RESOLUTION - EXHIBIT A
Springwell Danish Cemetery - 6326 Hartman Ave.
LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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

WHEREAS, the Springwell Cemetery Association is the owner of the Springwell Danish Cemetery; and,

WHEREAS, the owner requested that the Springwell Danish Cemetery be designated as a Landmark under the City of Omaha's Landmarks Heritage Preservation Ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission of the City of Omaha requested on December 13th, 1995, that the Springwell Danish Cemetery, located at 6326 Hartman Ave., be designated a Landmark under the City of Omaha's Landmarks Heritage Preservation Ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, Danish immigration to Omaha began in the 1880's and continued through the 1910's; and,

WHEREAS, Danish immigrants were integral to the physical and social development of Omaha, and surrounding areas during the early 19th and 20th centuries; and,

WHEREAS, Springwell Cemetery was developed by the Danish Brotherhood and subsequently owned by the Springwell Cemetery Association; and,

WHEREAS, other than State-interrred indigents, the cemetery is the burial site of only people of Danish descent, several of which were locally important businessmen and families, the first burial dating from 1868; and,

WHEREAS, this cemetery contains the gravesite of Col. Sophus Neble, an important community and military leader and eventual owner of the internationally known Danish Pioneer Newspaper; and,

WHEREAS, the Springwell Danish Cemetery contributes significantly to the Danish and overall ethnic heritage of Omaha; and,

WHEREAS, this case application and supporting data are attached hereto as exhibits, and incorporated herein as reference.

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

THAT, Springwell Danish Cemetery, 6326 Hartman Ave., be designated a Landmark of the City of Omaha.
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission

Application for Landmark
or Landmark Heritage District

1. Name of Structure: Springwell Cemetery

2. Location / Address: 6326 Hartman Avenue

3. Applicant:
   name: Springwell Cemetery Association
   address: 6326 Hartman Ave.
   Omaha, NE 68104
   phone (402) 571-5844

4. Classification:
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   Present Use
   | agriculture | museum |
   | commercial  | park   |
   | educational | private residence |
   | entertainment | religious |
   | government | scientific |
   | industrial | transportation |
   | military   | other (explain) |
   | vacant     | Cemetery |

5. Owner of Property:
   name: Springwell Cemetery Association
   address: 6326 Hartman Ave.
   Omaha, NE 68104
   phone (402) 571-5844

6. Legal Description:

Southeast quarter of the Northwest quarter of the Southeast quarter of Section 36, Township 16, Range 12 East.
7. Historic Description and Significance: Please provide as thorough a description as possible. This should include, but is not limited to, architectural styles and features; site elements; landscaping/urban design elements; architects, builders, and owners. Copies of architectural drawings, photos and similar documents are encouraged. Include a statement explaining why the item/property/district is historically significant. The Landmarks Commission staff will assist you in filling out this portion if necessary. Use additional sheets if necessary.

DESCRIPTION
Springwell Danish Cemetery was established in 1889 on a ten acre tract of land northwest of the city of Omaha. City directories of that time identify the address as “west of Fort Omaha.” Originally located outside the city limits, the cemetery and surrounding area was annexed by the city in 1917. Currently the cemetery is located at 64th and Hartman Avenue and covers approximately ten acres. Although the landscaping was unplanned, the small cemetery appears to be based roughly on the idea of the rural cemetery with sloping hills and curving avenues. The gravesites, however, are set in a grid pattern which is atypical of the rural cemetery. The surrounding area is currently residential, but when originally established the cemetery was surrounded by farmland. The cemetery has been in continuous use since its incorporation in 1889.

Landscaping plays an important role in the design of any cemetery. Although relatively unplanned, Springwell Cemetery displays important landscape features including gently sloping hills and several areas of full grown trees and shrubs. Main Avenue separates the cemetery into east and west sections and Avenues A and B surround Section Two. Coming off the main road, Avenue C is a circular drive encompassing Section Five. This drive accents the gently sloping hills. A chain link fence was erected in 1976 to protect the cemetery from vandals. During the 1970’s vandalism was becoming a problem in the cemetery when teenagers began knocking over large monuments and stealing gravestones. The stones have since been remounted and the fence has put a stop to the vandalism. A row of evergreen trees ornaments the east side of Section One and was planted in the 1930’s. Lining the Avenues are hackberry trees that have become full-grown. At one point the cemetery contained many American Elm trees, but during the 1960’s and 1970’s Dutch Elm disease wiped out all the Elms in the cemetery. Many of these have been replaced with other types of trees, but there is no record of when they were planted. Other low lying shrubs and plants also play a role in the landscaping of the cemetery. Many of these include small evergreens and yucca plants.

The cemetery is divided into several different sections. The east half contains Sections one through four plus three family reserves, Christiansen, Wolf, and Henrichsen. At the far northeast corner of the cemetery, south of Section Four, a section was purchased by Dannebrog No. 216 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Here, members of the Dannebrog No. 216 could purchase plots directly from their organization. In order to comply with state regulations, two sections of the cemetery were set aside for indigent persons, the northeast and the northwest corners. Recently, a monument recognizing those indigent persons buried in the northwest corner was placed in the northwest section. The monument lists the name, age, and death year of all indigents buried there. The west half of the cemetery is divided into Sections Five through Seven with the northwestern most corner being left for the indigents.

Several examples of late 19th and early 20th century sepulcher art is found in the east half of the cemetery. Obelisks, monuments, and tableau stones are among the most common styles of stones, but other examples are also present. Stone materials include marble, granite and sandstone. Victorian era iconography is also found throughout the older sections of the cemetery. Several large, carved stone tree stumps are present, as are lambs, urns, and flowers. The majority of the newer stones are granite bevel markers set close to the ground for easier maintenance. Many of the stones in the cemetery have been placed into concrete bases for ease of maintenance.

The oldest area of the cemetery is located in Section Two at the far east edge. The oldest grave is an obelisk that dates from 1868 and is the grave of Lars Jocumensen, a farmer from the area. Other
older graves are children's graves and date from about 1874 until the establishment of the cemetery. Although several graves predate the establishment of the cemetery, the official organization of the cemetery was in 1889 when the Springwell Cemetery Association was incorporated. At that time, the ten acres was purchased from the Danish Brotherhood Lodge No. 1 and a cemetery was officially established on the land. One month after the cemetery was established the first plat of the cemetery was drawn up by George R. Prandell. The cemetery plots were located on the five acres east of the main road. It was not until 1929 that the west half of the cemetery was platted and the main road became a circular road. That plat was drawn by John N. Jorgensen.

A plat map of the area in 1898 shows that the land surrounding the cemetery was predominantly farmland and many of these farms were owned by Danish farmers. The proximity to these farms could provide the explanation for the location of the cemetery as it was a distance from the city and any of the Danish churches. Being close to a large percentage of Danes, the cemetery would have developed. The surroundings changed very little by 1913 and farmland was still the prevalent land use. By 1937, however, the township of Benson was beginning to expand into the area, and the city of Omaha had annexed some of the land immediately south and east of the cemetery. Currently, the area surrounding the cemetery is being developed for low to moderate income housing. This development, however, is not visible from inside the cemetery fence because trees and brush create a natural visual barrier.

According to cemetery records, there are approximately 4100 people interred in this cemetery, but not all graves are marked with individual headstones. Some stones have more than one person's name carved on it; other graves simply do not have a marker. Family plots often have only a simple monument with the family name, but no individual markers for each member of the family. Some of the stones may have also sunk or been destroyed or stolen by vandals. In the areas of the cemetery where the indigent people were buried, there are few stones. Of those that do have stones, many were placed on the graves by relatives who bought the stones much later than the burial.

The main entrance gate, erected in 1961 by the Dania Club, is located off Hartman Avenue and leads to the main road of the cemetery which separates the cemetery into east and west sections. Originally Hartman Avenue was called Redman Road, but that has since been changed. Because of the location of Springwell Cemetery, in 1916, Redman Road was paved up to the cemetery entrance. This was done for ease of travel to and from the cemetery. Because of its distance from the city, a visit to the cemetery was often an all day affair. A streetcar traveled to Benson and from there visitors would walk the remainder of the way to the cemetery, often times spending the day picnicking out at the cemetery.

Immediately to the west of the gate is a house built in 1916. The house was built as an office for the cemetery and living quarters for the caretakers. Built in a vernacular version of the California bungalow, the gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the ridgeline runs from north to south. The main entrance is on the south gable end of the house and has a replacement aluminum screen door. The original open front porch has been enclosed and a deck has been added to the rear of the house. The exterior of the house has been covered with aluminum siding, but the original layout is still the same. A two car garage of concrete block was built to the north of the house and is used for storage of equipment and cars. Originally, a water tower was located at the far east edge of the cemetery, but it has since been removed. In the southeast corner of section five there are two flag poles, one for the American flag and the other for a Danish flag.

SIGNIFICANCE
Springwell Danish Cemetery is significant at the local level, in particular its Danish Community, under Criterion A because of the significance of immigration to Omaha as the city developed into a leading commercial and industrial center in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Most of the people interred in the cemetery are either Danish or of Danish descent, the only exceptions being the indigent persons buried in the cemetery to fulfill state requirements. The Danish community played an important role in the development of Omaha during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Danish immigration to Omaha began in the late 1880's and continued through the early 1910's. Individuals of Danish background played an important role in the development of Omaha, especially in the city's commercial development. Several of these Danes are buried at Springwell.
Part 7, Page 3

Omaha's location as the eastern terminus for the transcontinental railroad provided numerous jobs for the European immigrants who were arriving during the late 19th century. This location influenced many immigrants, including Danish immigrants, to settle in the Omaha area. Many of these immigrants worked in the Union Pacific railroad shops or in other rail related fields. Eventually, many of the immigrants opened their own businesses and contributed to the rising commercial activity of Omaha.

Mass immigration by the Danish people began in Omaha during the 1880's, although some immigration occurred before that time. Originally moving here to flee the German occupation of Denmark and in turn the mandatory military service, many of the Danish people settled in and around Omaha to work for the railroad or to farm the land. Several organizations and industries were established by the Danish population. These became important to Omaha and the Danish community.

The Danish Brotherhood was a fraternal organization of Danes founded in Omaha in 1862. Because of the high concentration of Danish population, the Danish Brotherhood chose Omaha as its National Headquarters, and it maintains that status today. The Danish Brotherhood was organized to provide insurance to its members, aid for the immigrants, and social activities for the Danish community. Several changes have occurred to the organization over time, but it is still one of the largest Danish social organizations in the country. In recent years the insurance program has been turned over to another company making the Brotherhood solely a source of information and a social fraternity. After its organization in Omaha, the Brotherhood expanded and currently has lodges throughout the United States. The Danish Brotherhood also played a role in the establishment of Springwell Cemetery. Lodge Number One of the Danish Brotherhood in Omaha owned the ten acres of the cemetery for about three months before selling it to the Springwell Cemetery Association in 1889. Founders of the Springwell Cemetery Association were also members of the Danish Brotherhood.

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows and its sister fraternity, the Daughters of Rebekah, were also important organizations in the city of Omaha. Several lodges were organized in the city including Dannebrog No. 216. This particular lodge was composed of Danish members and met at Dannebrog Hall. It purchased the I.O.O.F. area in the cemetery for its members and their families. In 1936, a large monument was erected in this area in honor of the Odd Fellows members. After Lodge 216 disbanded, the organization donated $20,000 for the perpetual care of the cemetery.

One of the strongest draws to the city of Omaha for Danish people was Den Danske Pioneer, (The Danish Pioneer), a Danish newspaper begun in Omaha in 1872. The Danish Pioneer was published in Omaha from 1872 through 1958 at which time it was purchased by a Chicago based company. At that time the publication was moved to Chicago. The Danish Pioneer is still one of the largest Danish weeklies in the United States. With a circulation throughout the world in the late 1800's, many people learned about Omaha and decided to settle in the area. Sophus Nebble was one such person. After his arrival in Omaha, he worked for the Danish Pioneer for several years before purchasing the newspaper in 1867. He then strengthened the publications and gained wide world attention for his weekly newspaper. Col. Nebble was also a strong community leader and as well as a state and military leader. He served as Douglas County Commissioner for several years and served on the military staff of several Democratic governors. He was also the Democratic party nominee for presidential elector three times. At the local level he served on the board of public welfare and was also director of the

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5Nielson, p. 174.
7"heart Disease Takes Nebble." (Omaha Bee, January 10, 1931)
Nebraska National Bank. Sophus Neble died in 1931 and is buried at Springwell Cemetery in Section Two.

Other important Danes buried in Springwell include several local businessmen who played a role in the commercial development of Omaha. One of the more significant Danish families was the Brodegaard family who owned a jewelry business in Omaha during the 1920's and 1930's. His family is buried here. Another famous Dane buried in Springwell is Samuel Augustus Corneer. Corneer owned the first two brick factories in Omaha and was a member of the state legislature. The Andresen family is also buried here and they owned the Buena Vista Orchards that were located on the current grounds of the Immanuel Hospital. The Buena Vista Orchard was one of the largest apple orchards near Omaha.

After their arrival in Omaha, many of the Danish immigrants began their own dairies. The dairy business came naturally to the Danes, as many had learned the trade in their native Denmark. By 1908 it is estimated that seventy-five percent of the dairies in the city were owned by Danes. This was a large percentage for any ethnic group in the city. The industry was soon lost by the Danes, however, because many of the Danish operations were too small to survive the larger competition. Several of these dairy owners were buried here in Springwell.

The Danish community has helped play an important role in the development of Omaha and surrounding areas. Benson, Florence, and North Omaha were communities with strong Danish populations and the Danes in these communities built the businesses and the politics of the areas. Several Danish citizens of Benson held high ranking positions in the Benson city government. One of the strongest areas of settlement for the Danish population was North Omaha, particularly around Cuming Street. Several Danish businesses were located here, and these businesses helped to establish North Omaha as an important commercial area in Omaha. Although the Danish population soon dispersed throughout the community, the impact it had on the North Omaha community was felt for many generations and several other ethnic groups moved into the prosperous area.

The Danish people began to immigrate to the United States in the late 1800's. The main reason for leaving their country was the occupation of the country by Germans. This occupation of their country by foreigners created a sense of hatred towards their government. As a result of these feelings, the Danes had very little nationalistic feelings towards their native country. Within a few years of settlement in the country the Danish population was almost entirely acculturated. The Springwell Danish Cemetery is one of the few reminders of the Danish heritage here in Omaha. The cemetery has always played an important role in the lives of the Danish people. In the early years of Omaha settlement, almost all Danish people were buried on these ten acres. Today the Danish heritage is displayed through the various organizations and through the cemetery. Even today when there is a funeral at the cemetery both the Danish and American flags are flown.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


City of Omaha Deed Records. Register of Deeds Office, Omaha/Douglas Civic Center, Omaha, NE.

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9Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission. Patterns on the Landscape: Heritage Conservation in North Omaha, (Omaha City Planning Department, 1984), p. 22.
10Larsen, p. 160.
Bibliography, Page 5


"Heart Disease Takes Neble." Omaha Bee. January 10, 1931.

Jorgensen, John H. Plat Map of Springwell Cemetery, 1929.


"Men Who Are Making Omaha, Sophus Neble." Omaha Bee, April 29, 1924.


Omaha City Directories. Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark Branch. Omaha, NE.

Oral Interviews with Howard Jensen, Kenneth Jessen, Ruth Nielson, and Otto West.


Plat Book of Douglas County, NE. The Omaha Been News: 1937.

Savage, James W. and John T. Bell. History of the City of Omaha and South Omaha. Chicago: Munsell and Co., 1894.


Springwell Cemetery Association Records.

March 19, 1996

C3-96-28

Honorable President

and Members of the City Council,

The attached Ordinance designates the Springwell Danish Cemetery, located at 6326 Hartman Avenue as a landmark. The applicant is the Springwell Cemetery Association.

Springwell Danish Cemetery was established in 1889 on a ten (10) acre tract of land northwest of the city of Omaha. City directories of that time identify the address as "west of Fort Omaha". Originally located outside the city limits, the cemetery and surrounding area was annexed by the city in 1917. Currently the cemetery is located at 64th and Hartman Avenue and covers approximately ten (10) acres. Although the landscaping was unplanned, the small cemetery appears to be based roughly on the idea of the rural cemetery with sloping hills and curving avenues. The grave sites, however are set in a grid pattern which is atypical of the rural cemetery. The surrounding area is currently residential, but when originally established the cemetery was surrounded by farmland. The cemetery has been in continuous use since its incorporation in 1889.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

The Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission held a public hearing on this request December 13, 1995 and recommended approval of the designation.

The Planning Board held a public hearing on this request February 7, 1996, and recommends approval of the designation.

Full summary of all proceedings attached.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey P. Johnson, AICP
Planning Director

Referred to City Council for Consideration:

Mayor's Office/Title
Interoffice Memo
21 December 1995

To: Chairman, Planning Board Members
From: Jeff Johnson, Planning Director
Re: Landmarks Case No. H1-95-29, Landmark designation

At the December 13th meeting of the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission, the applicant, Springwell Cemetery Association, requested Landmark designation for the Springwell Danish Cemetery, 6326 Hartman Avenue. The request was initiated by the present owners of the property. The public hearing held at this meeting resulted in a recommendation for approval of the request.

Landmark designation allows for Commission review and approval of proposed changes that may affect the property, based on significant elements described in the Landmark application, as well as other elements referred to in Chapter 24 of the Omaha Municipal Code (O.M.C.).

According to Chapter 24 O.M.C., section 24-59, we hereby transmit this proposal to the City Planning Board, and request that you consider the degree of conformity or nonconformity with the Master Plan of the City.

Staff Recommendation: The Planning Department considers this request to be in conformance with the Master Plan.
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

C3-96-29
Planning Department
(2-23.45)

REQUEST: Approval of Landmark Designation Designation for the Springwell Danish Cemetery
(LHPC Case #H1-95-29)

LOCATION: 6326 Hartman Avenue

At the Planning Board meeting held on February 7, 1996, no one appeared before the Board to present this request.

No one appeared in opposition to this request.

Mr. Johnson stated that this case was approved by the Landmark Heritage Preservation Commission on December 13, 1995, as a local landmark. Mr. Johnson stated that the Planning Department is recommending approval of the request. The request conforms to the City's Master Plan and is related to the goals of the Concept Element because it promotes the city's cultural and ethnic heritage.

Mr. Nesbitt moved to APPROVE the landmark designation of the Springwell Danish Cemetery (LHPC Case #H1-95-29); 6326 Hartman Avenue. Mrs. Spence seconded the motion which carried 7-0.

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Minutes  
December 13, 1995  
Page 2

Mr. Otto West, Springwell Cemetery Association, 6326 Hartman Avenue, stated that the cemetery is Danish in every sense of the word. It was founded by Danes, administered and operated by Danes, and burials are approximately 100% Danes. Mr. West stated that they have established a perpetual care fund that will have proper income to take care of the maintenance of the cemetery in the future. Mr. West stated that the Board of Trustees supports the nomination of the cemetery for a landmark designation.

No one appeared in opposition to this request.

Dr. Pratt moved to APPROVE the local designation of Springwell Danish Cemetery as a local landmark. Mr. Dunbar seconded the motion.

AYES: Dunbar, Kinnich, Wilsam, Pratt, McCusker.

Motion carried 5-0.

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ORDINANCE NO. 33853

AN ORDINANCE to designate the Springwell Danish Cemetery, located at 6326 Hartman Avenue, 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 Springwell Danish Cemetery, located at 6326 Hartman Avenue, which is on the following described land, to wit:

The Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 36, Township 16, Range 12 East of the Principal Meridian, City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska.

Section 2. That for the reasons cited in the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission Resolution attached hereto as Exhibit "A", and made a part hereof, the historical value of the Springwell Danish Cemetery is hereby deemed significant and worthy of recognition.

Section 3. That the Danish Cemetery is hereby designated pursuant to Section 24-61 of the Omaha Municipal Code.

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 BY:

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA

PASSED APR 2 1996 7-0

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF OMAHA

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY

PAPLN\12024.SAP
ORDINANCE NO. 33853

AN ORDINANCE to designate the Springwell Danish Cemetery, located at 36326 Hartman Avenue, as a Landmark pursuant to the Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance of the City of Omaha.

PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

1st Reading MAR 19 1996 - Hearing

Hearing MAR 26 1996 - Over to 4/21/96

Final Reading APR 2 1996 - Passed 7-0

Mary Lougan Barnett
CITY CLERK