



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, March 13, 2012

Council Session

Item G15

#2012-65 - Approving Support of the Hall County Historical Society Pursuing Placement of the Seedling Mile Site on the National Registry of Historic Places

Staff Contact: Terry Brown, Public Works Manager of Engineering S

Council Agenda Memo

From: Terry Brown, PW Manager of Engineering Services

Meeting: March 13, 2012

Subject: Approval and Support of the Hall County Historical Society Pursuing Placement of the Seedling Mile Site on the National Registry of Historic Places

Item #'s: G-15

Presenter(s): Terry Brown, Public Works Manager of Engineering Services

Background

The Lincoln Highway Association was formed in 1913 to establish the Country's first coast-to-coast highway and to promote "good roads". The route chosen for the Lincoln Highway went from New York City to San Francisco through Nebraska using existing roads and lanes. Grand Island had its own Lincoln Highway Booster Club which chose the route through town on Second Street.

In 1914 the Association realized the gravel roads in the Midwest were impassable much of the year because of mud and set up the Seedling Mile program to promote paved roads. The idea was that if the public experienced the joy of driving on a cement road, they would demand that the government fund more paved roads. Portland Cement donated the concrete for the Seedling Miles and the Association supplied the designs and specifications. The first Seedling Mile was built in DeKalb County, Illinois in December of 1914. It was a mile long and 10 feet wide. The second Seedling Mile was built in Hall County, Nebraska in December of 1915. It was over a mile long and 16 feet wide. The Seedling Mile program was a great success. By 1930, the entire Lincoln Highway was paved and by 1935 there were 60,000 miles of paved road in the country.

Today most of the Hall County Seedling Mile is still in use as Seedling Mile Road. It ceased to be part of the Lincoln Highway in approximately 1925 when the Union Pacific Rail Road consented to lease some of its land for the Highway. The Lincoln Highway was then changed to the route of the present-day Highway 30. After Highway 30 was built, a small section of the Seedling Mile was no longer part of a road network. It wasn't used much and never paved over. It is now the **only** remaining original concrete Seedling Mile in the USA. The Historical Society has worked with the City to get a historical marker erected at the site and a parking pad and signs to inform travelers how to get to

the site. The Hall County Historical Society would now like the Seedling Mile to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places and seeks the City's consent.

Resolution No. 2002-207, which was approved by City Council on July 9, 2001, provided for the closure of Seedling Mile Road from Willow Street east for approximately 450 feet.

Discussion

The section of undisturbed concrete on Seedling Mile Road east of Willow Road and north of US Highway 30 is eligible for listing with the National Register of Historic Places.

Alternatives

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand. The Council may:

1. Move to approve
2. Refer the issue to a Committee
3. Postpone the issue to future date
4. Take no action on the issue

Recommendation

City Administration recommends that the Council approve a resolution approving and supporting the Hall County Historical Society in pursuing placement of the Seedling Mile Site on the National Registry of Historic Places.

Sample Motion

Move to approve the resolution.

RESOLUTION 2012-65

WHEREAS, the Lincoln Highway Association was formed in 1913 to establish the Country's first coast-to-coast highway; and

WHEREAS, the route chosen for the Lincoln Highway went from New York City to San Francisco through Nebraska using existing roads and lanes; and

WHEREAS, the second Seedling Mile for the Country was built in Hall County, Nebraska in December, 1915 and was over a mile long and 16 feet wide, and

WHEREAS, this section of roadway is the only remaining original concrete Seedling Mile in the USA; and

WHEREAS, the Hall County Historical Society has worked with the City to get a historical marker erected at the site and a parking pad and signs to inform travelers how to get to the site; and

WHEREAS, the Hall County Historical Society would now like the Seedling Mile to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places and seeks the City's consent.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA, that the City of Grand Island does approve and support the pursuit of placing the Seedling Mile on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Adopted by the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska, March 13, 2012.

Jay Vavricek, Mayor

Attest:

RaNae Edwards, City Clerk

Approved as to Form	☐ _____
March 9, 2012	☐ City Attorney