

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Fairacres Historic District

Other names/site number _____

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

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

2. Location

Street & Number Roughly bounded by Dodge St. to the south, N. 62nd St. to the east, California St. and Fairacres Rd to the north, and North 68th to the west.

City or town Omaha State Nebraska County Douglas

Not for publication Vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title:

SHPO/Director

Date

5/31/17

Nebraska State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official

Date

Title

State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper
For

7-24-2017
Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>121</u>	<u>13</u>	Buildings
		Sites
<u>1</u>		Structures
		Objects
<u>122</u>	<u>13</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
RELIGION: church-related residence
TRANSPORTATION: road-related

Current Functions

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
TRANSPORTATION: road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Georgian Revival, French Eclectic,
Mediterranean Revival

Materials

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, STONE, WOOD, STUCCO, CERAMIC TILE, SLATE

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Description

Summary Paragraph

The Fairacres Historic District is located in Fairacres, a former western suburb of Omaha annexed by the city in 1941. In 1907, real estate investors Charles C. and J. Edward George contracted nationally-prominent landscape architect George E. Kessler, based in Kansas City and St. Louis, to help develop the area as an early automobile suburb on the western reaches of the city. In basing his plan on City Beautiful ideals, which emphasized social improvement of cities through beautification, Kessler designed a garden suburb, emphasizing the aesthetic qualities and functionality of the local topography. The contributing houses, constructed between 1907 and 1961, represent large and elaborate examples of various styles of the Eclectic movement that dominated early-20th-century residential architecture in America. Early residents of the district were wealthy Omaha business figures capable of affording the automobile necessary to complete the four-mile commute to downtown offices. In its retention of architectural and landscape character, the district is an excellent example of an early-20th-century planned residential community.

Narrative Description

Overview

The layout of the district reflects its origin as the core of a planned community designed to attract wealthy residents of Omaha. In developing the area, real estate investors Charles C. and J. Edward George followed national trends emphasizing the beautification of cities through carefully designed landscapes. One aspect of the City Beautiful movement was the *garden city* ideal, popularized in the United States through the work of Frederick Law Olmsted, Calvert Vaux, and Horace Cleveland. Garden cities, like Olmsted and Vaux's Riverside, Illinois, typically featured curvilinear streets following site topography. On undeveloped land at the periphery of cities, designers had freedom to accentuate these ideals in comprehensive plans for *garden suburbs*. After acquiring farmland on the western fringe of Omaha, brothers Charles C. and J. Edward George sought to develop such a community and hired noted City Beautiful proponent George E. Kessler to create a design.

One of the major considerations facing Kessler and the George brothers in designing Fairacres was the need to foster the use and enjoyment of automobiles. Given the four-mile distance from Fairacres to downtown Omaha, development of the land was only possible once automobiles made outlying areas more accessible. As substantial wealth was a requisite for automobile ownership during the first decade of the 20th century, the development as a whole had to cater to upper-class Omahans. At the time, wealthy automobile owners sought high-quality roads in beautiful settings so as to maximize the pleasure of driving. The priorities of real estate developers and wealthy automobile owners aligned more clearly in the Fairacres district than anywhere else in Omaha's western suburbs. The road was central to Kessler's landscape design as well as the George brothers' efforts to accommodate early automobile enthusiasts. Several prominent Omaha business leaders, all of them automobile owners, built large houses that reflect architectural values of the time. The district retains the character-defining features from its development during the first half of the 20th century, including the road's layout and materials.

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Setting and Location

Fairacres lies in the eastern portion of the former village of Fairacres, which extends westward to North 69th Street, northward to Burt Street, and eastward to the other side of North 62nd Street. The campus of the University of Nebraska at Omaha lies to the south, directly across Dodge Street. St. Margaret Mary Church and Memorial Park lie to the east, between Fairacres and other early-20th-century neighborhoods, Dundee and Happy Hollow. While these neighborhoods share some historical links with Fairacres, their boundaries and patterns of development are clearly distinct.

The Dodge Street entrance to Fairacres Road is approximately four miles west of downtown Omaha. Due to tree cover and the absence of signage, the entrance is discreet. Dodge Street is one of Omaha's most heavily-trafficked east-west thoroughfares and Fairacres Road, by comparison, is much quieter. The road was paved with brick in 1915 and the original brick materials remains in place. The road has concrete curbs on both sides and a concrete sidewalk on the east side, separated from the road by a vegetation strip. From Dodge Street, the road winds in a serpentine pattern, first to the northwest, then rounding eastward before straightening out near the intersection with Chicago Street. The road then curves back to the northwest near the intersection with California Street/Prairie Avenue before intersecting Underwood Avenue. The road continues to the north before rounding westward and terminating at North 66th Street. However, Underwood Avenue, a significant east-west thoroughfare in the area west of Dundee, historically and currently serves as a line of demarcation within Fairacres. The division is clearly seen in the design and materials of Fairacres Road, where the portion north of Underwood Avenue never shared the distinctive brick paving of the southern portion.

Generally, the lots on the east side of Fairacres Road sit on grade that is slightly elevated above the lots on the west side. As drawn in the original 1907 Plat, the lots ranged in size from 1.49 to 7 acres. Early-20th-century subdivisions reduced the size of all but three of the lots. Today, the lot sizes range from 0.32 to 3.72 acres. Five of the lots along the east side of the road have metal, non-chain link perimeter fences. Some of the lots on the west side of the road have similar fences, though they do not extend past the footprints of the houses. Each lot is extensively landscaped and mature trees line the road in some stretches. Common species include spruce and oak varieties. The east side of the road between Dodge Street and Chicago Street is more densely wooded than other areas, perhaps due to the earlier development of those lots.

Development Patterns

All of the buildings in the district are single-family dwellings ranging from one to three stories in height. The house at 6300 Dodge Street was a church-related residence during a period of the mid-20th-century. With that exception, the existing houses have maintained their single-family residential use since their original construction. The houses were built over three periods: 1907-15, 1929-41, and 1949-51. While each period is distinct, all of the houses share broad patterns of architectural and historical character. Each house is a representative of a particular variety of the Eclectic architectural styles popular during the first half of the 20th century. At least twelve of the houses were designed by prominent Omaha architects on behalf of wealthy business figures. In other cases, real estate investors acquired land, designed and built houses, and then marketed them to the same market of elite Omahans.

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Houses built between 1929 and 1941 are typically smaller than the earlier houses, though they are still large in comparison to contemporary houses elsewhere in the Omaha area. During this period, real estate investors subdivided many of the lots, resulting in shorter setbacks and greater density.

The final period of historic development along Fairacres Road occurred between 1949 and 1961, when Slosburg Realty Company built houses. Similar to the development trend of the 1930s, these houses were built on subdivided lots.

Architectural Styles

The district includes houses of various Eclectic styles, following the trends of American architecture during the first decades of the 20th century. The quality of architecture marked the village of Fairacres as a wealthy neighborhood by 1915, when the first wave of houses had been completed near the southern end of Fairacres Road. The house at 6300 Dodge Street, built 1907-10, is a Colonial Revival building with a large Neoclassical portico added in 1925. 215 Fairacres Road (6301 Chicago Street) was built 1907-08 as an example of Prairie architecture. After fires in 1928 and 1937, the house was refurbished using pre-existing materials and a Tudor-influenced design. 401 Fairacres Road, built 1907-08, with its gambrel roof and symmetrical façade, represents Dutch Colonial Revival. The former house at 207 Fairacres Road, which was demolished in the late 20th century, was similar to 6300 Dodge Street and 401 Fairacres Road in its materials and Colonial Revival influences. Frederick A. Henninger designed at least two of the houses (6300 Dodge Street and 207 Fairacres Road).

Between 1929 and 1941, at least 10 houses represent examples of Tudor Revival architecture or a combination of Tudor and other revival influences including French or Mediterranean influences. Several of Omaha's most notable architects contributed designs within the district during this period, including John and Alan McDonald, Birger J. Kvenild, Leo A. Daly, Bert B. Hene, and Noel Stanley Wallace. Additionally, real estate investor Abraham "Max" Fisher, who built three houses in the district, is known to have designed houses elsewhere and may have personally designed two of his Fairacres Road houses.

The houses built between 1949 and 1961 represent a return to the district's Colonial Revival roots. Houses at 402 and 410 Fairacres Road, both developed by Slosburg Realty Company, represent post-war Colonial Revival, a subtype characterized by simple forms, symmetrical or L-shaped plans, and ornamental (non-operational) shutters. Bert B. Hene was given a posthumous design credit for 410 Fairacres Road. John F. Hyde, Jr. designed the asymmetrical Colonial Revival house at 617 Fairacres Road.

Across all periods of development, most of the houses feature a combination of façade materials. The most prevalent material is brick, followed by stone, stucco, weatherboard, and wood shingles. Roof materials include clay tiles, wood shingles, slate, synthetic slate, and composite shingles. The Tudor Revival houses typically feature multiple gable roof shapes. The Colonial Revival houses have more basic, symmetrical hipped roof designs. The gambrel roofs at 401 Fairacres Road and 6300 Dodge Street stand out as unique examples.

Condition and Integrity

None of the houses in the district have gone through extended periods of neglect. Consequently, the historic building materials are in excellent condition. Where repairs and replacements have been made, they have generally been completed in a sympathetic manner. Some of the roofs have modern materials, such as composite shingles and synthetic slate. Elsewhere, some

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original windows have been replaced with modern materials, but these changes are not prevalent. Outside of the painting of brick exteriors of two or three of the houses (210, 401, and perhaps 624 Fairacres Road), façade materials have undergone few alterations.

The most significant changes to the buildings in the district relate to the various additions added in the second half of the 20th century. Most of these additions were concentrated on rear and side facades not visible from Fairacres Road.

The character of the landscape has not undergone any transformative changes since its design by George E. Kessler. Despite the subdivision of lots that occurred during the period of significance, the terrain within the district was never substantially regraded. Lots on the east side of the road, described in early sources as high points, retain their hierarchical relationship to the surrounding area. The brick-paved Fairacres Road, faithfully following the topography in accordance with Kessler’s plan, has retained to a high degree all aspects of its historic integrity. The work of later landscape architects on behalf of individual property owners has become obscured by time, though traces are evident in species selection and paving materials.

In the preservation of its architectural and landscape features, the Fairacres Historic District retains a high degree of integrity of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association from its 1907-61 period of significance. None of the additions and alterations detailed above detract from the district’s ability to convey its historic significance.

Inventory

The following inventory lists all of the buildings within the boundaries of the district as described above.

Address	C or NC	Parcel Number	Construction Date
6721 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028390002	1928
6725 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028400000	1953
6720 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028420000	1930
6724 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028430000	1930
321 N 068 ST	NC	1028450000	1983
419 N 068 ST	C	1028460002	1930
515 N 068 ST	C	1028470000	1952
6705 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028480000	1951
535 N 068 ST	C	1028490000	1952
601 HACKBERRY RD	C	1028500000	1952
6624 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028510000	1957
701 HACKBERRY RD	C	1028530000	1952
717 HACKBERRY RD	NC	1028540000	2006
6629 BURT ST	C	1028550000	1961
721 HACKBERRY RD	C	1028550001	1936
6625 BURT ST	C	1028560000	1957
724 N 066 ST	C	1028560003	1924
720 N 066 ST	C	1028570001	1925
668 N 066 ST	C	1028580000	1952
652 N 066 ST	C	1028590000	1951

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6600 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028600004	1939
681 HACKBERRY RD	C	1028610000	1951
6614 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028620000	1936
524 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028630000	1935
6611 UNDERWOOD AV	NC	1028640000	1965
506 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028650000	1935
6621 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028660000	1942
412 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028670000	1935
400 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028690000	1930
6710 DAVENPORT ST	NC	1028720000	2001
6610 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028730002	1941
6701 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028740000	1925
6711 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028750000	1932
6615 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028810000	1954
6611 DAVENPORT ST	C	1028820000	1952
142 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028830000	1932
138 N 066 ST	C	1028840000	1931
139 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028870000	1931
6501 PRAIRIE AV	C	1028880000	1936
6545 PRAIRIE AV	C	1028890000	1936
145 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028900000	1942
6540 PRAIRIE AV	C	1028910000	1940
401 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028920000	1951
407 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028930000	1928
6544 PRAIRIE AV	C	1028940000	1951
6523 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028980000	1954
605 N 065 AV	C	1028990000	1939
6515 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028990002	1962
624 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029050000	1932
616 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029060000	1931
608 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029070000	1936
6444 PRAIRIE AV	C	1029080000	1954
505 N 065 ST	C	1029090000	1954
6500 PRAIRIE AV	C	1029130000	1951
420 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029140000	1931
426 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029150000	1936
6435 PRAIRIE AV	C	1029160000	1935
6424 CHICAGO ST	C	1029180002	1931
402 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029190000	1950
410 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029200000	1949
6421 CHICAGO ST	C	1029210000	1930
6403 CHICAGO ST	C	1029220000	1952
220 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029230000	1941

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216 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029240000	1930
210 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029250000	1929
120 N 062 ST	C	1029310000	1943
6300 DODGE ST	C	1029330000	1907-08
220 N 062 ST	C	1029340000	1937
6211 CHICAGO ST	C	1029350000	1938
6301 CHICAGO ST	C	1029360000	1907-08
423 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029390000	1931
401 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029390003	1907-08
425 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029400000	1940
525 FAIRACRES RD	NC	1029410002	0
6209 CALIFORNIA ST	NC	1029410004	1996
401 N 062 ST	C	1029450000	1918
6116 CHICAGO ST	C	1029460000	1942
700 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029510000	1939
750 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029520000	1925
760 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029530000	1940
663 FAIRWOOD LA	C	1029540000	1940
6414 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1029550000	1940
6420 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1029560000	1949
6500 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1029570000	1947
654 FAIRWOOD LA	C	1029580000	1938
609 N 066 ST	C	1029590000	1940
667 N 066 ST	C	1029600000	1942
660 FAIRWOOD LA	C	1029610000	1949
664 FAIRWOOD LA	C	1029620000	1942
672 FAIRWOOD LA	C	1029630000	1959
835 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029640000	1942
843 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029650000	1940
847 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029660000	1936
849 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029670000	1947
850 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029680000	1948
848 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029690000	1940
844 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029700000	1939
840 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029710000	1943
830 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029720000	1949
820 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029730000	1958
765 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029740000	1943
761 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029750000	1940
655 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029760000	1940
651 FAIRACRES RD	C	1029770000	1942
400 N 062 ST	C	1029930300	1952
207 FAIRACRES RD	NC	1029930325	1996

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200 N 062 ST	C	1029930327	1937
206 FAIRACRES RD	NC	1029935014	1982
619 N 065 ST	C	1030120000	1932
615 N 065 ST	NC	1030130000	1939
607 N 065 ST	NC	1030140000	1936
620 N 065 ST	C	1030150000	1939
610 N 065 ST	VACANT	1030160000	0
604 N 065 ST	C	1030170000	1939
6729 DAVENPORT ST	NC	1030240000	1952
6201 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1030250000	1947
6211 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1030260000	1942
6227 UNDERWOOD AV	NC	1030270000	1991
6237 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1030280000	1940
6241 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1030290000	1940
6247 UNDERWOOD AV	NC	1030300000	1940
617 FAIRACRES RD	C	1030310000	1950
615 FAIRACRES RD	C	1030320000	1938
601 FAIRACRES RD	C	1030330000	1941
6248 CALIFORNIA ST	C	1030340000	1940
6220 CALIFORNIA ST	C	1030350000	1940
6214 CALIFORNIA ST	C	1030360000	1940
6210 CALIFORNIA ST	C	1030370000	1940
6202 CALIFORNIA ST	C	1030380000	1955
6620 UNDERWOOD AV	C	1028520000	1952
524 N 065 ST	C	1029110000	1936
6450 PRAIRIE AV	C	1029100000	1929
527 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028970000	1952
521 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028960000	1926
425 N ELMWOOD RD	C	1028950000	1966

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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.
A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- E** A commemorative property.
- F** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1907-1961

Significant Dates

1907-15, 1929-42, 1949-61

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kessler, George E. (landscape architect)

Henninger, Frederick A. (architect)

Fisher, Abraham "Max" (builder)

Kvenild, Birger J. (architect)

Prinz, George B. (architect)

Hene, Bert B. (architect)

Slosburg Realty Company (builder)

Hyde, John F., Jr. (architect)

McDonald, John and Alan (architects)

Daly, Leo A. (architect)

Hare, Sydney and Herbert (landscape architects)

Schroeder Realty Company (builder)

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The Fairacres Historic District is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of *community planning and development* and *landscape architecture* and Criterion C in the areas of *community planning and development* and *architecture*. The period of significance, 1907 to 1961, begins with the initial planning and construction in the Fairacres Road district and ends with the most recent subdivision of lots. Between 1907 and 1915, in the midst of an era marked by geographic expansion of the Omaha metropolitan area, a real estate investment group led by Charles C. and J. Edward George purchased farm land on the city's western periphery with the intention of developing a residential suburb. To **plan the community**, the George brothers hired landscape architect George E. Kessler, a nationally prominent proponent of City Beautiful ideals. Kessler designed the village of Fairacres, with Fairacres Road at its core, as a garden suburb. Without direct access to streetcar routes, early residents relied on automobiles for their commutes to downtown business offices. The design and materials of Fairacres Road demonstrate an early emphasis on ease and enjoyment of automobile use. The **landscape architecture** of the roads and the adjacent lots demonstrates how Kessler and other landscape professionals incorporated the area's natural topography into the design of the district. Over the course of the period of significance, wealthy Omahans hired the city's leading **architects**, including Frederick A. Henninger, George B. Prinz, Birger J. Kvenild, John and Alan McDonald, Leo A. Daly, Bert B. Hene, and John F. Hyde, Jr., to design houses in various Eclectic styles, most frequently based on Colonial and Tudor influences. Despite some demolition projects and garage additions, the Fairacres Historic District retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places.

Narrative Statement of SignificanceHistorical Outline

The city of Omaha emerged during the second half of the 19th century as American settlements expanded westward. Initially established as a Missouri River ferry crossing, Omaha came to serve as a central hub in regards to many of the most important commercial activities of the western U.S. The first milestone in the growth of the city came in 1857 with the commencement of construction of the transcontinental railroad. By the 1880s, the city was in the midst of a prolonged period of intense growth, bolstered by the increase of cattle and grain production in areas west of the city. Given the city's stockyard facilities and downtown office buildings, businesses were uniquely positioned to take advantage of Nebraska's economic expansion.¹ With a population of 140,452, Omaha was the fourth largest city west of the Mississippi River in 1890, behind St. Louis, Kansas City, and Minneapolis.²

By the end of the 1880s, real estate investors sought to capitalize on the city's growth by establishing suburbs in outlying areas. The incorporation of the Omaha and Council Bluffs Railway and Bridge Company in 1886 made extended commutes to downtown business offices more feasible. Development on the western periphery of the city was particularly active. In one project, early Omaha settler John Nelson Hayes Patrick hired Shannon Brothers of Kansas City to develop a small portion of

¹ Cottrell, Barbara and Lawrence H. Larsen. *The Gate City: A History of Omaha*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, pp.71-72; *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*. Omaha: Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission, 1980, pp.12-13.

² Moffatt, Riley. *Population History of Western U.S. Cities & Towns, 1850-1990*. Lanham: Scarecrow, 1996, p.149.

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his 800-acre estate west of the city. "Dundee Place," as the Shannon Brothers named the development, included six houses in an area now bounded by 48th and 52nd Streets.³ The project failed to gain momentum, in large part due to a period of economic decline during the 1890s when drought conditions throughout Nebraska, coupled with broader effects of the Panic of 1893, led to an exodus of the Omaha population.⁴ As of 1900, the population had fallen to 102,555.⁵

By the turn of the 20th century, the worst effects of the drought and the Panic of 1893 had dissipated and Omahans were once again optimistic about their future.⁶ In addition to the city's continued importance as a regional commercial hub, two economic developments bolstered this optimism. First, Nebraska agriculture attained unprecedented levels of productivity. The decade became known as the "Golden Age" of Nebraska agriculture. Second, the Union Pacific Railroad experienced a resurgence under the leadership of E.H. Harriman, whose policies proved beneficial for the greater Omaha business community.⁷ With this decidedly positive change in Omaha's economic outlook, western expansion once again intensified. The project to develop Dundee, now under the leadership of Walter L. Selby and Kansas City-based streetcar tycoon Frank L. Underwood, gained momentum as Selby and Underwood moved aggressively to attract new residents. Selby offered free land to anyone willing to build and stay in Dundee for at least one year. Underwood organized the establishment of a horse-drawn streetcar line from the intersection of 41st and Farnam Streets to a terminal near 55th Street and Underwood Avenue. Their strategies proved effective and, by the middle of the decade, Dundee's investors were enjoying the revenues of a housing boom.⁸

Dundee did not embody the entirety of the Patrick estate. Land to the west and north of the village remained undeveloped in the first years of the century. In 1903, the Patrick family incorporated the Elmwood Park Land Company and platted 410 acres of additional land for sale.⁹ Following Patrick's January 1905 death,¹⁰ his widow Eliza sold the corporation to a group led by brothers Charles C. and J. Edward George, who renamed it *Dundee Realty Company*.¹¹ In the following two years, the George brothers purchased more land in the vicinity, including another 40 acres of Patrick Farm and the J.N.H. Patrick Residence at the intersection of 55th Street and Underwood Avenue in March 1907.¹² In developing these tracts, they expanded Dundee's footprint, created the Happy Hollow neighborhood surrounding the Patrick Residence, and established a separate suburb west of Dundee called "Fairacres."

The George Brothers

Charles Carlton George was born 1863 in Galesburg, Illinois. His father, John W. George married his mother, Mary E. Younger, after moving to Illinois from his native Muskingum County, Ohio. Charles spent his childhood in Galesburg and remained in the city after high school to attend Knox College for

³ Rock, Dan, editor. *Dundee, Neb: A Pictorial History*. Omaha: Dundee-Memorial Park Association, 2000, pp.1-2.

⁴ Cottrell and Larsen, *The Gate City: A History of Omaha*, p.61.

⁵ Moffatt, *Population History of Western U.S. Cities & Towns, 1850-1990*, p.149.

⁶ Cottrell and Larsen, *The Gate City: A History of Omaha*, p.61.

⁷ Cottrell, Barbara and Lawrence H. Larsen. *Upstream Metropolis: An Urban Biography of Omaha and Council Bluffs*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007, pp.173-176.

⁸ Rock, *Dundee, Neb: A Pictorial History*, pp.9-12

⁹ "Elmwood Park Land Co.," *The Omaha World-Herald*; May 12, 1903.

¹⁰ "J.N.H. Patrick Dies at His Home in Happy Hollow," *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 5, 1905.

¹¹ Deed Abstract, 525 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska, Number 63, Book O, Page 152.

¹² "Large Real Estate Deals Put on the Record," *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 27, 1907; Gerber, Kristine and Jeffrey S. Spencer. *Building for the Ages*. Omaha: Omaha Books, 2003, p.7.

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undergraduate and graduate degrees. After completing his studies in 1888, he relocated to Omaha and launched a career in financial and real estate investments.¹³ After a period working as a clerk in a real estate office, in 1890 he formed a firm with Arthur S. Potter. Originally from New York, Potter was a veteran real estate professional who, through interests separate from Potter & George, was instrumental in developing East Omaha.¹⁴ George served as the secretary and manager of the new firm until 1900.¹⁵ Meanwhile, in 1893, he became involved with the Conservative Savings and Loan Association and he later served as its director and vice president.¹⁶

Around 1896, Charles was joined in Omaha by his younger brother, John Edward "Ed" George, who had recently graduated from Knox College. Ed followed his brother's career path in real estate, first with a position in the Potter-Cobb-Miekle Company co-owned by Arthur S. Potter.¹⁷ In 1900, Charles and Ed reformed Potter & George as "George & Company," with Charles serving as president and Ed as secretary.¹⁸ Working with various investors, the brothers launched projects to develop areas west of Omaha through George & Company and another of their interests, Dundee Realty Company.

Sources from the beginning of the 20th century give evidence of the George brothers' strong optimism during the period. A March 6, 1906 article in the *Omaha World-Herald* leads with this quote from Ed:¹⁹

"I doubt if ever we have received so many inquiries from outside buyers for Omaha real estate as during the past few days...This cannot be regarded as other than a hopeful sign, and indicating thorough confidence in the future of Omaha."

In September of the same year, another article "Outlook for Real Estate Activity Good. Sales Plentiful and Autumn Business Will Probably be Better than Ever" cites George & Company as an example of a real estate firm unable to keep up with the demand for residences.²⁰

Between 1905 and 1907, the George brothers moved to take advantage of the booming market. They acquired land and consolidated their holdings under the Dundee Realty Company. Their first development focused on a section of Dundee south of Dodge Street and west of 50th Street, which became known as Elmwood Park.²¹ At the time, the project was distinct within Dundee for its use of curving roads, all of which were paved and furnished with sidewalks and streetlights.²² As part of the project, they filled in a creek that ran southward along 50th Street.²³ Their next development in Dundee, called "Happy Hollow," was built as an exclusive upper-class neighborhood and served as a

¹³ Wakely, Arthur Cooper. *Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County Nebraska*. Volume II. Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1917, pp.310-311.

¹⁴ Bell, John T, Consul W. Butterfield, and James W. Savage. *The History of the City of Omaha, Nebraska and South Omaha*. New York: Munsell & Company, 1894, pp.572-573.

¹⁵ "He Was the Father of Fairacres," *The Omaha World-Herald*; June 23, 1982. Courtesy of the Douglas County Historical Society.

¹⁶ Wakely, *Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County Nebraska*, p.311.

¹⁷ "J.E. George and R.M. Welch Die in Auto Crash," *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 26, 1921.

¹⁸ Wakely, *Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County Nebraska*, p.311.

¹⁹ "Outside Buyers Inquire for Bargains in Omaha Real Estate," *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 6, 1906.

²⁰ "Outlook for Real Estate Activity Good. Sales Plentiful and Autumn Business Will Probably be Better than Ever," *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 23, 1906. Omaha Public Library. Accessed January 3, 2017.

²¹ Rock, *Dundee, Neb: A Pictorial History*, p.14.

²² "Development of the Residence Section," *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 15, 1907.

²³ "Dundee's History Told in Outline," *The Dundee News*; July 21, 1937. Courtesy of the Douglas County Historical Society.

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“portion of the city’s newest Gold Coast.”²⁴ Similar to Elmwood Park, the project included curving roads, sidewalks, and other landscape improvements.²⁵ The highlight of the development was the winding Happy Hollow Boulevard, for which a later account credits Ed with first emphasizing the importance of “the landscape gardening that marks all of the George enterprises.”²⁶

While the George brothers were undoubtedly the driving forces behind the general beautification of their developments, they relied on the skill of landscape professionals to design and execute the plans. The most significant contributions came from George E. Kessler, a nationally renowned landscape architect and a proponent of enhancing the natural beauty of cities and suburbs. Kessler contributed designs for both Elmwood Park and Happy Hollow, and their curving roads give evidence of his influence. By early 1907, the George brothers solicited his help for their next project, Fairacres, which amounted to their most ambitious attempt to develop an elite residential community.



Figure 1 – The George brothers sought to accentuate the beauty of the natural landscape in their development of western suburbs. This photo, taken in 1919, depicts the rolling topography typical of the area around Dundee, Happy Hollow, and Fairacres. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

George E. Kessler

George Edward Kessler was born in 1862 in Bad Frankenhausen, Germany to Edward C., a merchant, and Clotilde Kessler. Just three years later, the family immigrated to the U.S. After stays in New Jersey, St. Louis, and Wisconsin, the family settled in Dallas from 1874 until Edward’s death in

²⁴ *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*, 62.

²⁵ “Development of the Residence Section,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 15, 1907.

²⁶ “J.E. George and R.M. Welch Die in Auto Crash,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 26, 1921.

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1878.²⁷ Soon afterwards, Clotilde took the children back to Germany, where George undertook an education in landscape gardening at the Belvedere in Weimar.²⁸

Studying under Julius Hartwig and Julius Sckell, Kessler learned about ongoing trends in European gardening, including the “English style.” His mentor, Sckell, was known for balancing naturalistic and formal elements in his designs, and his influence can be seen in Kessler’s professional work. Likewise, Kessler picked up the influence of other European designers, including early 19th century German prince and landscape designer Hermann, Fürst von Pückler-Muskau, over the course of tours across continental Europe and southern England. He was particularly impressed by the road system that Pückler-Muskau designed on his ancestral estate. As described by landscape historian Kurt Culbertson, the roads there served to “provide sequential glimpses of the chief points of interest—riveting sight lines and great pastoral spaces.”²⁹ Many years later, Kessler summarized his design philosophy, heavily influenced by his European training, when he explained that “city planning is largely the correction of conditions in the heart of a city and the development of new property where realty men are the ‘original sinners’.”³⁰

Kessler returned to the U.S. in 1882 and attempted to gain employment with famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted in New York. Olmsted declined to offer a position, but encouraged Kessler to be more ambitious in his career outlook and provided him with a reference for a position as the station grounds superintendent for a railway in Merriam, Kansas. Kessler took the position and his early projects there were met with approval. He quickly found new opportunities and he began to augment his regular duties with side commissions. In 1887, he completed the design of Hyde Park, a subdivision near Kansas City. The success of that project brought more work, including the first phase of Roland Park, a residential subdivision in Baltimore. Additional projects in Cleveland, Ohio and Ogden, Utah cemented his status as a nationally active landscape designer.^{31 32}

The same economic conditions that hindered development in Omaha during the 1890s affected other areas as well. Growth in the Kansas City area slowed. During this difficult period, Kessler nonetheless reached a career milestone in his development of the Park and Boulevard Plan of Kansas City.³³ His idea was to incorporate the ideals of the City Beautiful movement through a system of parks showcasing natural features like streams, river bluffs, and open spaces, all to be connected by boulevards. While other designers previously established interconnecting parks elsewhere, Kessler’s Kansas City plan set a new standard for sophistication by integrating large and small parks into a unified system.³⁴

Kessler’s practice grew throughout the end of the century, with more projects in Kansas City and significant commissions in Oklahoma City, Memphis, and St. Louis, where business leaders invited him to design the landscape for the 1904 World’s Fair. Omaha architect Thomas R Kimball designed the Electricity Building for the fair, and it’s possible that Kessler and Kimball established a working relationship there. He established a new office in St. Louis to augment his Kansas City base. One of his

²⁷Worley, William S. “A Legacy to a City: Kansas City Architects George Kessler, Henry Wright, and Sid and Herbert Hare,” *Kansas History*, Volume 20, Number 3, Autumn 1997, pp. 196.

²⁸ Culbertson, Kurt. “George Kessler: Landscape Architect of the American Renaissance” in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, William H. Tishler, editor. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000, pp.99-100.

²⁹ Culbertson, “George Kessler...” in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 101.

³⁰ “Kessler Speaks to ‘Original Sinners,’” *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 10, 1915.

³¹ Culbertson, “George Kessler...” in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 102.

³² Worley, “A Legacy to a City: Kansas City Architects...” 196.

³³ Worley, “A Legacy to a City: Kansas City Architects...” 196-197.

³⁴ Culbertson, “George Kessler...” in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 102-103.

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architects there, Henry Wright, went on to become a prominent landscape architect in his own right.³⁵ Under Kessler, Wright was responsible for overseeing work-in-progress.³⁶ As described below, Wright may have played a role in the design of Fairacres, though its extent is uncertain.

Successful large-scale projects established Kessler's reputation as a leading City Beautiful proponent. With the movement gaining popularity, he became a sought-after public speaker. He traveled across the country, lending his insights on quality community planning and gaining valuable business contacts for future projects.³⁷ It was during this phase of his career that Kessler began to collaborate with the George brothers on his first projects in Omaha. The circumstances of their partnership's origin are unknown. As an experienced real estate developer, Charles George was likely familiar with Kessler's work in Kansas City during the 1890s. One possibility is that the two men were introduced through either J.C. Nichols of Kansas City or Hugh Prather of Dallas, both of whom shared membership with Charles George in the National Conference of Developers of First Class Residential Property and had worked with Kessler previously.³⁸

As drawings completed by Kessler for the Dundee, Happy Hollow, and Fairacres projects have been lost, the precise circumstances of his involvement are unknown. The earliest reference to his role is a January 20, 1907 article in the *Omaha World-Herald*, which states,³⁹

"The west row of blocks in Dundee and a part of the Patrick farm to the west, is now being graded, platted, laid out with sidewalks, sewers, water, gas, trees and all up-to-date improvements, under the direction of George E. Kessler, who was landscape engineer for the World's Fair at St. Louis, and when completed will be put upon the market by George & Co."

The article likely describes both Happy Hollow and Fairacres, as planning for the two areas overlapped. Kessler's role for the design of Fairacres was later explicitly confirmed in an October 16, 1910 article, which states,⁴⁰

"Kessler of Kansas City, who laid out the boulevards and parks of that city, is the landscape architect of Dundee and Fairacres and adjoining tracts. His work develops the beauties of the lands that are the highest for many miles in this part of the state."

A third article, dated September 9, 1915, after Kessler's involvement in the project had concluded, reaffirms his authorship of Fairacres while describing a speech given by Kessler to a group of realtors at the Omaha civic center.⁴¹

"Mr. Kessler, who has been the genius of Kansas City's boulevard development for a number of years and has also laid off Happy Hollow and Fairacres comes to Omaha this time to lay out Walnut Hill reservoir tract for the water board."

³⁵ Culbertson, "George Kessler..." in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 108.

³⁶ Worley, "A Legacy to a City: Kansas City Architects..." 198.

³⁷ Culbertson, "George Kessler..." in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 108.

³⁸ Culbertson, Kurt. "Re: Kessler in Omaha," Message to Matt Pelz. Date: October 1, 2016.

³⁹ "Acreage Property is Jumping in Value," *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 20, 1907.

⁴⁰ "Omaha's Sunset Side; Dundee and Fairacres," *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 16, 1910.

⁴¹ "Kessler Speaks to 'Original Sinners'," *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 10, 1915.

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Together, these sources indicate that Kessler directed the design of the landscaping, utility systems, lot configuration, and road layouts for Fairacres between 1907 and 1910 and for an undetermined period afterwards, and that his involvement had ended by 1915. One surviving piece of correspondence between Charles C. George and Henry Wright suggests that Wright or Kessler may have provided design services for unidentified early individual property owners in Fairacres as well.⁴²

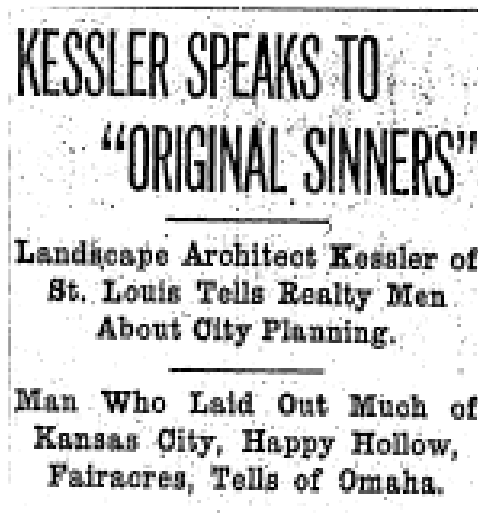


Figure 2 – The headline of a 1915 newspaper article describes Kessler’s involvement in the George brothers’ western suburb developments and reveals his planning philosophy, which emphasized protecting the natural beauty of the physical environment amidst the work of real estate developers, or “original sinners.” (*The Omaha World-Herald*, September 9, 1915).

Early development: 1907-1915

Soon after the George brothers acquired the Patrick Farm land, they began to work with Kessler to design Fairacres. To a degree, planning and execution of the developments occurred simultaneously with the Elmwood Park and Happy Hollow projects. Fairacres generally lagged in progress behind the other two, due in part to its more remote position further west. Also contributing to the delay, in 1906 the George brothers had to file suit against a host of rival claimants to the land to clean up title issues stemming from the Patrick family’s 19th century business dealings.⁴³

During the initial planning stages, the project received a significant boost with the formation of an investor syndicate composed of Edgar M. Gibson, Lyman O. Perley, Charles S. Hayward, and Thomas J. Nolan. The men agreed to purchase tracts of land along Dodge Street and to begin construction on residences that would serve as the seeds for the new suburb. Gibson, a rancher from Wyoming, received seven acres of land closest to Dodge Street, at what is now 6300 Dodge Street. Perley, an attorney married to Gibson’s daughter Nora, would build a house immediately to the north, on a four-acre lot now designated as 207 Fairacres Road. Proceeding north away from Dodge Street, Hayward, owner of Hayward Brothers Shoe Company and originally from Massachusetts, received a three-acre lot (215 Fairacres Road and later called 6301 Chicago Street). Attorney Nolan had the two acres

⁴² Letter from Charles C. George to Henry Wright, April 14, 1909. Courtesy of the Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, Missouri.

⁴³ Deed Abstract, 601 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska. App. Doc. 94. No. 360.

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farthest north (401 Fairacres Road).⁴⁴ As the first buyers, these men secured the most attractive lots-- those in the southeast corner of the suburb, closest to Dodge Street. For the George brothers, having four "fine country homes"⁴⁵ already constructed on the land would make other tracts more attractive to potential buyers as soon as they were ready for public offering.

The *Omaha World-Herald* first announced the formation of the syndicate in the same January 20, 1907 article that described Kessler's role as director of landscape improvements.⁴⁶ The following week, they secured an agreement to supply the homes with "an abundance of electric 'juices'."⁴⁷ In March, the George brothers, the syndicate, and owners of adjacent properties petitioned the Douglas County Committee on Roads to vacate an existing county road, to be replaced by a new street described as, "Commencing at a point about 1321 feet South of the center of said Sec. 13 and running thence in a South Easterly direction to Dodge Street as shown on plat hereto attached."⁴⁸ The plat mentioned in the petition has been lost, though it may have been an early version of the Fairacres plat finalized the following December.

By the end of March, members of the syndicate had begun construction on their houses. In describing these houses collectively in a 1910 article, *The Clay-Worker*, a publication of the National Brick Manufacturers' Association, notes that "Fairacres, for example, is a brick settlement. Not one of the many beautiful homes erected in this most charming suburb is of frame. Masonry has a complete monopoly in Fairacres."⁴⁹ Gibson and Perley hired Architect Frederick A. Henninger to design the large brick Colonial Revival residences facing Dodge Street. Henninger's pre-existing business relationships with Edgar Gibson and the George & Company may have played a role in his commission.⁵⁰ The architects for Hayward's brick and stone Prairie School house and Nolan's brick Dutch Colonial Revival house, both also facing Dodge Street, are unknown. The initial budgets for the houses ranged from \$12,000 to \$18,000.⁵¹ Final figures reveal that the Gibson house went substantially over budget with a construction cost of \$30,000. Perley's house cost \$18,000, Hayward's was \$15,000, and Nolan's was \$10,000.⁵²

⁴⁴ "Omaha is Turning to the Country for its..." *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 29, 1908. Written by Elizabeth Sears.

⁴⁵ "Lively Year in Omaha's Thriving Suburbs Where Country Homes are a Joy," *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 1, 1907.

⁴⁶ "Acreage Property is Jumping in Value," *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 20, 1907.

⁴⁷ "Business Begins the New Year Much on Up-Grade," *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 3, 1907.

⁴⁸ Deed Abstract, 525 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska, Number 69. Road Record B. Page 88; Road Record D. Page 85; Road Record X. Page 376.

⁴⁹ "Increased Use of Brick in Omaha." *The Clay-Worker*, Volume 54, Number 5, November, 1910. Indianapolis, Indiana. pp. 501-505

⁵⁰ "Real Estate Had an Active Market," *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 26, 1906.

⁵¹ "Suburban Syndicates," *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 26, 1907.

⁵² "Wonderful Growth of Suburban District," *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 5, 1909.

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Figure 3 – Edgar M. Gibson and his son-in-law Lyman O. Perley built houses at 6300 Dodge Street (right) and 207 Fairacres Road (left) in 1907-08. Photo 1914. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).



Figure 4 – Charles S. Hayward built a house at 215 Fairacres Road in 1907-08. Photo 1927. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).



Figure 5 – Thomas J. Nolan built a house at 401 Fairacres Road in 1907-08. Photo 1928. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

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A March 26 article provides the best insight into the arrangement of the George brothers and the syndicate as of spring 1907. It described the group as “working to the common end of having a beautiful acreage suburb of 160 acres, with an aristocratic name and appearance.” The article describes the involvement of Gibson, Perley, Hayward, and Nolan, as well as builders in areas south of Dodge Street which were ultimately left off of the Fairacres plat. It concludes by stating that “The Dundee Realty company has the intervening tract, and is co-operating with the others to plat the whole 160 acres according to beautiful and harmonious plans.”⁵³

By the fall of 1907, the George brothers had spent over \$100,000 combined on landscape improvements for their three development projects along Dodge Street. The work consisted of grading, installing drains and sidewalks, and planting trees and shrubs. Grading contractor William H. Dugan completed the work. As Charles C. George explained at the time, “Scarcely anyone realizes the extent of the development going on in that section. The Dundee Realty company is spending thousands upon thousands of dollars in building up West Dodge street and the territory north of there. It will doubtless be one of the most popular residence sections in the city some time.” According to George, the company had remained discreet about the projects until they were prepared for sale to the public.⁵⁴

While publicizing already completed Happy Hollow projects, the George brothers began to promote the still unnamed Fairacres development. In October, they announced the tract “laid out with winding roadways following the crests and ridges, which have been cut down in their abrupt places, while unsightly gulleys have been filled, though the beauties of nature have been preserved as far as possible.”⁵⁵ This description, in emphasizing the priority placed on preserving and accentuating nature, exemplifies the extent of Kessler’s influence on the project. As described in a feature article three years later, Kessler “located the streets and avenues along the slight valleys. The heights upon which residences stand or which are to be crowned by them command views of 10 or 15 miles in nearly every direction.”⁵⁶ The original plat, drawn according to Kessler’s plans and finalized in December 1907, provides an illustration. Five roads gave access to Dodge Street: (from east to west) Prospect Avenue, Fairacres Road, Elmwood Boulevard, Locust Avenue, and Hackberry Avenue. The major east-west roads were Prairie Avenue and Underwood Avenue. All of the roads curved according to the topography of the site. The lots adjacent to Fairacres Road contained the highest ground in the development. Following the terrain, the road was laid out with the sweeping curves in a backwards S-shape. All of the houses under construction by the syndicate occupied these preferred lots on Fairacres Road.⁵⁷

The county board accepted the dedication of streets as drawn in the plat and on Christmas Day 1907, the *Omaha World-Herald* listed the area as “Fair Acres” for the first time.⁵⁸ Four days later, the *Omaha Bee* gave a more thorough announcement:⁵⁹

⁵³ “Suburban Syndicates,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 26, 1907.

⁵⁴ “Development of the Residence Section,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 15, 1907.

⁵⁵ “West Dundee Now Ready for the Builders,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 13, 1907.

⁵⁶ “Omaha’s Sunset Side,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 16, 1910.

⁵⁷ “Fairacres,” 1907 Plat Map. Roy N. Towl, Surveyor. Note: Additional names Lora Power, Mattie Shelley, and Thomas Shelley appear on the plat, likely because they owned adjacent land, concentrated in the western areas of Fairacres.

⁵⁸ “Omaha at a Glance,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; December 25, 1907.

⁵⁹ “Timely Real Estate Gossip,” *The Omaha Bee*; December 29, 1907.

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"Fairacres is north of Dundee and consists of a large number of acre tracts ranging from one and a third to eight and nine acres each. It is parked and improved and its sale will be pushed by George & Company."

Though inaccurate in its lot measurements, the article provides valuable details. It lists the total costs of permanent landscape improvements specific to Fairacres as \$75,000 and it reports that Henry L. Reed planned to build a residence in the area at a cost of \$20,000.⁶⁰ The ultimate location of Reed's house is unknown. In the weeks after they finalized the plat and announced Fairacres, the George brothers formalized the sale of the lots to Reed and the four members of the syndicate.⁶¹

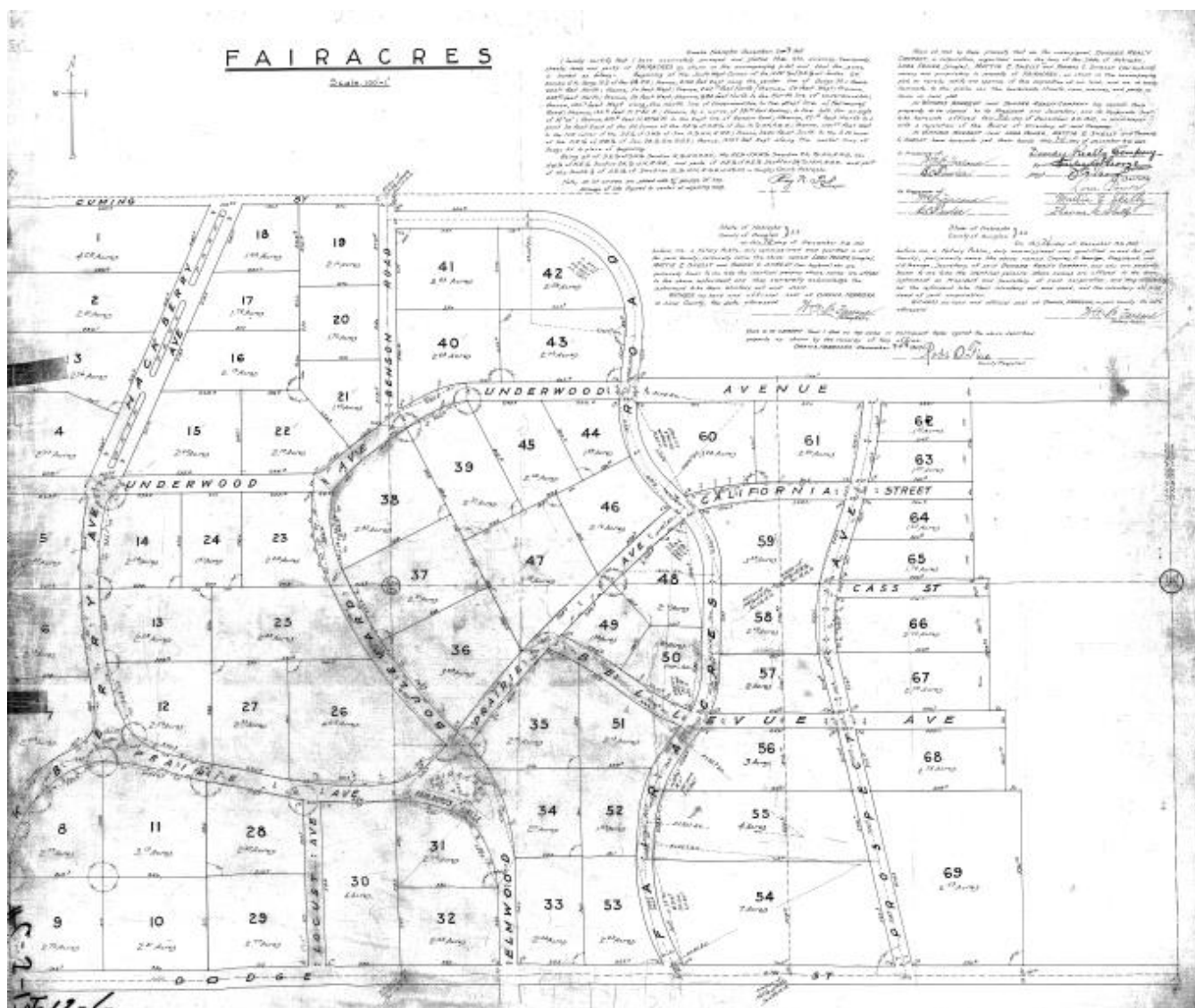


Figure 6 – Ray N. Towl surveyed the original 1907 plat of Fairacres based on George E. Kessler’s design. (Douglas County Assessor).

⁶⁰ "Timely Real Estate Gossip," *The Omaha Bee*; December 29, 1907.

⁶¹ "Real Estate Transfers," *The Omaha Bee*; December 31, 1907; "Real Estate Transfers," *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 12, 1908.

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A two-page feature on suburban living in the *Omaha World-Herald* on March 29, 1908 gives a thorough look at the state of the houses in Fairacres, as well as the motivations of the men behind their construction. After describing the interior and exterior features of each house, the article explains the draw of the Fairacres landscape.⁶²

"Each of these claims the finest view. They may admit that other homes are fine, but not a one of them can be found to concede that any man in the state has such a view from any part of his home. And all of them are right. A pretty feature of Fairacres is the boulevard system. The drives wind in and out of the lots like a tan ribbon laid on green grass. Trees planted on each side of the boulevards and tiny parkings artistically inset look like bits of emeralds shining in the drive in the summer when the air is freshest and the trees and shrubbery and grass do their level best to reward tired business men by making what used to be rough prairie beat an Inness landscape by a good mile."



C. S. HAYWARD



TOM NOLAN

Figures 7 and 8 – A March 1908 newspaper article on the burgeoning trend in country living among wealthy Omahans included caricatures of Charles S. Hayward and Thomas J. Nolan. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, March 29, 1908).

The extended article preceded an aggressive promotion campaign that began in May 1908, when the George brothers took out several advertisements in both the *Omaha World-Herald* and the *Omaha Bee*. The contents of the ads reveal the methods by which the George brothers hoped to attract wealthy Omahans. First, in keeping with the design philosophy implemented by Kessler, they emphasized the beauty of the landscape. The ads reference the graded park, shrubs and trees planted in double rows, "high, slightly tracts," and winding roads. Second, the George brothers explained that construction was underway on several houses, thereby reassuring prospective buyers that the community would not be desolate, while at the same time insinuating a sense of high demand for

⁶² "Omaha is Turning to the Country for its..." *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 29, 1908.

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available lots. References to “reasonable building restrictions” further assured readers that the development had a high standard of quality.⁶³

A third, particularly pervasive strategy used by the George brothers in their advertisements was to appeal explicitly to early automobile owners. As two commonly placed ads read,⁶⁴

“AUTOMOBILISTS and others will find excellent roads for automobiling and driving in FAIRACRES after they have attended the automobile races on West Dodge street today, Saturday. A trip through this artistically laid out subdivision will surprise and repay all.”

“OILED ROADWAYS through FAIRACRES make that suburb more attractive than ever; when driving or automobiling on West Dodge st., much of the pleasure of the ride is missed by failing to run over the winding roadways through FAIRACRES.”

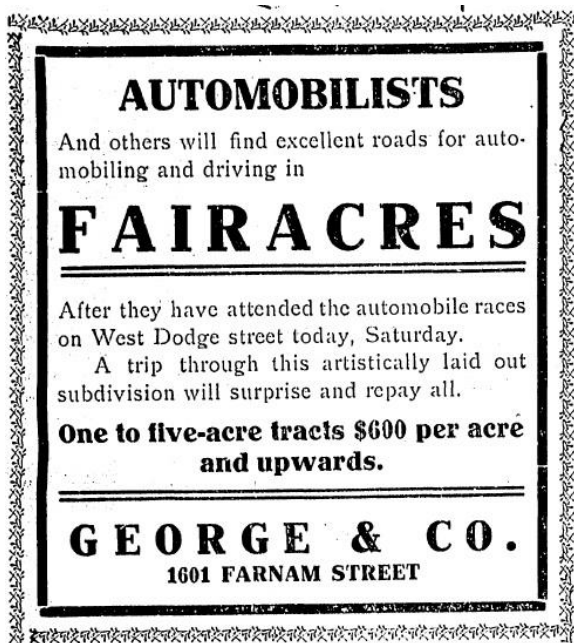


Figure 9 – Early George & Company newspaper advertisements, like this one from May 1908, appealed directly to automobile owners. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, May 30, 1908).

This was an important audience for the George brothers to reach. Automobile owners came from among the wealthy elite that they hoped to attract. Moreover, automobiles would be a necessity for any potential buyers because the streetcar system, which accessed Dundee and Happy Hollow, stopped short of Fairacres. In directly addressing automobile owners, the George brothers suggested to their readers that Fairacres would only be populated by those who could afford a car. Quickly, Fairacres Road developed a reputation as an automobile destination, boosted by events like a 1909 automobile outing organized by Charles S. Hayward for his employees. Hayward arranged six cars to pick his employees up from the downtown offices of the Hayward Brothers Shoe Company and bring

⁶³ George & Company advertisements: *The Omaha World-Herald*; May 5, 1908, May 17, 1908. Omaha Public Library; *The Omaha Bee*; May 2, 1908, May 10, 1908, May 12, 1908. Library of Congress.

⁶⁴ George & Company advertisements: *The Omaha World-Herald*; May 30, 1908, August 2, 1908. *The Omaha Bee*; May 30, 1908.

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them first to his Fairacres residence and then to the Happy Hollow Country Club (the former Patrick Residence). The *Omaha Bee* covered the event with a large posed photograph.⁶⁵



Figure 10 – Charles S. Hayward organized an automobile outing for his employees in 1909. The tour included a stop at his house in Fairacres. (*The Omaha Bee*, October 3, 1909).

In another marketing strategy, the George brothers targeted fellow real estate investors. In one of the first ads, they reminded readers that “not many years ago, acre tracts in the vicinity of 39th and Farnam streets sold around \$1,000 per acre, and these same acres are now worth from \$15,000 to \$20,000.” The George brothers offered Fairacres tracts for \$1,500 to \$2,000, an apparent bargain. Over the following months, they asserted that, “No mistake can be made in buying any of the above (Fairacres tracts) for either a home or an investment, as land values increase fast around \$10,000 to \$25,000 houses.”⁶⁶ The strategy paid early dividends when, in September 1908, Arthur H. Fetters invested through the purchase of lot 59.⁶⁷ In October 1910, Richard C. Peters purchased lots 44 and 46 as drawn in the 1907 plat.⁶⁸ Fronting Fairacres Road, the lots were valuable investment commodities and Peters planned to develop the lots and resell them. He also reported plans to build a house within the next couple of years. This house may be the same house visible in a 1916 photograph of Fairacres Road.⁶⁹ That house was demolished under unknown circumstances by 1936 at the latest.⁷⁰ Four years later, William H. McCord purchased lots 60 and 61 and stated plans to build a house there.⁷¹ Ultimately, he also chose to subdivide and sell the property.

⁶⁵ “The Hayward Employes’ Outing,” *The Omaha Bee*; October 3, 1909. Library of Congress. Accessed December 29, 2016.

⁶⁶ George & Company advertisements: *The Omaha Bee*; May 12, 1908, August 16, 1908.

⁶⁷ Deed Abstract, 525 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska, Number 74, Book 314, Page 210.

⁶⁸ “Real Estate Sales in City’s Playtime,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 5, 1910.

⁶⁹ Rock, *Dundee, Neb: A Pictorial History*, 14.

⁷⁰ “Fairacres,” c.1937 Plat Map. Courtesy of Douglas County Engineer.

⁷¹ “McCord Buys Ground for New Home in Fairacres,” *The Omaha Bee*; June 7, 1914.

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Figure 11 – The original five Fairacres houses, as seen in this view from the east on Dodge Street, were located along Fairacres Road. From left to right: 6300 Dodge Street (Gibson), 207 Fairacres Road (Perley), 215 Fairacres Road (Hayward), Unidentified (possibly Richard C. Peters), and 401 Fairacres Road (Nolan). (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

Not all of the early buyers along Fairacres Road focused on the investment opportunity. In August 1908, William A. Paxton, Jr., son of the prominent rancher and cattleman, purchased lots 33 and 53 as drawn in the original plan for a combined 2.5-acre tract. He hired John Latenser, Sr. to design a house on the lot designated 6412 Dodge Street.⁷² Paxton died two years later⁷³ and his widow sold the house to George Brandeis, who maintained the property for many years.⁷⁴ Long known as a center of social life in Fairacres,⁷⁵ the house was demolished in 1971.⁷⁶

As of 1915, the George brothers had managed to sell several of their Fairacres tracts. However, the construction of houses lagged. Most new houses in the area, including those of William S. Wright, George H. Payne, and Frank B. Kennard, sat south of Dodge Street.⁷⁷ News articles sometimes

⁷² "Real Estate Deals," *The Omaha World-Herald*; July 19, 1908.

⁷³ "Funeral Services of William A. Paxton," *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 8, 1910.

⁷⁴ "Mrs. Paxton-Saxe Sells Fairacres Home," *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 8, 1913.

⁷⁵ *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*, 62.

⁷⁶ "Brandeis House Apparently to be Torn Down," January 11, 1971.

⁷⁷ "Omaha's Sunset Side," *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 16, 1910.

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associated these houses with those in Fairacres, but other sources were careful to explain that they were in fact part of “Buena Vista,” a separate neighborhood outside of Fairacres’ boundaries.⁷⁸ Two factors could explain the slow growth of construction in Fairacres despite the investment activity. First, a misunderstanding regarding the terms of a 1907 water supply agreement led the water company to disconnect the mains for lots north of Chicago Street in October 1910. The George brothers immediately filed an injunction and it is uncertain when the water supply returned.⁷⁹

More problematic was the slow growth of transportation infrastructure. Car usage across America began to grow in the 1890s, but the introduction of the model T Ford in 1907 was a turning point. Between 1900 and 1920, the numbers of vehicles in the U.S. increased from 8,000 to 8,000,000.⁸⁰ By 1889, brick paving was “just coming into vogue” in Omaha,⁸¹ but road infrastructure did not develop quickly enough to meet the growing needs. As of June 1915, a disgruntled automobile owner wrote to the *Omaha World-Herald* that the city had the worst roads in the state and asked, “Why do they (the city commission) let every man that visits Omaha in his automobile curse the city as soon as he passes its entrance gates as he arrives and curse it again as he leaves?”⁸²



Figure 12 – Poor conditions of roads, like this one in the Happy Hollow area, hindered the development of western suburbs during the 1910s. Photo 1914. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

Road conditions near Fairacres were especially poor. According to a 1917 columnist, “Dodge road is a disgrace for practically the entire length of the made road, and particularly so for a block or

⁷⁸ “More Fine Homes to Grace Fairacres,” *The Omaha Bee*; November 27, 1910.

⁷⁹ “No Water for the Mains When They are Built,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 5, 1911.

⁸⁰ Ben-Joseph, Eran and Michael Southworth. “Street Standards and the Shaping of Suburbia.” *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Volume 61, Number 1, Winer 1995. Chicago: American Planning Association, 1995, pp.71.

⁸¹ “Some Points on Brick Paving,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; 1889.

⁸² “Fix Up Those Highways,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; June 12, 1915.

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two within the confines of aristocratic Fairacres.”⁸³ The difficulty of the four-mile commute to downtown Omaha dissuaded most potential Fairacres residents during the first two decades of the 20th century.⁸⁴ Conditions improved after Omaha’s 1919 master plan prioritized long-term investments for streets.⁸⁵ The improvements made Fairacres a more feasible option for potential buyers. As the pool of potential buyers for remote neighborhoods like Fairacres expanded, Omaha’s west side grew accordingly.

Amidst the rapid growth in automobile usage, the residents of Fairacres Road, including Nolan, Hayward, William R. Newton, and John L. Kennedy (the latter two had purchased the houses of Perley and Gibson, respectively, in 1912), paid to have the road paved with brick so as to provide better access to their houses.⁸⁶ The paving extended from Dodge Street to Underwood Avenue, where it connected to land the George brothers had recently donated to Brownell Hall.⁸⁷ The project included the installation of a concrete sidewalk along the east side of the road.⁸⁸ The road, laid out according to Kessler’s plan and paved with brick, became a preferred area within the village of Fairacres. Later newspaper advertisements for house sales boasted of a house’s position “on the pavement.”⁸⁹ A Fairacres Road culture emerged. The district became known for its beautiful houses and landscaping.⁹⁰ In 1915, John L. Kennedy, the resident of 6300 Dodge Street who had served as a U.S. congressman from 1905 to 1907, organized a Fairacres Club for social meetings.⁹¹

In 1921, Ed George died in an automobile accident, leaving Charles to take sole control of the George & Company business.⁹² By that point, the bulk of their involvement in the project was completed and the project had, despite delays, ultimately proven to be successful. Illustrating the growth of the village, the Catholic Archdiocese established a new parish in Fairacres in 1919.⁹³

Subdivision and construction: 1929-1942

Through the 1920s, while other areas of west Omaha developed, investors like Richard C. Peters and Andrew “Bert” Murphy, who had purchased the McCord tract in 1919,⁹⁴ continued to hold onto their investments.

The 1930s marked a period of increased home construction activity across the U.S. Financing programs enacted by Presidents Hoover and Roosevelt created a broader pool of potential buyers, sparking tremendous growth in the construction industry.⁹⁵ Which, if any, of these programs were utilized in Fairacres is unknown, but busy construction in Fairacres kept pace with national trends.

Two projects, on portions of lots 51 and 52 of the original plat, marked the beginning of the wave of construction. At 210 Fairacres Road, insurance executive William Herbert Wheeler hired

⁸³ “A Big Job for Omaha,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; July 6, 1917.

⁸⁴ *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*, 62.

⁸⁵ Cottrell and Larsen, *Upstream Metropolis*, 193-197.

⁸⁶ “Develop Rich Country About City Says Myers,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 17, 1915.

⁸⁷ “Brownell Hall Will Accept George Offer,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 14, 1915.

⁸⁸ “Doubling Development South Part of Dundee,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; November 21, 1915.

⁸⁹ Classified advertisement, *The Omaha World-Herald*; December 13, 1931.

⁹⁰ “Omaha’s Gardens Soon to Be at Their Loveliest,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; May 4, 1924.

⁹¹ “Fairacres Club,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 10, 1915.

⁹² “J.E. George and R.M. Welch Die in Auto Crash,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 26, 1921.

⁹³ “New Catholic Parish Formed in Fairacres,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; August 23, 1919.

⁹⁴ Deed Abstract, 601 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska. Book 440, Page 6. Dated July 18, 1919.

⁹⁵ *Historic Residential Suburbs*. U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002, pp.29-31.

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architect George B. Prinz to design a house on a lot that he purchased in 1928.⁹⁶ Next door, at 216 Fairacres Road, Mutual Benefit Health and Accident Association leaders C.C. and Mabel Criss hired architect Leo A. Daly to design a house of their own. They hired Nelson Construction Company to complete the work.⁹⁷ Peter Kiewit, who would later develop his business into one of the largest contractors in the world, is credited with performing masonry work.⁹⁸ The project was completed in December 1930.⁹⁹ Prinz and Daly designed each of their respective two-story brick houses with primarily English design influences, in keeping with the Period Revival design styles trending at the time.¹⁰⁰



Figure 13 – C.C. and Mabel Criss built a house at 216 Fairacres Road in 1929-30. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

⁹⁶ "More Prominent Omahans Buy Land in Fairacres for Their Future Homes," *The Omaha World-Herald*; August 8, 1928.

⁹⁷ "Criss Plans Fine Home," *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 24, 1930.

⁹⁸ Vodicka, Nadine. "A Tudor Tradition: The 1996 Omaha Symphony Designer Showhouse," *Omaha Magazine*, March/April 1996, pp. 12-17, 21-23.

⁹⁹ "New Fairacres Homes," *The Omaha World-Herald*; December 28, 1930; "Decorating Challenges Overcome," *The Omaha World-Herald*; April 14, 1963. Written by Frances McCoy.

¹⁰⁰ *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*, 90.

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Figures 14 and 15 – C.C. and Mabel Criss, pictured at their Fairacres house, were influential figures in the development of the Mutual Benefit Health and Accident Association, a predecessor of Mutual of Omaha. Leo A. Daly designed the house. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

The following year saw three more houses built farther north from Dodge Street. At 423 Fairacres Road, Glen R. Driscoll, owner of the Driscoll Leather Company built a two-story, hip-roofed house.¹⁰¹ Driscoll likely hired an architect, though the identity is unknown. Harkness Kountze hired Bert B. Hene to design a house at 616 Fairacres Road, the closest house to Underwood Avenue yet built.¹⁰² As with the 1930 houses, both 423 and 616 Fairacres Road are two-story brick dwellings based on English design features, though 616 Fairacres Road bears French influences as well.

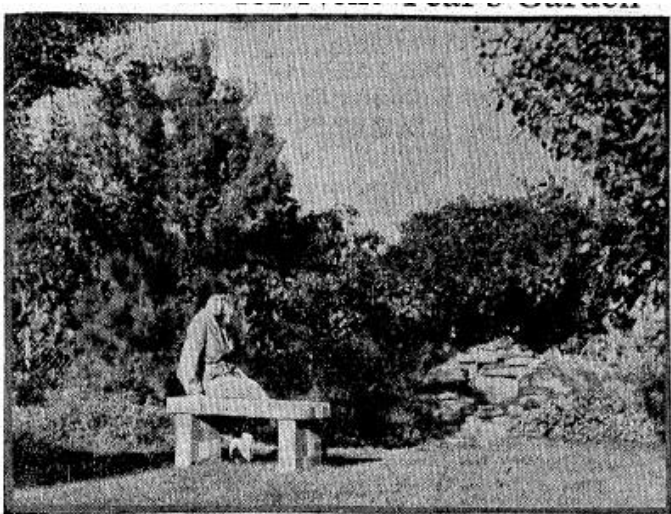


Figure 16 – Sarah Driscoll established a garden at 423 Fairacres Road soon after the house's construction. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, October 25, 1931).

¹⁰¹ "Plans Now for Next Year's Garden," *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 25, 1931.

¹⁰² "Two New Residences of Beauty and Utility," *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 11, 1931.

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Builder Abraham "Max" Fisher, who bought land from Richard C. Peters (not part of Peters' tract on the west side of Fairacres Road between Underwood Avenue and Prairie Avenue) starts contributing to the neighborhood in 1931.¹⁰³ Fisher's first house on the land sits at 420 Fairacres Road. He completed the house by December 1931 and began marketing it for sale as "the new Fisher home."¹⁰⁴ After a year on the market, the house sold to Louis Sommer, the owner of a grocery store on Dodge Street in Dundee.¹⁰⁵ He continued building houses through the late 1930s.

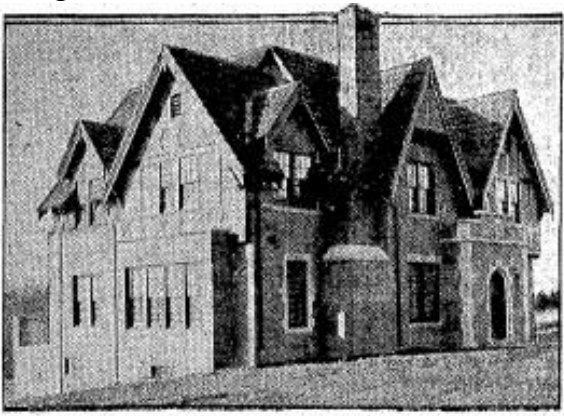


Figure 17 – Max Fisher designed and built the house at 420 Fairacres Road, photographed here soon after its completion. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, January 10, 1932).

In 1936 and 1938, Fisher completed two more houses in the district. The first was located at 426 Fairacres Road, on another lot acquired from Peters. Physician William P. Wherry purchased the house upon its completion in December 1936.¹⁰⁶ Fisher's third house marks a substantial deviation from his previous building process in that he purchased plans from a Beverly Hills architect named Milton R. Sutton.¹⁰⁷ The resulting Colonial Revival-influenced house bears none of Fisher's signature Tudor Revival design features. Fisher sold the house to John A. Swanson, founder of the Standard Blueprint Company, in September 1938.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ "Real Estate Transfers," *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 21, 1932.

¹⁰⁴ Classified advertisement. *The Omaha World-Herald*; December 13, 1931.

¹⁰⁵ "Louis Sommer Buys in Fairacres," *The Omaha World-Herald*; December 25, 1932.

¹⁰⁶ "Two Doctors are Figures in Transfer of Homes," *The Omaha World-Herald*; December 13, 1936.

¹⁰⁷ "Design Brought from California," *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 2, 1938.

¹⁰⁸ "Real Estate Transfers," *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 29, 1938.

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Figure 18 – Max Fisher built the house at 426 Fairacres Road in 1936. Photo taken 1937. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).



Figure 19 – Max Fisher built the house at 615 Fairacres Road in 1938, using plans drawn by California architect Milton R. Sutton. Photo taken 1939. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

The north side of the district continued to develop throughout the decade. Grant McFayden, an automobile executive, hired John and Alan McDonald to design a house at 624 Fairacres Road in 1932.¹⁰⁹ Samuel Houser, founder of the Omaha Taxicab Company, followed with a house at 608 Fairacres Road in 1936.¹¹⁰ In 1940, Frank J. and Stella G. Bender built a house at 425 Fairacres Road. Noel Stanley Wallace provided the design for the new house.¹¹¹ Each of the McFayden, Houser, and Bender houses followed Tudor Revival trends.

¹⁰⁹ Omaha City Directory, 1933, Omaha Public Library, Omaha, Nebraska.

¹¹⁰ "12 New Houses, Fairacres Area," *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 13, 1936.

¹¹¹ *Historic Omaha 1976*. Junior League of Omaha with support from the Nebraska Arts Council and Landmarks, Inc.

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Figure 20 – Samuel Houser built the house at 608 Fairacres Road in 1936. Photo taken 1941. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

In 1937, Bert Murphy, owner of the six-acre tract east of Fairacres Road, bounded by Underwood Avenue and California Street, and originally purchased by William H. McCord, subdivided the property.¹¹² Three of the resulting lots addressed Fairacres Road. Max Fisher purchased the central lot to build 615 Fairacres Road using Milton R. Sutton's plans.¹¹³ The southern lot, promoted as one of the highest in the district, was developed in 1941 for physician Charles T. Crow and his widowed mother Helen J. Crow. The Colonial Revival house, situated diagonally on its lot, addresses the corner of Fairacres Road and California Street. The Schroeder Realty Company managed the design and construction of the house.¹¹⁴

While construction was active on the north end of the district during the 1930s, the older houses closer to Dodge Street retained their original designs and materials with two exceptions. In a relatively minor change, the brick exterior of 401 Fairacres Road was painted white by the end of the decade. The project may have been completed by either Arthur C. Stokes or the original owner, Thomas J. Nolan. More substantial changes took place at 215 Fairacres Road, built in the Prairie style by Charles S. Hayward. Frank Judson made unspecified repairs to the house after a 1928 fire. Edson L. and Kathryn H. Bridges purchased the property in 1930 and hired George B. Prinz to create designs for more unspecified renovations.¹¹⁵ Seven years later, after the death of Edson Bridges, a second fire badly damaged the second story and roof of the house, necessitating substantial repairs.¹¹⁶ As a result of the 1928, 1930 and 1937-38 renovation projects, a Tudor Revival design replaced the original Prairie style.

¹¹² "Names Agents for Subdivision Sales," *The Omaha World-Herald*; June 20, 1937.

¹¹³ "Design Brought from California," *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 2, 1938.

¹¹⁴ "Build Home in Fairacres," *The Omaha World-Herald*; April 13, 1941.

¹¹⁵ "Dr. E.L. Bridges Buys Frank Judson's Home," *The Omaha World-Herald*; July 15, 1930.

¹¹⁶ "Fire Damages Home on Fairacres Road," *The Omaha World-Herald*; November 13, 1937.

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In completing the repairs to her house at 215 Fairacres Road, Kathryn Bridges likely utilized the services of architect Birger J. Kvenild, whom she also hired to design two additional houses on the eastern portion of her lot. The first, addressing North 62nd Street, was built using sandstone and other building materials repurposed from a pre-existing barn on the site.¹¹⁷ The house has a French Provincial design, deriving from the combined creative influences of Bridges and Kvenild. Bridges sold the house to George Hauser in 1937, just one month prior to the fire at 215 Fairacres Road.¹¹⁸ The second house, addressing Chicago Street, involved another collaboration between Bridges and Kvenild. This time, they sought to give the impression of a “house in the woods” through incorporating English Norman farmhouse design influences. The house was sold to Herman J. Johnson in March 1938.¹¹⁹

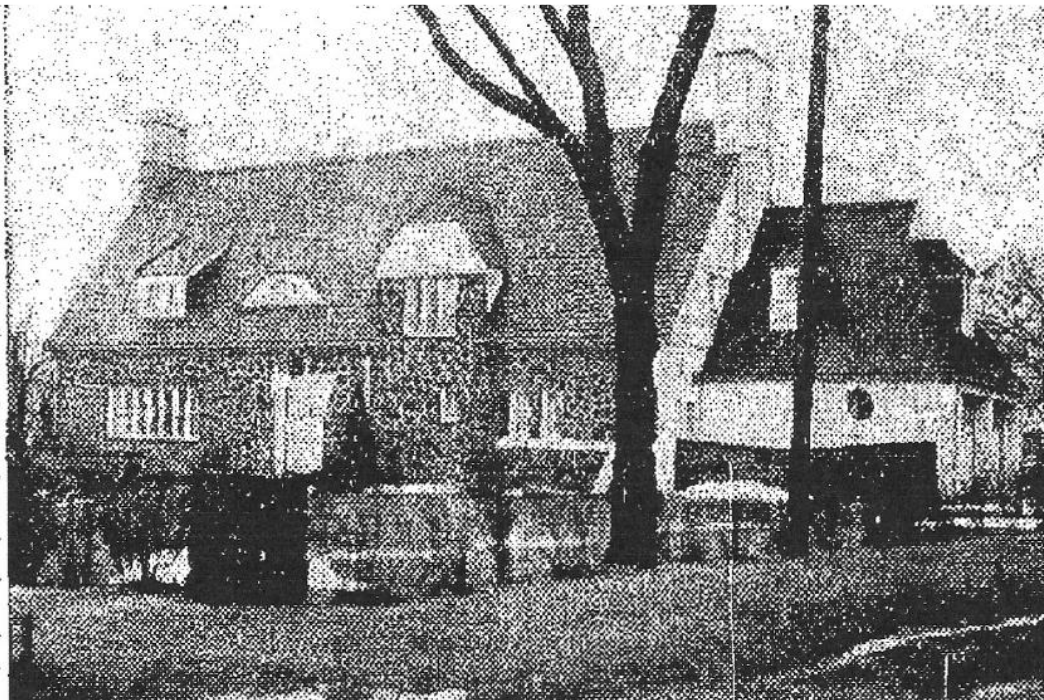


Figure 21 – Kathryn Bridges built the house at 220 North 62nd Street, at the eastern end of her lot at 215 Fairacres Road, in 1937 using materials from a pre-existing on-site barn. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, September 9, 1939).

On the other side of Fairacres Road, Gennero Petello built a Mediterranean Revival house at 220 Fairacres Road in 1941.¹²⁰ Petello, an Italian immigrant who had founded the Petello Fruit Company, built the house on property he purchased from Max Fisher in 1935.¹²¹ Nine years later, Petello subdivided a rear portion of his lot.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Bridges, Edson. 2016 November 1. Personal interview with Barbara McCusker and Matt Pelz.

¹¹⁸ “New Style Arithmetic,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 31, 1937.

¹¹⁹ “This Week in Review: ‘House in the Woods,’” February 20, 1938; “Builder,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 27, 1938;

¹²⁰ Omaha City Directory, 1942, Omaha Public Library, Omaha, Nebraska.

¹²¹ “Real Estate Transfers,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 9, 1935.

¹²² “Real Estate Transfers,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; August 31, 1944.

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Figure 22 – Italian immigrant Gennero Petello built the Mediterranean Revival house at 220 Fairacres Road in 1941. The date of the photo is unknown. (Courtesy of Susie Buffett).

Annexation: 1933-1941

The first record of public debate regarding the annexation of Fairacres by the City of Omaha occurred in November 1924. At the time, Mayor James Dahlman and City Commissioner James Koutsky commented that the city sought to avoid annexation of any surrounding territory due to increased demands on city services.¹²³ By 1933, under a new regime, the city government had reconsidered the situation. The city council and police department pursued the annexation of wealthy, though sparsely populated Fairacres as a means for improving the city's overall financial outlook. As Police Commissioner Frank Myers explained, "The city's bonded indebtedness has risen to such a figure that our bonds are no longer first class. If we annex Fairacres, the city's total valuation is greatly increased, but nothing added to the bonded indebtedness. That will bring the ratio down, and the value of the bonds will be bettered."¹²⁴ Residents strongly opposed the idea—Rufus E. Lee, Arthur C. Stokes, and Harkness Kountze each expressed their disapproval in the press.¹²⁵ In August, the city council voted against the proposal by a vote of four to three. Mayor Roy N. Towl, who had surveyed the land and drawn the original Fairacres plat 26 years earlier, voted in opposition and asked Fairacres residents to establish a private fund to pay for their own fire protection.¹²⁶

Two years later, the city council revisited the issue once again. In this vote, they approved annexation by a vote of four to three, with Mayor Towl changing his position.¹²⁷ At hearings on the matter, George & Company representative Thomas R. Huston spoke against the measure on behalf of

¹²³ "Commission Not Anxious to Annex Fairacres," *The Omaha World-Herald*; November 20, 1924.

¹²⁴ "Fairacres Plan Pushes Limits of City to 69th St.," *The Omaha World-Herald*; July 14, 1933.

¹²⁵ "Myers Would Annex Fairacres for Taxes," *The Omaha World-Herald*; July 13, 1933.

¹²⁶ "Council Kills Plan to Annex Fairacres," *The Omaha World-Herald*; August 21, 1933.

¹²⁷ "Annexation Voted 4 to 3," *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 20, 1935.

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owners of vacant property in the area.¹²⁸ In March, residents of Fairacres filed an injunction against annexation and successfully fought off the latest attempt.¹²⁹

For city officials, one of the major impediments in their case for annexing Fairacres was the fact that nearer western suburbs had yet to be annexed. That issue was finally resolved in April 1941, when residents of the Country Club Heights district elected to drop their fight against the city and surrender to annexation. In an article announcing the decision, city officials presented their intention to proceed quickly with the annexation of Fairacres.¹³⁰ In May 1941, they followed through and formally annexed the entire village after a unanimous city council vote, over the objections of a dozen residents.¹³¹

One of the reasons that Fairacres residents had so vehemently opposed annexation was their fear of watching their “lovely, quiet lanes” and “privately-selected lamp posts” be replaced by “concrete pavement with wider streets” and standardized streetlights. To an extent, those fears were prescient. Roads within Fairacres, particularly Underwood Avenue, were hardened and widened.¹³² Only Fairacres Road, still retaining its 1915 brick paving and concrete sidewalk, remained immune to these changes.

Charles C. George did not live to see the annexation of Fairacres. After his role in the Fairacres development had ended, he worked towards other real estate efforts, including an unrealized proposal for mixed residential and retail buildings on Dodge Street between Happy Hollow and Dundee.¹³³ He remained a leader in the Omaha business community, representing the Omaha Chamber of Commerce in national meetings. Between 1919 and 1923, he served as director of the national U.S. Chamber of Commerce.¹³⁴ Upon his death in 1940, George & Company continued business operations under the management of George’s daughter Mary George King and her husband H. Stephen King. In 1940, they merged with the interests of Nile Booth, formerly of the Booth-Pederson Company.¹³⁵ The partnership dissolved two years later.¹³⁶ In 1943, George & Company formally discontinued business operations, yielding existing projects to the Schroeder Realty Company.¹³⁷

Post-war projects: 1949-1961

At the beginning of the 1940s, the Fairacres district between Dodge Street and Underwood Avenue still had lots available for subdivision. However, construction paused during World War II and did not recommence until 1949, when three final projects increased the density of the district.

The Slosburg Realty Company, founded after the war by Jacob Slosburg, Jr. and his sons Harold and Stanley Slosburg, built houses on neighboring lots at 402 and 410 Fairacres Road.¹³⁸ They hired Bert B. Hene to create plans for the first house at 410 Fairacres Road and they may have hired an

¹²⁸ “Annexation is deferred,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 4, 1935.

¹²⁹ “Annex Land to Colorado,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 15, 1935; “Fairacres Wins Suit to remain Outside of City,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; July 24, 1935.

¹³⁰ “Annexation Fight Ended,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; April 7, 1941.

¹³¹ “Fairacres is Taken by City,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; May 6, 1941.

¹³² Killian, Margaret Patricia. *Born Rich: A Historical Book of Omaha*. Edited by Sharon M. Wiesner. Illustrated by Pamela Nye. Omaha: Assistance League of Omaha, 1978, p.50.

¹³³ “Details Plans of Subdivision,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 20, 1939.

¹³⁴ “Charles C. George Dies at 77; Lifetime Omaha Developer,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 19, 1940.

¹³⁵ “Form 2 New realty Firms,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; June 15, 1940.

¹³⁶ “Booth, George to Separate Firms,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 18, 1942.

¹³⁷ “Hain Joins Schroeder Firm,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 28, 1943.

¹³⁸ “Harold ‘Bus’ Slosburg, 95, helped build Omaha with Slosburg Co.,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; March 8, 2016.

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unknown architect for the other project.¹³⁹ The company built and marketed the houses, and sold them to Frank G. Pringle (410 Fairacres Road) and Robert A. Braun (402 Fairacres Road).¹⁴⁰

At the intersection of Fairacres Road and Underwood Avenue, fashion retail executive Lazar Kaplan hired architect John F. Hyde, Jr. to design a Colonial Revival residence.¹⁴¹ The lot was the last of the Murphy tract properties facing Fairacres Road to be developed. Along with the Slosburg projects, Hyde's house represents the final development of subdivided lots within the district.



Figure 23 – 601 Fairacres Road, constructed by Schroeder Realty Company and possibly designed by John F. Hyde, Jr., soon after its construction. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, April 13, 1941).

After the period of significance: 1962-Present

During the second half of the 20th century, Fairacres retained its stature as one of Omaha's most significant early-20th-century neighborhoods. As a 1980 report on preservation in the city explained, "Fairacres was perhaps Omaha's best example of a park-like subdivision," thereby exemplifying the predominant trend in suburb design during the period.¹⁴² Based on an understanding of the particular significance of Fairacres Road, which retained its original paving materials and served as the core of the larger village, residents of the district to a great extent preserved the original designs of the community landscape and the individual houses.

Three demolitions took place since the end of the period of significance. The house at 6412 Dodge Street, built in 1908 by William A. Paxton, Jr and purchased by George Brandeis in 1913, was demolished in 1971.¹⁴³ Eventually, the land was redeveloped with multiple-unit housing and one single-family residence, and the area is not included within the boundaries of the nominated district. In 1996, the Lyman O. Perley House at 207 Fairacres Road was demolished and replaced with a ranch-style house.¹⁴⁴ The area is included within the boundaries of the district, with the new house designated as non-contributing. Finally, in 2015, the Elvad-Eldredge House at 525 Fairacres Road was demolished.¹⁴⁵ The original outbuilding remains standing.

¹³⁹ Classified advertisements; *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 11, 1949; May 18, 1950.

¹⁴⁰ Omaha City Directory, 1951, Omaha Public Library, Omaha, Nebraska.

¹⁴¹ "Building Plan for 617 Mr. & Mrs. Lazar Kaplan," John F. Hyde, Jr. August 15, 1949.

¹⁴² *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*, 62-63.

¹⁴³ "Brandeis House Apparently to be Torn Down," *The Omaha World-Herald*; January 11, 1971.

¹⁴⁴ "U.P. Boss Buys Fairacres Property," *The Omaha World-Herald*; February 7, 1996. Written by Matt Kelley.

¹⁴⁵ "Homeowners Pilloried for Fairacres Faux Pas," *The Omaha World-Herald*; November 7, 2015.

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During the middle decades of the 20th century, Fairacres Road had a concentration of church-related residences. In 1937, Rufus E. Lee sold the house at 6300 Dodge Street to the Catholic Archdiocese, which used the house as the residence of Bishops James H. Ryan (1937-47) and Gerald T. Bergan (1948-72). Ryan added a segment to the rear of the building to house a chapel and library.¹⁴⁶ The church sold the house to current owners James and Elizabeth Quinn in 1972.¹⁴⁷ In 1943, St. Margaret Mary Church, located just to the east of Fairacres, purchased the house at 525 Fairacres Road to serve as the rectory for Father Joseph A. Suneg.¹⁴⁸ Finally, Robert Storz, longtime resident of 207 Fairacres Road, sold the house to the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska in 1965.¹⁴⁹ For a period between 1965 and 1972, three of the houses within the district were used as church-related residences.

Significance of Community Planning and Development

Fairacres is significant as a garden suburb designed and developed to attract wealthy residents of Omaha by appealing to a widespread early-20th-century fascination with the beauty of the natural environment. The garden suburb trend was an extension of the City Beautiful movement, which focused on “a synthesis of aesthetics and functionalism” in city planning. While downtown civic centers were the primary focus of the movement, its influence quickly spread to the periphery of U.S. cities during the 1900s.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, planners advocated the coordinated and comprehensive development of residential suburbs. The combined effects led to the American adoption of the *garden suburb*, developed in England and most famously executed at Letchworth and Hampstead.¹⁵¹

As the usage of automobiles increased, planners gained greater flexibility in the design of suburbs. Significantly, these suburbs could be designed as remote, exclusive enclaves for wealthy citizens—the only people capable of purchasing the automobile to make the necessary commute to the city.¹⁵² This was particularly true in suburbs, like Fairacres, that were not accessible via public transportation. Furthermore, since these outlying areas were usually undeveloped, City Beautiful-minded planners did not have to exert efforts to undo the mistakes of insensitive previous developments.

Based on his comments in a 1915 presentation in Omaha, George E. Kessler certainly believed that the developers of new tracts tended to taint their natural beauty unless otherwise directed by conscientious city planning. As he explained,¹⁵³

“Seldom can one tie, as he should, the new property to that which has gone before—the margin of profit on property not admitting it. But co-operation for business interest of adjoining properties will sometimes do what would be impossible if each owner viewed it from the standpoint of his own personal interest.”

¹⁴⁶ “Lee Home to Bishop Ryan,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; August 23, 1937.

¹⁴⁷ “Dr. Quinn Buyer of Bergan Home,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; October 1, 1972.

¹⁴⁸ “Eldredge Home to be Father Suneg’s Rectory,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; June 12, 1943.

¹⁴⁹ “U.P. Boss Buys Fairacres Property,” written by Matt Kelley, February 7, 1996.

¹⁵⁰ *Historic Residential Suburbs*. U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002, p.31.

¹⁵¹ Bunce, M.F. *The Countryside Ideal: Anglo-American Images of Landscape*. London: Rutledge, 1994.

¹⁵² Bunce, *The Countryside Ideal*, 166.

¹⁵³ “Kessler Speaks to ‘Original Sinners,’” September 10, 1915.

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Kessler's residential experience began as early as 1887, when he designed Hyde Park, a private park inside a residential neighborhood.¹⁵⁴ In 1891, he served as landscape engineer for the first phase of Baltimore's Roland Park. He was responsible for the neighborhood's "gracefully curved streets, paths, and large lots on the first plat of land, lying east of Roland Avenue."¹⁵⁵ The Olmsted Brothers later completed additional phases of the development.¹⁵⁶

At the turn of the century, Kessler became increasingly known as a leading City Beautiful figure based on the success of his city parks and boulevard designs. Nonetheless, he continued to take on residential design projects, particularly in Kansas City.¹⁵⁷ In 1907, J.C. Nichols began development of Kansas City's Country Club District, noted as the first garden suburb to be planned explicitly for the use of automobiles.¹⁵⁸ Kessler served as design consultant for the project and Nichols cited Roland Park as its inspiration.¹⁵⁹

Simultaneous to his contributions to Nichols' project in Kansas City, Kessler worked with the George brothers to develop Fairacres, Dundee, and Happy Hollow. The Fairacres project was similar to Country Club in that the growth of the automobile served as the logical basis for the development. The automobile shaped Fairacres in two ways.

First, the community was planned so as to appeal to wealthy citizens more likely to afford automobiles. This consideration directly led to an increase in lot size and more expansive setbacks in the earliest houses. It also strengthened Kessler's priority on accentuating the natural environment, which was itself a major source of appeal for rich city-dwellers. The George brothers secured Kessler's design through a series of deed restrictions to be in effect until 1930. They allowed only single-family residential buildings, set back at least 100 feet from Fairacres Road and 75 feet from cross streets. Only brick, brick veneer, stone, or stucco buildings were allowed. Any outbuildings had to match the design and materials of the primary house. Significantly, the George brothers required that each building have an initial value of at least \$10,000.

Another way in which the rise of the automobile shaped Fairacres was that Kessler planned the roads so as to facilitate travel within the village. He and the George brothers understood that, in the absence of public transportation accessibility, residence in Fairacres would require automobile ownership. This recognition led to the installation of "excellent" "oiled roadways" of the early years and, eventually, paved surfaces. Furthermore, whereas streets in other western suburbs often followed the city's grid pattern, the roads in Fairacres curved according to local topography. Kessler and the George brothers embraced the topography in part to increase the pleasure of the driving experience.

Fairacres most clearly represents both of the ways that automobiles shaped Kessler's plan for the village of Fairacres. The earliest houses, built by the 1907 syndicate, are set back on large lots and oriented towards the southern sun. Each addressed Dodge Street, which was at that point a dirt road with a decidedly rural character. The houses lined a ridge in the area's natural topography, affording their owners' pleasing views of the picturesque surroundings. In the earliest period, Fairacres Road was

¹⁵⁴ Culbertson, "George Kessler..." in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 102.

¹⁵⁵ Black, Catharine F. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Roland Park. National Register #74002213. November 1973.

¹⁵⁶ Culbertson, "George Kessler..." in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 102.

¹⁵⁷ Culbertson, "George Kessler..." in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, 108.

¹⁵⁸ Bunce, *The Countryside Ideal*, 166.

¹⁵⁹ Pregill, Philip and Nancy Volkman. *Landscape in History: Design and Planning in the Eastern and Western Tradition*. 2nd Edition. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999, p. 602.

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the only developed area of the neighborhood and, therefore, the focal point of advertisements stressing the quality of the roadways. Once paving was completed in 1915, the road assumed a standard for automobile-friendliness due to beauty and quality of the brick paving and pleasure of the ride.



Figure 24 – The early houses along Fairacres Road are visible on the ridgeline in this photo, taken from the east in 1928. The gambrel roof of 401 Fairacres is most easily identifiable, roughly in the center of the photo. The houses occupied a prominent position at the top of a ridge, providing residents with expansive views. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

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Figure 25 – The house at 6300 Dodge overlooked the intersection of Dodge Street and Fairacres Road. The driveway is seen in the foreground. Photo taken prior to the paving of Fairacres Road in 1915. (Courtesy of James and Elizabeth Quinn).

After its paving, Fairacres Road itself took a central role in defining the character of the district's landscape. The 1915 project, funded by residents Kennedy, Nelson, Hayward, and Nolan, also included the installation of concrete curbs and sidewalks.¹⁶⁰ In both its paving width and the placement of a planting strip separating the sidewalk, the road bears the features that defined suburban roadway systems at the turn of the 20th century.¹⁶¹ The materials and design, vitrified brick laid in running bond, are also characteristic of early-20th-century suburban streets. While a stretch of 56th Street between Blondo and Maple retains original brick paving, the road is part of the city's typical grid system and does not play such a significant role in the character of the surrounding landscape. West of 42nd Street, Fairacres Road is the only remaining brick-paved street designed as an integral part of a comprehensive community plan.

¹⁶⁰ "Doubling Development South Part of Dundee," November 21, 1915.

¹⁶¹ Ben-Joseph, Eran and Michael Southworth. "Street Standards and the Shaping of Suburbia." *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Volume 61, Number 1, Winer 1995. Chicago: American Planning Association, 1995, p.67.

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Figure 26 – The brick paving of Fairacres Road became a character-defining feature of the district’s landscape during the first half of the 20th century. Photo taken by Father Joseph Suneg, who resided at 525 Fairacres Road. The date is unknown. (Courtesy of St. Margaret Mary Church).

Significance of Landscape Architecture

Note: The significance of George Kessler’s contributions to the landscape architecture of Fairacres Road is covered in the section on Community Planning and Development. Additional Information on the contributions of other landscape professionals is provided here based on guidance from “Historical Residential Suburbs,” a 2002 National Register Bulletin.¹⁶²

While Kessler and the George brothers worked to create a holistic design for the village of Fairacres, the early homeowners along Fairacres Road hired other landscape professionals to improve their private grounds. Prior to the finalizing of the plat, the syndicate of Gibson, Perley, Hayward, and Nolan hired a landscape “artist” named Howard E. Wead to take stewardship of their collective grounds.¹⁶³ Wead came from Chicago; other details about his life, including his specific profession, are unknown. Based on Kessler’s simultaneous activities as a landscape engineer, it seems likely that Wead’s duties were closer to that of a groundskeeper. He may have played a role in the planting of some Blue spruce trees and English oaks that survive from the early 20th century.

In the following decade, after Kessler had established the design of Fairacres, two landscape architects contributed to the character of the district. In 1913, after purchasing 6300 Dodge Street

¹⁶² *Historic Residential Suburb*, 109.

¹⁶³ “Home-Building Fever Lasts into Coming Year,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; November 17, 1907.

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from Edgar M. Gibson, John L. Kennedy hired B. Terrell Hoyt to redesign his landscape.¹⁶⁴ Hoyt, based in St. Paul and Minneapolis, spent his career lending landscape expertise across the northern plains. In 1910, he designed a park in Bismarck, North Dakota.¹⁶⁵ The following year, in remarks made during a visit to Helena, Montana, he expressed a design philosophy in alignment with that of George E. Kessler. "It has been my experience," he said, "that the best class of residences always follow well laid out boulevards."¹⁶⁶ Hoyt could appreciate the role that automobiles played in the lives of Kennedy and other Fairacres Road residents because, in addition to landscape work, he participated in long distance races.

A 1924 newspaper article describes the Kennedy grounds. While some changes during the interim decade are likely, many features of the landscape as described likely derive from Hoyt's work. The article mentions "an unusually lovely garden...they have many hedges of bridal wreath, quantities of peonies, tulips, and irises besides many bushes of lilacs...the blue spruce trees on the Kennedy grounds always come in for a lot of comment, so attractive are they."¹⁶⁷ A 1938 photo of the property shows landscape features, including a terraced central walkway and a formal garden, that may have originated with Hoyt's project.¹⁶⁸ These features were removed at an unknown date in the second half of the 20th century, though the blue spruce trees identified in the 1924 article remain.



Figure 27 – The front walkway and terrace of 6300 Dodge Street visible in this photograph from 1938 were likely remnants of B. Terrell Hoyt's 1913 landscape design. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

¹⁶⁴ "Binnie Brae Landscape to be Done by Hoyt," *The Omaha World-Herald*; August 5, 1913.

¹⁶⁵ Gordon, Hugh. "Work for Civic Betterment in North Dakota," *Suburban Life*: July 1911. Harrisburg, PA: Suburban Press Publishers, p.32.

¹⁶⁶ "Landscape Man Likes Helena," *The Helena Daily Independent*; August 1, 1911. *Newspaper Archive*. <http://www.newspaperarchive.com/> Accessed January 12, 2017.

¹⁶⁷ "Omaha's Gardens Soon to Be at Their Loveliest," May 4, 1924.

¹⁶⁸ "Lee Home to Bishop Ryan," August 23, 1937.

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In a second project, two years later, Sid and Herbert Hare of Kansas City completed a landscape plan for William E. Newton, who had purchased the house at 207 Fairacres Road from Lyman O. Perley.¹⁶⁹ Hare and Hare was a father-and-son firm that operated between 1910 and 1938, and they were competitive in some regards with Kessler. The Hares were more prolific, though they were less likely than Kessler to create comprehensive plans guiding the growth of entire communities. In some cases, including Country Club in Kansas City, the University of Kansas in Lawrence, and Longview, Washington, they and Kessler contributed towards the same projects.¹⁷⁰ Most features of the landscape they designed for Newton in 1915 were removed during the 1996 demolition of the house.

Richard C. Peters made landscape improvements to his tract (west of Fairacres Road, north of Prairie Avenue, and south of Underwood Avenue) prior to subdividing it in 1931. A banker by trade and a landscaper by hobby, Peters was a supporter of City Beautiful efforts. As he explained in 1927,¹⁷¹

“A beautiful city is a commercial asset. We may tell a stranger about our bank clearings and our live stock, but usually he forgets these figures the next day. A city of home and building sites is not soon forgotten. It would attract tourists, who would tell others to stop here. And some of these would remain. Omaha has the natural setting. It only needs to be developed.”

During the 1910s and 1920s, he improved the landscape of his Fairacres tract with “winding footpaths, bordered by shrubs and flowers” and a large number of trees, including chestnuts, butternuts, oaks, elms, and evergreens.¹⁷² Which of these specimens survived the subdivision of the tract is unknown.



Figures 28 and 29 – Landscaping improvements were a trademark of Fairacres Road houses during the first half of the twentieth century, as seen in these photos of lots at 401 Fairacres Road and 6412 Dodge Street (the since-demolished Paxton-Brandeis House). The landscape designers for these lots are unknown. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

¹⁶⁹ “General Plan for Middlefield, the Home Ground of Mr. William Newton, Fairacres, Omaha, Nebraska;” Hare & Hare, Landscape Architects, Kansas City, Missouri, August 1915. Courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri, Kansas City, Missouri.

¹⁷⁰ Worley, “A Legacy to a City: Kansas City Architects...”

¹⁷¹ “City Beautiful is Need, Says Peters,” June 8, 1927.

¹⁷² “City Beautiful is Need, Says Peters,” June 8, 1927.

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Typical landscape improvement projects continued after the period of significance as new property owners customized their yards. In one documented project, J. Frederic Schlott redesigned the landscape at 616 Fairacres Road. The layout of his design remains intact, though the materials have undergone changes.¹⁷³

Significance of Architecture

During the first half of the 20th century, American residential architecture drew inspiration from traditional European styles. Known as “Eclectic” and “Period Revival” architecture, houses from the era stressed the importance of honoring architectural precedents in their pure forms. In theory, each house bore a direct connection to the architecture of a specific time and place in Western history.¹⁷⁴

Colonial Revival, one of the predominant styles in the first two decades of the 20th century, is well-represented in the earliest houses in the Fairacres district through the work of **Frederick A. Henninger**, born 1865 in Eddyville, Iowa. After two years of architectural training at the Chicago Art Institute, Henninger worked briefly in Chicago and Lincoln before settling in Omaha in about 1891.¹⁷⁵ Initially he worked as a laborer and draftsman, but by 1896 he had acquired an architectural practice.¹⁷⁶ He first established his reputation through his designs of the Dairy Building for the Trans-Mississippi Exposition in 1898 and other downtown office buildings. Ultimately, he became most famous for his prolific career as a residential designer. His notable works include the Havens-Page House at 101 North 39th Street (1900), the Edgar Morsman House at 518 S. 38th Street (1923), and the Otto H. Barmettler House at 622 N. 38th Street (1916).¹⁷⁷

Henninger was particularly prolific in the western suburbs. He completed at least 30 designs in Dundee and Happy Hollow.¹⁷⁸ Additionally, he was “by far the most prolific designer to play a part in creating the design character of the Field Club neighborhood.”¹⁷⁹ In Fairacres, he is known to have designed two houses, the Gibson House at 6300 Dodge Street and the Perley House at 207 Fairacres Road, both located along Fairacres Road. Previously, in 1901, Henninger had designed a brick house for Edgar and Julia Gibson at 1728 South 32nd Avenue. In 1907, as they prepared to move westward, the Gibson family contracted him to design two new houses: one for Edgar and Julia and another for their son-in-law and daughter, Lyman and Nora Perley.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷³ “Landscape Plan for Mr. and Mrs. William Garvey;” Fred Schlott, Landscape Architect, March 1954. Courtesy of Barbara McCusker, 616 Fairacres.

¹⁷⁴ McAlester, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013, p. 406-407.

¹⁷⁵ Murphy, David. “Frederick A. Henninger (1865-1944), Architect,” in David Murphy, Edward F. Zimmer, and Lynn Meyer, comps. *Place Makers of Nebraska: The Architects*. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, February 16, 2016. <http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/>. Accessed, December 30, 2016.

¹⁷⁶ Gerber and Spencer, *Building for the Ages*, 184.

¹⁷⁷ Gerber and Spencer, *Building for the Ages*, 184; Meyer, Lynn. Bob Puschendorf (editor). “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Havens-Page House.” Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #82000604. August 1982.

¹⁷⁸ Faltinson, Brian J., Marisa Kosobucki, and John N. Vogel. “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Dundee/Happy Hollow District.” Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, National Register #05000726. June 2005.

¹⁷⁹ Dirr, Melissa and Jill Ebers. “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Field Club Historic District.” Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #00001380. August 2000.

¹⁸⁰ Murphy, “Frederick A. Henninger (1865-1944), Architect,” <http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/>.

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Figure 30 – The house at 6300 Dodge Street was designed by Frederick A. Henninger. Photo taken in 1912, prior to the addition of a two-story central portico in 1925. (Courtesy of James and Elizabeth Quinn).

The resulting brick houses stand out from Henninger's other works in the western suburbs due to their scale and their relationship to the landscape. When constructed, both houses sat back on expansive lots, facing Dodge Street to the south. Their brick facades featured classical symmetry typical of Colonial Revival buildings from this period. That previous architectural descriptions of the buildings highlighted their Georgian features is not unusual given the close, often indistinguishable relationship between Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival buildings in the early 20th century. Of the two houses, the design for 6300 Dodge Street was more ornate in its curved door surround, gambrel roof, and pedimented dormers with alternating styles. These classical influences were later magnified by the addition of the two-story portico with Corinthian columns in 1925. By comparison, Henninger's design at 207 Fairacres Road was more restrained in detail. The most notable feature of the front façade was an enclosed central entrance. Despite the demolition of 207 Fairacres Road in 1996, Henninger remains a pivotal figure in the development of the district because these earliest houses established Fairacres Road both as a wealthy, "aristocratic" area and as the core within the village of Fairacres.

The architects of the other two 1907 houses are unknown. Among the four, Charles S. Hayward's house at 215 Fairacres Road was unique in its adherence to Prairie School architecture in preference over Colonial Revival. However, the house, as originally designed, bore similarities to others in its scale and orientation. Fires during the early 20th century led to significant changes in the house, giving it stronger English Period Revival features. Architects George B. Prinz and Birger Kvenild, each discussed below, likely contributed to the house's current appearance, though their individual contributions are undetermined.

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Figure 31 – The house at 215 Fairacres Road was originally designed in the Prairie style. Photo taken in 1927. (Courtesy of the Durham Museum Photo Archive).

Thomas Nolan's house at 401 Fairacres Road also stood on the high point of its lot, facing Dodge Street. The design and materials of the house more closely mirrored those of the Gibson and Perley houses rather than Hayward's more modern approach. The Nolan house is most similar in scale to the Perley house, though its gambrel roof and covered entry more closely align with Henninger's original design of the Gibson house.

In the 1920 and 30s, European-influenced Period Revival styles became increasingly prevalent throughout the U.S. as Americans explored their diverse cultural traditions.¹⁸¹ Buildings following these trends, particularly in the Tudor Revival mold, dominate the architectural fabric of Omaha's western suburbs, which were largely developed during this era. Along Fairacres Road, 14 houses were built between 1929 and 1941 and all but one prominently feature traditional European design influences. The quality of the district's architecture from this period is due to the involvement of Omaha's most talented architects.

George B. Prinz was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1864. Both of his parents were German immigrants.¹⁸² He attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and, after two years studying in Europe, returned in Boston to work under architect J. William Beal. He first came to Omaha in 1891,

¹⁸¹ *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*, 90.

¹⁸² Murphy, David. "George Bernhard Prinz (1864-1946), Architect," in David Murphy, Edward F. Zimmer, and Lynn Meyer, comps. *Place Makers of Nebraska: The Architects*. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, March 5, 2015. <http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/>. Accessed, December 30, 2016.

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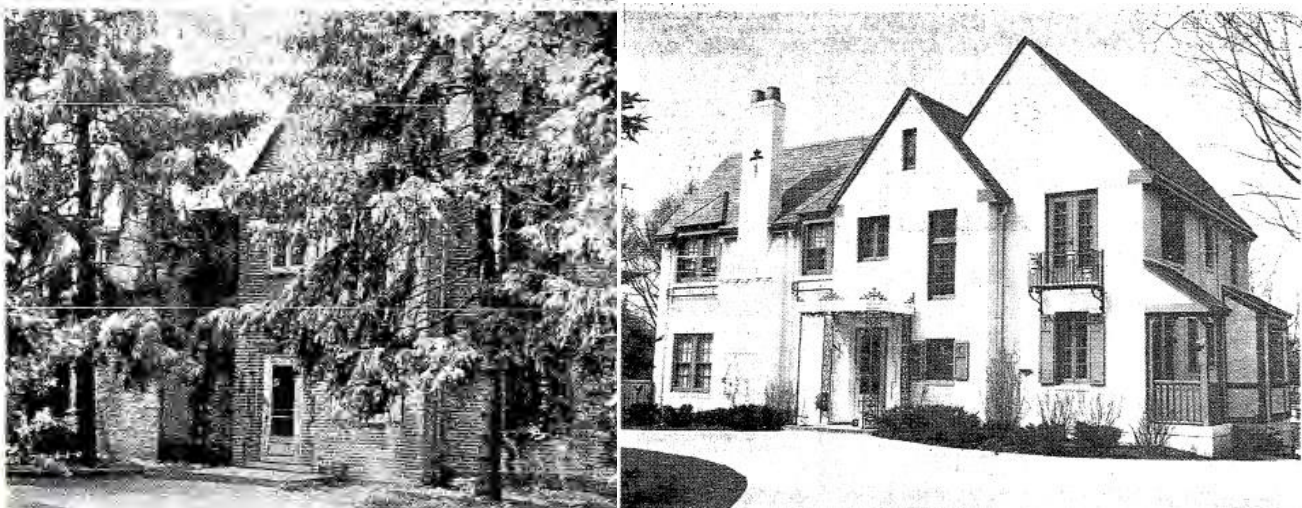
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when he became the chief draftsman under architect Thomas R. Kimball. He held the position until 1909, when he established an independent architectural practice.¹⁸³

Prinz established his solo reputation with the design of large residences in near western suburbs. Among his notable residential designs are the Charles Metz House at 3708 Dewey, the Lewis C. Nash House at 3708 Burt, and the C.A. Grimmel House at 3716 Pacific.¹⁸⁴ All three were built between 1906 and 1911. In the following years, Prinz completed significant commercial buildings including the Flatiron Hotel at 1720 St. Mary's Avenue and a Masonic Temple at 1822 Douglas. In 1916, he began a tenure on the Omaha City Planning Commission that did not end until 1939.¹⁸⁵

On Fairacres Road, Prinz contributed to the designs of two houses. As explained previously, he designed one of two major fire-related renovations that took place at 215 Fairacres Road. His involvement took place in 1930, after Edson L. and Kathryn Bridges purchased the property. His contributions to the district are more clearly represented at 210 Fairacres Road, which he designed for William Herbert Wheeler in 1929. The house demonstrates Prinz's continued employment of traditional English features. Of his major residential works, the Wheeler house most closely resembles the 1906 Nash House at 3708 Burt in steeply-pitched gable roofs. The house underwent a renovation in 1963, at which time copper entrance details were added and the exterior brick was painted for the first time.¹⁸⁶



Figures 32 and 33 – The house at 210 Fairacres Road was remodeled in 1963. These photos illustrate the house's appearance before (left) and after (right) the project. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, April 14, 1963).

Like Henninger and Prinz, Norwegian-born **Birger J. Kvenild** cultivated a thriving architectural career in designing Period Revival houses in the growing western suburbs. Born in 1879, he came to the U.S. in 1905 and settled in Omaha in 1911.¹⁸⁷ From 1915 to 1918, he served as secretary and

¹⁸³ Gerber and Spencer, *Building for the Ages*, 187.

¹⁸⁴ Gerber and Spencer, *Building for the Ages*, 187; Murphy, "George Bernhard Prinz (1864-1946), Architect," <http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/>.

¹⁸⁵ Gerber and Spencer, *Building for the Ages*, 187.

¹⁸⁶ "Decorating Challenges Overcome," *The Omaha World-Herald*; April 14, 1963. Written by Frances McCoy.

¹⁸⁷ Murphy, David. "Birger J. Kvenild (1879-1953), Architect," in David Murphy, Edward F. Zimmer, and Lynn Meyer, comps. *Place Makers of Nebraska: The Architects*. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, February 3, 2015. <http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/>. Accessed, December 30, 2016.

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architect-in-charge of the City Planning Commission. He worked as a private architect beginning in 1919 and quickly became active on the west side. The National Register nomination for Dundee and Happy Hollow credits him as the designer of 36 of the houses within the district.¹⁸⁸ He was also highly active in Country Club.¹⁸⁹ However, his most noted work, the Harry B. Neef House, lies on the north side of the city at 2884 Iowa Street.¹⁹⁰ As seen in the Neef House and in his projects inside the Fairacres Road district (220 North 62nd Street, 6211 Chicago Street, and 215 Fairacres Road), Kvenild utilized continental European influences to a greater degree than his architectural counterparts, who were more often focused on English influences. Both 220 North 62nd Street and 6211 Chicago Street share traditional design details of France, where Kvenild is known to have studied.¹⁹¹

John McDonald was born in Prince Edward Island, Canada in 1861 and educated in civil engineering at McGill University in Montreal. After graduating in 1884, he relocated to Omaha and launched his architectural career. He began with residential designs on the western reaches of the city, at that point near 30th Street. His earliest examples tend to demonstrate 19th century styles, such as Victorian and Italianate. His only child, **Alan**, was born in 1891. After obtaining undergraduate and graduate degrees from Harvard University, Alan returned to Omaha and joined his father's practice, renamed *John & Alan McDonald, Architects*.¹⁹² The firm was active in the Gold Coast¹⁹³ as well as Dundee and Happy Hollow.¹⁹⁴ They designed one house in the Fairacres Road district, located at 624 Fairacres Road.¹⁹⁵ Of the houses the McDonald's built in the western suburbs, 624 Fairacres Road is one of the best surviving example of Tudor Revival architecture.

Leo A. Daly was also born 1890 and raised in Omaha. He attended Creighton and afterwards served as a draftsman for Joseph P. Guth and subsequently John L. Latenser. In 1922, he founded his own practice, which he eventually reformed with his son, Leo A. Daly, Jr. in 1948.¹⁹⁶ Many of the elder Daly's best known works were church-related facilities, which may help to explain the cathedral glass that he incorporated into his Tudor Revival design at 216 Fairacres Road.¹⁹⁷

John F. Hyde, Jr. (601 and 617 Fairacres Road) and **Bert B. Hene** (410 and 616 Fairacres Road) are each responsible for two houses within the district. Both architects alternatively worked directly with homeowners or through property developers. Hene's design at 616 Fairacres Road stands out as Tudor Revival example with significant French influences of which the most recognizable is the turret at the northern side of the central entrance. At 410 Fairacres Road, the Slosburg Realty Company hired Hene to create an L-shaped post-war Colonial Revival design in 1949.¹⁹⁸ Hyde's design at 617 Fairacres

¹⁸⁸ Faltinson, Kosobucki, and Vogel. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Dundee/Happy Hollow District."

¹⁸⁹ Meyer, Lynn. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Country Club Historic District." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #04001410. November 2004.

¹⁹⁰ Nebraska SHPO Staff. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Henry B. Neef House." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #10000758. July 2010.

¹⁹¹ Murphy, "Birger J. Kvenild (1879-1953), Architect," <http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/>.

¹⁹² Fogarty, Joan M. *Building Omaha: The Architectural Legacy of John and Alan McDonald*. Omaha: Barnhart Press, 2013.

¹⁹³ Meyer, Lynn and Stacey C. Pilgrim. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Gold Coast Historic District." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #97000237. July 1996.

¹⁹⁴ Faltinson, Kosobucki, and Vogel. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Dundee/Happy Hollow District."

¹⁹⁵ "Specifications for the General Construction of a Residence for Mr. Grant McFayden. Omaha, Nebraska" John and Alan McDonald, Architects. 1933.

¹⁹⁶ Eastman, Alan and David Murphy. "Leo Anthony Daly (1890-1952), Architect," in David Murphy, Edward F. Zimmer, and Lynn Meyer, comps. *Place Makers of Nebraska: The Architects*. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, March 5, 2013. <http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/>. Accessed, December 30, 2016.

¹⁹⁷ "New Fairacres Homes," *The Omaha World-Herald*; December 28, 1930.

¹⁹⁸ Classified advertisements; *The Omaha World-Herald*; September 11, 1949;

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Road represents the continued influence of Colonial Revival architecture in the midst of so many English-influenced examples. In 1941, the Schroeder Realty Company likely hired Hyde to design the Colonial Revival house built at 601 Fairacres Road.¹⁹⁹

The real estate enterprises of **George Schroeder** were active in the western suburbs in the 1930s and 1940s, particularly in Country Club where he “was responsible for a large amount of construction in the district.”²⁰⁰ Schroeder Realty Company developed one Fairacres Road property at the southwestern corner of the former Murphy tract (601 Fairacres Road). The side-gabled house has a slight second-story overhang characteristic of some Colonial Revival examples from the period.²⁰¹ The house bears similarities to Hyde’s work, giving further evidence to his involvement.

Brothers Stanley and Harold Slosburg launched **Slosburg Realty Company** with their father, Jacob Slosburg, Jr. after World War II.²⁰² The company was active in the Fairacres area throughout the middle of the 20th century, largely focusing on undeveloped areas outside of the Fairacres Road district. Between 1949 and 1951, the Slosburgs built two houses along Fairacres Road on the southern portion of the former Peters tract. While Hene is documented as the architect for 410 Fairacres Road, the architect for 402 Fairacres Road is unknown. Both brick houses represent examples of the post-war Colonial Revival subtype characterized by less elaborate exterior detail and the sacrifice of symmetry to accommodate attached garages.²⁰³

The most prodigious builder in the district was **Abraham “Max” Fisher**. Though little information is known regarding Fisher’s background or training in construction, he was extraordinarily active in Fairacres during the 1930s. He first appears in a 1928 article detailing a house that he had designed and built on Happy Hollow Boulevard.²⁰⁴ By the end of the decade, he had built at least 13 houses inside Fairacres including three along Fairacres Road. In one case, he purchased plans from an out-of-state architect. In other cases, all of his houses follow traditional Tudor Revival design schemes. His documented design capabilities and the similarities among his Tudor Revival houses suggest that Fisher likely did not contract a licensed architect for his projects.

All of the architects and builders who worked in the Fairacres Historic District based their careers in Omaha, capitalizing on the tremendous growth in the city between 1880 and 1920 and the westward expansion that continued throughout the first half of the 20th century. All of them had previous experience in other western suburbs of Omaha, including Dundee, Happy Hollow, Country Club, and Field Club. Among their other projects, the houses on Fairacres Road stand out due to their prominent role in defining the character the village of Fairacres, which became the most exclusive residential enclave among all of the western suburbs.

Additional Information

1 6300 Dodge Street (DO09-0545-001): Brick, three-story, five-bay, gambrel-roofed house with classical symmetry, a full-height central portico, and flanking sunrooms.

Style: Colonial Revival with Neoclassical Revival portico addition

Dates of Construction: 1907-10; portico 1925; rear addition 1938

Architect: Original design: Frederick A. Henninger; 1938 addition: Kimball, Steele & Sandham

¹⁹⁹ Meyer, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Country Club Historic District.”

²⁰⁰ Meyer, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Country Club Historic District.”

²⁰¹ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 410.

²⁰² “Harold ‘Bus’ Slosburg, 95, helped build Omaha with Slosburg Co.,” March 8, 2016.

²⁰³ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 409.

²⁰⁴ “Ross Johnson Buys Home,” *The Omaha World-Herald*; June 3, 1928.

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Name of Property**County and State****Landscape designer:** B. Terrell Hoyt, 1913**Owners:** Edgar M. and Julia A. Gibson: 1907-1912; John L. and Marguerite Kennedy: 1912-1925; Rufus E. and Helen M. Lee: 1925-1935; Helen M. Lee: 1935-37; Catholic Diocese of Omaha (Archbishops James H. Ryan 1938-47, Gerald T. Bergan 1948-72)**Description:** Built by Wyoming rancher Edgar M. Gibson out of pressed brick. Henninger's original design was a stately example of Colonial Revival architecture with pronounced Georgian and Federal influences, including quoins, pedimented dormers, and a small, classical portico. In 1925, Rufus E. Lee replaced the original portico with a full-height Neoclassical portico supported by four columns. Prominent Omaha stonecutter Jacob Maag performed work on the house, likely related to the Corinthian capitals. Symmetrical sunrooms on the east and west sides of the house were also added that time. The slate roof has a gambrel shape, which is obscured by the lateral parapet walls at the roof's crest. After the Catholic Diocese of Omaha purchased the property in 1938, the church made an addition to the northeast corner of the building to house a small chapel, a library, guest rooms, and servants' quarters. The church also subdivided the original seven-acre lot. At 3.72 acres, the lot remains the largest in the district. Brick columns, the driveway, and blue spruce trees are likely remaining features of the 1913 landscape design by B. Terrell Hoyt.**Additional Notes:** Nicknamed "Binnie Brae" by the family of John L. and Marquerite Kennedy**Outbuildings:** The brick, one-story, hip-roofed carriage house sits in the middle of the north end of the lot. It has hipped dormers, chimneys, and a composite shingle roof. The design and materials match the original portion of the main house on the lot.

- 2 207 Fairacres Road (Non-contributing)** (DO09:0545-048): Stone veneer Ranch-style house. (Original building demolished 1996)

Date of Construction: 1996**Owners:** (Original building) Lyman O. and Nora G. Perley: 1908-12; William and Mary E. Newton: 1914-29; William C. and Orpha Newton: 1929-38; Robert H. and Mildred T. Storz: 1938 through 1961**Description:** Built on the former site of the Lyman O. Perley House, designed by Henninger and built 1907-10. The three-story Colonial Revival brick house had white stone trim and a small central portico. Similar to Henninger's other Fairacres Road house at 6300 Dodge Street, the house faced Dodge Street and the primary façade featured classical symmetry. Kansas City-based landscape architects Sid and Herbert Hare with Hare & Hare created a design for the property on behalf of William Newton in 1915. From 1965 to 1974, the house was owned by the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska and used as a residence for the Bishop. A later owner demolished the house in 1996 and the current owners replaced it with the existing ranch-style building. While most of Hare and Hare's landscape features were removed by the date of the house's demolition, some existing trees, including blue spruce, English oak, and ginkgo, likely survive from the early 20th century.**Outbuildings:** Behind the house sits a pool house on the north side of the lot. The building matches the design and materials of the main house and shares its 1996 construction date.

- 3 210 Fairacres Road** (DO09:0545-003): Brick, two-story, three-bay, gable-roofed house with a painted exterior and a front gable above a covered entrance.

Style: Tudor Revival**Dates of Construction:** 1929-30**Architect:** George B. Prinz

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Name of Property**County and State**

Owners: William Herbert and Hattie C. Wheeler: 1930-56; Hattie C. Wheeler: 1956-60; Everts S. and Beverly M. Sibbersen: 1960 through 1961

Description: Built by William Herbert Wheeler, an insurance executive with Wheeler, Welpton, and Alexander Insurance Agency. The house lacks the ornamental half-timbering characteristic of most other examples of Tudor Revival architecture in the district. The steeply-pitched slate roof, front gable, coupled windows, and decorative chimney pots give the house its Tudor style. The house was painted and the copper awning was added during an early 1960s renovation. The synthetic slate roof was installed in 2002 to mimic the house's original slate roof. In 2005, the rear façade of the house was altered during a project to re-finish the original basement garage. The current 0.56-acre lot was part of the 1.6-acre Lot 52 in the original 1907 plat.

Outbuildings: A brick, one-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed, half-timbered garage was constructed in 2001 at the northwestern corner of the lot. The upper level of the garage is used for storage.

- 4 **216 Fairacres Road** (DO09:0545-004): Brick, three-story, five-bay, hip-roofed house with two front gables, a two-story bay window, and half-timbering on the southern portion of the second and third stories.

Style: Tudor Revival

Dates of Construction: 1930; rear porch addition 2003

Architect: Leo A. Daly

Owners: C.C. and Mabel Criss: 1930-52; Mabel Criss: 1952-78

Description: Built by C.C. and Mabel Criss, leading figures in the development of the Mutual Benefit and Accident Association, an precursor of Mutual of Omaha. The original design, completed by Leo A. Daly and executed by Nelson Construction Company, included 13 rooms and five bathrooms. Retrospective sources from the 1990s indicate that Peter Kiewit contributed to the construction of the house, likely performing masonry work. The roof retains its original flat red clay tiles. The roofing system was fully repaired in the first decade of the 21st century. At the time of construction, a newspaper article noted the cathedral windows in the two-story projecting bay as a highlight of the original design. The interior retains its Tudor character through arched doorways, scored plaster walls, and a large, two-story foyer. The current 0.75-acre lot was part of the 2.13-acre Lot 51 in the original 1907 plat.

- 5 **220 Fairacres Road** (DO09:0545-006): Brick, two-story, five-bay, hip-roofed house with a painted exterior, an ornate central architrave, and arched casement windows on the first story.

Style: Mediterranean Revival

Dates of Construction: 1941; addition c.1980

Architect: Original design: unknown: c.1980 addition: Henry Raemsch

Owners: Gennero and Josephine Petello: 1941-51; Alfred S. and Sylvia Z. Mayer: 1952-61

Description: Built by Gennero Petello, founder of the Petello Fruit Company. An Italian immigrant, Petello utilized Mediterranean details, including arched windows and doorway on the first story, symmetry, and a small classical entrance with pilasters. Existing composition shingles on the roof replaced the original material (likely clay tiles) at an unknown date. An early-1980s renovation project included the addition of a heavily-glazed great room above a garage on the north side of the house, facing Chicago Street. The current 0.32-acre lot was part of the 2.13-acre Lot 51 in the original 1907 plat. The lot was 0.75 acres at the house's date of construction. The Petellos subdivided and sold the rear portion in 1944.

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- 6 215 Fairacres Road (6301 Chicago Street) (DO09:0545-007):** Brick and stone with half-timbering and a gable roof. The house has different segments corresponding to various additions and alterations, most of which date to the period of significance.

Style: Prairie 1907-1938; Tudor Revival since 1938

Dates of Construction: 1907-08; renovations 1928, 1930, and 1938

Architect: Original building: unknown; 1930 renovation: George B. Prinz; 1938 renovation: Birger J. Kvenild

Owners: Charles S. and Abbie C. Hayward: 1907-18; James A. and Mary E. Langan: 1918-19; Cyril G. and Bernice W. Langan: 1919-22; (Briefly owned by both C.H. Harris and Reed A. Flickinger in 1922); Frank W. and Minnie Judson 1923-30; Edson L. and Kathryn H. Bridges: 1930-34; Kathryn H. Bridges: 1934-1941; Jay and Helen Cherniack: 1941-73

Description: Built by Charles S. Hayward, founder of the Hayward Brothers Shoe Company, and dubbed "Minot Lodge" to honor Minot's Ledge, a reef near Cohasset, Massachusetts from which Hayward sourced stones used in the construction of the house. The original three-bay Prairie style house was among the few houses in the district that did not represent the Eclectic movement of architecture. It had a low-pitched, hipped roof with wide overhangs, a stone-column supported, one-story front porch, and a central entrance. The first story of the front façade was stone and the upper levels were brick. A fire in March of 1928 did "considerable damage on the third floor" of the house.²⁰⁵ The house was repaired shortly afterwards. In 1930, after Edson and Kathryn Bridges purchased the home, they made more substantial repairs, including the enlargement of the east side of the house. A second substantial renovation project took place after a 1937 fire damaged the second story and the roof. The two post-fire renovations gave the house its Tudor Revival character, with half-timbering, casement windows, and a steep gable roof. It appears that the stones from Minot's Ledge were retained and reconfigured in the Tudor Revival design. The current 1.14-acre lot was part of the 3-acre Lot 56 in the original 1907 plat. Kathryn Bridges subdivided the lot after building 220 North 62nd Street and 6211 Chicago Street in 1937-38. The iron fence has stone columns that are likely original given that the stone matches the material used in the construction of the house and reused in the 1937 renovation. The height of the columns was extended at an unknown date.

- 7 6211 Chicago Street (DO09:0545-009):** Stone, two-story, five-bay, side-gable-roofed house with half-timbering and a basement garage on the eastern side.

Style: English Cottage Revival

Dates of Construction: 1938

Architect: Birger J. Kvenild

Owners: Herman F. and Maude P. Johnson: 1938-50; Joseph H. and Grace McFayden: 1950-65

Description: Built by Kathryn H. Bridges, widow of Edson L. Bridges, on land behind their house at 215 Fairacres Road. She hired architect Birger J. Kvenild and took an active role in designing the house. The design was intended to give the impression of "a house in the woods."²⁰⁶ Some sources site traditional French influences. The stone came from Carthage, Missouri. The garage, accessible from the eastern side of the house, is original and typical of English Cottage Revival architecture. The roof has wood shingles. The 0.82-acre lot was part of the 3-acre Lot 56 in the original 1907

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plat. The low wall along Chicago Street in front of the house, built of stones from Union, Nebraska, is an original feature of the landscape.

- 8 220 North 62nd Street (DO09:0545-020):** Stone, two-story, side-gable-roofed house with a slender front gable, five dormers of miscellaneous styles including a central eyebrow dormer, and symmetrical side additions.
Style: French Provincial Revival (French Eclectic)
Dates of Construction: 1937
Architect: Birger J. Kvenild
Owners: George M. and Luella Hauser: 1937-39; James D. and Martha Legge: 1939-42; John W. and Mary Swanson: 1942-61
Description: Built by Kathryn H. Bridges, widow of Edson L. Bridges, on land behind their house at 215 Fairacres Road. Similar to the project at 6211 Chicago Street, Bridges hired architect Birger J. Kvenild and took an active role in designing the house. She and Kvenild used repurposed materials, including sandstone, from a pre-existing barn on the site to construct the house. The design featured a stone front patio, an enclosed rear porch, and an attached garage on the north side of the house. The 0.67-acre lot was part of the 3-acre Lot 56 in the original 1907 plat.
- 9 401 Fairacres Road (DO09:0545-007):** Brick, three-story, three-bay, gambrel-roofed house with symmetrical side additions, three third-story dormers, a hip-roofed porte-cochere, and a painted exterior.
Style: Dutch Colonial Revival
Dates of Construction: 1907-08; addition 1988
Architect: Unknown
Owners: Thomas J. and Margaret R. Nolan: 1907-1923; Margaret R. Nolan: 1923-26; Arthur C. and Bertha Stokes: 1926-43; Bert L. and Pearl J. Fuchs: 1943-56; Todd Storz: 1956 through 1961
Description: Built by Thomas J. Nolan, an attorney and designed by an unknown architect. The Dutch Colonial Gambrel roof is the dominant architectural feature. The brick exterior, originally exposed, was painted at some point in the early 20th century. The original plan contained a library, dining room, reception room, and eastern sun porch on the first story. Despite the house's Fairacres Road address, the front door faces Chicago Street, as Fairacres Road had not yet been paved at the house's date of construction. In 1988, the porte-cochere replaced an original portico with Corinthian columns. The 1.13-acre lot was part of the 2-acre Lot 57 in the original 1907 plat.
Additional Notes: Nicknamed "Alta Vista" by the family of Thomas J. and Margaret R. Nolan
Outbuildings: A carriage house in the northeastern corner of the lot was modified for use as a pool house in the late 20th century. The building has a beveled wood siding, a composite shingle hipped roof, and one chimney. In 1988, a garage was added at the northwestern corner.
- 10 402 Fairacres Road (DO09:0545-047):** Brick, two-story, three-bay, hip-roofed house with a metal balconette above the central entrance, a northern sunroom, and a southern attached garage.
Style: Post-war Colonial Revival
Dates of Construction: 1950
Architect: Unknown
Owners: Robert A. and Lois L. Braun: 1950 through 1961

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Additional Description: Built by Slosburg Realty Company as an investment property and purchased by Robert A. and Lois L. Braun. The restrained entrance details and the ornamental shutters are typical of Post-war Colonial Revival houses. A northern sunroom wing and the southern garage are original. The garage was expanded during the first decade of the 21st century to provide room for a third car. The roof has composite shingles. The 0.38-acre lot was part of the 1.6-acre Lot 50 in the original 1907 plat.

11 410 Fairacres Road (DO09:0545-046): Brick, two-story, three-bay, gable-roofed house with a small central portico, a southern sunroom, and a northern attached garage.

Style: Post-war Colonial Revival

Dates of Construction: 1949

Architect: Bert B. Hene

Owners: Frank G. and Grace H. Pringle: 1950-1960; Grace H. Pringle through 1965

Additional Description: Built by Slosburg Realty Company as an investment property and purchased by Frank G. and Grace H. Pringle. Slosburg used plans drawn by architect Bert B. Hene, who died before the project was complete. The plan featured a central hallway accessing the rooms of the first story. The southern sunroom and the two-car garage are original. The roof has wood shingles. The 0.43-acre lot was part of the 1.6-acre Lot 50 in the original 1907 plat.

12 420 Fairacres Road (DO09:0545-045): Brick, three-story, four-bay, gable-roofed house with three steep front gables, half-timbering on the second level, and a red clay tile roof.

Style: Tudor Revival

Dates of Construction: 1931; garage addition 2002

Designer: Likely Max Fisher

Owners: Louis and Amelia Sommer: 1932-1952; Louis Sommer: 1952-57; Rental property: 1957 through 1961

Additional Description: Built by Max Fisher as an investment property and purchased by Louis Sommer, owner of a grocery store at the intersection of Dodge Street and 49th Street. Fisher built at least 13 houses in Fairacres. While in at least one case he purchased plans from an out-of-state architect, he is elsewhere documented to have created his own Tudor designs. Given this capability, it is reasonable to suggest that he likely designed houses himself unless otherwise noted in primary sources. At 420 Fairacres Road, he used "matted" face brick, Bedford stone trim, and clay tiles for the roof. The original layout had ten rooms, including four bedrooms and servants' quarters on the third story. The garage was originally located beneath the house. In 2002, a garage addition matching the style of the house was built on the north side of the house, facing Fairacres Road. The 0.46-acre lot was part of the 2.11-acre Lot 48 in the original 1907 plat.

13 423 Fairacres Road (DO09:0545-011): Brick, two-story, four-bay, hip-roofed house with half-timbering, a front gable, an arched central doorway, and a painted exterior.

Style: Tudor Revival

Dates of Construction: 1931

Designer: Unknown

Owners: Glen R. and Sarah M. Driscoll: 1931-45; John F. and Jean Day: 1945-56; John D. and Ellen Ashford: 1956 through 1961

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Additional Description: Built by Glen Driscoll, owner of the Driscoll Leather Company. While it is indeed an example of Tudor Revival architecture, the house has unusual characteristics for the type. Most notable is its hipped roofs, a feature not commonly seen in Tudor Revival houses. The wide dimensions of the front gable are also unique. Nonetheless, the arched doorway, front-facing gable, half-timbering, and coupled windows signify the house's Tudor Revival style. The 0.89-acre lot was part of the 2.09-acre Lot 58 in the original 1907 plat.

Outbuildings: There are two buildings behind the lot—a garage built in the late 20th century on the north side of the lot and a shed built in 2010 in the southeastern corner.

14 425 Fairacres Road (DO09:0545-010): Brick, two-story, side-gable-roofed house with traditional Tudor Revival features including two front gables and a garage addition projecting off the north end of the front façade.

Style: Tudor Revival

Dates of Construction: 1940; addition 1991

Architect: Noel Stanley Wallace

Owners: Frank J. and Stella G. Bender: 1940-53; Theodore G. Miller: 1953 through 1961

Additional Description: Built by Frank J. Bender, an investment banker. The house, with its multiple gable faces, decorative chimney pots, couple windows, and quoining around doorways and at the corners of the primary façade, is more typical of Tudor Revival architecture. The slate roof matches the original roofing material. The four-car garage, matching the materials and design of the original house, was added to the north end of the front façade in 1991. The 0.78-acre lot was part of the 2.09-acre Lot 58 in the original 1907 plat.

15 426 Fairacres Road (DO09:0547-004): Stone, two-story, side-gable-roofed house with a red clay tile roof, dormers and a front gable, and a basement garage accessible from Prairie Avenue.

Style: Tudor Revival

Dates of Construction: 1936; addition 2007

Designer: Likely Max Fisher

Owners: William P. Wherry: 1936-1940; James Leroy Welsh: 1940 through 1961

Additional Description: Built by Max Fisher as an investment property and purchased by William P. Wherry, an ear, nose, and throat physician. As explained in the notes regarding 420 Fairacres Road, Fisher may have designed the house himself. The house is unique within the district for its execution of a Tudor Revival design using stone rather than brick. Fisher sourced the stone from Louisville, Nebraska. The use of both gabled and shed-roofed dormers is typical of Tudor Revival architecture. The red tile roof is an original feature of the house. The original floorplan included 11 rooms, including four bedrooms. A living room on the first floor had a marble fireplace. The 0.77-acre lot was part of the 2.11-acre Lot 48 in the original 1907 plat.

16 525 Fairacres Road (Garage) (DO09:0547-049): Brick, two-story, hip-roofed outbuilding on the southern end of the lot.

Dates of Construction: 1917-18

Architect: Unknown

Additional Description: Outbuilding associated with a house demolished in 2015. As the bricks and red clay tile roof match features of the since-demolished house, it was likely constructed at the same time. The since-demolished house was constructed by Peter Elvad, president of Bankers

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Realty company. Amidst financial difficulties, Elvad sold the house to Delmer C, and Cora G. Eldredge in 1919. The Eldredge family retained ownership until 1943, when Cora's estate sold it to St. Margaret Mary Church for use as a rectory. The outbuilding is accessible from both the east and west sides and the upper level was used as a guest house.

- 17 601 Fairacres Road (DO09-0547-046):** Brick and wood-sided, two-story, three-bay, side-gable-roofed house with three small front-facing gables, a restrained central portico, and projecting bay windows on the first story.
Style: Colonial Revival
Dates of Construction: 1940-41
Designer: Likely John F. Hyde, Jr.
Owners: Charles T. Crow and Mrs. Helen Crow: 1940 through 1961
Additional Description: Built by the Schroeder Realty Company on behalf of osteopathic physician Charles T. Crow and his mother, Helen Crow. The house was publicized as sitting on one of the highest points in Fairacres. The house is situated diagonally on the lot and faces the intersection of Fairacres Road and Prairie Avenue. The overhanging, sided second story is typical of Colonial Revival architecture of the period. The original clay tile roof was replaced with composite shingles. The original floorplan included eight rooms, including four bedrooms. The first story had a center hall entry, a living room with colonial-style fireplace, and a library. An original side porch was enclosed during the 20th century. The attached garage on the northern portion of the house is original. In preparing the National Register nomination for the Country Club Historic District, researchers found that Schroeder Realty Company commonly hired John F. Hyde, Jr. to design their houses during this period, indicating that he may be responsible for this design. The 0.42-acre lot was part of the 3.24-acre Lot 60 in the original 1907 plat. Bert Murphy purchased Lot 60 in 1925 and subdivided the it in 1937.
- 18 608 Fairacres Road (DO09:0547-047):** Stone and wood-sided, two-story, four-bay, side-gable-roofed house with two front-facing gables, a bay window at the southern end of the front façade, and a north garage addition facing Fairacres Road.
Style: Tudor Revival
Dates of Construction: 1936; garage addition 1954; addition 1983
Architect: Unknown
Owners: Samuel A. and Helen Houser: 1936-45; Robert F. and Lillian Epsen: 1945-59
Additional Description: Built by Samuel A. Houser, founder and president of the Omaha Taxicab Company. The multiple gable faces, coupled windows, and decorative chimney pots distinguish the house as a Tudor Revival example. The house originally had half-timbering on the upper level. The replacement of original second-story half-timbering with wood siding occurred at an unknown date. The roof has wood shingles. The attached garage was added in 1954. The 0.65-acre lot was part of the 2.16-acre Lot 46 in the original 1907 plat.
- 19 615 Fairacres Road (DO09:0547-045):** Brick, three-story, five-bay, hip-roofed house with a central portico, two dormers, and a painted exterior.
Style: Colonial Revival
Dates of Construction: 1938
Architect: Milton R. Sutton

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Name of Property**County and State****Owners:** John A. Swanson: 1938 through 1961

Additional Description: Built by Max Fisher as an investment property and purchased by John A. Swanson, founder of the Standard Blueprint Company. Fisher constructed the house using plans obtained from architect Milton R. Sutton during a visit to California. Accordingly, Fisher marketed the house as a “Beverly Hills colonial home.” The house is unique among other Colonial Revival examples in the district. The hipped roof, painted exterior, and differentiated upper and lower windows give the house somewhat of a Mediterranean quality, though not as pronounced as that of 220 Fairacres Road. Perhaps these features were what earned the design the title of “Beverly Hills colonial.” The wood shingle roof was installed late in the 20th century. The 0.32-acre lot was part of the 3.24-acre Lot 60 in the original 1907 plat. Bert Murphy purchased Lot 60 in 1925 and subdivided it in 1937. The central steps leading from Fairacres Road to the front door were installed by previous owners.

20 616 Fairacres Road (DO09:0547-003): Brick, two-story, three-bay, side-gable-roofed house with two front-facing gables, half-timbering, and a copper-roofed turret.

Style: Tudor Revival with French Norman influences**Dates of Construction:** 1931**Architect:** Bert B. Hene**Landscape designer:** J. Frederic Schlott, 1954

Owners: Harkness and Louise C. Kountze: 1931-1937; Louise C. Kountze: 1937-43; Judson G. Squires and Louise C. (Kountze) Squires: 1943-49; James Howard and Betty Lee Cooke: 1949-53; William P. and Mary C. Garvey: 1953 through 1961

Additional Description: Built by Harkness Kountze, founder of the Midwest Dexter Corporation and son of successful hardware wholesaler Luther L. Kountze. Bert B. Hene, whose name was found inscribed on structural members, designed the house as a Tudor Revival example with French influences, most notably the turret on the east façade and fleur-de-lis brackets for the copper downspouts (one such bracket remains in place). The half-timbering, multiple gable faces, and quoined door and window surrounds are typical Tudor Revival features. The southern screened porch was enclosed in the late 20th century. An architectural shingle roof was added in 2012 to mimic the appearance of the original slate roof. The 0.44-acre lot was part of the 2.16-acre Lot 46 in the original 1907 plat. The driveway, brick front walkway, front lawn, side patio, and backyard all appear in their current configuration in a 1954 drawing produced by J. Frederic Schlott. The sandstone paving materials designed by Schlott were replaced with brick.

21 617 Fairacres Road (DO09:0547-044): Brick and wood-shingled, two-story, three-bay, side-gable-roofed house with a recessed porch, three gabled dormers, and a bay window on the north end of the west façade.

Style: Colonial Revival**Dates of Construction:** 1950**Architect:** John F. Hyde, Jr.**Owners:** Lazar and Bernice R. Kaplan: 1951 through 1961

Additional Description: Built by Lazar Kaplan, president of women’s fashion retail chain Tober’s, and designed by John F. Hyde, Jr. as a Colonial Revival house. While details of the front façade have been altered, the building’s original Colonial Revival form is apparent through the symmetrical dormers and brick and wood siding façade materials. A southern screen porch was enclosed in the

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late 20th century. The roof has wood shingles. The 0.4-acre lot was part of the 3.24-acre Lot 60 in the original 1907 plat. Bert Murphy purchased Lot 60 in 1925 and subdivided it in 1937.

22 624 Fairacres Road (DO09:0547-001): Brick, two-story, six-bay, side-gable-roofed house with a front-facing gable, a copper awning above a central entrance, and a painted exterior.

Style: Tudor Revival

Dates of Construction: 1932; 1999 addition; 2001 garage remodel

Architect: John and Alan McDonald

Owners: Grant L. and Iris M. McFayden: 1933-44; Iris M. McFayden: 1944-46; Arthur F. and Iris M. (McFayden) McCaffrey: 1946-48; Willard D. and Mary H. Hosford: 1948 through 1961

Additional Description: Built by Grant L. McFayden, an automobile executive. The primary façade of the house, while characteristically Tudor Revival in its coupled windows and front-facing gable, is more expansive than other Tudor-influenced houses in the district. Consequently, it conveys a feeling of broader English manor influences. The details of the front façade, including window surrounds and shed-roofed dormers, are restrained, drawing attention to the central entrance, with its rounded copper awning. The exterior was painted in the late 1990s. (the house may have been painted during an early historical period as well). The 1.1-acre lot is roughly congruent with the 1.49-acre lot 44 drawn in the original 1907 plat.

Outbuildings: A brick and wood-sided, two-story garage was built in the first decade of the 21st century. The garage, sitting diagonally in the northwest corner of the lot, has traditional design features including a steeply gabled wood-shingle roof and garage doors.

23 Fairacres Road (DO09:0547-002): Fairacres Road begins at Dodge Street and winds northward towards Underwood Avenue, intersecting with Chicago Street and California Street/Prairie Avenue. In 1915, adjacent property owners John L. Kennedy, William E. Newton, Charles S. Hayward, and Thomas J. Nolan paid to have the road paved with vitrified brick in a running bond pattern. Both sides of the road have concrete curbs and the east side of the road has a concrete walkway. A strip of vegetation divides the road from the sidewalk.

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Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska

Name of Property

County and State

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Letter from Charles C. George to Henry Wright, April 14, 1909. Courtesy of the Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, Missouri.

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"Building Plan for 617 Mr. & Mrs. Lazar Kaplan," John F. Hyde, Jr. August 15, 1949.

"General Plan for Middlefield, the Home Ground of Mr. William Newton, Fairacres, Omaha, Nebraska;" Hare & Hare, Landscape Architects, Kansas City, Missouri, August 1915. Courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri, Kansas City, Missouri.

"Landscape Plan for Mr. and Mrs. William Garvey;" Fred Schlott, Landscape Architect, March 1954. Courtesy of Barbara McCusker, 616 Fairacres Road.

"Nine Room Residence for..." Milton R. Sutton. Courtesy of Linda Burt Rebrovic, 615 Fairacres Road.

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"Dundee's History Told in Outline," July 21, 1937. Courtesy of the Douglas County Historical Society.

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"McCord Buys Ground for New Homes in Fairacres," June 7, 1914.

"More Fine Homes to Grace Fairacres," November 27, 1910.

"Outside Capital Larger," May 3, 1908.

Real Estate Transfers: December 31, 1907

"The Hayward Employees' Outing," October 3, 1909.

Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska

Name of Property

County and State

"Timely Real Estate Gossip," December 29, 1907; August 29, 1909; April 23, 1911

The Omaha World-Herald

1900-25

"A Big Job for Omaha," July 6, 1917.

"Acreage Property is Jumping in Value," January 20, 1907.

"Automobilists..." advertisement, May 30, 1908.

"Binnie Brae Landscape to be Done by Hoyt," August 5, 1913.

"Brownell Hall Will Accept George Offer," October 14, 1915.

"Business Begins the New Year Much on Up-Grade," February 3, 1907.

Byron Reed Company advertisements: August 1, 1920; August 8, 1920

Classified advertisements:

Fairacres neighborhood: August 2, 1908; January 16, 1910

6301 Chicago: March 24, 1918

"Commission Not Anxious to Annex Fairacres," November 20, 1924.

"Develop Rich Country About City Says Myers," October 17, 1915.

"Development of the Residence Section," September 15, 1907.

"Doubling Development South Part of Dundee," November 21, 1915.

"Elmwood Park Land Co.," May 12, 1903.

"Fairacres Club," January 10, 1915.

"Fix Up Those Highways," June 12, 1915.

"Funeral Services of William A. Paxton," February 8, 1910.

George and Company advertisements: May 8, 1908; May 17, 1908; November 29, 1908; April 21, 1911

"Give Some Practical City Planning Advice," January 6, 1913.

"Home-Building Fever Lasts into Coming Year," November 17, 1907.

"Homes of Omaha Folk on Broad Acres," August 11, 1907.

"J.E. George and R.M. Welch Die in Auto Crash," September 26, 1921.

"J.N.H. Patrick Dies at His Home in Happy Hollow," January 5, 1905.

"John L. Kennedy Buys Fairacres Residence," February 27, 1912.

"Kessler Speaks to 'Original Sinners'," September 10, 1915.

"King Long Linked with Life of City," October 17, 1925.

"Large Real Estate Deals Put on the Record," March 27, 1907.

"Lively Year in Omaha's Thriving Suburbs Where Country Homes are a Joy," 1907.

"Mrs. Paxton-Saxe Sells Fairacres Home," March 8, 1913.

"N.A. Hotel Company Sues Bakers Realty," *The Omaha World-Herald*; June 5, 1919.

Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska
County and State

Name of Property

- "New Catholic Parish Formed in Fairacres," August 23, 1919.
- "No Water for the Mains When They are Built," October 5, 1911.
- "Omaha at a Glance," December 25, 1907.
- "Omaha is Turning to the Country for its..." written by Elizabeth Sears, March 29, 1908.
- "Omaha's Gardens Soon to Be at Their Loveliest," May 4, 1924.
- "Omaha's Sunset Side; Dundee and Fairacres," October 16, 1910.
- "Outlook for Real Estate Activity Good. Sales Plentiful and Autumn Business Will Probably be Better than Ever," September 23, 1906.
- "Outside Buyers Inquire for Bargains in Omaha Real Estate," March 6, 1906.
- "Paving into Fairacres," October 17, 1915.
- "Personal," November 22, 1923.
- "Plan Fine Homes for Fairacres," July 8, 1920.
- "Purely Personal," May 5, 1918.
- "Real Estate Deals," July 19, 1908.
- "Real Estate Had an Active Market," March 26, 1906.
- "Real Estate Sales in City's Playtime," October 5, 1910.
- Real Estate Transfers: January 12, 1908.
- "Rufus Lee to Occupy New Home," May 21, 1925.
- "Suburban Syndicates," March 26, 1907.
- "Thomas J. Nolan Dies After a Brief Illness," August 4, 1923.
- "West Dundee Now Ready for the Builders," October 13, 1907.
- "Where Storm Struck Hardest in Omaha," June 5, 1925.
- "Wonderful Growth of Suburban District," September 5, 1909.

1926-50

- "12 New Houses, Fairacres Area," September 13, 1936.
- "Annex Land to Colorado'," March 15, 1935.
- "Annexation Fight Ended," April 7, 1941.
- "Annexation Voted 4 to 3," February 20, 1935.
- "Arches Give Spaciousness," September 27, 1936.
- "Await One Move in Chain of Sales," November 11, 1945.
- "Booth, George to Separate Firms," January 18, 1942.
- "Build Home in Fairacres," April 13, 1941.
- "Builder," March 27, 1938.
- "Building Here Over Five Million in 1937," January 2, 1938.

Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska

Name of Property

County and State

"Charles C. George Dies at 77; Lifetime Omaha Developer," February 19, 1940.

"City Beautiful is Need, Says Peters," June 8, 1927.

Classified advertisements:

420 Fairacres Road: December 13, 1931; March 9, 1932; May 8, 1932

425 Fairacres Road: November 30, 1941; December 14, 1941

426 Fairacres Road: September 20, 1936

616 Fairacres Road: June 20, 1948; July 25, 1948; April 10, 1949; February 5, 1950

6211 Chicago Street: November 13, 1938

Slosburg Realty: September 4, 1949; September 11, 1949; December 4, 1949; May 18, 1950

"Council Kills Plan to Annex Fairacres," August 21, 1933.

"Criss Plans Fine Home," January 24, 1930.

"D.C. Eldredge is Dead at 73," May 5, 1939.

"Death Takes Dr. Bridges at Honolulu," December 5, 1934.

"Design Brought from California," October 2, 1938.

"Details Plans of Subdivision," February 20, 1939.

"Dr. and Mrs. Bridges Move in September," July 27, 1930.

"Dr. and Mrs. Stokes Purchase the Nolan Home," November 5, 1926.

"Dr. Bridges Estate is Left to Widow," December 18, 1934.

"Dr. Crow Building New Fairacre Home," September 22, 1940.

"Dr. E.L. Bridges Buys Frank Judson's Home," July 15, 1930.

"Eldredge Home to be Father Suneg's Rectory," June 12, 1943.

"Fairacres is Taken by City," May 6, 1941.

"Fairacres Plan Pushes Limits of City to 69th St.," July 14, 1933.

"Fairacres Wins Suit to remain Outside of City," July 24, 2935.

"Fire Damages Home," March 19, 1928.

"Fire Damages Home on Fairacres Road," November 13, 1937.

"Form 2 New realty Firms," June 15, 1940.

"Frank Judson Leaves Omaha for Bigger Job," April 24, 1928.

"Friends Surprise Housers at Housewarming Party," March 16, 1936.

"Hain Joins Schroeder Firm," February 28, 1943.

"Harkness Kountzes are in a New Home," September 13, 1931.

"Hauser Home is Sold," September 3, 1939.

"J.L. Welch (sic) Buys Wherry Homes," August 18, 1940.

"Kountze Dies of Pneumonia," July 13, 1937.

"Lee Home to Bishop Ryan," August 23, 1937.

Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska
County and State

Name of Property

"Louis Sommer Buys in Fairacres," December 25, 1932.

"Max Fisher Buys Murphy Tract Lot," July 4, 1937.

"More Prominent Omahans Buy Land in Fairacres for Their Future Homes," August 8, 1928.

"Mrs. Cora Eldredge Gets \$98,063 in Estate," April 11, 1940.

"Myers Would Annex Fairacres for Taxes," July 13, 1933.

"Names Agents for Subdivision Sales," June 20, 1937.

"New Catholic Parish Formed in Fairacres," August 23, 1919.

"New Fairacres Homes," December 28, 1930.

"New Fairacres Tracts Placed on the Market," May 10, 1931.

"New Home in Fairacres," January 10, 1932.

"New Homes in Fairacres Circle," February 27, 1930.

"New Style Arithmetic," October 31, 1937.

"Omaha Diary," May 13, 1943.

"Plan Four New Homes on Tract in Fairacres," March 17, 1940.

"Plans Now for Next Year's Garden," October 25, 1931.

Real Estate Transfers:

220 Fairacres Road: March 9, 1935; August 31, 1944

220 North 62nd Street: June 12, 1942

420 Fairacres Road: October 21, 1932

426 Fairacres Road: October 21, 1932

615 Fairacres Road: September 29, 1938

616 Fairacres Road: April 28, 1950

6211 Chicago Street: March 3, 1938

"Ross Johnson Buys Home," June 3, 1928.

"Rufus E. Lee Fairacres Estate Sold to Catholic Diocese for Bishop's Home," August 23, 1937.

"This Week in Review: 'House in the Woods'," February 20, 1938.

"Three Homes are Sold for 79 Thousand," June 14, 1942.

"Torpedo Sinks Spanish Ship—Views of Bishop Ryan's New Home," August 24, 1937.

"Two Doctors are Figures in Transfer of Homes," December 13, 1936.

"Two New Residences of Beauty and Utility," October 11, 1931.

"Warm Red in Living Rooms of Mrs. E.L. Bridges' Fairacres Home Most Inviting," January 10, 1937.

1951-75

"Board Approves 6 Building Plans," September 9, 1954.

"Brandeis House Apparently to be Torn Down," January 11, 1971.

Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska
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Name of Property

Classified advertisements:

616 Fairacres Road: October 8, 1967; March 19, 1972

"Decorating Challenges Overcome," written by Frances McCoy, April 14, 1963.

"Dr. Quinn Buyer of Bergan Home," October 1, 1972.

"Ex-Regent Welsh is Dead of Cancer," February 4, 1973.

"House Coming Down," January 17, 1971.

"J. Cherniack Dies; Funeral Set Tuesday," March 26, 1973.

"Mrs. Squires Dies; Services Tuesday," December 16, 1968.

"Sculptor Soon to Leave City He Helped Carve," July 16, 1961.

"Tumbling Down," January 13, 1971.

"T. Warren Thompsons have moved..." September 26, 1965.

1976-present

"10th Showhouse 'Best One Yet'," written by Marilyn Busch and Jim Burnett, April 29, 1984.

Building Permits, June 6, 2005.

"Clinton Home Built in 1907," April 19, 1992.

"Community Builder Robert, 93, Dies," May 11, 1992.

"Harold 'Bus' Slosburg, 95, helped build Omaha with Slosburg Co.," March 8, 2016.

"He Was the Father of Fairacres," June 23, 1982.

"Homeowners Pilloried for Fairacres Faux Pas," *The Omaha World-Herald*; November 7, 2015.

"Joy Rings in 'Christmas of Your Dreams' Home White Christmas is Taking Shape Schedule of Events," written by Chris Olson, November 29, 1992.

"U.P. Boss Buys Fairacres Property," written by Matt Kelley, February 7, 1996.

"Vote is Set for Next Week on Fairacres Town Houses," August 2, 1978.

Other Newspapers

"Landscape Man Likes Helena," *The Helena Daily Independent*; August 1, 1911. *Newspaper Archive*.

<http://www.newspaperarchive.com/> Accessed January 12, 2017.

Records

Black, Catharine F. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Roland Park. National Register #74002213. November 1973.

Deed Abstract, 525 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska, Number 63, Book O, Page 152.

Deed Abstract, 525 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska, Number 69. Road Record B. Page 88; Road Record D. Page 85; Road Record X. Page 376.

Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska

Name of Property

County and State

Deed Abstract, 525 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska, Number 74, Book 314, Page 210.

Deed Abstract, 601 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska. App. Doc. 94. No. 360.

Deed Abstract, 601 Fairacres Road, Douglas County, Nebraska. Book 440, Page 6. Dated July 18, 1919.

Dirr, Melissa and Jill Ebers. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Field Club Historic District." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #00001380. August 2000.

"Fairacres," 1907 Plat Map. Roy N. Towl, Surveyor. Courtesy of Douglas County Engineer.

Faltinson, Brian J., Marisa Kosobucki, and John N. Vogel. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Dundee/Happy Hollow District." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, National Register #05000726. June 2005.

Honebrink, Jennifer. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Minne Lusa Residential Historic District." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, National Register #14000178. November 2013.

Meyer, Lynn. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Country Club Historic District." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #04001410. November 2004.

Meyer, Lynn and Stacey C. Pilgrim. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Gold Coast Historic District." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #97000237. July 1996.

Meyer, Lynn. Bob Puschendorf (editor). "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Havens-Page House." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #82000604. August 1982.

Nebraska SHPO Staff. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Henry B. Neef House." Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register #10000758. July 2010.

Omaha City Directories, 1923-61, Omaha Public Library, Omaha, Nebraska.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Omaha. Nebraska, 1960s Update. Courtesy of the City of Omaha, Nebraska.

"Specifications for the General Construction of a Residence for Mr. Grant McFayden. Omaha, Nebraska" John and Alan McDonald, Architects. 1933.

Reports

A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha. Omaha: Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission, 1980.

Historic Omaha 1976. Prepared by Junior League of Omaha with support from the Nebraska Arts Council and Landmarks, Inc.

Historic Residential Suburbs. U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002.

Reconnaissance Survey of Portions of Omaha: Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey. Prepared by Mead & Hunt, May 2009.

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

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency

Fairacres Road Historic District _____

Douglas, Nebraska _____

Name of Property

County and State

- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

- Local government
- University
- Other (Name of repository) _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 40.32 USGS Quadrangle _____

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

- | | | | | |
|----|----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 2. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 3. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 4. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |

OR

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map): _____

___ NAD 1927 or ___ NAD 1983

- | | | | | | | |
|----|------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| 1. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 2. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 3. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 4. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the Fairacres Historic District are as follows: roughly follow the rear property line along Dodge Street on the south, the properties on the east side of North 68th Street on the west, to a small section of the south side of Burt Street until North 66th Street, whereupon it follows the back lot lines of Fairacres Road curving toward Underwood, and the south side of Underwood street to North 62nd Street on the "north." The eastern boundary follows North 62nd as it curves back toward Dodge.

Boundary Justification

The proposed boundaries are those associated with the historic boundaries of the Fairacres neighborhood. We excluded most of the properties along Dodge Street, because as a major Omaha thoroughfare, it is comprised primarily of commercial properties. The area is characterized by curvilinear streets and boulevards, and larger than typical lot sizes.

Fairacres Road Historic District

Douglas, Nebraska

Name of Property

County and State


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.460 et seq.).

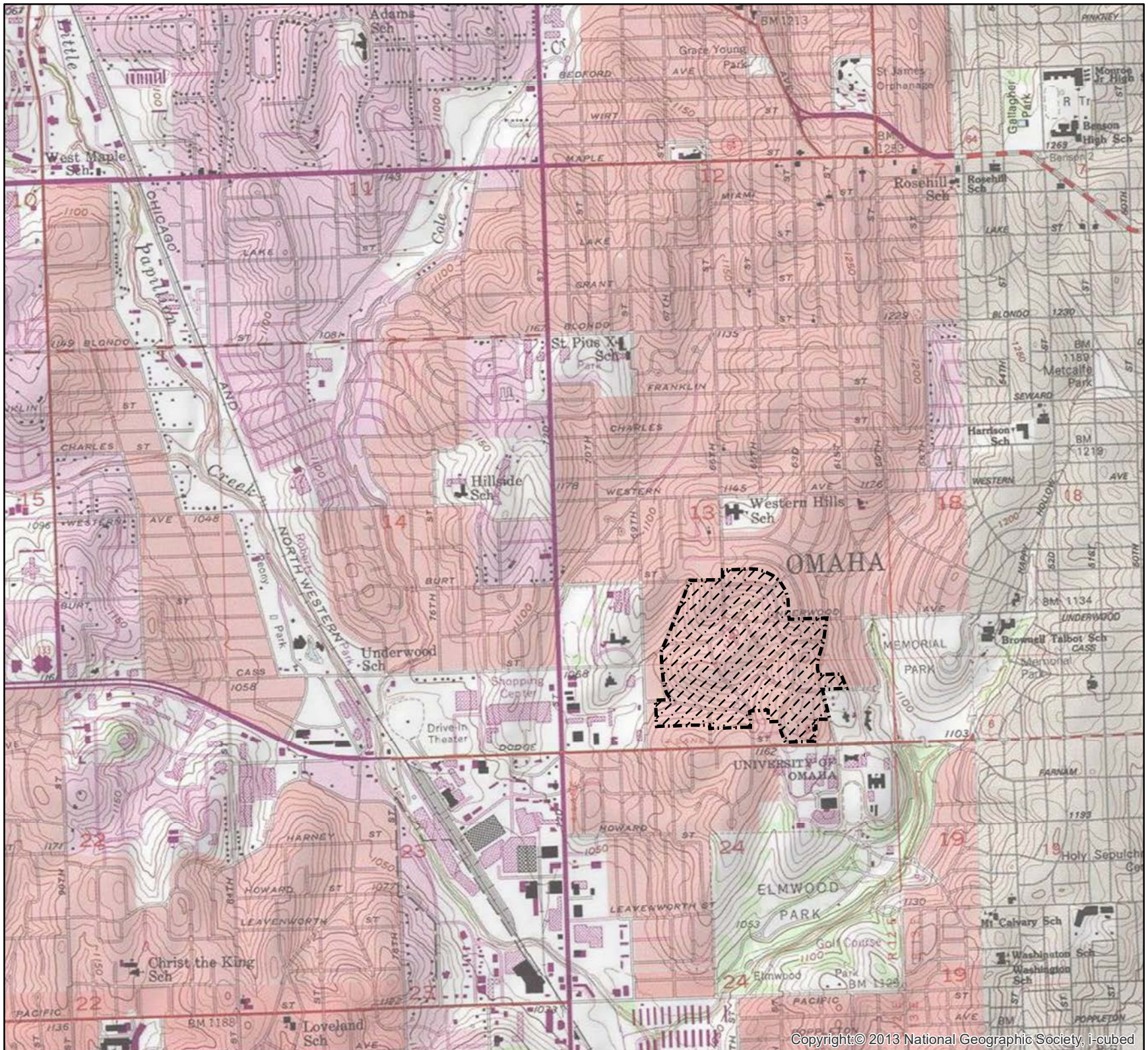
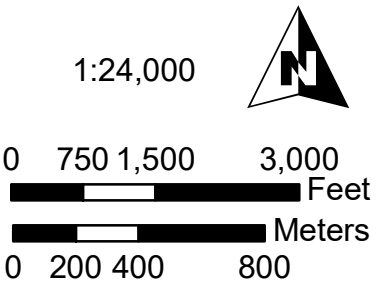
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC

Fairacres Historic District

**Omaha, Douglas Co.,
Nebraska**

USGS Quad: Irvington

Legend
 Proposed NRHP Boundary



Fairacres Historic District


Omaha, Douglas Co.,
Nebraska

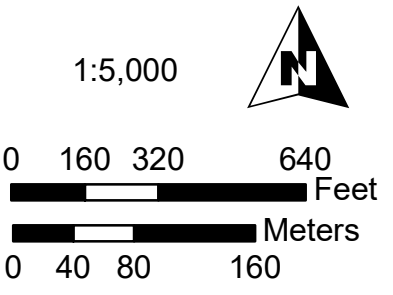
Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

- A) 41.266867, -96.016192
- B) 41.267361, -96.014327
- C) 41.266713, -96.011087
- D) 41.265048, -96.010565
- E) 41.265029, -96.008447
- F) 41.262599, -96.009005
- G) 41.262608, -96.007697
- H) 41.261980, -96.007474
- I) 41.261979, -96.008825
- J) 41.260690, -96.008474
- K) 41.260680, -96.009302
- L) 41.259727, -96.009441
- M) 41.259729, -96.011088
- N) 41.261120, -96.012009
- O) 41.261136, -96.013063
- P) 41.260464, -96.013022
- Q) 41.260626, -96.019045

Datum:WGS84

Legend

 Proposed NRHP Boundary



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community, Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors





218

















616





6435















WINDY HILLS
COUNTRY CLUB
COUNTRY CLUB



National Register of Historic Places

Note to the record

Additional Documentation: 2018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet



Fairacres Historic District (amendment)

Name of Property

Section **5, 7, 8, 9**

Page **70**

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Listed: 20170724; NPS # 100001353

Further research has led to a property – 6247 Underwood Avenue – that was previously determined noncontributing, to be reclassified as contributing. The following sections of the original documentation are recommended for amending:

Section 5. Classification

- Change of number of properties listed as contributing and noncontributing

Section 7. Description

- Change in C/NC status of property listed above; change in date of construction

Section 8. Statement of Significance

- Add paragraph and historic image regarding the property listed above
- Update information about the architect of the property listed above

Section 9. Major Bibliographic References.

- Add source information regarding the building of the property listed above

Additional Documentation

- Add current image of 6247 Underwood Avenue

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 of certifying official

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): Accept Additional Doc.

John Kelly

10-26-2018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Fairacres Historic District

Name of Property

Section **5, 7, 8, 9**

Page **71**

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 5. Classification (pg.2)

The reclassification of 6247 Underwood Avenue from a noncontributing resource to a contributing resource changes the total number contributing buildings to 122, noncontributing buildings to 12; total contributing resources to 123, total noncontributing to 12.

Section 7. Description (pg.9)

In the list of properties that lie within the district, change the information for 6247 Underwood Drive from 'NC' to 'C' and construction date from '1940' to '1938.'

Section 8. Statement of Significance (add new text, pg.33)

In August 1938, builder and realtor Jesse L. Schroeder developed a lot on Underwood Avenue. Architect John F. Hyde, Jr. provided the house's Colonial Revival design, which featured a "combination of stone, white painted brick, white shingles with green accessories and shutters and a slate green roof." As was typical of Fairacres houses from this period, the house had an attached garage accessible from the back of the house. Dr. Frank Conlin, a physician, professor of clinical medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical School, and prominent expert on diabetes, purchased the house from Schroeder in January 1939. He resided there until his death in 1947. Afterwards, Chief Federal District Court Judge Richard K. Robinson purchased the house.¹

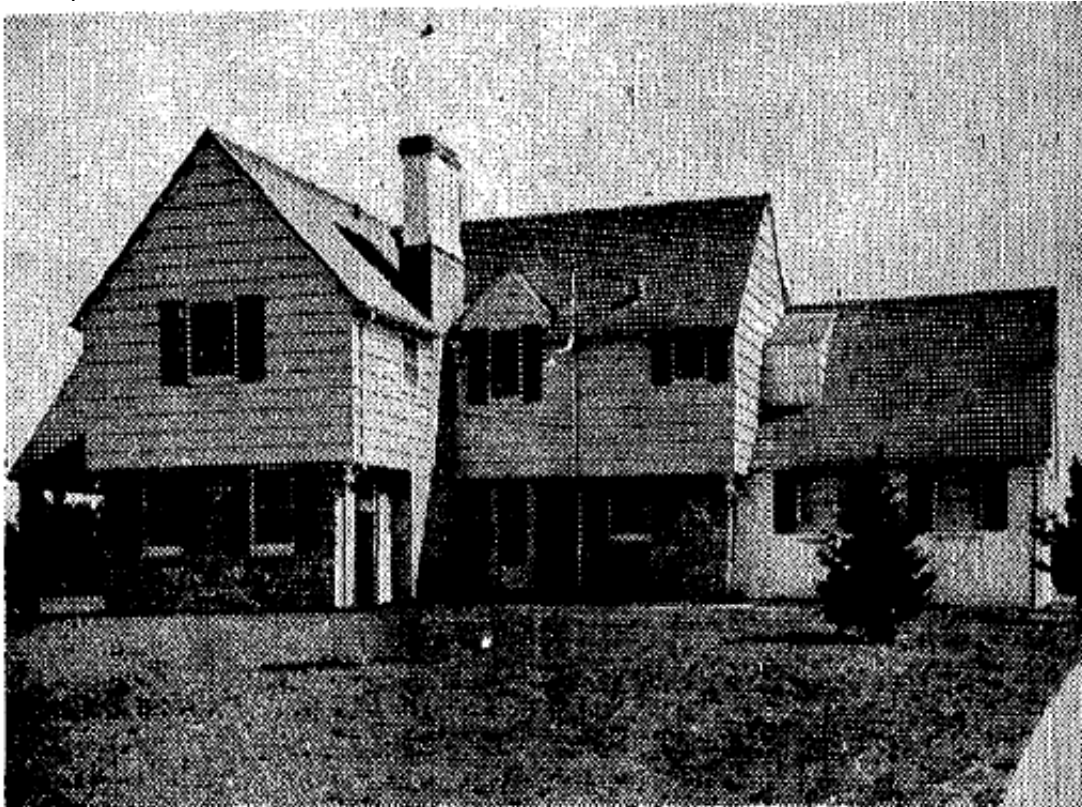


Figure 33 – The house at 6247 Underwood Avenue, developed by Jesse L. Schroder and designed by John F. Hyde, Jr. (*The Omaha World-Herald*, August 7, 1938).

¹ "A New Style House Out Fairacres Way," *The Omaha World-Herald*, August 7, 1938. Notice of Sale of 6247 Underwood Avenue, *The Omaha World-Herald*, December 25, 1938. Notice of Sale of 6247 Underwood Avenue, *The Omaha World-Herald*, April 1948.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Fairacres Historic District

Name of Property

Section **5, 7, 8, 9**

Page **72**

Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

(replace existing paragraph on Hyde and Hene, pg.48)

Both **John F. Hyde, Jr.** (601 and 617 Fairacres Road, 6247 Underwood Avenue) and **Bert B. Hene** (410 and 616 Fairacres Road) alternatively worked directly with homeowners or through property developers. Hene's design at 616 Fairacres Road stands out as Tudor Revival example with significant French influences of which the most recognizable is the turret at the northern side of the central entrance. At 410 Fairacres Road, the Slosburg Realty Company hired Hene to create an L-shaped post-war Colonial Revival design in 1949.² Hyde's design at 617 Fairacres Road represents the continued influence of Colonial Revival architecture in the midst of so many English-influenced examples. In 1939, the Schroeder Realty Company likely hired Hyde to design the Colonial Revival house built at 6247 Underwood Avenue. Two years later, the company brought him back to design the house at 601 Fairacres Road.³

Section 9. Major Bibliographic References (add, pg. 62)

"A New Style House Out Fairacres Way," August 7, 1938.

Additional Documentation (add, page 68)

21. 6247 Underwood Avenue (Kristine Gerber, 2018)



² Classified advertisements; *The Omaha World-Herald*, September 11, 1949.

³ Meyer, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Country Club Historic District."

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 6/9/2017 Date of Pending List: 7/18/2017 Date of 16th Day: 8/2/2017 Date of 45th Day: 7/24/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 7/24/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

The logo for the Nebraska State Historical Society features the word "Nebraska" in a large, elegant cursive script. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic of the state of Nebraska, colored in shades of yellow and orange, with a dark blue rectangular shape overlaid on the upper portion.

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

June 5, 2017



Ms. Alexis Abernathy
NPS – National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: Fairacres Historic District NRHP Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy,

Enclosed is the complete nomination packet for the Fairacres Historic District in Douglas County, Nebraska. The enclosed contents are as follows:

1. The signed first page of the Fairacres Historic District nomination
2. One archival disk with the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Fairacres Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places in pdf format.
3. One archival disk with the photographs for the Fairacres Historic District nomination.

If you have any questions regarding the submitted materials, please feel free to contact me at the number of email address below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill Dolberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jill" and last name "Dolberg" clearly legible.

Jill E. Dolberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office

Phone: (402) 471-4773
Fax: (402) 471-3100
Jill.dolberg@nebraska.gov

Enclosures: 2 disks and one page

1500 R Street
PO Box 82554
Lincoln, NE 68501-2554
p: (800) 833-6747
(402) 471-3270
f: (402) 471-3100
www.nebraskahistory.org

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 5/30/2018 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 7/16/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 6/26/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



A0100001353

Preserving the past. Building the future.

May 25, 2018

Jim Gabbert
NPS-National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW
Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240



Re: Fairacres Historic District (amendment), Omaha, Douglas County, NE

Dear Mr. Gabbert,

Enclosed is the complete nomination packet for the Fairacres Historic District (amendment), in Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska. The enclosed contents are as follows:

- The signed first page of the Fairacres Historic District (amendment) nomination;
- One (1) archival disk with the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Fairacres Historic District (amendment) to the National Register of Historic Places in PDF format; and

If you have any questions regarding the submitted materials, feel free to contact me at the phone number or email address below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'David L. Calease'.

David L. Calease
National Register Coordinator
Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office

Phone: 402-471-4775
Fax: 402-471-3100
david.calease@nebraska.gov

Enclosures (1): 1 disk with Nomination

1500 R Street
Lincoln, NE 68508-1651
P: 402.471.3270
P: 800.833.6747
F: 402.471.3100
history.nebraska.gov