RESOLUTION - EXHIBIT I
BRECKENRIDGE/GORDON RESIDENCE
LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

RESOLVED BY THE LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

WHEREAS, Stuart H. and Laurie F. Russell are the owners of the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence; and,

WHEREAS, the owners, on November 11, 1981, requested that the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence be designated a Landmark under the City of Omaha's Landmarks Heritage Preservation Ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence was built in 1909; and,

WHEREAS, the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence is significant as a fine example of the Georgian Revival style of architecture, a disciplined style popular between 1880 and 1920, that used examples from America's early colonial history as models; and,

WHEREAS, the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence was the home of two prominent Omaha civic leaders; and,

WHEREAS, the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence is located in the "Gold Coast" area, a neighborhood which housed a preponderance of Omaha's cultural and financial leaders in the early 20th Century.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

THAT, the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence, 3611 Jackson Street, be designated as a Landmark of the City of Omaha.
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission
DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

INSPECTION DATE
1/18/82

REQUEST          CATEGORY
X Landmark Designation  District
   Landmark Heritage  X Building
   District Designation  Structure
   Certificate of Approval  Site
   to Perform Work  Object

APPLICANT
Stuart H. & Laurie F. Russell

LOCATION OF PROPOSED DESIGNATION OR WORK
3611 Jackson Street

PRESENT USE
Residence

CONFORMANCE WITH MASTER PLAN
Conforms to both the 1976 West Central Study Area Housing Market Analysis and A Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation in Omaha where it is shown as being a potential historic neighborhood character district. Conforms to 1977 Community Development Master-Plan's conservation areas.

The neighborhood is a mix of both old and new structures, the old being primarily large, turn of the century residences of high architectural quality. Land use is also mixed, as many of the former single family structures have been converted to multi-family or commercial uses, interspersed with new office and institutional structures. Probable future effect on neighborhood if designation is granted or work is approved.

Reinforce historic character of the area; encourage sensitive re-use of surrounding historic structures; enhance potential for a future historic district.

PRESERVATION ADMINISTRATOR'S RECOMMENDATION

Approval

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION

Approval

ADDITIONAL DATA

One of several individual Landmark designations in the "Gold Coast" area that may eventually lead to formation of a historic district.
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission
APPLICATION FOR LANDMARK OR LANDMARK HERITAGE DISTRICT DESIGNATION

NAME OF STRUCTURE
Historic
A.W. Gordon Residence
and/or Common
Stuart H. Russell Residence

LOCATION
Street and Number
3611 Jackson Street

CLASSIFICATION

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OWNER OF PROPERTY
Name
Stuart H. & Laurie F. Russell

Street and Number
3611 Jackson Street

City, State and Zip Code
Omaha, Nebraska 68103

Representative
Same as above

Phone Number
hm: 346-5870
wk: 399-1303 (Stuart)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

The east 20 feet of lots 1 and 2, subdivision of lot 2 in block 10, in west Omaha, an addition to the city of Omaha, in Douglas County, Nebraska, and the west 55 feet of the north 137 feet of lot 1, in block 10, in west Omaha, an addition to the city of Omaha, and the west 65 feet of the south 56 feet of lot 1, in block 10, in west Omaha, an addition to the city of Omaha, except the following described tract: Beginning at a point on the south line of lot 1, in block 10, in west Omaha, an addition to the city of Omaha, 100 feet west of the southeast corner or less to south line of curved cement driveway extension of the paved private alley in said lot, thence easterly along south line of said driveway to a point 100 feet west of east line of said lot; thence south 44 feet or less to point of beginning, same being all of the west 22 feet of the east 122 feet of the south 44 feet of lot 1, in block 10, in west Omaha, which lies south of said driveway, all in Douglas County, Nebraska.
REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
Title A Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation in Omaha
Date 1981
Federal ___ State ___ County x Local ___

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
Title Historic Omaha Building Survey, Landmark's Heritage Preservation Commission
Date 1977
Federal ___ State ___ County ___ Local ___

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
Title ___
Date ___
Federal ___ State ___ County ___ Local ___

DESCRIPTION
Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance.

(see attached)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
Specific Dates 1909
Architect ___
Builder ___

(see attached)

Date 11/11/81
Signature of Owner/Representative ___
Architectural Significance

The 1909 Breckenridge/Gordon Residence is significant as a fine example of the Georgian Revival style of architecture. This style, popular primarily between 1880 and 1920, adheres to a stricter and more disciplined use of classical detailing than is to be found in the classical elements of the previous Victorian era structures. Designs from America's early colonial buildings served as examples for architects working during this period. The simple rectangular massing, the Palladian type dormer windows, the pedimented porch, the symmetrical facade, and the classically designed eaves and entry are among the major Georgian Revival elements of the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence.

Architectural Description

Breckenridge/Gordon Residence, 3611 Jackson Street, constructed in 1909; red brick, two and one-half story structure with hip roof and shallow projecting eaves; main mass L-shape (38’x55’); one story porch across facade, open porch at rear on first floor, enclosed porches at second floor on rear elevation; central dormer on facade and east elevation; two dormers on west elevation and one dormer at rear elevation; symmetrical facade; eaves enriched with modillions; front porch, with a projecting central pediment, is detailed as a classical entablature with dentils, supported by smooth columns with capitals influenced by the Ionic order, and is enclosed by a balustrade of simple rectangular members; double-hung windows throughout in rectangular and segmental arched openings; three part central dormer is made to appear as a Palladian window with the central portion containing a round-arched window crowned by a broken pediment and flanked by two small rectangular double-hung windows; slate roof; a cornice with dentils and supported by consoles tops the main entrance; special brickwork includes the quions formed at the corners of the structure and voussoir brick above the segmental arched window openings, where raised brickwork is also used to emulate a keystone; a simple metal fire stair has been added to the west elevation. Side hall plan; dog-leg stair with painted handrail and balusters; fireplace surround and all trim and mouldings painted white; quarter-sawn oak floors throughout.

Historical Significance

Research indicates that the residence standing today at 3611 Jackson was built in 1909. The name of the architect and/or builder is not known. The original owner was a prominent Omaha attorney, Ralph W. Breckenridge. One early Omaha history describes Breckenridge as being "one of the leading young lawyers of Omaha, which reputation he has acquired by diligent study and careful attention to business." The complement was apparently deserved, for in 1905 Breckenridge was chosen to the presidency of the Nebraska State Bar Association. Ralph W. and his wife Harriet were the parents of three children: Almyra Morton, Warren Allen, and Katherine.

In August of 1913 Breckenridge was the victim of an unfortunate accident; he was killed by his own automobile while attempting to crank it up. Her father's death prompted Almyra to wed her fiancé months earlier than was planned, and in September of the same year she was married to Alfred W. Gordon. The couple immediately moved in to 3611 with Mrs. Breckenridge and
lived with her for the first few years of their marriage. In 1930 the mother sold the house to the daughter and it became known as the A.W. Gordon residence, the same by which many remember it today.

A.W. Gordon was an Omaha Business man and civic leader. A graduate of what is now Central High School, Gordon never went to college but his talents for management and organization led to the presidency of several businesses including the Gordon-Lawless Co., O'Brian Candy Co., and Gordon Can Co., the latter sold to Continental Co., in 1931. Two Omaha Business leaders recognized his ability and in 1929 asked him to preside over the Omaha Building and Loan Association to keep it from going under during the Depression. Gordon steered the firm safely through the 30's and continued as president until 1951 when he became chairman of the board.

More than having made him a successful business man, Gordon's 85 years made a positive difference to his city. He was the energy and the brains behind many projects that have greatly benefited Omaha. He worked during the 30's to establish the Omaha Association of Taxpayers, an organization which concerned itself with cutting government waste while continuing services. His services were invaluable in the founding of Children's Hospital. He and Mrs. Gordon were benefactors of Clarkson Hospital, having donated $100,000.00 to that Hospital's cancer unit. These are just a few of the civic projects which he furthered by his participation. Alfred W. and Almyra Gordon were the parents of four children: a daughter, Francis Gordon Ranney, was Queen of Ak-Sar-Ben in 1939; a son, A.W. Gordon, Jr., has retired as president of Findley Ice Service and is residing in Omaha. The Breckinridge/Gordon Residence was sold in 1947 and converted into a multiple dwelling in 1980. The home was allowed to deteriorate until its purchase in 1978 by Stuart and Laurice Russell. The Russells' have rehabilitated the structure for their own residence and one apartment. (The Gordon's had two daughters that were the victims of cancer. The area which houses the cobalt unit at Clarkson is named in memory of the two girls.)

The Gold Coast, West Farnam

The four decades from 1880 to 1920 were the golden era of Omaha, an era when a frontier city came of age and the rough exterior of the Eighties gave way to the more mature city of the 1920's. Much of this transformation came about under the direction of a group of men who can be classed under no other title but capitalists. The builders and developers of Omaha included some men whose names are still familiar and other long forgotten: Ezra and Joseph Millard, Guy C. Barton, E.W. Nash, Charles W. Hamilton, and Gurdon W. Wattles, to cite a few of the entrepreneurs.

Under the direction of such leaders, Omaha expanded west, north and south between 1880 and 1920, a movement which caused residential areas to shift. South Tenth Street and the area surrounding Capitol Hill at Twentieth and Dodge Streets marked desirable residence areas in the 1880's, but ten years later, residents began to move their homes west to an area referred to as the West Farnam district. From 1900 to 1910, any person who expected to fit in with Omaha society built his home in the district, which eventually became known as the "Gold Coast" because so many of the capitalists in the city resided there. The area provided a great number of the early monarchs of Ak-Sar-Ben: the queen, a daughter of a long-standing society-minded family, the king, chosen for his civic leadership. The neighborhood was the home of the "heavy respectables, "Omaha's cultural and financial leaders."
Bibliography

A Day in Old Omaha. Landmarks, Inc.


LHPC Case No. H1-82-1, APPLICANTS Stuart H. and Laurie F. Russell request LANDMARK DESIGNATION for 3611 Jackson Street. Area to be designated is shaded. (Breckenridge/Gordon Residence)
AN ORDINANCE to designate the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence, located at 3611 Jackson Street, as a Landmark pursuant to the Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance of the City of Omaha.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

Section 1. That the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence is located at 3611 Jackson Street, which is on the following described land, to wit:

The East 20 feet of Lots 1 and 2, Subdivision of Lot 2 in Block 10 in West Omaha, an Addition to the City of Omaha in Douglas County, Nebraska, and West 55 feet of the North 137 feet of Lot 1 in Block 10 in West Omaha, an Addition to the City of Omaha, and the West 65 feet of the South 50 feet of Lot 1, Block 10 in West Omaha, an Addition to the City of Omaha, except the following described tract:

Beginning at a point on the South line of Lot 1 in Block 10 in West Omaha, an Addition to the City of Omaha, 100 feet west of the Southeast corner more or less to the South line of curb cement driveway extension, paved private alley and said lot; thence Easterly along the South line of said driveway to a point 100 feet West of the East line of said lot; thence South 44 feet more or less to the point of beginning, same being all of the West 22 feet of the East 122 feet of the South 44 feet of Lot 1 in Block 10 in West Omaha which lies South of said driveway, all in Douglas County, Nebraska.

Section 2. That for the reasons recited in Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission Resolution attached hereto as Exhibit I, and made a part hereof as if fully set forth herein, the architectural characteristics of the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence are hereby deemed significant and worthy of preservation.

Section 3. That the Breckenridge/Gordon Residence is hereby designated pursuant to Section 24-61 of the Omaha Municipal Code, and hereby subject to all of the provisions of Landmark Heritage Preservation, Ch. 24, Art. II. of the City of Omaha.

Section 4. That this Ordinance shall be in full force and take effect fifteen (15) days from and after the date of its passage.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER

APPROVED:

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA /DATE

PASSED JUL 6 1982

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF OMAHA

CITY ATTORNEY

PL/87C3:56
ORDINANCE NO. 29795

AN ORDINANCE to designate the Breckenridge
/Gordon Residence, located at 3611 Jackson
Street, as a Landmark pursuant to the Land-
mark Heritage Preservation Ordinance of the
City of Omaha.

PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

1st Reading  JUN 22 1982

Hearing  6-29-82

PUBLICATIONS

PUB’N. OF HEARING  6/25/82

PUB’N. OF ORDINANCE

Date

Mary Coligan Cornett