

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Belle Prairie Township Hall & Strang Town Hall/Jail
other names/site number NEHBS #FM11-006, FM11-005

2. Location

street & number Main Street Not for publication
city, town Strang Vicinity
state Nebraska code NE county Fillmore code 059 zip code 68444

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	2	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		2	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.
James A. Hanson Signature of certifying official Date *October 21, 1991*
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.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. 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:)
for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action *11/29/91*

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government/City Hall

Government/Correctional Facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/Library

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: False-Front

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Metal

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Belle Prairie Township Hall and Strang Town Hall/Jail are one-story, false-front, brick structures built in 1911 and 1907, respectively. These buildings are located side by side near the south end of Main Street in the village of Strang, a community on Highway 81 in southern Fillmore County, Nebraska. The two governmental buildings are being nominated together as one historically related unit. Structural and historical integrity is good; some modifications have occurred in the interior spaces.

Both one-room buildings are of masonry construction and set on a concrete foundation. The gable roofs that were originally covered with slate shingles were replaced with tin. These simple rectangular buildings were designed and constructed by elected officials of the township and town, local carpenters, townspeople, and citizens of the township. The 22 by 40 foot Belle Prairie Township Hall was built in 1911, and the 16 by 24 foot Town Hall/Jail was constructed in 1907.

The main facade of the Township Hall has a round-shaped parapet front, and one-over-one double hung windows to each side of the main entry, which has a solid wooden door, and transom window. Three windows are on each of the side facades and two windows on the rear facade of the building. All windows have concrete lintels and sills. Permanent polling booths were constructed in 1911 by Roy Evans along the interior of the west wall of Belle Prairie Township Hall. A large wainscotted cupboard and old safe are also in the main room. The most decorative feature of the Township Hall is the pressed metal ceiling with its intricate border design.

Because of the fewer duties of today's township board and the lack of modern facilities, the usage of Belle Prairie Township Hall has declined these last years. It is now used for storage and for displaying items from the Strang Museum.

The main facade of the Town Hall/Jail has a stepped gable front, and shows an off center entry and one window. There is one window on each of the north and south facades of the building. Two

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small barred windows (where the jail section was located) are found on the rear facade of the building. All door and window openings are round arched and have brick round arched window hoods. A centered floor-through-roof brick chimney is located eight feet from the rear of the building. The structure served two purposes: a 16 by 8 foot section of the west end of the building contained two jail cells where lawbreakers were incarcerated: and the remaining 16 by 16 foot office space was utilized by the town board, town constable and justice of the peace. Government matters of the town were discussed and the decisions were made here. The justice of the peace performed marriages, pronounced sentences and assessed fines in the office space.

After 1926 the jail facilities were no longer used, and about 1970 the Town Board meetings were moved to the 4-H Community Hall. In 1977 the Strang CIP (Community Improvement Program) organization converted the building into a library, its present use. Shelves were constructed, the cell area was turned into a reading area, and the office corner is occupied by the librarian.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Politics/Government

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

1907

1907

1911

1911

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

N/A

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Belle Prairie Township Hall and Strang Town Hall/Jail are eligible under National Register Criterion "A" as important examples of local political and governmental facilities in Strang. The Township Hall is a well-preserved example of a somewhat uncommon building type in Nebraska--the township meeting hall. These halls were the product of a particular type of county organization, namely the organization of townships as governmental units. The Town Hall/Jail is a good example of a town hall, a building type which became evident in many towns throughout the state in the early twentieth century. These two buildings served as the only public meeting places for the people of Strang and the surrounding community to attend to, and administer, local civic and governmental activities. Due to their close proximity and comparable histories, the two buildings are being nominated together as one functionally and historically related unit. The period of significance is derived from the years (1907, 1911) the buildings began operation as a Town Hall and Township Hall.

The Belle Prairie Township Hall and Strang Town Hall/Jail are good examples of political and governmental structures of their type built in the early 1900's in the state of Nebraska. The historical purpose of Belle Prairie Township Hall and the Strang Town Hall/Jail was to fulfill the needs of the township and town's governing body. The elected officials and citizens of the community met in these halls to discuss and determine what governmental policies were needed, how the finances would be obtained, what regulations were necessary along with the enforcement of these rules. Belle Prairie Township Hall was the balloting site for the local, county, state and national primary and general elections.

Designed and built by local people without any assistance of an architect or a detailed blueprint, these two buildings are the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Chatfield, Penelope, Fontanelle Township Hall, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, March, 1981, on file, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Gilkerson, Joni, Bradshaw Town Hall, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, April, 1984, on file, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Reflections, 1886-1986, compiled by Janet Lentfer, printed by Record Printing Company of Cairo, Nebraska, 1986, pages 64, 119, 120.

Strang Scrapbook, 1977, compiled by Strang Community Improvement Association, Strang, Nebraska.

Strang Scrapbook, 1986, compiled by Strang Community Improvement Association, Strang, Nebraska.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre.

UTM References

A

1	4
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6	1	9	8	9	0
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4	4	7	4	4	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is described as the north 25 feet of Lot 10, First Addition (Belle Prairie Township Hall), and Lot 6, Block 21, Original Town (Strang Town Hall/Jail), Strang, Fillmore County, Nebraska.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes that parcel of land which has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janet K. Lentfer--Community Historian
organization Strang Community Improvement Association date March 22, 1991
street & number R.R. 2, Box 9 telephone (402) 627-2085
city or town Strang state Nebraska zip code 68444

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only original structures (other than a residence) remaining on Strang's Main Street. Belle Prairie Township Hall and the Strang Town Hall/Jail were constructed of brick and are located side by side on block 21 of Strang, Nebraska, the center of past history in the area. Not only are Belle Prairie Township Hall and the Strang Town Hall/Jail found in this block, but also the original Hamilton Township Hall which houses the Strang Museum, a wooden windmill similar to the one first built in the center of Main Street, a memorial stone dedicated to all servicemen from the area that gave their life for their country, and the former Goldenrod schoolhouse that is part of the 4-H Community Hall. Belle Prairie Township Hall was the second largest building in Strang so it was also used for community gatherings, organizational meetings and various social functions connected with the community. Occasionally a business in Strang would hold public meetings here to promote their business.

Today, Belle Prairie Township Hall and the Strang Town Hall/Jail stand as local landmarks in the Strang vicinity. They are of special significance to the present residents of the area, as the forefathers of many of today's citizens met in these buildings to make the decisions necessary for governing the community.

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The Nebraska Signal, county newspaper printed at Geneva, Nebraska, various articles noting events, activities, meetings, library notes, etc., 1907 to present day.

Town Board record books, 1907-1970, Strang, Nebraska.

Township record books, 1911-1960, Strang, Nebraska.