

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Chappell, N. Webster, House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 4131 Yuma Street, NW not for publication

city or town Washington, D.C. vicinity

state _____ code DC county _____ code 001 zip code 20016

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

 national statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

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

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

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Architectural and
Historic Resources: 1791-1941

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

foundation: Brick
walls: Fame covered with pebble dash stucco

roof: Slate
other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The house at 4131 Yuma Street NW was designed by its original owner, N. Webster Chappell, and erected in 1909-1910 by the builder A.C. Warthen. The house is located on the north side of Yuma street in the Tenleytown neighborhood of Washington, D.C. The immediate vicinity is home to several historic properties including Janney Elementary School to the north, and the Convent of Bon Secours to the east. The nineteenth-century country estate Dunblane and the former Immaculata Seminary, both now part of the American University Tenley Campus, are located across Yuma Street from the house.

A non-contributing single-story garage is located at the end of the driveway at the rear of the house lot.

Narrative Description

The Chappell House is a two-story, cross-gable house designed in a transitional Queen Anne style of architecture with projecting bays, enclosed gable ends, and a wrap-around porch. The house is set upon a low brick foundation, is clad with a pebble-dash stucco finish, and is covered with a cross-gabled roof, sheathed with slate. The house has an irregular cross-shaped footprint comprised of a central projecting bay and side wings.

The front elevation of the house faces south to Yuma Street and is characterized by its central projecting bay and its wrap-around porch. The porch is reached by a set of wooden steps on the east side that lead up to the principal entry door and to a side door located in the projecting bay on the east elevation of the house. The principal entry is a raised, six-paneled wood door located off-center, to the west of the central projecting bay. A square casement sidelight is located next to the door. On the first story, a large window with wide one-over-one glass panes is located on-center of the projecting bay. On the second story, a single window is located in the bay over the front door, and another larger window is symmetrically placed above that on the first story of the central projecting bay. The front porch extends the full width of the front elevation. It is covered by a flat roof and is supported by Tuscan columns, and a balustrade of narrow, decorative turned wooden balusters spans the space between the columns. A wooden balustrade also surmounts the open porch at the second level.

The east side of the house faces a yard and features a semi-hexagonal projecting bay towards the rear of the wall with a pedimented gable at the roof line. The front porch extends around the east side, where it abuts with the projecting bay and provides secondary access into and out of the house. Single, one-over-one wood windows are located in the principal wall and in the walls of the bay. A secondary entry door is located in that chamfered wall that opens onto the porch. A single square window with nine small panes is located in the attic level of the pedimented gable end.

The west side of the house is more regularized with no projecting bay. A projecting pediment caps what may have been a projecting bay at one time, though presently the entire side wall is flush. A square nine-light window is located in this pediment. As on the front, all of the windows on the side walls are one-over-one, double-hung wood sash.

The rear of the house opens onto a deck surrounded by a high fence.

A one-story, square-plan, hipped-roof, frame garage stands at the rear of the property. It was built in 1910 and designed by architect Alexander Sonnemann. It has deteriorated over time to the point that it has lost its integrity and no longer contributes to the character of the property.

Interior

The interior of the house features a side-passage plan, room-behind-room house. The main entry door opens onto a small entry hall with a quarter-turn stair located immediately next to the door against the west side wall. The closed stringer stair features a robust principal newel post with fluting in the shaft and simple, square one- by one-inch square

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balusters on the railing. Across from the stair on the opposite side of the hall, a wide double door opening leads into a front parlor which, in turn, opens into a rear parlor. A mantel in the rear parlor is not original to the room. The opening between the front and rear parlors has been widened from the original, and is supported by narrow columns.

A dining room, located at the end of the front hall, can also be reached through a door on the interior wall of the rear parlor. The kitchen is located at the rear of the house and is equipped with fixtures put in place sixteen years ago.

INTEGRITY

The N. Webster Chappell House retains high integrity. The house is located on its original site retains its historic setting with the early 19th-century estate Dunblane and the early 20th-century Immaculata Seminary located across the street, and the early 20th-century Convent of Bon Secours immediately next to it on the east. The Chappell House has seen few alterations, save for an addition at the rear, second floor level. The building has integrity of design, materials and workmanship. The house recalls the village of Tenleytown prior to its transformation into a major urban neighborhood of the city, and thus retains integrity of association and feeling.

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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1909-1964

Significant Dates

1909-1910

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

N. Webster Chappell

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance for the property extends from 1909, when the house was constructed to 1964, the end of the tenure of residence of the Chappell family—original owner and builder of the house.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

When built in 1909-1910, the single family dwelling at 4131 Yuma Street, NW, referred to as the N. Webster Chappell House for its original owner/occupant, was a harbinger of the residential expansion in the Tenleytown area brought about by improved transportation networks and corridors into and out of the city. The streetcar had been in operation for a number of years and cars would soon offer another transportation alternative. Located near Tenley Circle, the house at 4131 Yuma Street is surrounded by other historic buildings representing the multi-phased evolution of Tenleytown's growth from a modest rural enclave of some two hundred households in the nineteenth century to the extensive middle-class residential suburb just beyond the original city limits in the mid-twentieth century. The N. Webster Chappell house, which bridged these two major periods of growth, heralded the change that was to come.

The Chappell House qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under the Multiple Property Document *Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Architectural and Historic Resources, 1791-1941* and under Criteria A and C. The property is associated with historical periods and patterns of growth and change that contributed significantly to the heritage and development of the District of Columbia. The Chappell House bridges two major periods in the development history of Tenleytown as it transitioned away from being a distinct nineteenth-century "village" to a twentieth-century residential neighborhood of the city.

The property embodies the distinguishing characteristics of architectural styles, building types, or methods of construction, and is an expression of urban planning and siting significant to the appearance and development of the District of Columbia. The Chappell House is an excellent local example of a transitional Queen Anne-style/early twentieth-century American Foursquare that was the product of local builder and longtime member of the Tenleytown community, N. Webster Chappell. The Chappell House is a prime example of the "Rural or Village Dwelling (1860-1915)" associated property sub-type as described in the Multiple Property Document. As described, the "Rural or Village Dwelling" of the early 20th century Tenleytown were typically two or 2-1/2-stories in height, with a principal wing and rear ell, cross gable or hipped roofs, projecting side bays and wrap-around, or front porches.

The Period of Significance of the Chappell House extends from 1910 when construction of the house was completed, to 1964 when the widow of the original owner/builder N. Webster Chappell died.

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

The N. Webster Chappell House at 4131 Yuma Street is significant in the Area of Architecture and Community Planning. The architecture of the house, not typical of earlier dwellings in the center of Tenleytown at that time, provides an excellent intact example of a transitional Queen Anne-style/American Foursquare house typical of the early suburban building style that is found nearby in the early American University Park dwellings. Web Chappell owned one of the houses in the AU Park development and may have believed that the house style had merit but was too far from transportation. His subdivision of this property into six lots suggests the intent to build or encourage the building of homes in anticipation of the changing development patterns along transportation corridors, particularly in Tenleytown, occasioned by the streetcar and motor cars. The Yuma Street house is a bridge between the early building clusters, such as Grant Road, Mount Airy, and American University Park, and the subdivisions that were created in the 1920s.

Chappell himself was a skilled designer and builder and one of a group of craftsmen, including the Robeys, who worked in old Tenleytown. His house at 4131 Yuma reflects his skill as a designer.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

By the last decade of the nineteenth century, transportation options were increasing to outlying regions of the city, making the Tenleytown area northwest of the city an increasingly desirable place for homes. The streetcar line up Wisconsin to Friendship Heights was in operation by the time 4131 Yuma Street was built, barely a block away. Additional amenities, such as the construction of the Engine 20 firehouse in 1900, a water tower and reservoir in 1903, and Tenleytown's first telephone exchange in 1908, provided the ingredients for an attractive and modern neighborhood. The proximity to the highest natural elevation in the District of Columbia created a healthful environment.

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The land on which 4131 Yuma Street was built was once part of the Murdock tract that became the nineteenth-century Dunblane estate. In 1886-87 the Dunblane tract was combined with a contiguous estate and platted as Grasslands and Dumblane. Until the early twentieth century, there were few buildings on this parcel off the Rockville Pike, now Wisconsin Avenue, the nearest to the Chappell house being Dunblane, an earlier St. Ann's Church and rectory, and the Immaculata Seminary. The early history and growth of Tenleytown is documented in the Multi-Property Document, *Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Architectural and Historic Resources, 1791-1941*.

In the early twentieth century, Block 7 of Grasslands and Dumblane was purchased for the Immaculata Seminary, and shortly thereafter the larger Block 8 on which Dunblane sits was added to the Immaculata property. The Immaculata Seminary was built in 1904-5 and was operation by the time N. Webster Chappell bought part of Block 2 in 1909. Chappell subdivided his purchase into six lots. Part of Block 14 was purchased by S. Hazen Bond, who in 1911 built there "Dumblane," a Gustav Stickley Arts and Crafts house. Later, part of block 14 was sold, and another twentieth-century estate, "Under Oak," was established, named for the famed Dunblane Oak which towers over the house today.

In addition to Dunblane and Immaculata, the house at 4131 counts as neighbors St. Ann's Church and the Convent of Bon Secours to the east and Janney Elementary School to the north. Both the Convent of Bon Secours and Janney Elementary School are listed in the D.C. Inventory and the National Register of Historic Places. Thus, the dwelling at 4131 Yuma Street sits within a group of Tenleytown's most historic properties. Further north are additional listed sites: the Methodist Cemetery, the former Eldbrooke United Methodist Church, and the former Sears store.

Chappell likely did not anticipate the increasingly institutional environment that would surround him. There was much was open space around the house until the 1920s; the house at the corner of Yuma and 42nd Streets, built on Chappell's original parcel in 1913, was the only other residence until then. And at the time of Chappell's purchase, St. Ann's Church was smaller than the present one.

The Chappell family had deep roots in Tenleytown. Chappells served in the Revolution, and in 1780 a John Chapple, bought part of a parcel known as Fletchall's Chance west of the Broad Branch. The 1786 Colonial census lists Chapples in the Lower Potomack Hundred area between Georgetown and Rockville.ⁱ John E. Chappell was one of the Tenleytown twelve who established the Methodist Cemetery in 1855. Dr. John Chappell and N. Webster Chappell were his grandsons. Dr. John Chappell and his son, Sidney, were both physicians, Dr. John conducting his practice in Tenleytown. His house, razed in 1999, was located at Nebraska Avenue and Albemarle Street and is commemorated in Lily Spandorf's painting, reproduced on the cover of Judith Helm's book on Tenleytown.

Web Chappell was a "home boy." His family was a prominent one in Tenleytown. Before he built 4131 Yuma, the 1900 census reports him living on Grant Road and indicates his occupation as house painter. He also designed and built houses. He was a past Most Worshipful Master of the Tenleytown's Singleton Masonic Lodge and, according to Helm, the first person in Tenleytown to own a motor car, a Maxell one-seater purchased in 1910.ⁱⁱ

Chappell lived at 4131 Yuma from the time the house was built until his death *circa* 1940. The date is approximate because of the bizarre circumstances surrounding his demise. A newspaper article of June 1939 stated that he had been reported missing by his wife and was last seen walking with a cane toward Friendship Heights.ⁱⁱⁱ Eight months later, another article reported that his remains had been found in Virginia, identified by his niece's widower, W. F. Rowe, who said he read about the discovery of the body.^{iv} Shortly thereafter, Chappell's widow, Ella, married Rowe, who was nine years her junior. Mrs. Rowe continued to live at 4131 Yuma, bequeathed to her and the Chappell daughters, for the remainder of her life. She died in 1964.

Some years after Mrs. Rowe's death, the house was purchased by La Fondation de L'École Française Internationale de Washington and was later owned by Oakcrest School. Both schools were housed in The Convent of Bon Secours next door. From 1984 to the present, the house has been owned and occupied as a family residence and has been maintained as necessary with materials that match the originals, including a slate roof.

ⁱ Helm, Judith Beck, *Tenleytown, DC: Country Village into City Neighborhood*, Washington, DC, pp. 12, 13 and 22.

ⁱⁱ Helm, p. 155.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Capital News in Brief: 3 Reported Missing," *The Washington Post*, 6/26/1939, p. 11.

^{iv} "Skeleton Identified as Washingtonian Gone Since June," *The Washington Post*, 2/24/1940, p. 3.

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Architectural Designer: N. Webster Chappell

The Chappell House was designed in 1909-1910 by and for N. Webster Chappell and constructed by Alfred C. Warthen, builder. In the period from 1897 to 1932, N. Webster Chappell is listed as architect on more than twenty building permits in the District of Columbia, including several in American University Park, Robeyville, and Tenleytown. He was in his late twenties when the first houses in A.U. Park designed by him were under construction. He is also listed on permits for commercial buildings, mostly as architect, but occasionally as builder; he is responsible for at least one of the commercial structures on 41st Street in the Mt. Airy section of Tenleytown, as well as a chicken house! Chappell frequently worked with and for others who bear equally recognizable Tenleytown names: Robey, Parks, Heider, and Shoemaker.

Alfred C. Warthen, listed as the builder of the house on the D.C. Permit to Build for 4131 Yuma, is enumerated in the 1900 census as a carpenter living in Rockville, Maryland. Active from 1903-1926, he is identified as builder on 50 permits.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Judith Beck Helm. *Tenleytown, D.C.: Country Village into City Neighborhood*. Washington, D.C. Tennally Press. 2000.
Washington, D.C. city directories, 1901-1956. Washingtoniana Room, District of Columbia Public Library.
Kim Williams. "Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Architectural and Historic Resources, 1791-1941." National Register of Historic Places multiple-property document. 2008.

Other Resources:

The Washington Post

District of Columbia Archives
District of Columbia Office of the Surveyor
District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds

Sanborn Map Company atlases

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>3 19 633</u> Easting	<u>43 12 666</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

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

The house at 4131 Yuma Street sits on Lot 1 on Square 1729 in the District of Columbia.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The house at 4131 Yuma Street, NW has been associated with Lot 1 on Square 1729 since its construction on the site in 1909-1910. The original parcel purchased by N. Webster Chappell was subdivided by him into six lots in 1909, with this being Lot 1 of Lots 1-6.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jane Waldmann and Carolyn Long
organization Tenleytown Historical Society date April 2011
street & number 5332 42nd Street, NW telephone 202 686-1446
city or town Washington, D.C. state _____ zip code _____
e-mail _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: N. Webster Chappell House

City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.

County: _____ State: _____

Photographer: Kim Williams

Date Photographed: October 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

South and west elevations. View looking northeast
1 of 5.

East elevation. View looking west.
2 of 5.

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North (rear) elevation. View looking south
3 of 5.

Interior view of stair hall looking towards front door
4 of 5.

Interior view of rear parlor looking towards front parlor.
5 of 5.

Property Owner:

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

name Elizabeth and Xavier Legrain
street & number 4131 Yuma Street, N.W. telephone _____
city or town Washington, D.C. state _____ zip code 20016

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 18 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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

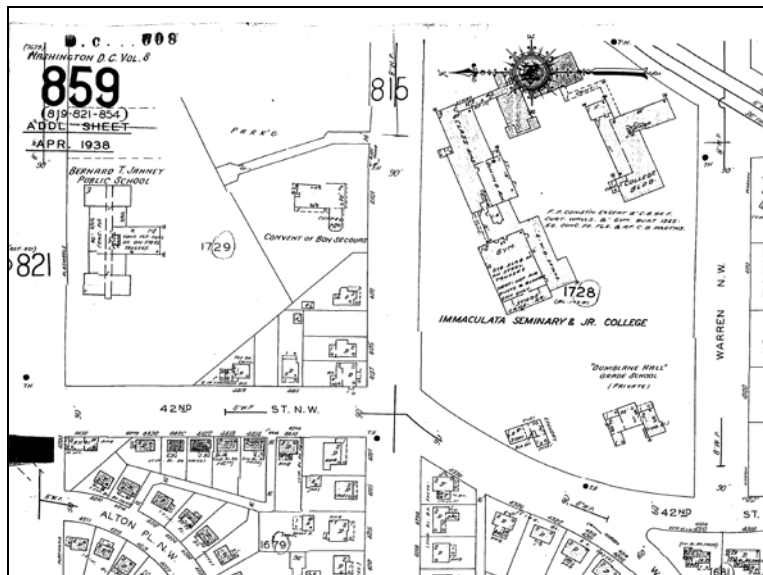
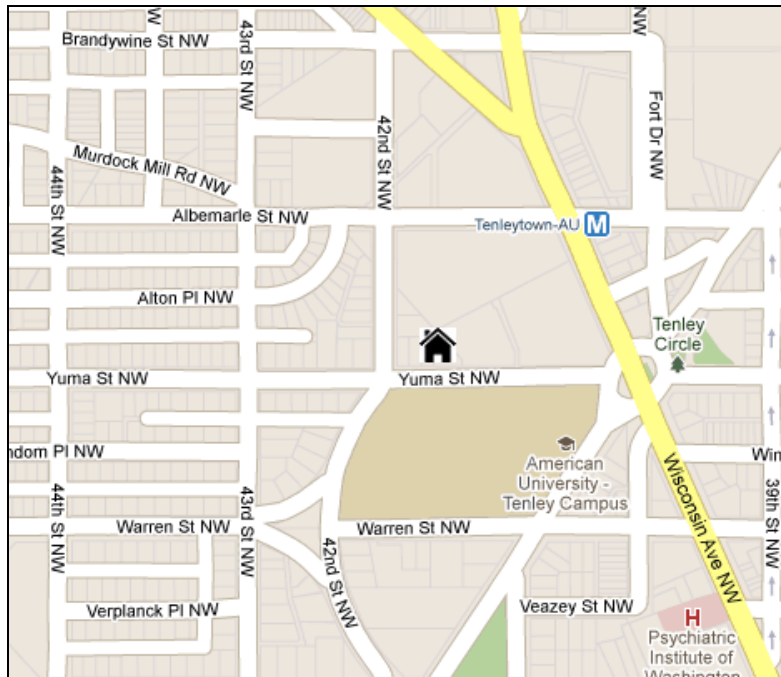
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

N. Webster Chappell House	
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)	

Section number MAPS/HISTORIC IMAGES

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N. Webster Chappell House
4131 Yuma Street



(From Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1959)