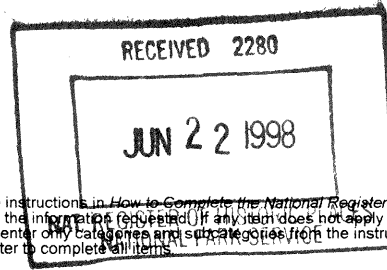


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Springfield Community Hall

other names/site number NeHBS #SY10-027

2. Location

street & number 104 Main Street not for publication

city or town Springfield vicinity

state Nebraska code NE county Sarpy code 153 zip code 68059

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

6/10/98
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.

[Signature]

7-23-98

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
2		structures
		objects
3		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/gymnasium/auditorium

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instruction)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/gymnasium/auditorium

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls stone, concrete

roof asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
[] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
[x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
[] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
[] B removed from its original location.
[] C a birthplace or a grave.
[] D a cemetery.
[] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
[] F a commemorative property.
[] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1940

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Henzie, Floyd (Architect)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
[] previously listed in the National Register
[] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[] designated a National Historic Landmark
[] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
[] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location for Additional Data:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
[] Other State agency
[] Federal agency
[] Local government
[] University
[] Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

Table with 6 columns: Zone, Easting, Northing, Zone, Easting, Northing. Rows 1-4.

[] See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carol Ahlgren, Architectural Historian
organization Nebraska State Historical Society
street & number 1500 R Street
city or town Lincoln
date March 1998
telephone 402.471.4787
state NE zip code 68501

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title City of Springfield
street & number Box 189
city or town Springfield
telephone 402.253.2204
state NE zip code 68059

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Springfield Community Hall

Name of Property

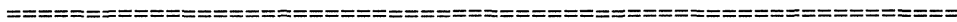
Sarpy County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

Description

The Springfield Community Building is located at the western edge of the business district of Springfield, a small Sarpy County town in east central Nebraska. The Community Building was constructed between 1938 and 1940 from area sandstone by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The nomination includes one contributing building: the community building and two contributing structures: a sandstone retaining wall located along the east and north sides of the building and one free-standing sandstone column topped with a concrete light post at the southwest side of the building. All of the resources retain a high degree of integrity.



The Springfield Community Building is located at the western edge of Main Street in Springfield, a small town (1990 population: 1,426) approximately 30 miles southwest of Omaha, Nebraska. The large, rectangular-shaped sandstone building provides a physical and visual boundary of downtown Springfield. The adjacent commercial buildings are predominantly one or two story second generation structures, on the north and south sides of Main Street along a slight hill which rises eastward. The area west of the Community Building is vacant land which marks the former railroad tracks. To the south and west are several industrial buildings and the Sarpy County Fairgrounds. West of the Fairgrounds is State Highway 50 which runs north-south.

The Springfield Community Building was constructed between 1938 and 1940 on vacant business lots as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project. The large rough-cut sandstone building is an excellent example of a public building constructed with WPA funds and labor. Typical of WPA construction projects, the sandstone used for the building, retaining wall, and light post was obtained from a nearby quarry by WPA workers. With its rough cut stone, beaded mortar, and randomly placed stones with distinctive fossilized leaves on the main facade, the building is an excellent example of the craftsmanship associated with WPA construction.

The rectangular, gable roof building measures 51 by 109 feet and has a full basement. The main (south) facade fronts Main Street and features a parapet roof. The centrally located main entrance is accessed by several concrete steps. Stone pilasters flank the double doors, topped with a simple entablature which features limestone key stones and a flat concrete crown. The keystones are repeated in a cross shape above the main entrance. Paired windows are symmetrically located on the east and west sides of the main entrance. The windows feature lintels with limestone keystones and concrete sills.

The building is bordered to the east and north by a stone retaining wall which utilizes the same sandstone construction and is a contributing structure. The wall follows the edge and contour of the property line and measures approximately 2 to 3 feet in height, and is topped with concrete. The southeast edge of the wall has an integral column, approximately six feet tall with a flared concrete post and globe light. A matching free-standing column and light post is located at the southwest edge of the property and is also a contributing structure. The west facade of the building features a basement level wooden double garage door and four basement level windows.

The roof line of the main facade extends approximately 15 feet to the east and features a doorway which leads to a vestibule, ticket room, basement stairs and into the gymnasium. The gymnasium features a maple floor and measures approximately. The building's exterior stone walls are exposed in a band approximately six feet above the floor. Wooden benches are located along the east and west sides of the gymnasium. On the east side are men and women's rest rooms. At the north end of the gymnasium is a stage which is approximately 17 feet deep. On the west and east

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Continuation Sheet

Springfield Community Hall

Name of Property

Sarpy County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

sides of the stage are stairs which lead to dressing and storage rooms. The space has a maple floor with basketball hoops to the north and south.

The basement is accessed by steps located at the southeast corner of the main floor. The area features a concrete floor, exposed stone walls and wooden support beams. A kitchen area with wooden counters and cupboards is located at the northwest corner of the building.

Since its completion in 1940 the Springfield Community Building has served a variety of public functions. For many years the basement was used for receptions, local elections and County Fair exhibits. From 1940-1960 the gymnasium was the town's primary court for basket ball games and the stage was used for high school graduation ceremonies. Today the building still serves as the site for numerous private and public functions.

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Springfield Community Hall

Name of Property

Sarpy County, Nebraska

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Section 8 Page 1

Statement of Significance

The Springfield Community Building is being nominated to the National Register at the local level of significance under Criteria A and C for its association with the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Built of rough cut area sandstone, it is an excellent example a small town, multiple use public building constructed by the WPA, a New Deal public works program. The period of significance, 1940, represents the year construction was completed.

=====

The Springfield Community Building is located in the central business district of Springfield, a small town southwest of Omaha, Nebraska. Construction began in the summer of 1938 and was completed in the fall of 1940. The rectangular-shaped, gable roof sandstone building with its prominent downtown location was made possible through the labor and funds provided by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Established during the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the WPA was the most extensive national public work relief program designed to alleviate the unemployment of the Great Depression. The WPA was established by Executive Order in May, 1935. In cooperation with state and local governments, the WPA conducted broad programs of public works and other community services until its liquidation in June, 1943.

Approximately 80 percent of the WPA's activities were public works and construction. Projects included building or improving more than 644,000 miles of roads, 750 airports, 24,000 miles of sewage lines, and 120,000 buildings (Cutler, 1985). Public buildings constructed by the WPA included libraries, schools, and recreational buildings for use by local communities. Other construction included recreational areas such as playgrounds, campgrounds, and public parks.

Prior to the construction of the Community Building, Springfield's public recreational and entertainment facilities were limited to the existing opera house, a 19th century frame building. Although Springfield was home of the Sarpy County Fair, exhibition and entertainment space consisted of tents erected west of the Community Building site. Further, the gymnasium at the local high school was inadequate for basketball games, graduations, and other functions of the growing school district. The Springfield Community Building provided space for these activities from 1940 until 1960 when a new school was built (Iske, 1997).

In the spring of 1938, local residents recognized the potential for utilizing WPA money and funds for a community building and took steps to ensure its construction. On May 12, 1938 the *Springfield Monitor* reported that the city had purchased vacant lots in the downtown for delinquent taxes with the intention of erecting a community building. The structure would be "suitable for housing county fair activities as well as other local affairs." (*Monitor*, 5-12-1938)

A month later the bond issue to fund construction costs was presented to voters. In the weeks prior to the June 21, 1938 election, the *Monitor* described the proposed building, which would be constructed of area sandstone by WPA labor and contain a basketball court, stage/auditorium, and full basement for various public functions. It was noted that the structure, "can be built with the help of WPA for less than half the cost of any other method" (*Monitor* 6-2-1938). The *Monitor* continued to emphasize the opportunity for Springfield to "get a \$12,000 community building for \$4,000 to \$5,000," and stated that without WPA labor and funds "the cost would be four times that" (*Monitor* June 16, 1938). The bond issue passed by a solid majority with the approval of 145 out of 179 votes.

The Community Building would be constructed on vacant lots at the northwest edge of downtown. Construction began in the fall of 1938 following building plans by Omaha architect Floyd Henzie. WPA crews under the direction of Edgar Kobler excavated the building site. The opera house was sold to the city and torn down; where feasible, material salvaged

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Continuation Sheet

Springfield Community Hall

Name of Property

Sarpy County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

from the structure was used in the new Community Building. (*Monitor* 9-1-38; 9-29-38) Sandstone for the structure was cut by WPA crews from a quarry approximately three miles west of town.

The cornerstone was laid on April 25th, 1939 and the *Monitor* reported a large crowd and "impressive ceremonies" which included attendance by local students and teachers and music provided by the "WPA colored band of Omaha." The contribution of the WPA for Springfield's building and others throughout the country was noted: "Not only has worthwhile and needed structures been built [sic] but employment has been furnished to many workmen who would otherwise be idle." The newspaper accurately predicted that the "thoroughly modern building" would "house Springfield activities for many years" (*Monitor* 4-27-39).

When the Community Building was completed in 1940 Springfield's population was only 370. The large building housed numerous activities such as basketball games, graduation ceremonies, dances, county fair exhibits, meetings, and local elections. From 1940 to 1990 Springfield's population would almost quadruple to its present day total of 1,456. From 1940 to the present, the Community Building has continued to serve as an important public facility.

The Springfield Community Building was determined to be eligible on the local level as an excellent example of a small town, multiple use public building constructed by the WPA. The building is significant under Criterion A for its association with the WPA, which was one of the broad work relief programs of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Construction of the building provided several years employment for at least 25 area men in a project intended to benefit Springfield and the surrounding area.

The building is also significant under Criterion C as a well preserved example of a hall/auditorium which exhibits outstanding craftsmanship. Constructed of area sandstone, the building features details such as limestone keystones in the lintels, beaded mortar, and randomly placed stones with distinctive fossilized leaves. To date, the on-going Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) has not identified similar properties in the adjacent east-central Nebraska counties of Cass, Douglas, or Lancaster. Saunders County, to the northwest, has a c.1936 city auditorium located in the small town of Cedar Bluffs. Unlike the Springfield Community building, however, the Cedar Bluffs Auditorium is a large brick arched roof structure that was constructed for use as an auditorium.

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Continuation Sheet

Springfield Community Hall _____

Name of Property

Sarpy County, Nebraska _____

County and State

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Bibliography

Cutler, Phoebe. The Public Landscape of the New Deal. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985.

Iske, Gary. Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey form, April, 1997. Lincoln NE: Nebraska State Historical Society.

Nebraska Blue Book 1930, 1940, 1950. Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Legislative Council

Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) files. Nebraska State Historical Society, 1500 R Street, Lincoln, NE.

Newspapers:

The Springfield Monitor, 1938-1940

Verbal Boundary Description

The Springfield Community Building is located on Lots 9 - 12, Block 5, Original Town Plat, Springfield, Sarpy County, Nebraska.

Boundary Justification

The boundary contains the tract of land historically associated with the Springfield Community Building.