wright termed “work spaces,” were often small Pullman car-inspired galleys. Many Usonian house designs tend to resemble the shape of a tadpole, with the body being the main living area and the kitchen, and the tail being a narrow hallway leading to small bedrooms for the family members. To cut costs, Wright encouraged his clients to become involved in the building process.

The Brown House, which Wright designed in 1949-50, is a quintessential Usonian house. Wright was 79 years old when Eric Brown first contacted him in September 1946 about working on the Parkwyn Village project. By then Wright’s fame and stature in the architectural community made him legendary, no doubt contributing to the deference with which the Browns and others in the Parkwyn Village Association seemed to treat him.

### *Origins and Development of Parkwyn Village*

As the country returned to normal after World War II, several families in Kalamazoo got together and proposed to develop a housing community that would be ideal for raising their families. A primary motivation was to develop a distinctive residential community that the residents would help design and build, thus not only avoiding the rigid same-ness of many commercial developments but also, importantly, saving money through pooling materials purchases and performing much of the development work themselves. An early promotional brochure stated: “Enrollment in the group for speculative purposes will not be permitted. We want to attract to our Village congenial homemakers who are interested in cooperatively building the finest family community possible.” Many, though certainly not all, of the families involved in this endeavor were associated with The Upjohn Company, a major pharmaceutical employer in Kalamazoo.

Early on in the planning process for this ideal residential community, the group split into two smaller groups: One group wanted to live in a more rural setting, well outside the city of Kalamazoo; the other group wanted to live closer to the city and be able to avail themselves of the Kalamazoo schools. In the event, the former group purchased 71 acres of land near Galesburg, Michigan, well east of Kalamazoo, and eventually a small development known as The Acres was built there (including four Usonian houses designed by Wright). The latter group, including the Browns, purchased 47 acres of farmland, then just west of the Kalamazoo city limits, which ultimately became Parkwyn Village.

Although the Galesburg and Parkwyn groups developed their projects independently of each other, they cooperated in a number of ways in their early years. When Eric Brown first met with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin, in October 1946, he was accompanied by Lillian Meyer from the Galesburg group. For a time, the two groups advertised their projects, seeking new members, in shared advertisements. After Wright provided site plans for the two projects and individual members began planning their Wright-designed houses, members of the two groups collaborated in making the concrete building blocks for the houses.

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Initially, the concrete blocks for both developments were made at the Parkwyn site and then needed quantities were transported to the Galesburg site.

The Parkwyn Village Association was incorporated in July 1946. Initially there were six families in the group (Brown, Hanze, Greiner, Levin, Margolies, and Spero). Eric Brown was the first president of the association and acted as its de facto attorney. The association purchased the 47 acres of land for \$18,000 in 1946. Because no bank would lend money to the association, one of its members, Fred Margolies, borrowed the money personally, and the other members by private side agreement agreed to share responsibility for the loan.

The members of the association considered a number of different architects to work with them in designing the Parkwyn project but ultimately the group decided to ask Frank Lloyd Wright. At least some of the members were familiar with Wright's work including a failed planned community with which he had been associated in the Lansing, Michigan, area a few years before. Eric Brown made the initial contact with Wright by letter dated September 5, 1946:

"We are a group of families in Kalamazoo who for several years have been interested in organizing a cooperative housing project. We have just purchased a forty-seven acre site in the outskirts of Kalamazoo and we contemplate a project from forty to sixty families, with individual ownership of lots. The lots will be about one-half acre in size with homes ranging in price from \$5000 to \$20,000. There will be a community park and recreation areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, gardens and possibly such developments as tennis courts and a swimming pool, etc. We would like to consider the possibility of other cooperative services such as central heating, water softening and sewage disposal, if practical."

Wright responded favorably to the request, suggesting that the parties meet at Wright's home and offices in Spring Green, Wisconsin ("Taliesin East"). Wright's terse reply, dated September 12, 1946, stated:

"My dear Mr. Brown: Michigan seems to come back again and again for projects such as yours seems to be. But each time enthusiasm runs dry too soon. I would like to cooperate with your plan because it lies within the realm of "Broadacre City" and I am enclosing a schedule of architectural services. Why don't a few of you come over to Taliesin to talk it all over?"

Brown, accompanied by others (Ann Brown, Ward Greiner, and Lillian Meyer, the latter a member of the Galesburg group), drove to Spring Green and had a productive meeting with Wright. Thereafter, in February 1947, after several exchanges of correspondence, the association reached agreement with Wright for him to prepare a site plan for Parkwyn Village. The fee for the site plan was \$1500, with individual lot owners who elected to commission Wright to design their houses to receive a prorated reduction in the architectural fees for the house plans. Wright did not require that he design all the houses in the development, but he did require that he could veto the plans for any house adjacent to one that he designed in the event that it was not aesthetically compatible.

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Wright submitted his initial draft of the site plan to the association in April 1947. The plan showed forty numbered lots, each lot a circle approximately 200 feet in diameter, common interstitial areas between the circular lots and common park areas, and a winding roadway providing access to all the lots. The association members made a number of suggestions and requested changes that were transmitted to Wright in July. Wright submitted a second iteration of the site plan in August 1947. Again the association provided feedback. Wright submitted his third and final site plan in October 1947, and this is the site plan that the association implemented.

The site plan featured several key elements, the most conspicuous of which was the provision for round one-acre lots. The idea was that the house on each of the forty lots would lie at the center of the circle, and that the interstitial areas between lots would be common areas that would be planted according to a separate plan with native shrubs. Another key element of the site plan was a winding roadway, with spurs, that connected each of the lots to roads giving access to the development. The site plan also included two “parks” and a tennis court.

#### *Challenges During Development of Parkwyn Village*

The Parkwyn Village Association had to overcome numerous challenges in building the planned community. An initial challenge was just obtaining a final acceptable site plan from Wright, who had many projects in various stages of development at all times. It was not until October 1947 that the association received the final site plan. Later, individual lot owners seeking house plans from Wright also had to wait for their plans, for their answers to questions, or for Wright to send an engineer or apprentice to assist with some part of the construction.

Another issue for the association was the building of the roads, which had to be done before individual lot-owners could begin construction of their houses. The association had to pay for the cost of the roads in the development, amounting to approximately \$7000, and then the maintenance of the roads was turned over to the county road commission. The roads were completed by October 1948.

Similarly, the association had to deal with the installation of water and utilities (gas, electric and phone). Plans for the development called for underground electrical and phone wires to obviate the necessity for unsightly above-ground wires, which was a relatively novel (and costly) idea at the time. In the end, however, Consumers Power and the phone company came around and the utilities were installed underground. (The phone company was less forthcoming than Consumers Power; it required that there be twenty-one homeowners receiving service before it would bury the phone lines.)

While the association members were dealing with these infrastructure matters, they were also seeking to market the development in the community. The association received considerable publicity for its retention of Wright as the site plan developer, and Wright even traveled to Kalamazoo in June 1947 to visit the Parkwyn site, attracting considerable attention and publicity for the development. But the association’s finances were very tight in the early years. The costs

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of the land, engineering, and road building, and utilities installation were considerable, and shared initially by only six families.

By January 1947, there were eight member families, attracted by the goals and ideals of the association. By November 1948 there were twenty-six members.

The association's growth was arrested in late 1948 when an African-American woman applied to purchase a lot in the community. She did purchase a lot, and within a few months ten other members resigned, some citing job transfers out of the area, but some citing the perceived negative effect on the community's property values of having an African-American member. In fact, the association was seriously divided on the issue, notwithstanding the fact that the association had from its beginning publicly declared that "there are no restrictions on membership as to race, color or creed." In March 1949, the association reaffirmed its position that race, color or creed was not a criterion for association membership. One member later recalled that had the African-American woman **not** been admitted, an equal number of members would have left the community.

By mid-1949, the association was down to sixteen members. At this point, the solvency of the association was seriously threatened, as the Association's contracts with its members provided that the association was required to repurchase the lots of members who later decided not to build. The departure of so many members in such a short period seriously extended the association's finances, and the association had to work out special arrangements for repayment to resigned members in many cases. It would be several years before the association fully recovered. In the event, the African-American member herself resigned from the association within a short time.

The association experienced a couple of additional challenges in its early years, just as the first houses were being planned and built. In November 1947 the association learned that the state was planning to relocate a major north-south road in the area and that the association's western boundary was one possible site for the road. This report occasioned several rounds of correspondence and in the end the state gave assurances that the road would not be built adjacent to the association's property. In February 1948 the association learned that Consumers Power Company planned to install a 40,000 volt electrical transmission line using sixty-foot poles next to the association's property that would actually cross over Lorenz Lake. The threat was so real that the association enlisted the help of Frank Lloyd Wright to persuade the power company to alter its plans. Wright wrote a strongly-worded letter dated March 13, 1948 to Dan Karn, President of Consumers Power Company, railing in part: "My dear Mr. Karn: Isn't it about time public utilities put some of the things learned during the past five or six years into practice – especially where advanced efforts in the direction of environment are concerned? Like – say putting underground the wires that used to run on poles, sky-wires that knocked hell into any well designed building project like the one we propose as 'Parkwyn Village'." Wright's letter helped win the day; within two weeks of receiving Wright's letter Mr. Karn responded that the planned transmission line would be re-routed. Wright's vehemence in this matter is no doubt explained by his own recent dispute with an Arizona power company that recently had built high-voltage transmission lines within view of Wright's winter compound known as Taliesin

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West near Scottsdale, Arizona, a blight on the landscape (then and now) that greatly angered Wright.

Still, by March 1954, only fourteen houses were built and occupied, and twelve lots remained unsold. (Four of the fourteen built houses were Wright-designed.)

The year before, in February 1953, the association decided that it would be in its interest to adjust the boundaries of the lots, changing them from circular lots to “squared off” lots. This was accomplished by March 1954, and resulted in a plat with two additional lots, forty-two instead of the original forty in Wright’s final site plan. There were a number of reasons for the association’s decision: One was that the Federal Housing Administration (“FHA”) refused to approve mortgages for properties on round lots, this in spite of strongly-worded letters and a personal appeal from Frank Lloyd Wright. Apart from the novelty of round lots, the FHA was concerned about how the substantial interstitial areas would be maintained, possibly adversely affecting future resale prices of the houses. Another reason for redrawing the boundaries was that the association believed that some members of the public were deterred from purchasing a lot due to the unusual lot designs. Yet another reason for the decision was that while Wright’s site plan contemplated natural cover pursuant to a landscaping plan for the interstitial spaces, often these spaces became just overgrown weed patches. Finally, there was the issue of who would be responsible for the maintenance of the interstitial spaces, if left unchanged. The association already had the responsibility to maintain two common “parks” within Parkwyn Village. In the end, the association retained a local engineer to “square-off” the lots, though most residents informally agreed that the appearance of the community would likely not change much as a result.

After flirting with insolvency for several years, the association’s finances turned around in 1955 and 1956, as lots began to sell again. By September 1956, all the lots in the community were sold.

### *Design of the Brown House and Its Significance*

From the beginning, the Browns wanted Wright to design their Parkwyn Village house for them. In fact, in November 1946 Eric Brown asked Wright if he would also design a lake-front house for him in South Haven, a project not pursued apparently due to land acquisition and title issues. The Browns certainly knew what they were getting into when they retained Wright to design their new house. In 1946 Wright was a famous architect and his work around the country was well known. Moreover, in August 1947, before Wright submitted his third and final site plan for the Parkwyn Village project, Eric Brown and others traveled to Okemos, Michigan, to visit the house for Alma Goetsch and Katherine Winkler that Wright had recently completed.

Plans for the Brown House had to wait until Wright’s site plans for Parkwyn Village were completed (October 1947). Shortly thereafter, the roads were roughed in and the six founding families selected their lots in March and April 1948. The Browns had the fourth pick and selected Lot 40, overlooking Park No. 1 and Lorenz Lake.



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The Browns meanwhile were anxious for Wright to complete the plans for their house. To expedite matters, the Browns made arrangements to visit Wright at his camp near Scottsdale, Arizona, known as Taliesin West, in April 1949. Thus, the Browns' Easter vacation found them at Taliesin West where they stayed for five days while Wright completed the first set of drawings for the house.

For the next two years, Eric Brown and Frank Lloyd Wright exchanged correspondence regarding suggested changes and details of the plans. One of the biggest changes introduced during this period was the addition of the "father-in-law suite" at one end of the house due to the recent death of Ann Brown's mother. Other changes that Brown discussed with Wright were the substitution of mahogany for cypress as the wood for the soffits, fascia, ceiling, interior walls and interior trim (due to the local unavailability of cypress wood), and the elimination of color from the cement floor (Eric Brown believed that the mahogany wood provided so much red in the house that a red-dyed cement floor would overpower). Brown also asked Wright to design the main living area to accommodate a piano.

Finally in May 1950, Wright produced the final working drawings for the house, and the Browns were able to begin construction.

The Brown House, as built, incorporated many of the design elements that Wright typically included in his Usonian designs. These features, many novel at the time, in short order became standard elements of many houses built since the 1950's throughout the country. These features were highlighted in the March 1953 issue of the magazine *House + Home*, and included the following innovations:

- ❖ a modular grid floorplan, here four-foot squares on the concrete slab footprint
- ❖ open plan
- ❖ rear living room opening to a terrace and view
- ❖ window wall
- ❖ closed front to house to maintain privacy
- ❖ corner windows without corner mullions
- ❖ ceiling-high windows
- ❖ sloped ceilings
- ❖ strip windows
- ❖ open carports
- ❖ radiant floor heat

*Building the Brown House*

Even before the final working drawings for the house were completed, the Browns worked to prepare the site for construction.

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Brown prevailed on Wright to send an apprentice to stake out the footprint of the house, imploring this assistance by telegram when a regular letter failed to achieve results. This was done in June 1950.

Meanwhile, the Browns had arranged for grading their site, reducing the slope towards Lorenz Lake and preparing the site with a driveway (somewhat uphill) to the road. Brown and others with Wright-designed houses also collaborated at this time in securing (with some difficulty) aluminum forms to make the concrete blocks that would be the main building blocks for several of the homes (including some in the Galesburg project, the "Acres"). The families themselves made many of the concrete blocks, but this task was soon turned over to others for more efficient production (at the Parkwyn Village site). The cost of all the forms, produced by a Detroit-area firm, was \$500. The cost of the basic blocks was \$0.35 each and \$1.10 for each of the seven types of odd blocks (e.g., corners, ends, electrical outlets).

David Corning, a local contractor, was hired to do much of the building, especially the roof and interior mahogany work. Ann helped on the roof and with some of the electrical work. Each night, one of Eric Brown's law partners, who also held an electrician's license, would inspect her work. Ann also made sure that none of the grout used between blocks was left to harden on the visible portions of the block walls. Each night the newly constructed walls needed to be hosed down to remove excess grout.

Wright had visited the Parkwyn Village site in June 1947, and he visited the site again in May 1949 just before construction of the first houses was scheduled to begin. Wright again visited the Parkwyn site in late 1950 or early 1951 when construction of the Brown House was well underway. On this visit Wright was accompanied by his chief field engineer, Wes Peters. Peters also made several solo visits to the Brown House to render his assistance during the construction phase.

All the while that the main elements of the house were being constructed, Ann and Eric Brown were in continuous correspondence with Wright about details of the project. For example, Eric Brown at one point asked Wright to specify the rugs and curtains for the house. On another occasion, Eric Brown asked Wright about the appropriate length of the curtains in the "maid's room." While the house was under construction, Eric Brown also sent Wright a list of furniture needs for the house. Wright had agreed to design custom furniture for the house at no extra charge as part of his standard commission. Wright provided the requested furniture plans and the furniture was built after the house was largely completed.

Finally, in May 1951, the Browns moved into their new home.

### *Living in the Brown House*

Eric and Ann Brown loved their new house and never stopped loving it. The Browns also enjoyed entertaining and showing off their "unusual" house. Both were active in Kalamazoo's music scene, and the house became the venue for many parties and receptions after concerts by the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra. In a video created about the house in 2002, Eric Brown

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recalled that many guest artists with the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra played at after-parties at the Brown House including on one occasion Van Cliburn, an internationally acclaimed pianist. In the same video, Ann recalled that on some such occasions they hosted as many as two hundred people at the house.

The Brown House was the center of the extended Brown family as the three Brown boys married and had children of their own. Many family gatherings at Thanksgiving and Christmas took place at the house. One of the features that particularly attracted the young grandchildren was the sunken living room fireplace which in the summer held about six inches of water with goldfish. The fireplace was designed with a drain for just such a feature.

Early on, in September 1950, Eric Brown asked Wright to design a horse stable to be built near the house, as the family from time to time enjoyed horseback riding. Wright obliged with some preliminary drawings of a three-stall stable and corral, but the stable was never built.

Within a few years of moving into the house, the Browns observed that the cedar shake roof was rotting. The pitch of the roof proved to be too low for rain and snow to run off. Thus, later in the 1950s, at Wright's recommendation, the Browns replaced the cedar shakes with tar and small stones. This roof held up for many years. In 2010, eight years after the Browns sold the house to Kathryn and Curtis Curtis-Smith, a steel-reinforced asphalt shingle roof was installed.

Eric Brown Jr. has recounted that over the fifty years that Eric and Ann Brown lived in the house, the roof leaked on many occasions, though not as much or as frequently as has been reported to be the case with other Wright houses.

The Browns, like most of their neighbors, landscaped their property with trees. It was never their intention to retain the original prairie-like surroundings of the house. Over the years, the trees (sycamore, white pine and oak) became quite mature. The Browns trimmed the lower branches of the trees, thus preserving, indeed enhancing, their view of Lorenz Lake. Many of the trees planted by the Browns and their neighbors are now mature trees that give a distinct "woody" feel to the neighborhood.

#### *Brown House – Similarities and Differences with Neighboring Wright-designed Houses*

The four Wright-designed Usonian houses in Parkwyn Village share many similarities, but each is different and also features design elements peculiar to that house.

Among the similarities: The four houses are all low, one-story structures and exhibit dominant horizontal lines. All four houses, as it turns out, face west, and, to different degrees, overlook Lorenz Lake. All have modular slab concrete floors and were designed with radiant floor heat. All the houses have carports; none has an enclosed garage. All the houses have highly cantilevered roofs, providing substantial overhangs over windows, doors, and carports. All have a fireplace, though the size varies from house to house. Windows with a fine view of the naturalized surroundings are an important feature of all the houses. All the houses use either mahogany or cypress wood for soffits, fascia, and interior cabinets and trim. The Brown House

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and its neighbor to the south (the Levin House) have one or more long rows of sixteen inch by twelve inch clerestory windows. All the houses are constructed of the same sixteen inch by twelve inch concrete blocks, made from the same mold, except that three of the houses (not the Brown House) also utilize decorative concrete blocks with cut-outs or a triangular motif as specified by Wright. The Brown House and Levin House also have similar concrete block retaining walls along one or both sides of the driveways.

The four Wright-designed houses also display some significant differences among them. The footprint of each house is quite different. The Brown House was designed generally in the shape of a long rectangle – it is one hundred thirty feet long from carport to the end of the “father-in-law” suite. The other houses’ footprints are differently shaped polygons, more contained. The McCartney House, to the north of the Brown House, shares the modular grid arrangement on the concrete floor with the other houses, except the modules are triangles, not squares. In fact, several of the roof segments and the work shed (attached to the house by a common roof) are triangular in shape. The roofs of the four houses differ as well. The Brown House has a fairly standard pitched roof, uniform for most of its length, though the pitch is low. Only the roof above the “maid’s room” is flat. The other houses employ flat, sometimes angled roofs in various shaped planes. The fireplace in the Brown House is probably the biggest of them all; Eric Brown specifically requested an extra-large fireplace. Despite these differences, the four houses on balance are more similar than different.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

#### 9. Major Bibliographical References

##### Books

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"Frank Lloyd Wright, World Famous Architect, to Map Parkwyn Project," **Kalamazoo Gazette**, Feb. 2, 1947.

"Wright Visits Development at Parkwyn," **Kalamazoo Gazette**, May 26, 1949.

"Parkwyn Village Replat Does Away with Round Lots," **Kalamazoo Gazette**, March 27, 1954.

##### DVD

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##### Websites

**Brown, Eric and Margaret Ann (Davis), House**

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<http://www.kalamazoocity.org/assessors> - tax records, sale history, square footage, etc. Follow link to BS&A Software.

[http://www.mlive.com/living/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2011/11/my\\_place\\_frank\\_lloyd\\_wright-de.html](http://www.mlive.com/living/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2011/11/my_place_frank_lloyd_wright-de.html) - Kalamazoo Gazette article "My Place: Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Home has the Classic Hallmarks", November 2011.

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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 **Baker Library, Columbia University, NYC**
- Other

Name of repository: **Parkwyn Village Archives**

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_



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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property**     *About 1 acre*    

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### **Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 42.263309 | Longitude: -85.632697 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

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**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

G 65X-40 Parkwyn, Liber 24 of Plats Page 40, Lot 40

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Entire lot historically and currently associated with the house.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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e-mail pacopeland73@aol.com  
telephone: 269-459-1107; cell: 908-672-8404  
date: October , 2015

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*Brown, Eric and Margaret Ann (Davis), House*  
Name of Property

*Kalamazoo Co., MI*  
County and State

### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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: *Eric and Ann Brown House*

City or Vicinity: *Kalamazoo, MI*

County: *Kalamazoo Co.*

State: *MI*

Photographer: *Ray Stubblebine*

Date Photographed: *July 20, 2015*

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

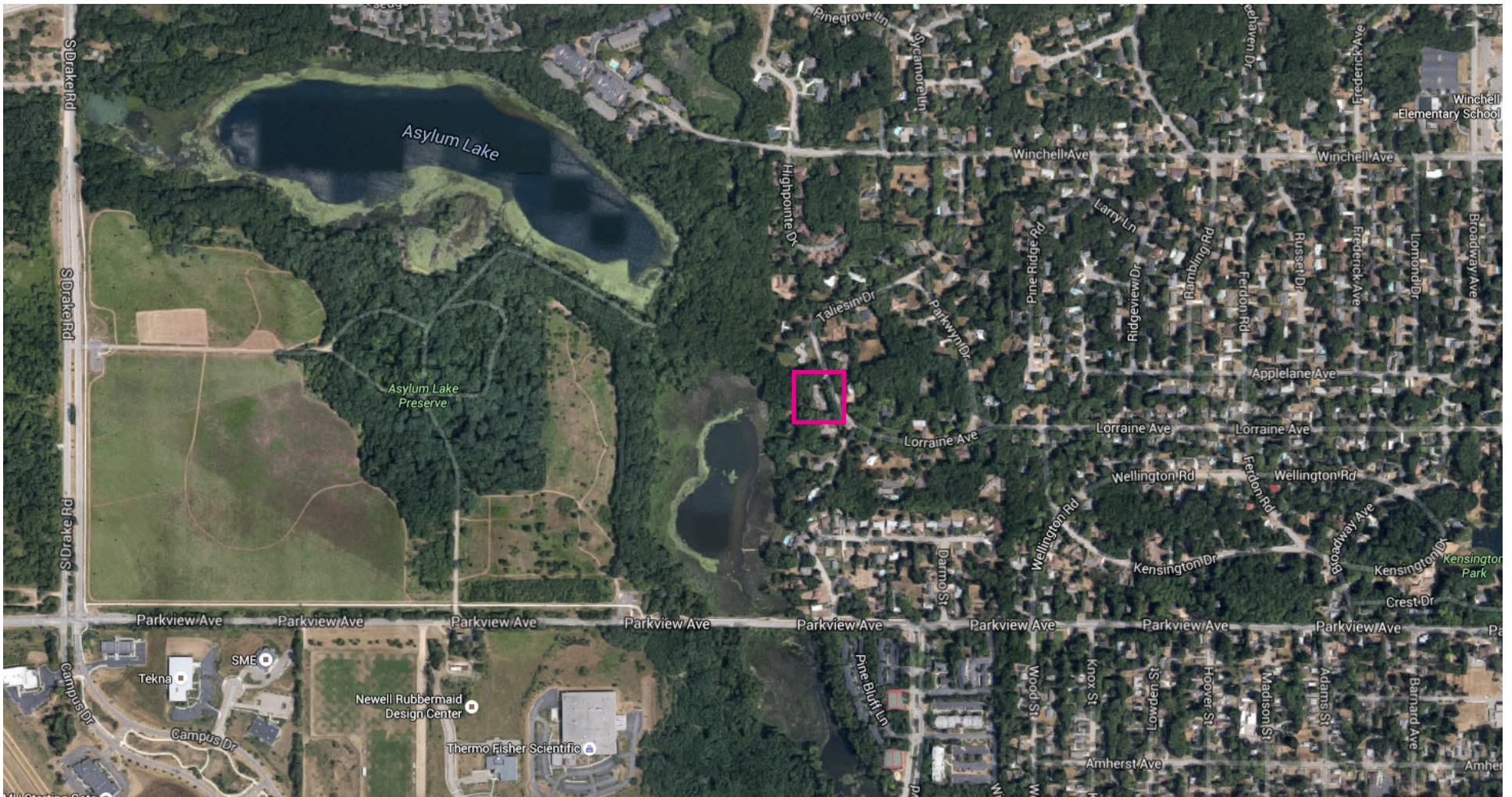
1 of \_\_\_\_.

*Brown, Eric and Margaret Ann (Davis), House*  
Name of Property

*Kalamazoo Co., MI*  
County and State

**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.



**Brown, Eric and Ann (Davis), House**  
2806 Taliesin Drive, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

Lat./Long.: 42.263309, -85.632697

one inch = 500 feet







**Brown, Eric and Ann (Davis), House**  
2806 Taliesin Drive, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

Lat./Long.: 42.263309, -85.632697

*one inch = 100 feet*







































































































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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Brown, Eric and Margaret Ann (Davis), House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Kalamazoo

DATE RECEIVED: 3/11/2016  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 04/21/2016  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

DATE OF PENDING LIST: 04/06/2016  
DATE OF 45TH DAY: 04/26/2016

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000200

Appeal: N Data Problem: N Landscape: N Less than 50 Years: N  
Other: N PDIL: N Period: N Program Unapproved: N  
Request: N Sample: N SLR Draft: N National: N

Comment Waiver: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 4/26/2016 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept c

REVIEWER Patrick Andrus Discipline Historian

DATE 4/26/2016

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

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



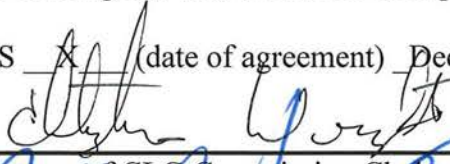
Certified Local Government  
National Register Nomination Review Report

Michigan State Housing Development Authority  
State Historic Preservation Office

Name of Property: Eric and Margaret Ann (Davis) Brown House  
Address: 2806 Taliesin Drive, Kalamazoo  
Owner: Mr. Peter A. Copeland, 2806 Taliesin Drive, Kalamazoo 49008  
Date completed nomination approved by the SHPO: November 30, 2015

\*\*\*\*\*  
The CLG agrees with the SHPO to expedite the review period for this nomination.

YES  (date of agreement) Dec. 8, 2015 NO

  
Signature of CLG Commission Chairperson

12-16-15  
Date

  
Signature of Elected Chief Official

Date

\*\*\*\*\*  
Date(s) of commission meeting(s) when nomination was reviewed: December 8, 2015

Date of written notice to property owner of commission meeting: December 7, 2015

The CLG provided the following opportunities for public participation in the review of this nomination:

The Kalamazoo Historic Preservation Commission meetings are open to the public and the agendas and packets, including this nomination, are posted on the city website by the Friday before the meeting. Agendas, and supporting packet materials, are emailed to a large "agenda notice" list.

Were any written comments received by the CLG? YES  NO   
(Please submit copies with this report.)

Was the nomination form distributed to CLG Commission members? YES  NO

Was a site visit made to the property by CLG Commission members? YES  NO   
If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

Did the CLG seek assistance of the Michigan Historical Center in evaluating the eligibility of this property for the National Register? YES  NO



VERIFICATION of Professional Qualifications of Commission in accordance with 36 CFR 61, Appendix 1, of Michigan's Certified Local Government Program.  
*List those commission members who meet the 36 CFR 61 qualifications required to review this type of resource.*

Commission Member

Professional Qualifications

1. David Benac, PhD - B.A. in History from Michigan State University (1995), an M.A. from Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis in Public History (1997), and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Missouri (2003).
2. David Brose, PhD – over 20 years of experience in historic preservation programs
3. David Kohrman- MS, Historic Preservation, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, June 2006
4. Sharon Ferraro – staff liaison – MS in Historic Preservation, Eastern Michigan University, 1994, historic preservation coordinator for the city of Kalamazoo from October 22, 2001

Was an outside consultant used? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X

If yes, provide the name and list the 36 CFR 61 qualifications the person meets:

The CLG Commission finds that the property meets the following national register criteria of significance:

B and C

The CLG Commission finds that the property meets the national register standards of integrity.

YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation of CLG Commission:

APPROVAL X

DENIAL 10 (specify reasons on a separate sheet of paper)

Mayor Bobby Hopewell

Signature of Chief Elected Official

Date

Date of transmittal of this report to MHC/SHPO \_\_\_\_\_

Date of receipt of this report by MHC/SHPO \_\_\_\_\_



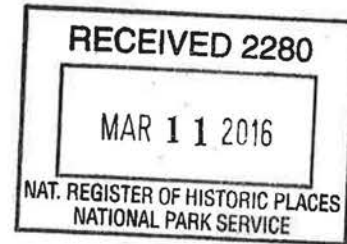


STATE OF MICHIGAN

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

KEVIN ELSENHEIMER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



March 3, 2016

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Brown, Eric and Margaret Ann (Davis), House to the National Register of Historic Places. We enclose a copy of our notification to the city of Kalamazoo, as a Certified Local Government, of this nomination and request for comments. Their response has been included on Disc 1, as instructed. This property is being submitted for listing in the national register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to our forwarding this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, national register coordinator, at 517/335-2719 or [christensenr@michigan.gov](mailto:christensenr@michigan.gov).

Sincerely yours,

  
Martha MacFarlane-Faes  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

