

State of California – The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Francis House

P1. Other Identifier: 4991 Warwick Avenue

\*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*a. County Sacramento

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Sacramento East Date 1947 (photorevised 1966) T 8N; R 5E; SW ¼ of Sec 20; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address 4991 Warwick Avenue City Sacramento Zip 95820

d. UTM: (give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

Assessor Parcel Number: 022-0103-024

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This 1,027 square-foot single-family residence at 4991 Warwick Avenue is located on a 0.17-acre lot in the South Oak Park neighborhood in Sacramento, California. It is a single-family, Minimal Traditional house that was built in 1955 with a roughly rectangular floor plan. It is a wood-framed building, and all walls are clad in stucco with little to no decorative detailing. The building has a low-pitched roof with two hipped elements and extends over the attached garage. The roof is clad in composition shingles and features narrow boxed eaves throughout. There is a shed-style awning that extends from the roof and provides shelter over the front porch; the awning has two wooden support beams. The front-façade features a small, offset concrete entry porch with two large steps and one smaller step—there is one medium-sized window located on either side of the flushed front door. There is a 1 x 1 sliding square window with aluminum framing to the right of the front doorway, and a 1 x 1 sliding rectangular window with aluminum framing to the left of the front door that is covered by a solar shade. (See Continuation Sheet)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2-Single-Family Residence

\*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) Photo#1. Camera facing east, April 13, 2023

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:  
☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both  
1955 (Sacramento County Assessor's Office)

\*P7. Owner and Address:  
Lakeitha Shaver  
4991 Warwick Ave, Sacramento CA, 95820

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, address)  
Brett Dudley, CSU Sacramento  
6000 J St, Sacramento, CA 95819

\*P9. Date Recorded: April 13, 2023

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)  
Intensive

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") None

\*Attachments: ☐ None ☐ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record ☐ Archaeological Record  
☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record ☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record  
☐ Other (list) \_\_\_\_\_

**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

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\*NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Francis House

B1. Historic Name: Francis House

B2. Common Name: 4991 Warwick Avenue

B3. Original Use: Residential B4. Present Use: Residential

\*B5. Architectural Style: Minimal Traditional

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alteration, and date of alterations) The property located at 4991 Warwick Avenue was built in 1955. Building permits indicate that the building was reroofed in 1998 and show that new windows were installed in 2016 by the current owner. (City of Sacramento's Citizen Permit Portal)

\*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features: None

B9. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Unknown

\*B10. Significance: Theme n/a Area South Oak Park, Sacramento

Period of Significance n/a Property Type Residence Applicable Criteria n/a  
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

The property at 4991 Warwick Avenue does not appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because it does not have historical significance. It does not share significant associations with historical events (NRHP Criterion A); the property is not associated with any historically significant individuals (NRHP Criterion B); the property does not embody the distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, and it does not represent the work of a master (NRHP Criterion C); and the property has not yielded and is not likely to yield information important in prehistory or history (NRHP Criterion D). (See Continuation Sheet)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) \_\_\_\_\_

**\*B12. References:**

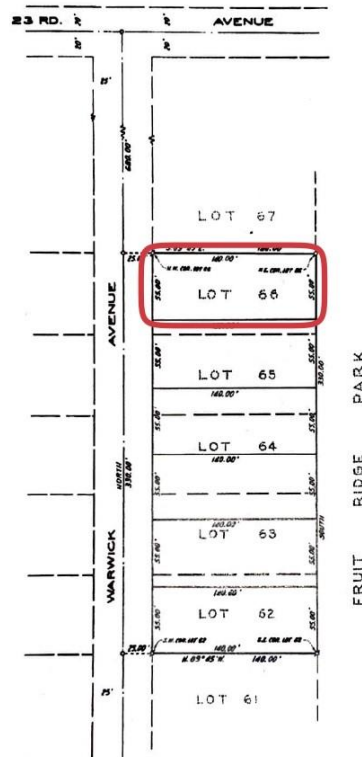
Page & Turnbull, Damany M. Fisher Ph.D, City of Sacramento, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project: Historic Context Statement." October 28, 2022; City of Sacramento, "Oak Park Historic District Plan"; Property records of the Sacramento County Assessor's Office; City of Sacramento's Citizen Permit Portal; USGS, *Sacramento East, Calif.*, 7.5-minute quadrangle, 1947; Anthony Francis, Interview by X Pasha. 31 December 2021. CSUS Oral History Project, CSU Sacramento; City of Sacramento, "A Community Plan for Fruitridge," July 1965.

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: Brett Dudley

\*Date of Evaluation: May 2023

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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\*Recorded by Brett Dudley \*Date May 2023

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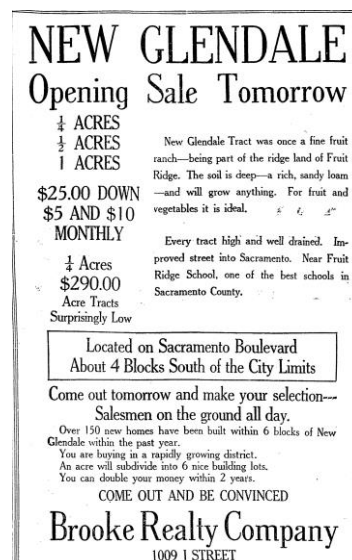
### P3a. Description (continued):

The southern wall of the building has a large, multi-paned window, but it is difficult to distinguish from the public right of way and satellite imagery. There is a brick chimney on the northern side of the building with a noticeable chimney pot, and the northern wall of the building features a small 1 x 1 sliding window with aluminum paneling. There is an attached two-car garage located on the southwest corner of the building, south of the main entryway—a concrete driveway on the right side of the front-facade leads to the garage. The garage is double-doored and front-facing and is set into the main body of the house. There is a small shed in the backyard placed near the northern fence line that is only visible using satellite imagery. The garage and front yard are enclosed by a wrought iron fence.

### B10. Significance (continued):

#### Historic Context

The property at 4991 Warwick Avenue is in the South Oak Park neighborhood of Sacramento, California, near Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and State Route 99. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Irish immigrant William Doyle owned the 230-acre William Doyle Ranch situated in present-day Oak Park. In 1887, developer Edwin K. Alsip and his company Alsip Realty subdivided the Doyle ranch and renamed it Oak Park. Alsip also owned the Central Street Railway Company and extended a streetcar line from 2<sup>nd</sup> and H streets in the West End of Downtown Sacramento to the newly established Oak Park development. While growth was initially slow, the creation of Joyland—an amusement park in Oak Park that featured a dance floor, concert stage, roller coasters, and a roller rink—in 1894 and the addition of a second streetcar line led to a small influx of middle-class residents at the turn of the twentieth century. Furthermore, in 1906, the California State Fair relocated to a fairground off Stockton Boulevard situated east of Oak Park. Shortly after, Oak Park was officially annexed into the City of Sacramento in 1911; this was the first time the city had expanded since it had been platted in 1848.<sup>1</sup>



**Figure 1:** Newspaper clipping advertising new land tracts in Oak Park circa 1924. Source: *Sacramento Bee*.

<sup>1</sup>Page & Turnbull, Damany M. Fisher Ph.D, City of Sacramento, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project: Historic Context Statement." October 28, 2022; City of Sacramento, "Oak Park Historic District Plan," <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/CDD/Planning/Urban-Design/Preservation/Adopted-Historic-District-Plans/Oak-Park-HDP.pdf?la=en>; William Burg, "A Brief History of Oak Park." *Midtown Monthly*, February 1, 2010. <http://www.midtownmonthly.net/life/a-brief-history-of-oak-park/>.

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From 1900 to 1930, Oak Park experienced substantial growth. This included the development of its own commercial district around Sacramento Avenue (called Broadway today) that featured brick shopfronts, theaters, and other institutional buildings. Although the demographics of Oak Park during this period primarily consisted of people with European ancestry, African Americans and Latinos always maintained smaller communities throughout Oak Park. Blue-collar jobs at the California State Fair, the Southern Pacific and Western Pacific railroads, canneries, and State of California agencies such as the California State Highway Commission employed many of Oak Park's residents prior to World War II.<sup>2</sup>

### Post-World War II

After World War II and into the 1950s, many of Oak Park's middle-class families and businesses relocated to newer suburbs that were made accessible by the increasing popularity and reliance on the automobile—this exodus opened the door for new residents to move into Oak Park. African Americans, who had previously lived in the West End of Downtown Sacramento, were being forced out of their communities because of increasingly restrictive racial covenants, urban redevelopment in the West End following the California Redevelopment Act of 1945, and the creation of multiple highways, including U.S. Highway 50 and Interstate 80, which cut through neighborhoods that largely consisted of ethnic minority groups. These events made Oak Park a new destination for those being displaced. Moreover, as newly constructed postwar subdivisions were increasingly segregated, Oak Park became a site where African Americans, Asians, and Latinos could purchase and own homes. Along with the changing demographics, Oak Park witnessed other notable changes throughout the 1950s and 1960s: the California State Fair relocated to its current location at Cal Expo on Exposition Boulevard, streetcar service ended, many of the blue-collar jobs previously in the area disappeared, racial tensions began to grow, and while many of the original businesses in Oak Park closed, they were frequently replaced with Black-owned businesses, churches, and social organizations.<sup>3</sup>

### Minimal Traditional

The Minimal Traditional architectural style rose to prominence after 1935 amid the Great Depression. These homes are simple in design, small in stature, usually clad in one material, and easier to build in comparison to some of the more detailed and grand architectural styles. Therefore, Minimal Traditionals could be built using the Federal Housing Administration-insured loans (FHA) that began during the Great Depression. Created in 1934, the FHA sought ways to produce small homes that the average working American could afford. With architects increasingly desperate for work throughout the 1930s, many worked alongside the FHA to design a small yet efficient house that qualified for the FHA loan insurance. Minimal Traditional buildings generally have restrained detailing, hipped or gabled roofs with subtle eaves, and an off-centered doorway. Built in 1955 and owned by Anthony Francis until 1969, the property at 4991 Warwick Avenue resembles the characteristics of the Minimal Traditional architectural style and follows post-war residential development trends.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Robin Dattel, "Central Oak Park Walking Tour," *Department of Geography, CSU Sacramento*. Center for Sacramento History. <http://www.centerforsacramentohistory.org/-/media/CSHistory/Files/exhibits/tours/Central--Oak-Park-Walking-Tour-Brochure.pdf?la=en>; City of Sacramento, "Oak Park Historic District Plan".

<sup>3</sup> Page & Turnbull, Sacramento African American Experience; "Oak Park Historic District Plan"; Dattel, Central Oak Park Walking Tour.

<sup>4</sup> Federal Housing Administration, "Principles of Planning Small Houses," Washington D.C. 1940, *University of Michigan*, Accessed May 6, 2023. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015037428375&view=1up&seq=3>; Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2021; Andrew Hope, *Tract Housing in California, 1945-1973: A Context for National Register Evaluation*, CalTrans, 2011. Sacramento, CA. Accessed May 7, 2023.

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Anthony Francis

Anthony Francis was born on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1927, in New Orleans, Louisiana. After growing up in an impoverished and segregated section of New Orleans, Francis moved to Vallejo, California, where he first worked for the Office of Price Administration—an agency within the Office for Emergency Management that was established during World War II—and then the State of California's Department of Employment. In 1947, he relocated to Oak Park and began working at McClellan Air Force Base in North Highlands while he waited for a job appointment with the state. Francis worked various jobs for the Department of Education before being drafted by the Army in the late 1940s. Following his discharge from the Army, Francis enrolled in Sacramento State College (California State University, Sacramento) in 1954 and graduated in 1957 with a bachelor's degree in social science. He later earned a master's degree in public administration from the University of Southern California.



FRENCH SUPPER—Authentic French dishes were the main attraction at the French Club supper Wednesday. Ann Rohleder, right, and Helen Lindgren, left, made sure Anthony Francis has plenty to eat. Bee Photo

**Figure 2:** Anthony Francis in the French Club at Sacramento State College circa 1957. Source: *Sacramento Bee*.

Francis and his wife, Noella, purchased the home at 4991 Warwick Avenue in 1959 and lived there until 1969—it was during this period that Francis began his professional career. His first job out of college was as a social worker for Sacramento County's Welfare Department; he then transferred to the county's probation department where he worked as a probation officer. After these two county positions, Francis found work at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation as a parole agent, but quickly transferred to the California State Personnel Board. Finally, Francis took a job at the California Department of Justice where he worked in the attorney general's office.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Francis, Interview by X Pasha. 31 December 2021. CSUS Oral History Project, CSU Sacramento; Property records of the Sacramento County Assessor's Office; Cynthia Hubert, "Legacy and Wisdom of Anthony Francis, 95, Carry on 66 Years After he Graduated from Sac State," CSU Sacramento, Newsroom. <https://www.csus.edu/news/newsroom/stories/2022/6/nonagenarian-blb.html>; Sacramento Directory (Sacramento: Sacramento Directory Co., 1959).

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During the 1960s, Francis served as the first president of the Oak Park Neighborhood Council. As president, Francis aimed to provide assistance to those seeking an education while developing organizations to improve life in Oak Park. The goal of the council was to organize and prepare the community for challenging the city, businesses, and community leaders; Francis was voted out as president of the council in the late 1960s. Francis also volunteered for the Catholic Social Services serving as a sort of liaison between the African American community, the Catholic churches in Oak Park, and the larger Sacramento region. Additionally, Francis served on the Sacramento County Commission on Ageing where he was the first African American on the commission. In this role, Francis encouraged diversity and provided outreach to other agencies.<sup>6</sup>

On October 31, 1969, Anthony and Noella Francis granted the deed to 4991 Warwick Avenue to Neola Thomas. Neola worked as a nurse and owned the house until her death in 2009. Afterwards, the Estate of Neola Thomas (Neola Thomas Tyson) granted the property to Denise A. Thomas, who sold the property to the current owner in 2012.<sup>7</sup>

### Evaluation

Under NRHP Criterion A, the property at 4991 Warwick Avenue does not have important associations with significant events in local, state, or national history. The residence was built in 1955 during a period of general growth in Sacramento and the Oak Park neighborhood following the end of World War II. The property is part of a subdivision that was built during the 1950s and follows typical development patterns of this period.

The property is not eligible under NRHP Criterion B because it is not associated with persons who made demonstrably important contributions to history. Property records indicate a total of four owners since 1955. While one resident, Anthony Francis, had a successful academic and professional career, and played a role in community organizing in Oak Park during his time as president of the Oak Park Neighborhood Council, it remains difficult to determine the specific contributions he made within his community. The other residents and owners, including Noella Francis, Neola Thomas, who worked as a nurse, and Denise A. Thomas, did not make demonstrably important contributions to history during their periods of association with this property. However, the property at 4991 Warwick Avenue is eligible for the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural resources due to its association with Anthony Francis and his leadership within Sacramento's African American community.

The building at 4991 Warwick Avenue does not possess distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, and it is not an important work of a master architect as outlined under NRHP Criterion C. Minimal Traditional was a common architectural style during the middle of the twentieth century. The building features many characteristics of the Minimal Traditional style, such as a low-pitched, hipped roof, and restrained traditional details. Additionally, the overall elements are modest and lack high artistic value, and the property does not resemble the work of a master.

The property has not yielded and is not likely to yield information important to history or prehistory and therefore does not meet the criteria required for listing under NRHP Criterion D. The building is representative of common construction techniques and building materials.

<sup>6</sup> Anthony Francis, Interview by X Pasha; Property records of the Sacramento County Assessor's Office; Hubert, "Legacy and Wisdom".

<sup>7</sup> Property records of the Sacramento County Assessor's Office; Sacramento Directory (Sacramento: R. L. Polk & Co. Publishers, 1982).

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## B12. References (continued):

- Burg, William. "A Brief History of Oak Park." *Midtown Monthly*, February 1, 2010. <http://www.midtownmonthly.net/life/a-brief-history-of-oak-park/>.
- City of Sacramento. "Oak Park Historic District." Accessed April 20, 2023. <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/CDD/Planning/Urban-Design/Preservation/Adopted-Historic-District-Plans/Oak-Park-HDP.pdf?la=en>.
- Datel, Robin. "Central Oak Park Walking Tour." *Department of Geography, CSU Sacramento*. Center for Sacramento History. <http://www.centerforsacramentohistory.org/-/media/CSHistory/Files/exhibits/tours/Central--Oak-Park-Walking-Tour-Brochure.pdf?la=en>.
- Federal Housing Administration. "Principles of Planning Small Houses," Washington D.C. 1940, *University of Michigan*. Accessed May 6, 2023. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015037428375&view=1up&seq=3>
- Francis, Anthony. Interview by X Pasha. 31 December 2021. *CSUS Oral History Project, CSU Sacramento*. [https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/CDD/Planning/AAHF/CSUS-Oral-History-Transcripts\\_with\\_TOC.pdf?la=en](https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/CDD/Planning/AAHF/CSUS-Oral-History-Transcripts_with_TOC.pdf?la=en).
- Hubert, Cynthia. "Legacy and Wisdom of Anthony Francis, 95, Carry on 66 Years After he Graduated from Sac State." *CSU Sacramento, Newsroom*. <https://www.csus.edu/news/newsroom/stories/2022/6/nonagenarian-blb.html>.
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- Page & Turnbull, Damany M. Fisher, Ph.D, City of Sacramento. "Sacramento African American Experience History Project: Historic Context Statement." City of Sacramento. October 28, 2022.
- Sacramento County Assessor Parcel Viewer. *4991 Warwick Avenue*, Sacramento CA, 95820.
- Sacramento County Assessor's Records for Assessor's Parcel Numbers 022-0103-024.
- Sacramento City Directory. *R. L. Polk & Co. Publishers*, 1982.
- Sacramento City Directory. *Sacramento Directory Co.*, 1959.
- U.S. Geological Survey. *Sacramento East, California*. 7.5-minute quadrangle 1947.



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**Photographs (continued):**



**Photograph 2:** 4991 Warwick Avenue, Camera facing northeast, April 13, 2023.



**Photograph 3:** 4991 Warwick Avenue, Camera facing southeast, April 13, 2023.