

## COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES ELIGIBILITY FOR THE MASONIC TEMPLE AT 413, 417, 427 AND 429 DOUGLAS AVENUE**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The City has received a request for a recommendation of National Register eligibility for the Masonic Temple, located at 413, 417, 427 and 429 Douglas Avenue (see *Attachment A – Location Map*). The nomination was submitted to the City by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), after first being submitted to SHPO by William C. Page, Public Historian at the request of the property owner. The complete National Register Nomination, and photographs, for the Masonic Temple, are available at the Ames Public Library, and may be found at the following links:

National Register Nomination: <http://www.cityofames.org/home/showdocument?id=27287>  
Photographs for Nomination: <http://www.cityofames.org/home/showdocument?id=27285>

**As a Certified Local Government (CLG), one of the City Council’s responsibilities is to review National Register nominations on any property that lies within the boundaries of the city.** Nominations are first submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office, and a copy of the nomination is then sent to the CLG for review and comment. After allowing for public comment, the Commission and the Mayor are to decide if the property meets the criteria of the National Register.

The State Historical Society of Iowa is required to provide the City with a 60-day period for the review from the date the nomination is received by the City. The City received a copy of the nomination on April 6, 2016. **The State Nominations Review Committee (SNRC) plans to consider the nomination of the Masonic Temple at its June 10, 2016 meeting. That meeting will be held at the Historical Building in Des Moines, Iowa.**

The property owner is the Ames Society for the Arts (deed holder) (Octagon for the Arts, as commonly known). The applicant has selected **National Register Criterion “A” and “B”** as being applicable to this application. Criterion A and B are described as follows:

- Criterion A are those properties that are associated with events that have made significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B are those properties that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past.

The completed nomination forms include a summary of the significance of the Masonic Temple (see *Attachment B – Summary of Significance*).

**The question to be answered by the Mayor and City Council, is whether the nominated property meets the National Register of Historic Places significance Criterion A and B.**

**Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation.** At the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on May 9, 2016, the Commission voted 6-0 to find that the nomination of the Masonic Temple to the National Register of Historic Places meets National Register Significance Criterion A and B, and recommended National Register eligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee

**ALTERNATIVES:**

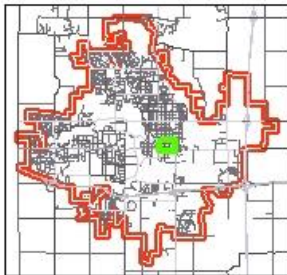
1. The City Council finds that the nomination of the Masonic Temple at 413, 417, 427 and 429 Douglas Avenue, to the National Register of Historic Places, meets National Register Significance Criterion A and B and recommends National Register eligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee.
2. The City Council finds that the nomination of the Masonic Temple at 413, 417, 427 and 429 Douglas Avenue, to the National Register of Historic Places, does not meet the National Register Significance Criterion A and B, and recommends National Register ineligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee.
3. The City Council can postpone this request for additional information from the applicant and/or City staff.

**MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

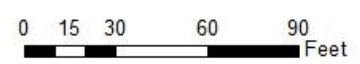
City staff believes that the information provided in the application provides a solid basis for a determination of significance under Criterion A and B. Wallace M. Greeley was one of Ames' most notable citizens, and the Masonic Temple calls attention to the life of Mr. Greeley and his substantial contributions to the Ames community.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council accept Alternative #1, thereby finding that the nomination of the Masonic Temple at 413, 417, 427 and 429 Douglas Avenue, to the National Register of Historic Places, meets National Register Significance Criterion A and B and recommends National Register eligibility to the State Nominations Review Committee.

Attachment A – Location Map



**Location Map**  
**Masonic Temple**  
**413, 417, 427, 429 Douglas Ave.**



## Attachment B – Summary of Significance

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8/86)

NPS/William C. Page, Public Historian, Word Processor Format  
(Approved 06/02/89)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 10

CFN-259-1116

Masonic Temple, Story County, Iowa.

### SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Begun in 1916 and completed in 1917, the Masonic Temple is National Register eligible, locally under Criterion A, because it calls attention to a high point of progressive era construction in Downtown Ames. Together with a handful of other downtown public and semi-public buildings of note, the construction of the Masonic Temple signaled Ames' emergence from a rural town to a modern Iowa city. As one local newspaper reported at the time:

From present indications the improvement record in Ames this year will be the greatest thus far in its history and this new structure [the Masonic Temple] will be one of the big additions to the city. (*Ames Weekly Tribune*, April 6, 1916)

Further, the Masonic Temple promoted the expansion of Downtown Ames. Its construction solidified Douglas Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Street as emerging corridors of commercial importance in the central business district.

The Masonic Temple is significant, locally under Criterion B, because it calls attention to the life of Capt. Wallace M. Greeley, an Ames banker and civic leader. Greeley's career in Ames spanned more than 50 years, at various times as its mayor and as its district representative to the Iowa House of Representatives. Greeley commissioned the erection of the Temple Block, a notable example of his many philanthropic contributions to the city.

The period of significance under Criteria A and B is 1917-1918, the time in Ames' progressive era when the Masonic Temple was constructed, solidified the emergence of 5<sup>th</sup> Street as a commercial corridor, and called attention to the boosterism and civic philanthropy of Capt. Wallace M. Greeley. The year 1917 is a significant date for these reasons.

The property contains one resource for this nomination, the Masonic Temple itself, which is contributing and classified as a building.

The Masonic Temple fulfills the registration requirements of the *A Home for Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa, 1864-1941 MPD* because it directly illustrates "Patterns of Community Development" and "Town Building:" 1) during the period of significance of these historic contexts, 2) as associated with the evolution of land use, and 3) as associated with Capt. Wallace M. Greeley.