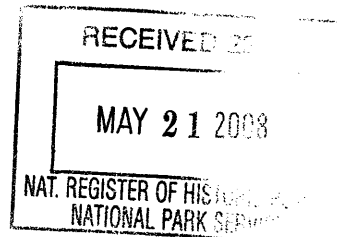


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



603

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 Selma Terrace
Other names/site number DO09:0207-050

2. Location

Street & number 630, 634 and 636 Park Avenue Not for publication
City or town Omaha Vicinity
State Nebraska Code NE County Douglas Code 055 Zip code 68102

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.)

Michael J. Paul Signature of certifying official May 16, 2008 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.
 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): _____

Edson H. Beall 7.2.08

Signature of Keeper Date of Action
for

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- X Private
Public-local
Public-state
Public-federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- X Building(s)
District
Site
Structure
Object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: Buildings, Sites, Structures, Objects, 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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic; Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic; Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements;
Prairie School

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation Masonry

Walls Masonry

Roof Asphalt/EPDM

Other

Narrative Description

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

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

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.)

Architecture

Community and Regional Planning

Period of Significance

1916

Significant Dates

1916

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Richard Everette

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
X Local Government
University
X Other
Name of repository: Omaha Main Public Library

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than 1 acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	15	252336	4570864	3.			
2.				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 Jennifer Honebrink, AIA, and Chris Jansen

organization Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture P.C.

date Feb 2008

street & number 1213 Jones St

telephone 402-341-1544

city or town Omaha

state Nebraska zip code 68102

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 Omaha Social Capital 1 LLC

street & number 12925 West Dodge Road

telephone (308) 249-9065

city or town Omaha

state Nebraska zip code 68154

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

Section 7: Narrative Description

(See Sanborn map on next page)

(See typical floor plan on Continuation Sheet Section 7, page 3)

Site:

Selma Terrace is located along one of the main thoroughfares into the residential neighborhood directly west of downtown Omaha. The neighborhood is a strong mix of large and small, multi-family dwellings and single family homes. Originally established along popular streetcar lines, which became Omaha's major bus routes, this neighborhood now serves many of Omaha's low income and new immigrant residents. The building itself is currently surrounded by a parking lot and church to the north, small commercial areas to the northwest and east, and a few single family residences to the south and west.

Exterior:

Selma Terrace is a three-story, "L" shaped building with four separate entrances from a grass-covered courtyard into the two main facades. The west wing is a flat façade, while the plane of the north wing is broken by a series of sun porches that tie this building to the popular sunlight and air movement of the late nineteen-teens and early nineteen-twenties. Each entry porch is set out from the face of the building and highlighted with decorative terra cotta trim. The top of each façade is capped with a decorative metal cornice. Decorative brickwork and terra cotta trim highlight the windows above each entry porch. The original wood windows are still intact, revealing a scheme of upper sashes divided into a "prairie" style pane over undivided lower sashes. Windows are typically paired with wide mullions between. The back of the building is unadorned and has a series of fire escapes that allowed access to the kitchen of each apartment. The basement has very low ceilings and doors that open at grade. On the North, these are behind a brick privacy fence that creates a light well at the back of the building and separates it from a parking lot. On the West, the doors exit onto the sidewalk of S 30th Street.

Interior:

On the interior there are nine apartments per floor. Each stair tower provides access to two apartments, one on each side of the landing, except the corner stair tower which allows access to three apartments. The studio apartments on either side roughly mirror one another with small kitchens, baths, dining rooms and living rooms. Larger units have sun porches.

Integrity:

This building was originally built as an apartment building and has remained an apartment building with only minor modifications over the years. The interior has remained relatively intact. "Bedrooms" were originally Murphy Beds that opened into the dining room from the closet. These have been removed. Dark wood trim and French doors remain however, and the stair towers retain their original mosaic floors and wood trim. Overall the building has a good level of integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

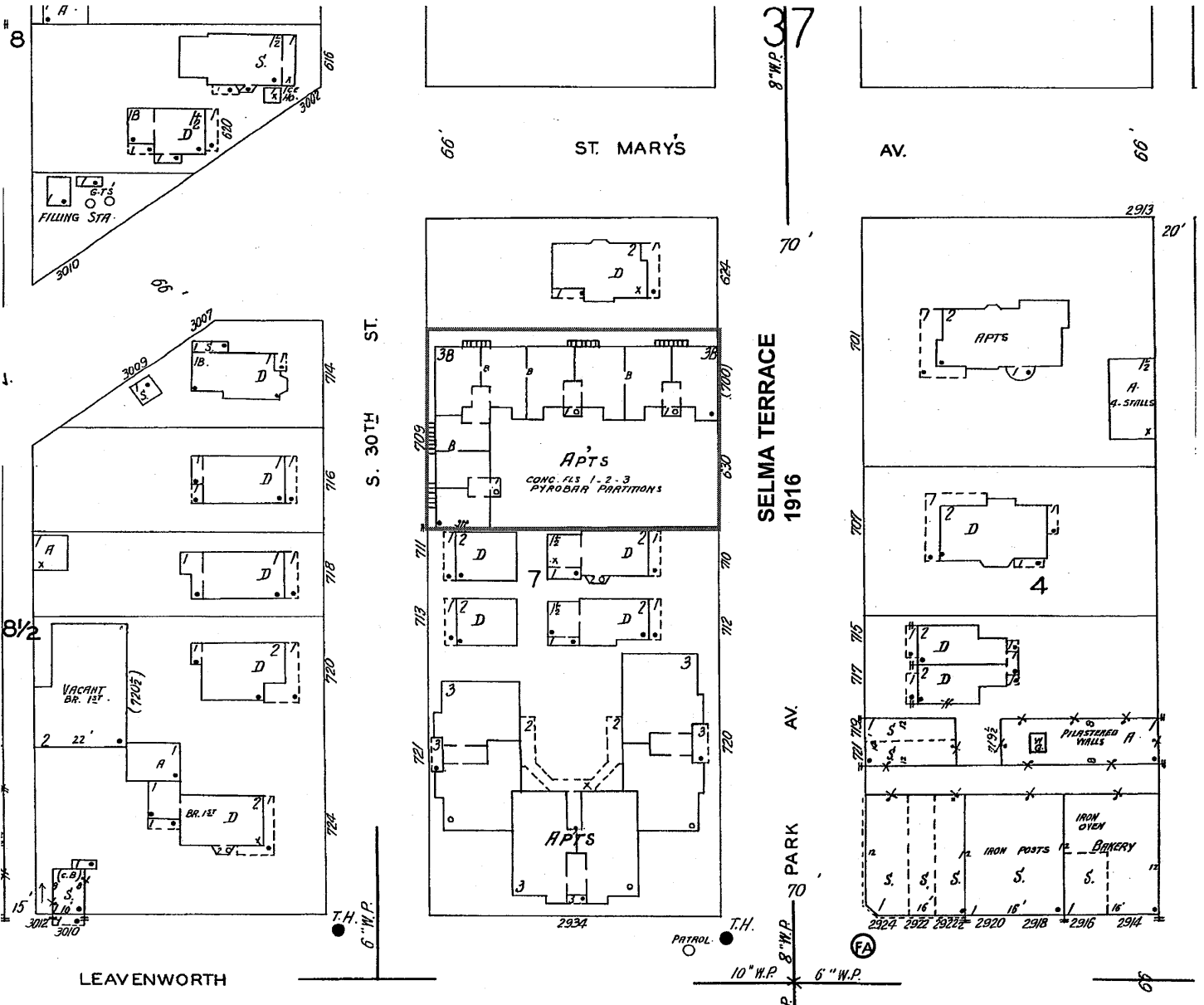
Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 2



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

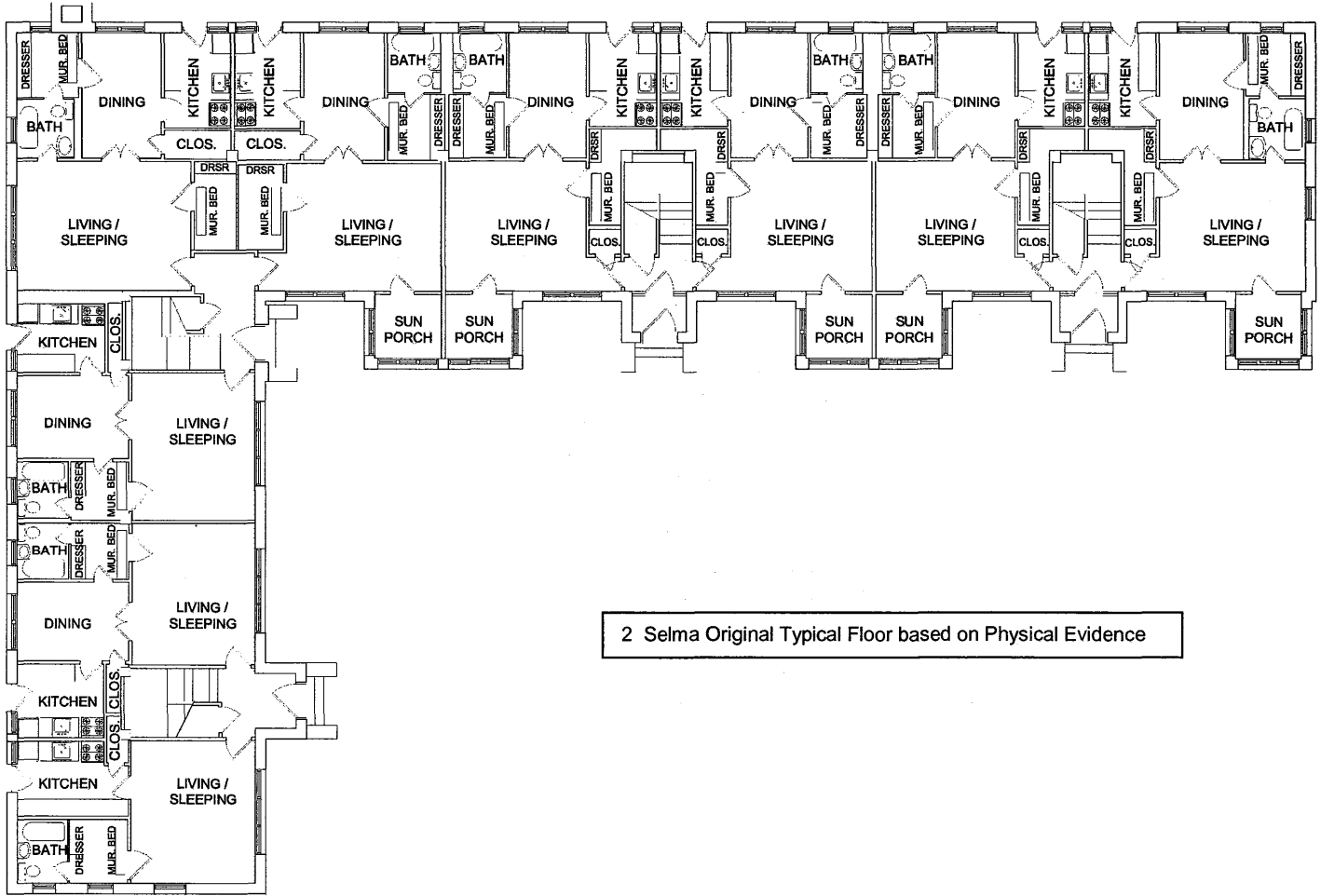
Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 3



2 Selma Original Typical Floor based on Physical Evidence



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

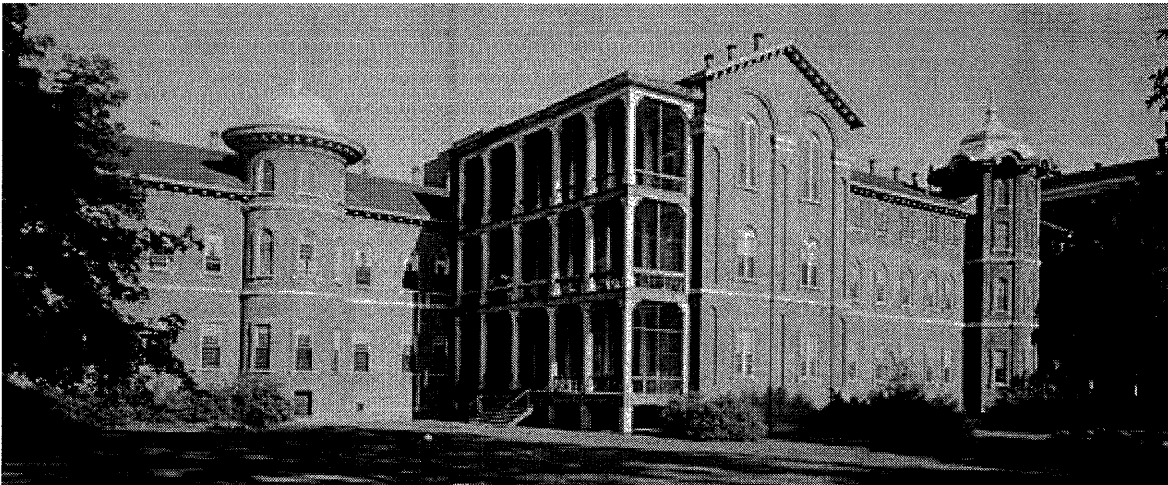
County and State

Section 8 Page 4

Section 8: Statement of Significance

Synopsis:

Selma Terrace is significant under Criterion A in the area of community and regional planning for its association with the Garden City Movement, and under Criterion C in architecture for its association with the development of the Sunlight and Air sub-type of apartment buildings in Omaha. During the early years of the Progressive Era, diseases such as tuberculosis were very common and highly contagious. Hospital designs incorporated features specifically for the treatment of tuberculosis. Beginning at the same time and progressing into the 1920s, influenced by tenement laws, ideas on housing reform and the Garden City Movement ideals, architects began to produce apartment buildings that emphasized sanitary conditions, natural light and air movement. As the apartment building type developed, a combination of features from all of these influences resulted in an apartment buildings sub-type best described by the term Sunlight and Air. Locally, Selma Terrace is a wonderful example of this apartment building sub-type.



3 Kalamazoo State Hospital, Oakland Drive, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, MI (HABS Document MI0012)

Tuberculosis Sanatorium and Hospital Design in the United States

In the late 1890s and early 1900s, tuberculosis was spreading rapidly through the United States. Poorly understood and almost impossible to cure, it was highly contagious. It was believed that the key to recovery from tuberculosis was plenty of rest, fresh air and relaxation. To promote these values, sanatoriums constructed at this time for the treatment of tuberculosis contained such key features as an isolated site, and buildings with good cross-ventilation, pleasant views of the grounds and screened porches.

Hospitals began picking up on these design features as well. "The number of hospitals in the United States grew from 149 in 1873 to 6,665 in 1913... To attract patients accustomed to medical care in the home, hospitals had to overcome the traditional image of the hospital as an unclean house of death or a refuge for the poor and had to transform into 'a work place for the production of health' based on scientific principles."¹ As they adopted the latest scientific methods for the eradication of disease, they adopted many of the same design features as the sanatoriums, including porches, well sunlit interiors, and good cross-ventilation.

¹ Margarete Arndt and Barbara Bigelow, "Hospital administration in the early 1900s: visions for the future and the reality of daily practice." *Journal of Healthcare Management*, Jan 1 2007, posted at http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi_0199-6258158/Hospital-administration-in-the-early.html

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

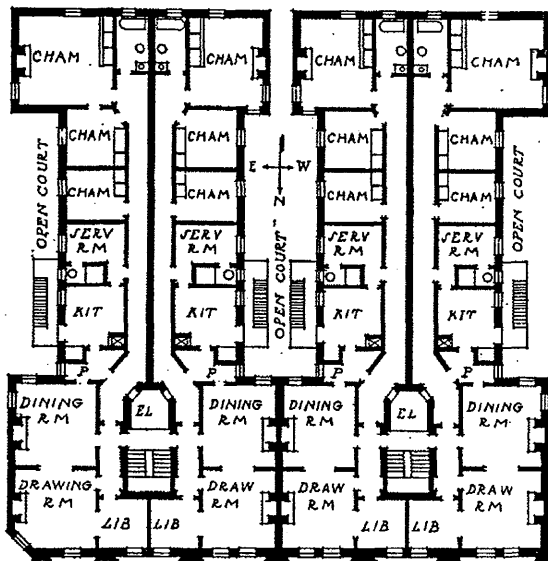
County and State

Section 8 Page 5

The use of these same key features in both hospital design and sanatorium design thus began to signify sanitary and healthy living. From there, these same features began showing up in other building types where the promotion of cleanliness was a concern. In the early nineteen-teens, architectural magazines would often dedicate an issue to a particular building type, sometimes promoting good apartment design one month and the latest trends in hospital design the next. The juxtaposition of these images and discussions helped spread the influence of one building type to another, as the same architect read both articles and worked on both building types.

Tenement Laws and Housing Reform across the United States

At the middle of the nineteenth century, health officials had already identified tenement housing as a problem, with its lack of sanitary conditions, overcrowding, lack of light and air movement, and lack of social propriety. They were unable to overcome the arguments of the investors however and enforce improvements. Then at the beginning of the nineteenth century, housing reformer Lawrence Veiller began to focus on the residences themselves, using the scientific method and the Progressive Era's emphasis on specialization. His efforts led to the New York Tenement Law of 1901, which focused on living conditions, unlike building codes which focused on construction methods. The New York Tenement Law outlawed what were known as the dumbbell tenements,² and required private bathrooms for each apartment, more windows, fire escapes and lighting for dark hallways.



4 Dumbbell Apartment Example - Taken from Wilfred W Beach's, "Some Recent New York Apartment Houses," *The Architectural Forum*, vol 30, 1919, p. 128.

Passage of the Tenement Law generated quite a bit of publicity and launched a national movement. Cities across America began passing similar laws, even when they did not have the variety or severity of problems that New York did. Additionally, as architects designs for new apartments in New York City began to reflect the changes to the laws and they began debating the best ways to accomplish the new design goals of this building type, their published work began to influence other designers and builders across America. Apartments with sanitary conditions, ample sunlight and good ventilation became hallmarks of good design.

The Garden City Movement and Apartment Buildings across the United States

The Garden City Movement was founded in 1898 by Ebenezer Howard to promote planned urban growth that segregated housing and industrial zones, promoted quality housing for industrial workers and provided green space for all to share. Although best known for its modest single-family dwellings and company towns, residential discussions also focused on multi-family dwellings and followed many of the same planning principals.

Jackson Heights in Queensboro, New York is credited as being the nation's first garden apartment community. It was founded by Edward MacDougall, a proponent of the Garden City Movement in the early part of this century. In describing the principals behind Jackson Heights, he later declared:

"the essentials of good planning of multiple-family houses to be few and comparatively simple:
1) Comprehensive [full block] development...."

² A dumbbell tenement was a building constructed on a site 25'x100', five to seven stories tall, with 14 rooms per floor. Only four rooms per floor received sunlight and air from street facades. Other windows opened onto small air shafts typically 5' wide or less. This created foul smelling apartments where tenants often had to walk through one another's space to get to shared facilities such as bathrooms or kitchens.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

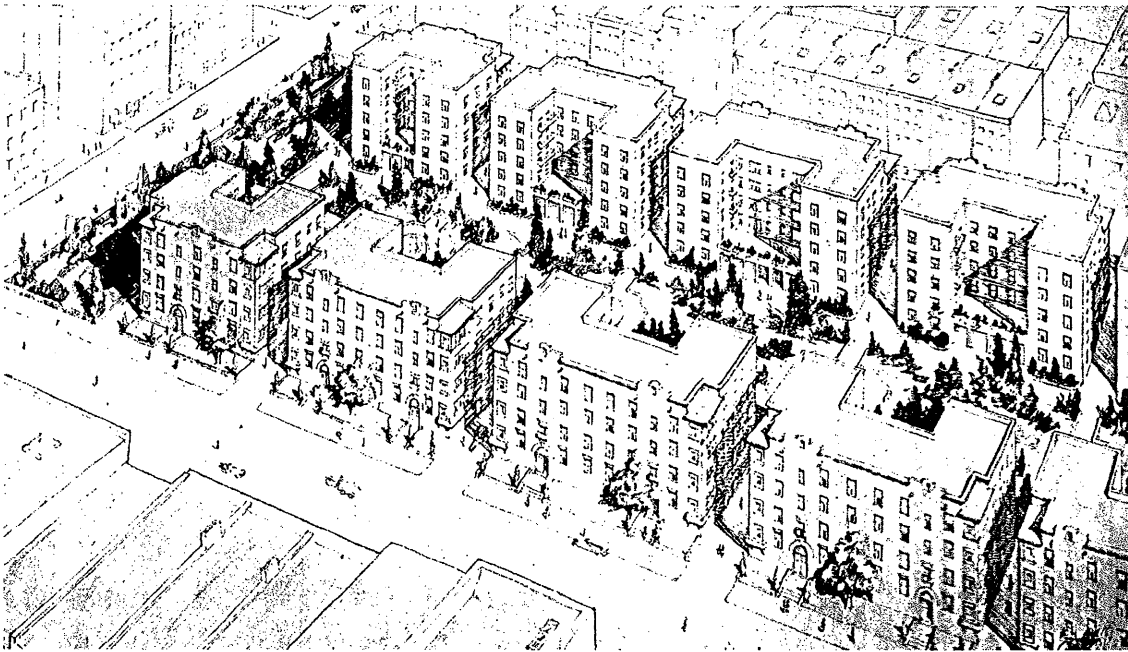
Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 6

- 2) Maximum of sunlight and ventilation...with an interior garden, the interior garden taking the entire length of the block....
- 3) Buildings are set back from the lot lines in order to provide distance between buildings and an opportunity for lawns and planting in the front of the houses....
- 4) The erection of detached or free-standing apartment buildings, which gives an opportunity for many corner rooms and consequent corner ventilation in most of the apartments.
- 5) The silhouette produced through a picturesque arrangement of roofs and dormers, towers and other features adds a great deal to the attractiveness of the new type of apartment."³

As the Garden Apartment type developed, several elements began to repeat themselves until a series of character defining features could be seen. A typical building is either two or three stories tall with easy access to the outdoors from each dwelling unit and never covers more than 30% of the site. All apartments are entered off a series of stair halls, instead of off of a central hallway. Elevators and central lobbies are never included. Common facilities such as laundry rooms were typically entered only from the exterior. Parking is dispersed around the perimeter of the project and not connected to the building, so that tenants must walk a certain distance to their cars.



5 The First Garden Apartment Building Type - From Andrew J. Thomas, "New Garden Apartments, Queens County, New York City," *The Architectural Forum*, vol 30, 1919, p. 190.

³ "Jackson Heights Beautification Group," PO Box 720253 Jackson Heights, NY 11372, posted Jan 2008 at <http://64.233.167.104/search?q=cache:-jKn5dULsL0J:www.jhbg.org/history/history.html+the+garden+city+movement+and+apartment+buildings&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=8&gl=us>

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

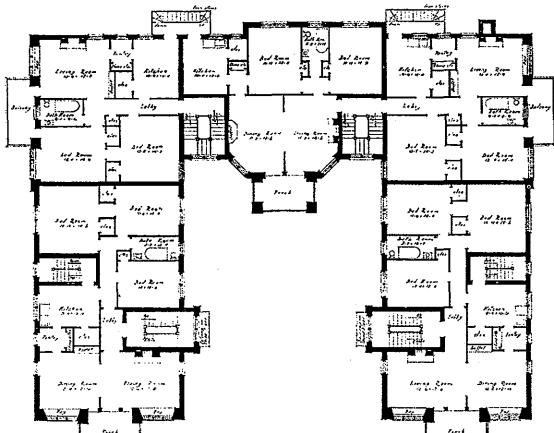
Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 7



6 Example of a Sunlight and Air Apartment in St. Louis - From Charles A Platt, "The Development of the Apartment House," *The American Architect*, Nov 29, 1916..

Sunlight and Air Apartments in Chicago and St. Louis

The result of all of these influences was the Sunlight and Air apartment sub-type. These apartments can be identified by a number of key character defining features. The most significant design element is the sun porch. Similar to the porches on earlier hospitals and sanatoriums, they provide windows on three sides for good natural light and ventilation. Sun porches are commonly entered off the living room or dining room of the apartments. Early tenement reform influenced the building mass, making it very narrow; two rooms deep from front to back, or sometimes two rooms and a hallway, allowing for cross ventilation. Large windows with these narrow rooms also meant that daylight penetrated well into the interior of the building. Finally, the Garden City's influence can be seen in a variety of features. These include courtyards that are incorporated into the front and back of the building design – often with formal landscaping. When the site does not allow a courtyard in front as well as in back, the building is at least set back from the sidewalk to provide a small yard. Furthermore, each building contains multiple entrances that lead directly into stair halls.

Within the stair hall, each landing provides access to one or two apartments. No elevators are provided. As a final point, the building mass is held to three stories high or less, most often with a raised basement.

Examples of this sub-type can be found in numerous period magazine articles. *The Architectural Review* of October 1917, credits Chicago with creating the most defining feature of this apartment sub-type, "the 'sun parlor' – that present apartment house combination substitute for both living and sleeping porch."⁴ When the *American Architect* devoted an entire issue to apartment house design in November of 1916, almost all of the apartments shown from Chicago and St. Louis incorporated sun porches in the design and adhered to the features set out above for the Sunlight and Air apartment sub-type.

Local Sunlight and Air Apartments

Local architects picked up on the features of the Sunlight and Air apartments and created a number of these in Omaha. One such building is Selma Terrace by Richard Everette.

Selma Terrace incorporates all of Sunlight and Air key character defining features. The building massing forms an "L" shape on two sides of an entry courtyard, with an alley and fire escapes off the rear sides of the "L". The building is also held to three stories tall with a raised basement and narrow massing that makes each apartment unit two rooms deep. Three-season porches project from the South façade of the North wing, directly off of the living room. Multiple entrances provide access to a series of stair halls. Each apartment is entered off a landing from the stair hall and no elevator was included in the plan.

In conclusion, Selma Terrace is nominated under Criterion A for its association with Community and Regional Planning because of its ties to the Garden City Movement and evolution of tenement laws and housing reform across America. Furthermore, Selma Terrace is nominated under Criterion C as representative of the sub-type of apartment buildings known as Sunlight and Air apartments which transformed middle class apartments from dark, cramped quarters to bright, sunlit spaces with through ventilation and middle class finishes.

⁴ "Two Western Apartment Houses," *The Architectural Review*, vol 5, Oct 1917, p. 227.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 9 Page 8

BOOKS

- Alpern, Andrew. *Apartments for the Affluent: A Historical Survey of Buildings in New York*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co, 1975.
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- Chudacoff, Howard P. *Mobile Americans: Residential and Social Mobility in Omaha 1880-1920*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.
- Hawes, Elizabeth. *New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City (1869-1930)*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1993.
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ARTICLES

- Douglas County Assessor's Office, Records for 630, 634 and 636 Park Avenue
- Omaha City Directories, 1902, 1904, 1906-1930.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Selma Terrace

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 10 Page 9

Verbal Boundary Description:

J.I. Redicks Subdivision, Block 7, Lot 4 of the city of Omaha, otherwise known as all of the area bound by a line approximately 60' South and parallel to St. Mary's Ave on the North, Park Avenue on the East, a line approximately 200' North and parallel to Leavenworth Avenue of the South, and 30th Street on the West.

Boundary Justification:

This area includes all of the property historically associated with the Selma Apartment building.

Photos

All photographs were taken by Chris Jansen in January 2008. Negatives were retained by Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture P.C. at 1213 Jones Street Omaha NE 68102.

1. East (Front) Façade
2. Partial South Façade (Primary Portion of Façade)
3. North (Rear) façade
4. West (Rear) facade