

Mill City Times

Covering the central riverfront neighborhoods of Minneapolis

Update: Fuji Ya - Water Works

Sunday, July 30, 2017 at 4:08PM | [David Tinjum](#) |



BACKGROUND. The site is located in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The site was once occupied by the Bassett's Second Sawmill, the Columbia Flour Mill and the Occidental Feed Mill. Portions of each of these mills remain on the site. In 1961, Reiko Weston purchased the property. In 1967-68, she built the Fuji Ya Restaurant incorporating portions of the Bassett's Second Sawmill and Columbia Flour Mill into the design of the restaurant structure. Today, the applicant is proposing to selectively demolish the Fuji Ya Restaurant and stabilize the remaining mills in order to incorporate them into the design of a new park building on the site.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL. The Fuji Ya building envelope and portions of its structure are in poor condition with little integrity remaining to the interior. Much of the Fuji Ya building will be carefully deconstructed and removed with select structural components left in place to ensure the continued integrity of the underlying historic mill structures and remnants. Wood posts and beams will be salvaged from the Fuji Ya building and stored for reuse in the Water Works project. Following removals, the historic mill structures and remnants (consisting of the Bassett Saw Mill Engine House, Columbia Flour Mill Boiler Room, and a

segment of the Columbia Flour Mill foundation) will be temporarily stabilized, secured, and protected for future interpretation within the Water Works project site at Mill Ruins Park. How the mills will be interpreted and engaged within the new park is still in the early planning stages.

Prior to deconstructing the Fuji Ya building, a Minnesota Historic Property Record will be submitted to the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office including descriptions of the building's character defining features and conditions at time of removal, the building's history, archival photographs, copies of Fuji Ya plans from all three phases of construction, and current field-measured drawings.