

PH# 366625

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 6 1976
DATE ENTERED FEB 17 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

**

HISTORIC
C.S.P.S. Hall
AND/OR COMMON
Czech Hall

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
381-383 Michigan Street
CITY, TOWN
St. Paul
STATE
Minnesota
VICINITY OF
Fourth
COUNTY
Ramsey
CODE
27
123

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED (see continuation sheet)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
C.S.A. (Czechoslovak Societies of America), Lodge Czech No. 51
STREET & NUMBER
383 Michigan Street
CITY, TOWN
St. Paul
STATE
Minnesota

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Ramsey County Courthouse - Registry of Deeds
STREET & NUMBER
15 West Kellogg Blvd.
CITY, TOWN
St. Paul
STATE
Minnesota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Statewide Historic Sites Survey
DATE
1976
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Minnesota Historical Society - Building 25, Fort Snelling
CITY, TOWN
Saint Paul
STATE
Minnesota

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED 1917

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The C.S.P.S. Hall is a three story, red brick building, 50 x 100 feet, built on the corner of Michigan and Western at West Seventh. There is a full cellar with vaulted roof under the Michigan Street sidewalk. The flat roof was originally gravelled. White limestone (or sandstone) was used sparingly for window and door trim. The building has been repainted a brick red since remodeling was undertaken in 1917. Total floor space is about 12,500 square feet.

On 19 March 1917 Raymond P. Pavlecka, architect and engineer, drew blueprints, still held by the C.S.A., for the remodeling of the Hall. At this time the entrance (on Michigan) for the upper storys was moved from the western wall to the center of the building. Many transoms on the second and third storys were removed, and a few windows were bricked over. (Arched side windows on the first floor have been more recently covered by boards or sheets of metal and painted.) Also, a sign with "1887 C.S.P.S. 1917" and other decorative brickwork was added to the third story Michigan facade.

Minor repair work has been done to the first story shop fronts. Tuckpointing should be done in a few limited areas on the Western Avenue side, and the electricity, plumbing, and heating are at least 50 years old, but the building is in quite good repair. Permits for repairs were taken out in 1925 and 1931.

The first story has been commercial space since the Hall was constructed in 1887. Dry goods, saloons, meat markets, and, since the 1940s, a bakery and grocery have occupied the two shops. Both shops have original molded sheet metal ceilings. The floors are linoleum tile on wood. The bakery has been frequently cleaned and painted, and presented a neat store front with its window arrangements and show cases. The grocery has, by all appearances, not been painted or scrubbed for decades, and it maintains no window decorations beyond pasteboard boxes.

The second and third floors are used by the C.S.A. and other Czech organizations. The second floor includes a kitchen, cloakroom, toilets, meeting room, and a ballroom/gymnasium with stage. The third floor includes a meeting room, two anterooms, and a balcony overlooking the ballroom. The woodwork is very simple, and the floors are hardwood. The plaster walls are in good repair and have been painted within the last year.

Of the original furnishings, some chairs and tables remain. The stage is provided with several drop curtains, including a Czech village on a forested hillside. Folding theater chairs are stored under the stage. Flags, trophies, and pictures are on the third floor, but most of the resident organizations' records are preserved by the Minnesota Historical Society, Manuscripts Department.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1887

BUILDER/ARCHITECT 1887 Unknown; 1917 remodeling
Raymond P. Pavlecka

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1887 the hundred plus C.S.P.S. members in the small Czech settlement in St. Paul built at the crossroads of that Czech settlement a modestly impressive cultural center that has continuously served their group through immigration, Americanization, two World Wars, and the new ethnic awakening. They are still a very active, but small group, proud of their homelands, their cultural heritage, their accomplishments, and their future.

To this small group, the C.S.P.S. Hall has been a center of Czech theater and music until World War II, of Czech language classes until shortly thereafter, of regularly scheduled festivities and dances and a prize-winning Sokol gymnast team for almost a century, and of a recent, but growing Czech folkdance group. To the larger community, its shops have provided dry goods, bread, meat and liquor at various times, and the Hall has been used for dances, St. Patrick's Day celebrations, weddings, war bond drives, and bingo evenings.

Czech immigrants began settling in the United States in the 1840s. Before 1900, perhaps 275,000 came to the U.S. from Bohemia and Moravia for a blend of political, economic, and religious reasons. Over a half million had arrived by 1970. They settled in New York, St. Louis, Cleveland, and Omaha. In the 1850s they founded the Minnesota farming communities of New Prague, Owatonna, Hopkins, and Silver Lake. In 1861 the urban settlements in Winona and St. Paul began. Michal Kartak, a furrier and the first Czech settler in St. Paul, was soon followed by Vojta Handl and T. Herauf. Few more came before 1863 (Jerabek, p.59), and in 1870 there were only 251 in Ramsey County, 2400 in Minnesota (total population 440,000). In 1900 they numbered 1345 in the County, 11,147 in the State (of 1,750,000) (Jerabek, p.80). In 1970, with a state population of 3,805,000, almost 18,000 were foreign born or second generation Czechs, with several thousands of third and fourth generation. They were never numerous in Minnesota.

Language bound the Czechs together; religion split them deeply. Catholics, freethinkers and Protestants seldom cooperated during peacetime. Rival organizations in the scattered Czech rural settlements and St. Paul were, therefore, unable to develop Minnesota into a flourishing Czech American cultural area. Each settlement did, however, maintain its own churches, schools, libraries, dramatic and musical groups, gymnastic organizations, cemeteries and lodges.

The C.S.P.S. (Česko-Slovanský Podporující Spolek, or Czechoslovakian Protective Society) was founded in St. Louis in 1854 to provide health insurance and funeral expenses. It is perhaps the oldest fraternal lodge in the U.S. In 1876, with 116 members, Lodge Cech of St. Paul became the first of a half dozen lodges organized in Minnesota, and the twelfth in the nation. Its members came from Slovanská Lipá (or Slavic Linden Tree) of 1869 (or earlier) and from other Czech

(see continuation sheet - page 2)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Habenicht, Jan, Dějiny Čechův Amerických, St. Louis, 1910.
 Jerabek, Esther, "Antonín Jurka, a pioneer Czech schoolmaster in Minnesota" in Minnesota History, 12:247-280 (1931).
 Jerabek, Milan Woodrow, Czechs in Minnesota, Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1939. (source of quotes)
Panorama, a historical review of Czechs and Slovaks in the United States of America, Cicero, Ill., Czechoslovak National Council, 1970.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	4 9 0 8 4 0	4 9 7 5 5 6 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 28, Block 1 of Smith's Addition, St. Paul

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marlin L. Heise

16 July 1976

ORGANIZATION

DATE

612-224-8754

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

343 Michigan Street

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

St. Paul

Minnesota

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Russell W. Fridley
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 11/29/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

DATE

2/12/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

2/10/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET C.S.P.S Hall

ITEM NUMBER 3

PAGE 1

Public acquisition being considered: HRA, ^{planning} drawings for the area would raze the C.S.P.S. Hall and many of the houses on Michigan to provide parking space for an expanded supermarket. This project has been talked about for several years, and some of the houses may now be owned by HRA, but no recent purchasing or razing has been done.

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CONTINUATION SHEET C.S.P.S. Hall ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

freethinker groups. They met in private homes and rented halls until 1887 when they built the C.S.P.S. Hall on Michigan and Western.

Czech students were taught English, Czech, music, and the three R's by Antonin Jurka at the nearby Jefferson Public School in 1870-1875. In 1877 a freethinker school, meeting on Saturdays or Sundays, began to teach the American-born Czechs to read and write Czech. These classes continued at the Hall until after World War II. Since 1972 Czech is again taught to about thirty students annually in the St. Paul adult education program at offices about five blocks from the Hall.

The C.S.P.S. has always promoted the Americanization of Czech immigrants, but it has also supported vigorously the retention of Czech culture among Czech Americans. In 1891 a national committee was founded to inform Americans about Bohemia and to foster relations between the United States and Bohemia. To retain Czech culture, they collected Czech books, often placing them in public libraries for wider use, they produced Czech plays during the winter, and they formed singing societies, polka bands and orchestral groups. Antonin Jurka insured quality acting during the 1870s-1890s. Most of the plays were farces, but they were done in Czech, and were frequently performed for other lodges around the state. Visiting troupes and the home actors could provide one night per month of Czech entertainment until World War II. Polka bands for playing old time dance music were very popular among the Czechs, but classical music was also popular. Jerabek (on p.156) lists two dozen Czech Minnesotans who were members of Twin Cities symphony orchestras between 1900 and 1930. Antonin Dvorak and other Czech artists visited the Czech settlement in St. Paul when traveling in the United States.

The Sokols (or falcons), gymnastic societies founded by Professor Tyrš in Prague to regenerate Czech nationalism, were first organized in St. Louis in 1865. About 1872 an informal Sokol began in St. Paul, formally organizing on 13 June 1882. It has from its beginnings shared common goals, membership and space with the C.S.P.S. In 1915 the District of Minnesota was formed and the first "slet" (public exercises) were held. Since then several slet have been held in St. Paul, and the St. Paul Sokol has gone to regional and national competitions, recently winning first place in Omaha.

During World War I the St. Paul Czechs made great contributions to the war effort and to the eventual creation of an independent Czechoslovakia. In the 1930s ^{what?} it was reorganized, and the C.S.A. (Czechoslovak Societies of America) resulted. World War II meant card parties, dances and other fund drives to buy Red Cross supplies, cigarets for G.I.'s, and aid for Czechoslovakia. Since the late 1960s, a new interest in roots and ethnic heritage has brought new blood into the Hall.

(see continuation sheet - page 3)

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CONTINUATION SHEET C.S.P.S. Hall ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

C.S.A. Lodge Cech No. 51 sponsored or supported dinners, booths at the St. Paul Festival of Nations, language classes, folkdancers, and charter flights to Czechoslovakia have done much to promote goodwill and understanding locally and internationally. At the same time, the Hall stands in the aging inner city, threatened by the progress of the ever growing parking lots. The C.S.P.S. Hall is a landmark in its neighborhood, and the living, historical cultural heart of a minute ethnic group that has contributed much to St. Paul since its early days.