RESOLUTION - EXHIBIT I
JOHN P. BAY - THOMAS A. FRY RESIDENCE
LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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

WHEREAS, Candice Downard is the owner of the Bay-Fry Residence; and,

WHEREAS, this owner, on April 29, 1980, requested that the Bay-Fry Residence be designated a Landmark under the City of Omaha's Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, the Bay-Fry Residence was constructed in 1887; and,

WHEREAS, the Bay-Fry Residence was designed by Omaha architect George L. Fisher; and,

WHEREAS, the Bay-Fry Residence is an early extant example of the picturesque Queen Anne structures which characterized Omaha's Kountze Place Addition during the late 1880s; and,

WHEREAS, the Bay-Fry Residence was constructed by John P. Bay, organizer of the Crystal Ice Company; and,

WHEREAS, the Bay-Fry Residence was owned for over thirty years by civic leader and Ak-Sar-Ben King Thomas A. Fry,

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

THAT, the John P. Bay-Thomas A. Fry Residence, 2024 Binney Street, be designated as a Landmark of the City of Omaha.
APPLICATION FOR LANDMARK OR LANDMARK HERITAGE DISTRICT DESIGNATION

NAME OF STRUCTURE
Historic John P. Bay - Thomas A. Fry Residence

and/or Common
Blue Retirement Home

LOCATION
Street and Number
2024 Binney St. Omaha, Nebraska 68110

CLASSIFICATION

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OWNER OF PROPERTY
Name
Candy Downard, Terry Girton

Street and Number
2024 Binney St.

City, State and Zip Code
Omaha, NE 68110

Representative
Same

Street and Number

City, State and Zip Code

LEGAL DESCRIPTION
Lots 8, 9, and 10, Block 9, Kountze Place, an Addition to the City of Omaha, as surveyd, platted and recorded in Douglas County, Nebraska

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
Title
Historic Omaha Building Survey (HOBS)

Date
May 1980

Federal ___ State ___ County X ___ Local
DESCRIPTION
Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
Specific Dates
Architect
Builder

4/29/80
Date

[Signature]
Signature of Owner/Representative
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission
DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

INSPECTION DATE
7-11-80

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

CATEGORY
___ District
X Building
___ Structure
___ Site
___ Object

APPLICANT
Candice Downard

LOCATION OF PROPOSED DESIGNATION OR WORK
2024 Binney Street

PRESENT USE
Retirement home for the aged.

CONFORMANCE WITH MASTER PLAN
Conforms to the 1977 Community Development Master Plan's Combination Rehabilitation Redevelopment Areas where reconstruction of existing neighborhoods is proposed

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER
Existing: Turn-of-the-century converted single-family residences which exhibit Queen Anne and Eclectic Revival forms; the high percentage of deteriorating structures and vacant lots has forced the public sector to declare the neighborhood a redevelopment target zone.

Probable future effect on neighborhood if designation is granted or work is approved.
The neighborhood, under our North Omaha Preservation Grant, is undergoing extensive study; the designation will give additional public notice of its existence.

PRESERVATION ADMINISTRATOR'S RECOMMENDATION
Approval

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION
Approval

ADDITIONAL DATA
See attached correspondence.
Historical Significance

In Omaha the general pattern of movement for the well-to-do has always been toward the West. Beginning with the earliest settlers on Capitol Hill and the bluffs west of Downtown, successive generations have jumped to Park Avenue and the West Farnam - Cathedral area, Happy Hollow and Fairacres, and today's Regency - Rockbrook vicinity. Perhaps the most notable exception to that trend was the North Omaha development of Kountze Place. First National Bank President Herman Kountze had owned the 160 acres between 16th and 24th Streets, Locust and Patt, since the 1860s, but waited until the real estate boom two decades later to subdivide it and offer lots for sale.

Kountze planned the new development as an upper middle class residential suburb and soon attracted the city's professionals and big businessmen. Provisions in each deed stipulated both the minimum costs of each dwelling and its distance from the street, while prohibiting any unsavory activities in the neighborhood. Streets in the southern portion of the subdivision, particularly Binney and Wirt, were first built on in the late 1880s and contain some of Omaha's finest extant examples of Queen Anne and late Victorian architecture. Kountze Place, like other suburbs of that decade, experienced almost no growth during the 1890s Depression, but recovered after the 1898 Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition held on the northern edge of the tract in what is now Kountze Park. As a result, the neighborhood as a whole exhibits several decades of popular architectural styles, from the Queen Anne structures on the southern streets to the more subdued Classic Revival residences built after 1900 on streets farther north.

Among the earliest structures in the neighborhood was a typical Queen Anne residence at 2024 Binney Street. John P. Bay, of Bay and Fitch Real Estate, erected the house in 1887. By 1889 Bay and Fitch had organized the Crystal Ice Company, no doubt to take advantage of Fitch's experience in operation of an ice company throughout the 1880s. The industrial growth in that decade created a demand for ice by the railroads, breweries, and packinghouses, and spawned a number of new ice companies. The Crystal Ice Company employed as many as 150 to 200 men in winter to fill their ice houses at 4th and Pierce, 8th and Nicholas, and at Cut-Off Lake (Carter Lake). The economic downturn probably affected the company's business, however, for by 1893 Bay, Fitch, and the Crystal Ice Company had left the city. The house at 2024 Binney went into receivership and was eventually sold in 1894 to local attorney Lewis H. Kent, who lived in the home until 1901.

The next owner of the residence was its most distinguished occupant, Thomas A. Fry. Fry came to Omaha in 1887 as Manager of A. Booth and Company, dealers in fish products. Over the years he became involved in a variety of enterprises, organizing the Fry Shoe Company in 1902, serving as President of the Drexel Shoe Company, President of the Nebraska Savings and Loan Company and as a Director of U. S. National Bank. But his civic contributions were not limited to business ventures. Fry was one of the original twelve organizers of Ak-Sar-Ben in 1895, and served as President of the Board of Governors for nine years. The organization bestowed its highest honor on him in 1902 when Fry was named Eighth King of Ak-Sar-Ben. In addition, he was a member of the Omaha School Board, and was an active Chamber of Commerce booster, holding the office of Treasurer for thirteen years. Fry was a perfect example of the businessman - civic leader, one of the men who dominated Omaha's commercial life in the first three decades of this century.
After Fry's death the house was sold in 1936 to Anna V. Dunn, who operated a convalescent home in the large structure. The new use was indicative of the changes occurring throughout the neighborhood during the Depression and war years, when many of the houses were being converted to apartments. Albert and Ada Blue purchased the property in 1952 and opened the Blue Retirement Home, which still occupies the residence in 1980. The Home is operated by members of the Blue family who hope to again return it to single family use sometime in the future.
Architectural Significance

The John P. Bay Residence is significant as an early extant example of the picturesque Queen Anne structures which characterized Omaha’s Kountze Place addition during the late 1880s. A decoratively rich style, the Queen Anne period represented a reaction against High Victorian "reality" and a renewed interest in visual aesthetics. During the development of Kountze Place, the height of a residence and the weight of its gingerbread became synonymous with an owner’s prestige in the community. Influenced by these trends, the evolving Queen Anne style became the obvious stylistic choice for Omaha architect George Fisher in his design for realtor John Bay.

Architectural Description

John P. Bay Residence, 2024 Binney Street, constructed in 1887 at a cost of $5,500, George L. Fisher, architect; J. Deess, Jr., builder. Wood frame structure, clapboard and fish scale shingle walls, rectangular (40' by 54') shape, two and one-half stories over raised brick basement, high and multiple A-type roofs with ridges meeting at right angles, three story octagonal tower terminating in an elongated domical roof intersects the structure’s hip roof at southwest corner and is flanked by projecting attic gables, wrap-around porch encircles tower at ground level and terminates in a projecting swan’s neck pediment with ornamental stone tympanum, fixed multiple pane windows in attic story, narrow rectangular double-hung windows with one over one lights in first and second stories, leaded and jeweled stained-glass windows in all transoms. Side hall floor plan, open well oak stairway enlivened with coffering, turned balusters and ornamental latticework, plastered walls with oak picture rail, plain oak trim in living and dining areas, pine trim with corner blocks elsewhere, rectangular oak fireplaces with elaborate tile surrounds, fern stand colonettes and mirrored overmantels on first floor, rectangular walnut fireplace with tile surround and incised Eastlake ornamentation in second floor bedroom, brass Eastlake door hardware, frame one and one-half story clipped gable roofed horse stable in lot’s northeast corner.

THE ARCHITECT, George L. Fisher

George Fisher was born in Pontiac, Michigan on August 21, 1856 to Charles Ernest and Mary E. (Lee) Fisher. He graduated from the University of Michigan in 1880 with a degree in civil engineering. In 1882, he moved to Omaha and was employed with the firm of Dufrene & Mendelssohn as head draftsman for two years. Mr. Fisher was a principal in the firm Mendelssohn & Fisher from 1885-1887, Mendelssohn, Fisher & Lawrie from 1887-1894, Fisher and Lawrie from 1894-1913 and George L. Fisher from 1913 to 1928. He resided at 1622 Lothrop Street.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Leading Industries of Omaha. 1884.


Omaha Chamber of Commerce Journal. April 15, 1922.

Omaha City Directories.

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

Hi-80-11 APPLICANT Candice Downard requests LANDMARK DESIGNATION for 2024 Binney Street. Area to be designated is shaded.

Scale: 1"=100'
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission
AN ORDINANCE to designate the John P. Bay Residence, located at 2024 Binney 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 John P. Bay Residence is located at 2024 Binney Street, which is legally described as follows:

Lots 8, 9 and 10, Block 9, Kountze Place, an addition to the City of Omaha as surveyed, platted and recorded 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 John P. Bay Residence are hereby deemed significant and worthy of preservation.

Section 3. That the John P. Bay 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:

PASSED MAR 17 1991 6-0

ATTEST:

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

K/8:6a
ORDINANCE NO. 29439

AN ORDINANCE to designate the John P. Bay Residence, located at 2024 Binney Street as a Landmark pursuant to the Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance of the City of Omaha.

PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

1st Reading MAR 3 1981
Hearing 3-10-81

Hearing MAR 10 1981
Over to 3-17-81

Final Reading MAR 17 1981
Passed 6-0

Mary Pettijohn

PUBLICATIONS

PUB'N. OF HEARING 3/6/81

PUB'N. OF ORDINANCE 3/27/81