RESOLUTION - EXHIBIT I
J. E. MEGEATH RESIDENCE
LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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

WHEREAS, Warren C. Schrempp, the properly authorized representative of 617, Inc., requested on November 21, 1979, that the J. E. Megeath Residence be designated as a Landmark under the City of Omaha's Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, the J. E. Megeath Residence, constructed in 1924, exhibits American Georgian Revival elements typical of the sharp, thin and brittle period revival buildings of the 1920s; and,

WHEREAS, the J. E. Megeath Residence was erected by the grandson of James G. Megeath, Omaha pioneer and donator of Hanscom Park; and,

WHEREAS, the J. E. Megeath Residence symbolizes the wealth and success of a family that made its fortune on the growth of Omaha and the region; and,

WHEREAS, the J. E. Megeath Residence from 1937 to 1956 was the home of Judge James A. Donohoe, well known for instituting the pre-sentence investigation.

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

THAT, the J. E. Megeath Residence, 617 North 90th Street, be designated as a Landmark of the City of Omaha.
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission
DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

INSPECTION DATE
August 6, 1980

REQUEST
X Landmark Designation
   Landmark Heritage
   District Designation
   Certificate of Approval to Perform Work

CATEGORY
   District
X Building
   Structure
   Site
   Object

APPLICANT
617, Inc.

LOCATION OF PROPOSED DESIGNATION OR WORK
617 North 90th Street

PRESENT USE
Offices

CONFORMANCE WITH MASTER PLAN

- NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER
Existing:
Mixed office, single and multi-family residential structures adjoining the West Dodge Street commercial district.

Probable future effect on neighborhood if designation is granted or work is approved.
Designation will encourage proper renovation of structure's exterior.

PRESERVATION ADMINISTRATOR'S RECOMMENDATION

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION

ADDITIONAL DATA
Building sandblasted prior to acquisition by present owner; current renovation is unsympathetic to existing fabric.
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission
APPLICATION FOR LANDMARK OR LANDMARK HERITAGE DISTRICT DESIGNATION

NAME OF STRUCTURE
Historic
    J.E. Megeath Residence
and/or Common

LOCATION
Street and Number
617 North 90th Street

CLASSIFICATION

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OWNER OF PROPERTY
Name
617, Inc.

Street and Number
700 South 89th Street
City, State and Zip Code
Omaha, NE 68114

Representative
Warren C. Schrempp

Phone Number
393-1493
341-1806

LEGAL DESCRIPTION
Parts of Lots 6 and 15, Pierson's Subdivision of the South half of the Southwest quarter and the West half of the Southeast quarter of Section 15, Township 15, North, Range 12, East of the 6th P.M., in the City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, being more particularly described as follows: commencing at the Southwest corner of said Lot 6, thence North along the West property line of said Lot 6 (a/k/a Center-line of 90th Street), a distance of 113.50 feet; thence East a distance of 85.00 feet to the point of beginning; thence continuing East along a line which is 113.50 feet North of and parallel to the North property line of said Lot 15, a distance of 82.70 feet; thence North along a line which is 167.70 feet East of and parallel to the West property line of said Lot 6, a distance of 5.00 feet; thence East along a line which is 118.50 feet North of and parallel to the North property line of said Lot 15, a distance of 24.30 feet; thence South along a line which is 191.80 feet East of and parallel to the West property line of said Lot 6, a distance of 5.00 feet; thence East along a line which is 113.50 feet North of and parallel to the North property line of said Lot 15, a distance of 69.20 feet; thence South along a line which is 261.00 feet East of and parallel to the West property line of said - over-

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
Title
Historic Omaha Building Survey, Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission, Omaha

Date
1980

Federal State County Local

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

Constructed in 1924, mansion-type building. Building proper approximately 70' x 36' situated on east side of 90th Street. Attached photos show present appearance of house only, arches and garage of same architecture extend to north, or left, of picture.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
Specific Dates
Architect
Builder

The architect is not known at the moment, nor the builder. From 1932 to 1956 it was the residence of Hon. James Donohoe, Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Nebraska. Prior to that it was the home of William Schall of Schall, Robinson, Hruska & Garvey.

Date
Signature of Owner/Representative

November 21, 1979

[Signature]
**Historical Significance**

**J. E. Megeath Residence, 617 North 90th Street**

The "House of a Thousand Windows" at 617 North 90th Street was the residence of James Edward Megeath when built in 1924. Megeath, who followed his father into the family coal business, was the grandson of Omaha pioneer businessman and landowner James G. Megeath. The new country home symbolized the success of a family that had come to the city early and made its fortune on the region's growth and development.

Pioneer James G. Megeath was an entrepreneur who got in on the ground floor of settlement in Nebraska. Arriving in 1856, he was in a position to take advantage of western travelers' trade and to purchase land inexpensively and reap profits on it later. Megeath started a merchandising business which catered to the Mormons, and later formed a forwarding, receiving and commission business which sold to the Union Pacific Railroad and the men building it. Both companies were highly profitable and made Megeath a wealthy man.

Soon after his arrival in the city James Megeath bought 380 acres of land which became more valuable as the city grew toward it. The land lay west of 27th Street and south of Center Street, an area including Hanscom Park, of which Megeath donated the southern portion. Since A. J. Hanscom donated a larger section, Omaha's first real park was named after him.

George W. Megeath, one of the five children of James G. Megeath, was in the coal business most of his life. He worked for several coal firms, then later set up his own company by purchasing three coal companies and two mining firms. It was George Megeath's son, James Edward, who purchased the land near 90th and Dodge in 1921 and named it Long View Farm. Newspapers dubbed his home the "House of a Thousand Windows" when first inhabited in 1924. The J. E. Megeaths remained there for several years, then left the city to manage one of the family coal companies in Wyoming. The senior Megeaths also decided to live at Long View Farm and constructed another larger home on the property (no longer standing). Numerous other structures, including a caretaker's cottage, carriage house and ice house were also erected nearby. The G. W. Megeaths lived on the property until his death in 1931.

Although the J. E. Megeaths lived in their home for only a few years, the structure had relatively few tenants after them. It remained vacant for several years, then was purchased by Judge James A. Donohoe and wife, who held longest tenure in the home, from 1937 until 1956. Judge Donohoe was known in legal circles for instituting the pre-sentence investigation, an innovation which later spread throughout the Federal judicial system. After Donohoe's death in 1956, the house had no long-term tenant until contractor William Hawkins bought it in 1962. By the 1970s the structure was alternately vacant, or held offices and a Halloween horror house until purchased by the present owner, who has renovated it for law offices.
Architectural Description

Erected during 1924, the James Edward Megeath Residence exhibits American Georgian Revival elements typical of the sharp, then and brittle period revival buildings of the 1920s. Originally set within a framework of formal gardens and landscaped approaches, the 36' by 70', two and one-half story, red brick country estate conveys an English atmosphere through the juxtaposition of projecting gable end walls and a central, horizontal, hipped roof mass. This formal arrangement of parts is highlighted by classical Colonial detailing in engaged piers, polygonal bays, and multi-paneled double-hung windows. Door and window openings are beautifully scaled and articulated, frequently incorporating fan forms in transom and entry areas. A blue slate roof sheaths the structure and once complemented the painted white brick facades.

Interior spaces revolve around a central, ornamental wrought-iron stairway and feature oak floors and traditional white painted woodwork. First floor mantels, cornices, door frames and ceilings, decorated with delicate rosettes, festoons and oval patera, remain as evidence of the structure's original grandeur.

Bibliography


Omaha City Directories.

Omaha Sunday News, "Unusual Homes Being Built in Omaha," April 6, 1924.

Omaha World-Herald, March 17, 1922.

Omaha World-Herald, March 28, 1931.

Omaha World-Herald, February 27, 1956.

Savage, James W., Bell, John T., and Butterfield, Consul W. History of the City of Omaha, Nebraska and South Omaha. New York: Munsell and Company, 1894.

Telephone Interview with William J. Schall, San Diego, California, August 6, 1980.

LHPC Case No. H1-80-3, APPLICANT 617, Inc. requests LANDMARK DESIGNATION for 617 North 90th Street. Area to be designated is shaded.
ORDINANCE NO 29332

AN ORDINANCE to designate the J E Megeath Residence, located at 617 North 90th 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 J E Megeath Residence is located at 617 North 90th Street, which is legally described as follows

Parts of Lots 6 and 15, Pierson's Subdivision of the South Half of the Southwest Quarter and the West Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 15, Township 15 North, Range 12 East of the 6th P.M., in the City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, be more particularly described as follows

Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Lot 6, thence North along the West Property Line of said Lot 6, a distance of 113 50 feet, thence East a distance of 85 feet to the point of beginning, thence continuing East along a line which is 113 50 feet North of and parallel to the North Property Line of said Lot 15, a distance of 82 70 feet, thence North along a line which is 167 70 feet East of and parallel to the West Property Line of said Lot 6, a distance of 3 feet, thence East along a line which is 118 50 feet North of and parallel to the North Property Line of said Lot 15, a distance of 28 10 feet, thence South along a line which is 191 80 feet East of and parallel to the West Property Line of said Lot 6, a distance of 5 feet, thence East along a line which is 113 50 feet North of and parallel to the North Property Line of said Lot 15, a distance of 69 20 feet, thence South along a line which is 261 00 feet East of and parallel to the West Property Line of said Lot 6, a distance of 134 90 feet, thence West along a line which is 21 40 feet South of and parallel to the North Property Line of said Lot 15, a distance of 176 00 feet, thence North along a line which is 83 feet East of and parallel to said West Property Lines of said Lots 6 and 15, a distance of 134 90 feet to the point of beginning

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 J E Megeath Residence are hereby deemed significant and worthy of preservation

Section 3 That the J E Megeath 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

[Signature]

APPROVED

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA

[Signature]

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original document now on file in the City Clerk's Office.

APPROVED AS TO FORM

CITY ATTY.

[Signature]
ORDINANCE NO 29332

AN ORDINANCE to designate the J. E. Megeath Residence, located at 617 North 90th Street as a Landmark pursuant to the Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance of the City of Omaha.

PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

1st Read 10/22/80

Hearing 11-4-80

Motion to delay 3rd reading to 11-18-80 Carried 6-0

Final Reading 11-18-80

Passed

Mary Collier, Corretto

PUBLICATIONS

PUB’N OF HEARING
Date 10/31/80

PUB’N. OF ORDINANCE
Date 11-28-80