

MINNESOTA ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY INVENTORY FORM

PROPERTY NAME: Pedestrian Bridge
ADDRESS: Foot of 8th Avenue
CITY/TOWNSHIP: Granite Falls
COUNTY: Yellow Medicine
PROPERTY OWNER: City of Granite Falls

SHPO NUMBER: YM-GFC-60 (Old); YM-GRN-060 (New)
DATE SURVEYED: October 2012
SURVEY PROJECT: Bridge Improvement Project
SURVEYOR/FIRM: Andrew Schmidt, Summit EnviroSolutions

LOCATION INFORMATION

TOWNSHIP: 116N **RANGE:** 39W
SECTION: 34 **QTR NE** **QTR NE** **QTR SW**
USGS QUAD: GRANITE FALLS
UTM ZONE: 15 **DATUM:** NAD27
EASTING: 299323 **NORTHING:** 4964779

1930s, the company was the largest manufacturer of steel cable in the world and also provided suspension bridge design services. Alexander Y. Bayne started the Minneapolis Bridge Company in 1914 (the earlier Minneapolis Bridge Company led by Commodore Jones had gone out of business by the 1910s), and Oliver Mattison took over as president after Bayne died.

PROPERTY TYPE: Bridge
NRHP PROPERTY TYPE: Structure
HISTORIC USE: Transportation
CURRENT USE: Transportation

APPLICABLE STATE HISTORIC CONTEXT:
Historic Iron and Steel Bridges in Minnesota, 1873-1945

DESCRIPTION

The pedestrian bridge crosses the Minnesota River in Granite Falls and connects the downtown area with the east side. The structure is a 280-foot, three-span, steel suspension bridge built in 1935. The center span is 130 feet, and the approach spans are 75 feet each. Character-defining features of the bridge include: two towers composed of steel I-beam piles resting on concrete piers in bent configuration and supported with steel I-beam, angle, and plate bracing; riveted steel members; steel wire main cables and suspender cables and steel I-beam cable anchors; and a stiffening truss in pony Warren-with-verticals configuration.

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

The pedestrian bridge does not meet Criterion A or B. It was built in the 1930s, long after Granite Falls' development as a railroad town and county seat, and multiple bridges previously provided pedestrian access across the river. Furthermore, the bridge is not known to have played a pivotal role in the life or career of a person significant in history.

STYLE, IF APPLICABLE

ARCHITECT/ENGINEER

John A. Roebling's Sons Company and Minneapolis Bridge Company

The pedestrian bridge meets Criterion C as a rare example of a suspension bridge in Minnesota. Furthermore, the bridge was built by Minneapolis Bridge Company, which was a significant bridge builder in Minnesota. According to the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) *Iron and Steel Bridges in Minnesota*, bridges "may be eligible for their association with important bridge engineers, structural metal fabricators, bridge contractors, or other individuals or firms who made significant contributions to the design and construction of bridges or transportation systems" (Quivick et al. 1989). Furthermore, the MPDF names Minneapolis Bridge Company as an important Minnesota bridge builder. Although at 280 feet, the bridge was not the largest constructed by Minneapolis Bridge Company, it is a rare example of a suspension bridge built by this important builder and, therefore, illustrates the range of bridge types and designs with which they worked.

HISTORY

The bridge was built in 1935. Multiple wooden foot bridges had been located at the foot of 8th Avenue to connect the downtown area, which was on the west side of the Minnesota River, with the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad depot on the east side of the river. Ice build-up and flooding in springtime, however, regularly damaged or destroyed the previous bridges. During the early 1930s, the City began planning for a permanent replacement for the foot bridge and, in 1934, a local bond fund was established to finance the bridge. The John A. Roebling's Sons Company designed the suspension bridge and provided the steel cables and tower members. The Minneapolis Bridge Company was selected in early 1935 as contractor for construction, and the bridge was completed by that summer.

INTEGRITY STATEMENT

The integrity of location, materials, design, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association are all good. One notable alteration is that in some locations, rivets have been replaced with bolts.

The Roebling Company was founded by the sons of the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge, John A. Roebling. By the

RECOMMENDATION

The Granite Falls Pedestrian Bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

PHOTOGRAPHS



LOCATION MAP

