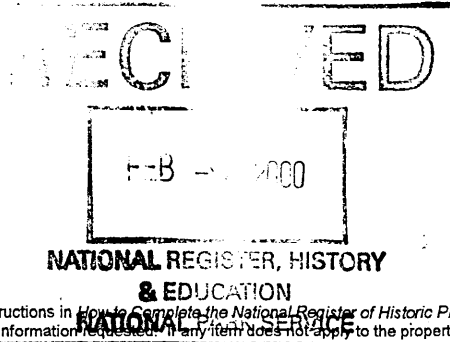


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 Keeline Building

other names/site number D009:0124-017

2. Location

street & number 319 South 17th Street not for publication

city or town Omaha vicinity

state Nebraska code NE county Douglas code 55 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.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

1/25/00
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): _____

[Signature: Elson H. Beall]

3/9/00

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Keeline Building

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

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	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	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)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business/Professional/Restaurant

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instruction)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business/Professional/
Restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENT/
Commerecial Style/Prairie School Style/ Sullivanesque
Detailing

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick, Terra Cotta

Roof Synthetic
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.)

- 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.
- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1911-1950

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

John Latenser

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository:
Historical Society of Douglas County
City of Omaha Public Library-Downtown Branch

Keeline Building

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	15	253870	4571170	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 Martin Kluck, Intern Architect

organization Alley Poyner Architecture

date _____

street & number 1213 Jones Street

telephone 402.341.1544

city or town Omaha

state NE

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 NuStyle Development Corporation

street & number 1025 Leavenworth Street

telephone 402-345-8000

city or town Omaha

state NE

zip code 68102

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetKeeline Building

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

Narrative Description

The Keeline Building at 319 South Seventeenth Street in Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska is a seven story commercial building with a full basement built in 1911 in the Commercial style. It is located on the northeast corner of Seventeenth and Harney Streets. This flat-roofed square building takes up an eighth of a city block. The main elevations are a fine example of the Chicago/Prairie School Commercial style, with a red brick composing the majority of the building's skin, and terra-cotta details in the Sullivan-esque style. A terra-cotta and glass storefront system is still apparent at the two easternmost commercial bays. The rest of the storefronts on the south and west elevations were modified in the late nineteen fifties to a streamlined "modern" look achieved through soapstone pilasters and full-bay curtain walls. Above the seventh floor windows is a terra-cotta crown with ornamental relief.

The Keeline Building is a seven story commercial building with full basement built in 1911 in the Commercial style. The building's skin is composed largely of red brick with two large sets of windows in each structural bay of each floor. All ornament of the building is given through terra cotta detailing, except for the large relief given in the form of brick pilasters that run in a continuous vertical from the terra cotta base to the cornice. These pilasters, which are found on the west and south (primary) facades, have definite base, body and capital definition. The bases of the brick pilasters are of terra cotta, rising above the sill line of the second floor windows approximately two feet. There is an elaborate crown that runs above the storefronts to below the second floor windowsills. This crown is terra cotta with elaborate, Sullivan-esque detailing. The terra cotta sills as well as the pilaster bases are an apparent elaboration of the crown mould.

The pilasters rise the six floors to the head of the seventh floor windows. The capital of each pilaster is a stylized, Prairie school composition of approximately four feet in height. The crown of the capital appears to support the terra cotta cornice, which is similar to the ornamentation found above the first floor. This cornice projects from the face of the building approximately eighteen inches. The pilasters project from the face about six inches, with the capitals spreading out another twelve inches to support the cornice. The areas above the seventh floor windows, between the pilasters but below the cornice, contain a frieze of spare terra cotta ornament set in the brick field.

Though the structure of the building is concrete, the primary facades are given an almost Chicago School feeling due to the large expanse of windows. Each structural bay of each floor has two pairs of large, double hung windows that are separated by a twelve-inch brick pier. Between the heads and sills of these windows there is a frieze in which a low-relief brick band provides a border to a brick field. Centered in this field is a low-relief brick diamond, which in turn has a dark green square

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Keeline Building

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

tile in its center. This subtle detailing, along with the style of the pilaster capitals, are excellent examples of Prairie School detailing prevalent at the time.

The Architect of the Keeline Building was John Latenser, who was well versed in architectural styles and building methods. While staff architect for the Omaha School District, he used this Prairie-style detailing on many of the branch elementary schools. Central High School, also designed by Latenser, is an excellent example of Second Renaissance Revival.

Born 1859 in Liechtenstein, Germany Latenser was a third-generation architect. He received his professional training at the Royal Polytechnic School in Stuttgart, Germany, studying architecture in the winter months and working as a stone cutter in the summers. He immigrated to America and practiced in several cities including Chicago before settling in Omaha in 1885 where his practice initially involved producing cottage designs. A turning point in Latenser's career came in the early 1890s when he devised a successful method for correcting the faulty foundation of the Federal post office in Chicago. As a result, President Cleveland appointed him superintendent of the Federal Building in Omaha, which is a prime example of the Art Deco style then prevalent in 1932

Other local projects designed by John Latenser: Brandies Building; Douglas County Courthouse; Temple Israel Synagogue; the Scottish Rite Cathedral and the Omaha Athletic Club.

The Keeline building originally had massive terra cotta storefronts with wrought iron/glass infill and elaborate pressed-metal awning covers below the transom windows. There are currently two of these storefronts left... one almost completely in original condition, at the easternmost commercial bays of the first floor. The rest of the terra cotta storefronts were removed and replaced with soapstone cladding at the structural columns and glass/aluminum storefront between. This curtain wall is continuous from ground to below the terra cotta crown mould, with minimal aluminum mullions providing the only detail. At the same time these storefronts were "modernized" (the late nineteen fifties), the entrance to the main elevator lobby was clad in a broad, unadorned swath of black granite. The elevator lobby itself was probably fitted out in the classical revival style prevalent in interiors at the time of the original construction. When the storefronts and main entrance were modified in the late fifties, the main elevator lobby was also redecorated to a sleek, moderne style.

The interior retains its u-shaped single loaded corridors with many original doors and interior transoms remaining. Overall, the building retains a high degree of historic integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Keeline Building

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 1

Statement of Significance

The Keeline Building located at 319 South 17th Street Omaha, Nebraska is architecturally significant to Omaha as an exceptional example of Georgian Revival architecture. Designed by local architect John Latenser, the building was completed in 1911. The Keeline Building is also significant under criterion A for as a representative of the prosperous commercial development in the city of Omaha during this time period. Its period of significance extends from the construction date in 1911 through 1950 the established 50 year cut-off period.

The city of Omaha was platted in 1854 in hopes that their organized territory would be attractive as a path for the transcontinental railroad. The city grew slowly at first with establishing necessary public and government services like newspapers, post offices and city hall. It wasn't until 1863 when the public announcement came that the Omaha area would be the eastern terminus for the transcontinental railroad that the population and construction boom began. Job opportunities and therefore population abounded during the 1880's after the railroad's arrival. During the later part of the 1800s and early 1900s, Omaha experienced tremendous growth. Census data shows Omaha's population at 16,000 in 1870 and over 124,000 in 1910. It was during this period that the downtown and warehousing area began to take shape with many warehouses and businesses undergoing construction. Construction came to a halt during the hard economic times of the 1890s. However, during the recovery years after the turn of the century and especially in the teen years prior to World War I, Omaha again saw a tremendous growth spurt and renewed financial prosperity. This period after the 1893 depression and through World War I was known as the "Golden Years" in Omaha. Many major structures were built during this time including the Douglas County Courthouse (1909-12).

Construction of the Keeline building is a direct result of this economic stability and population growth. The residence of Captain Charles B. Ruston, vice president of the Omaha Street Railway Company and of the Omaha Smelting Works was originally located on the site of the Keeline building. In 1887, the property was purchased by John F. Coad; he in turn selling it to a man named Keeline. Oscar Keeline razed the house and erected the present seven-story brick office and store building known at the time as the Keeline Brick. This efectually changed the face of the area surrounding the Douglas County Courthouse, undergoing construction at the same time, to a commerce and public center ridding downtown Omaha of what was left of the early residential settlement. Completed in 1911 for cost of \$200,000.00, the building provided commercial space at street level and office space on the second through seventh floors.

The building continued its functional use as a modern office tower until architect Leo A. Daly Co. along with Stitt Construction as the general contractor renovated the building in 1959. The entrance was framed in black granite with an aluminum canopy and doors. The lobby was given marble walls and terrazzo flooring. The second floor offices and the managers office were also remodeled.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Keeline Building

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

In 1973, District Court Judge Theodore L. Richling requested the County Board to designate part of the Keeline Building as "Interim Courthouse" during renovation of the Douglas County Courthouse. Four judges and the public defender occupied the Keeline for approximately one year.

The Keeline Building is also significant for its association with the well know Omaha architect John Latenser, Sr. (1858-1936). Born in Liechtenstein, Latenser was a third generation architect. He received his professional training at the Royal Polytechnic School in Stuttgart, Germany, studying architecture in the winter months and working as a stonecutter in the summers. He immigrated to America and practiced in several cities including Chicago where he was employed as a draftsman for seven years. In 1885, Latenser settled in Omaha where he set up his own practice. He became a staff architect for the Omaha School District and was responsible for the design of at least 20 of the City's public school facilities including Central High. A turning point in Latenser's career came in the early 1890s when he devised a successful method for correcting the faulty foundation of the Federal Post Office in Chicago. As a result, President Cleveland appointed him superintendent of the Federal Building in Omaha. Latenser's career spanned more than 50 years and included commissions for many of the City's larger civic and commercial building projects, including the J.L. Brandeis and Sons Store Building, the Scottish Rite Cathedral, and the Douglas County Court House.

Latenser's commissions are fewer on the landscape of Omaha now. The Keeline Building represents one of the commissions at the height of his career as well as a very modern and streamlined addition for the city of Omaha at the time. The Keeline building remains as a bold representative of this modern architectural era that embraced simple massing on large scale buildings with applied ornaments enhancing the detailing of the building. The building is adorned with terra cotta modillions, cartouches, sills, friezes, and capitals that reflect Sullivan-esque and Prairie styling.

Overall this building retains a high degree of historic integrity and is historically significant because it represents the growth of commerce and the formation of a downtown professional and office related core in Omaha. Its construction was made possible by the prosperity and economic stability of the post-depression era period at the turn-of-the-century. It is one of the few remaining historic office buildings serving this part of the downtown/governmental neighborhood. The building is also architecturally significant because of its association with local architect John Latenser as the work of a local master. It retains sufficient historic integrity to illustrate the modern stylistic details popular at the time of its construction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Keeline Building

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 9-10 Page 1

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Morearty, Ed. F. Omaha Memories: Recollections of Events, Men and Affairs in Omaha, Nebraska, from 1879-1917. Omaha Swartz Printing Co. 1917

"Owner to Remodel the Keeline Building". Omaha World-Herald. July 26, 1958

"Project to Evict Public Defender". Omaha World-Herald. September 27, 1977

Wakeley, Arthur C. Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County Nebraska – A record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement Volume II. Chicago. S.J. Clarke Publishing Company 1917.

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 5 and the West 22 feet of Lot 6, Block 140, Original city of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska.

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all historically associated property.

Photographs

Photo 1: Keeline Building - view of northeast corner of 17th and Harney Streets, September 18, 1918. From the Bostwick-Frohardt Collection

Photo 2: West view of Keeline Building, May 6, 1921. From the Bostwick- Frohardt Collection