

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **JUN 26 1986**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic First State Bank of Bethany (LC13:G11-198)

and/or common Salon of Hidden Charm

2. Location

street & number 1551 North Cotner Blvd. n/a not for publication

city, town Lincoln n/a vicinity of

state NE code 031 county Lancaster code 109

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 type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<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 Ron Hinkley (R. D. Hinkley and Associates, Inc.)

street & number 303 North 52nd Street, Suite 100

city, town Lincoln n/a vicinity of state NE

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number 555 So. 10th Street

city, town Lincoln state NE

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date on-going federal state county local

depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Lincoln state NE

7. Description

<u> </u> excellent	<u> </u> deteriorated	<u> </u> unaltered	<u> xx </u> original site
<u> xx </u> good	<u> </u> ruins	<u> xx </u> altered	<u> </u> moved date <u> n/a </u>
<u> </u> fair	<u> </u> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The former First State Bank of Bethany, built ca. 1914 in the Town of Bethany (now a neighborhood in northeast Lincoln), is a one story, buff brick building of rectangular plan with simple Neo-classical trim of limestone and cast-stone. The interior has been extensively altered since the bank's failure in 1930; the old vault is the only remaining significant feature. The exterior has a much higher degree of integrity, suffering only replacement of the original fenestration with aluminum-framed units, addition of a small wing to the rear and a projecting neon sign to the east facade, and alteration of one north window into a door.

The First State Bank of Bethany building stands on the southwest corner of Cotner Blvd. and Fairfax Street, anchoring the northern edge of the Bethany business district. The structure is built of long, thin, buff-colored, glazed "Roman" bricks laid in 10:1 common bond, with alternating headers and stretchers in the bonding courses. Taking advantage of the corner site, the flat-roofed building was designed with two principal facades, both with limestone watertable and sills, a cornice of limestone and cast-stone (concrete), and cast-stone coping. The east, entrance facade, about 20 feet long, consists of just two bays--a large window to the north and the main entrance to the south. The entrance retains its original pair of flanking, glass-globed cast-iron wall lights and its limestone and concrete hood, supported by stone consoles.

The 36-foot-long north facade originally consisted of three central bays of windows, flanked at each end by a windowless bay. (See historic photo included with this nomination, Photo 2 of 5.) Those windowless bays are each decorated with a simple brickwork panel outlined in stretchers and rowlocks, emphasized with small limestone squares and circles inserted in the brickwork. The blocky, horizontal massing of the building, the buff "Roman" brick, the cornice and the entrance trim mark the building as a restrained example of the Neo-classical Revival style of the early twentieth century.

A small, buff-brick wing, added to the rear (west) of the original building in 1933, accommodates an apartment. The south and west sides of the bank building are largely hidden by adjacent structures, but enough is visible to see that these secondary facades consist of red, common brick and have no cornice.

Comparison of an early photograph of the bank with the current structure indicate that the basic form and materials of the building are largely unchanged, although some significant alterations have occurred. The addition of the west apartment wing in 1933 probably blocked an original rear door, necessitating the insertion of a side door at one of the north window openings by cutting away the center of the sill and a section of wall. Nevertheless, the form of the original opening is still apparent in the sidelights and transom surrounding that side door. All of the original windows have been replaced with aluminum-framed units, but the pattern of large lower light and upper transom is retained, except on the main east window. The transoms of the east and north central windows originally had decorative muntins, now lost. The only interior feature that reflects the original use of the building is the bank's vault.

[SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.]

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Description

Item number 7

Page 2

While these changes have diminished the structure's integrity, it still retains its massing, pattern of fenestration, and simple ornamentation, including the lights flanking the entrance. Furthermore, the prominent corner location, relative to the local business district, and restrained, dignified style and massing on two principal facades, render the building still recognizable as a small town bank building.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) urban history/development
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates ca. 1914-1930 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

First State Bank of Bethany is Lincoln's best extant example of a small town bank building, a characteristic architectural type in Nebraska (Criterion C--architecture). Furthermore, the bank building is the most substantial commercial or public building with integrity surviving from Bethany's period as an independent town, before its annexation by Lincoln in 1926 (Criterion A--other (urban history/development)).

First State Bank of Bethany was organized in 1904 with a capitalization of \$25,000 and a surplus of \$10,000. C. W. Fuller, a Bethany grain elevator owner, was the bank's first president. The business's first office was housed near the middle of the Bethany business block (south of the structure here nominated) in a tiny brick structure which is still extant (LC13:G11-194).

In 1914, the bank purchased the lot at the north end of the business district; by the time of the next year's directory, the bank had relocated to 149 N. Saunders (the subject property's address in the Town of Bethany system of street names and numbers). The bank operated in its new building until its failure in 1930. A variety of occupants including a cafe used the building between 1930 and 1937, when it was purchased by the Lincoln City Libraries for a Bethany branch. The interior remodeling necessary for the new use was carried out as a WPA project.

This small building is locally significant in the area of architecture as a rare example of a small town bank, extant with fair integrity in a metropolitan area (Criterion C). Like most small town banks in Nebraska, First State Bank of Bethany is a one story structure, located on a prominent corner in its business district, with two principal facades displaying fine materials and conservative, dignified styling. These small buildings are often architect-designed and rank as the most architecturally developed structures in their towns. Neither the designer nor the builder of First State Bank of Bethany have been discovered, but in materials and style the structure characteristically stands out among its neighbors. A description of Bethany in 1926 referred to the bank as a "fine new office building."

Lincoln absorbed several small towns in the 1920s, all of which had their own bank or banks. In Havelock, no early, separate bank structures survive with integrity comparable to that of the Bethany example, although there is a larger, mixed use building (SW corner of Havelock and 61st St.) that housed a bank, among other tenants. University Place had several small banks, most of which are lost or denatured. Only the early office of Citizen's State Bank at the southeast corner of 48th and St. Paul Sts. retains integrity, an interesting, two-story building characteristic of a larger small town bank (LC13:F12-412). College View's early bank is extant but considerably altered (LC13:F3-128, 4728 Prescott Street).

The First State Bank of Bethany building is also significant in the area of the history of the development of the City of Lincoln (Criterion A) for its association with the Town of Bethany. Like two of the other incorporated towns which Lincoln annexed in the 1920s, University Place and College View, Bethany was organized in the 1880s around a denominational college. Nebraska Christian

[See Continuation Sheet.]

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Lincoln, NE

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	4	6	9	9	6	9	0	4	5	2	2	2	3	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H

Zone		Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

This property is described as the north 40 feet of Lot 1, Block 57, Bethany Heights Addition to the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, including all historically associated property.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brent Nelson/Planning intern; Edward F. Zimmer, Ph. D./Historic Preservation Planner

organization Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept. date April 28, 1986

street & number 555 So. 10th Street telephone (402)471-7491

city or town Lincoln state Nebraska

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 *James A. Benson*

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date June 10, 1986

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 7-24-86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Significance

Item number 8

Page 2

College was founded in 1888 and the village of Bethany incorporated in 1890. The school was soon renamed Cotner College after an early benefactor. The town had a population of about 1,300 when it was annexed by Lincoln in 1926. The College failed in 1933, a victim of the Depression; its original building was subsequently demolished and no other major structures of the school survive. Unlike University Place, no recognizable Bethany Town Hall remains, nor is the former town represented by an early library, as are College View and University Place. The annexed towns of Havelock, University Place, and College View all are represented, in varying degrees of integrity, by early commercial districts or major commercial buildings, while Bethany's best commercial or public structure predating 1926 is this bank.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9

Page 2

Cobbey, Mabel Snyder

A sociological survey of the village of Bethany, Nebraska. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebr. (M.A. thesis), 1926.

Copple, Neale

Tower on the Plains. Lincoln: Sunday Journal and Star, 1959. Pp. 70-71, 127, 142.

Lincoln City building permit #21172 (re 1933 addition). County-City Building, 555 S. 10th St., Lincoln.

Lincoln city directories.

Lincoln: Nebraska's Capital City. Lincoln: Woodruff Printing, 1923. P. 76.

Rob, Thomas Bruce

State Bank Failures in Nebraska. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska (M.A. thesis), 1934.

Sawyer, Andrew J., ed.

Lincoln, the Capital City, and Lancaster County, v. I, 225, 303. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1916.