DRAFT DESIGNATION STUDY:

C.A. Smith Lumber Historic District

Minneapolis

Draft: May 17, 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Designation Study Purpose and Background……...page 1

Summary of Findings……page 2
- Figure 1: C.A. Smith Lumber Historic District Map
- Figure 2: C.A. Smith Lumber Historic District List of Resources and Status

Part 1: **Physical Description of Property**…….page 4
- Parcel location, shape, and size
- Description of 4401 Lyndale Avenue North
- Description of 4400 Lyndale Avenue North
- Description of 4410 Lyndale Avenue North
- Description of 4420 Lyndale Avenue North
- Description of 4430 Lyndale Avenue North
- Description of landscape and landscape features

Part 2: **Historic Significance**……..……. page 14
- Summary
- Minnesota's Lumber Industry
- The C.A. Smith Lumber Company and Subsidiaries
- The Mereen Johnson Machine Company

Part 3: **Rationale for Local Historic Designation**……..……. page 23
- Designation Criteria
- Integrity of historic resource
- Other Considerations

Part 4: **Registration and Classification Information**……..…….. page 31

Part 5: **Photographs, drawings, and other documents**……page 36
- Figure 3: Site map for location of C.A. Smith Lumber District
- Figure 4: Mereen Johnson Office Building, view of east elevation, facing west. 1917 Building at left of image, 1953 addition at right of image.
- Figure 5: Mereen Johnson Office Building, view of south elevation, facing north.
- Figure 6: Mereen Johnson Office Building, 1953 addition, view of north elevation, facing southeast.
- Figure 7: Architectural drawing, Mereen Johnson Office Building front elevation, south side elevation, and section sections.
- Figure 8: Architectural drawing, Mereen Johnson Office Building ground floor plan
- Figure 9: Architectural drawing, Mereen Johnson Office Building Basement Plan
- Figure 10: Development Diagram of C.A. Smith Lumber District

- Figure 11: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, west façade, facing east. The three bays at the right of the image are the 1916 machine shop, the fourth bay at the left of the image is the 1940 addition.
- Figure 12: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, southwest corner, facing northeast. 1916 machine shop at right of image with gable roof, 1940s addition at left with flat roof.
- Figure 13: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, south façade, facing northeast. 1916 machine shop, the door at the left of the photo denotes the location where the faced turns to angle northeast along the railroad siding.
- Figure 14: Mereen Johnson Factory Building facing southwest – 1919 foundry and 1920 addition to machine shop at left of image, 1950s addition at right of image.
- Figure 15: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, 1919 foundry and 1920 addition to machine shop, facing northwest.
- Figure 16: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, 1919 foundry and 1920 addition to machine shop, facing west.
- Figure 17: Mereen Johnson Factory Building looking south - 1916 machine shop at left of image and 1917 addition at the right of image.
- Figure 18: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, north façade of 1960 addition facing south. Note painted sign.
- Figure 19: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, northwest corner facing southeast – 1969 addition.
- Figure 20: Mereen Johnson Garage Building, view of north elevation, facing south.
- Figure 21: Mereen Johnson Garage Building, view of east façade, facing west, Soo Line Railroad Siding at left of photo.
- Figure 22: Mereen Johnson yard, facing north.
- Figure 23: C.A. Smith Office Building, southwest corner, facing northeast.
- Figure 24: C.A. Smith Office Building, north façade facing southeast.
- Figure 25: C.A. Smith Office Building, east façade facing southwest.
- Figure 26: Metal Shed, west façade facing southeast.
- Figure 27: Compo Board and C.A Smith Factory Building, date unknown, courtesy Guilded Salvage.
- Figure 28: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, west façade.
- Figure 29: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, south façade and 1920 metal shed addition, facing northeast. Soo Line railroad siding in foreground.
- Figure 30: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, south façade, facing northeast. Soo Line Railroad siding in foreground.
- Figure 31: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, north façade, facing southeast.
- Figure 32: 4410 and 4420 Lyndale Avenue, looking west. East façade of Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building behind tree cover.
- Figure 33: 4410 and 4420 Lyndale Avenue, looking east. Barrier for Interstate 94 trench in background.
- Figure 34: C.A. Smith & Co Lumber, Advertisement from Minneapolis City Directory, 1889-1890.

- Figure 35: Map showing C.A. Smith Lumber Company was one of seven lumber concerns along this stretch of the Mississippi. (Sheet 1)
- Figure 36: Map showing C.A. Smith Lumber Company was one of seven lumber concerns along this stretch of the Mississippi. (Sheet 2)
- Figure 37: Photograph, C.A Smith Lumber Yards, June 4, 1910.
- Figure 38: Compo Board advertisement clipping exhibiting installation on varying surfaces.
- Figure 39: Comp Board advertisement clipping showing its composite material design.
- Figure 40: C.A. Smith Company diagram of patented Horizontal Band Re-Saw.
- Figure 41: Sanborn map showing the Mereen Johnson Company's shop location near C.A. Smith's "pattern shop" and "box sorting shop".
- Figure 42: Mereen Johnson Machine Company Box Maker advertisement.
- Figure 43: Mereen Johnson Machine Company No. 25 Slab Resaw advertisement.
- Figure 44: Mereen Johnson Machine Company No. 20 Junior "squeezer" advertisement.
- Figure 45: Mereen Johnson Machine Company No. 441 Gang Rip Saw advertisement.

End Notes……. page 69

Sources and References……. page 72

Appendices……page 74

- Appendix A: Action initiating nomination
- Appendix B: Nomination staff report
- Appendix C: HPC Actions from Nomination hearing
- Appendix D: Letter to SHPO *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix E: Letter from SHPO *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix F: Memorandum to City Planning Commission *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix G; Staff report to Heritage Preservation Commission *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix H: HPC Actions from Designation hearing *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix I: Request for Council Action *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix J: Zoning and Planning Committee Actions *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix K: Actions of the Full City Council *(forthcoming)*
- Appendix L: Publication in *Finance and Commerce (forthcoming*

Designation Study Purpose and Background

The parcels at 4401, 4440, and 4430 Lyndale Avenue North were nominated as individual landmarks by Council President Barbara Johnson (Ward 4) at the May 1, 2015 meeting of the Minneapolis City Council. The Council adopted the nomination. The nomination was reviewed by Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) staff and then presented to the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at their public hearing on July 14, 2015. At this time, CPED staff recommended that the parcels at 4410 and 4420 Lyndale Avenue North be added to the nomination. The HPC adopted CPED's findings, placing all five parcels under interim protection while a designation study was completed.

The C.A. Smith Lumber Company (4400 Lyndale Avenue North), Compo-Board Company - a subsidiary of the C.A. Smith Lumber Company (4430 Lyndale Avenue North), and Mereen-Johnson Machine Company (4401 Lyndale Avenue North) properties, are neither locally nor nationally designated. The structures at 4401, 4430, and 4440 Lyndale Avenue North were identified in the 2011 *Camden Area Historic Resources Inventory* as potentially eligible for local landmark designation under Criteria 1 and 4. The same parcels were identified in the 2013 *Historic Resources Inventory Capstone* as sites that could represent 20th Century Manufacturing, a category of historic resource that the *Capstone* identified as under-represented.

The sites have an historical relationship and, collectively, form an historic district. Northwestern Compo-Board was a subsidiary of the C.A. Smith Lumber Company and the Mereen-Johnson Machine Company was formed by two former C.A. Smith employees and counted C.A. Smith as an early investor. The site will be referred to in this Study as the "C.A. Smith Lumber District."

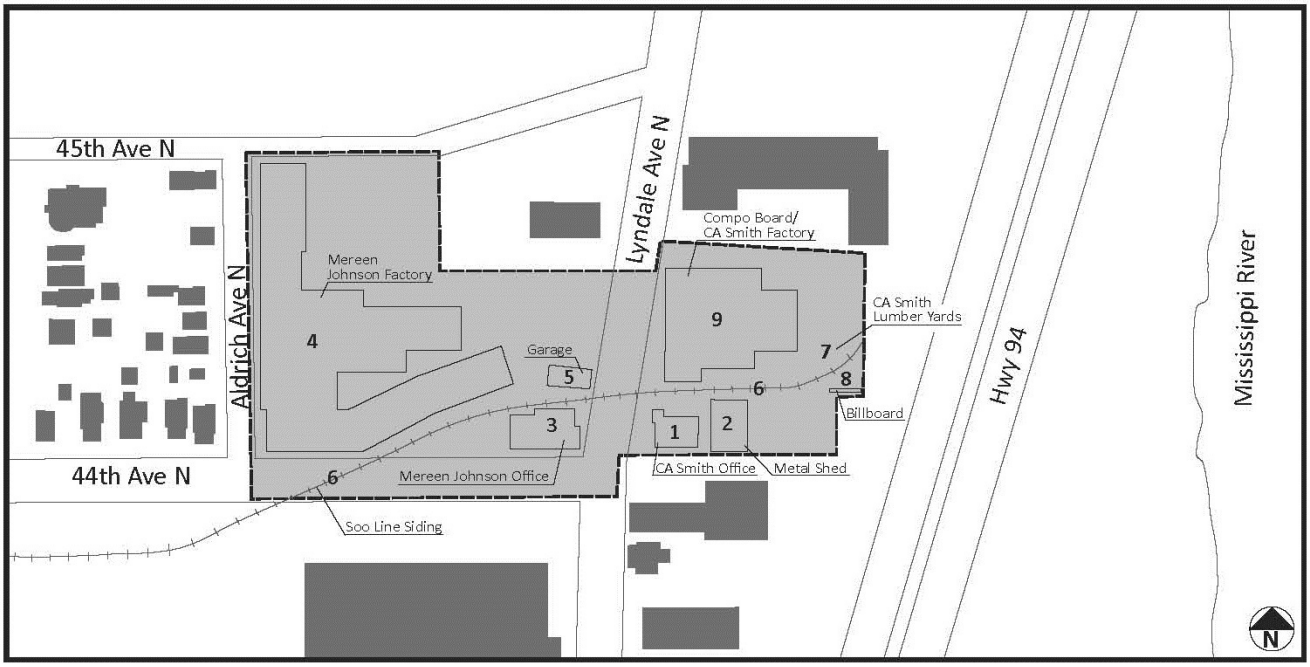
This Study is intended to fulfill the requirements for local historic designation outlined in Title 23, Chapter 599.230 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances. The history of the site was assessed with respect to local designation criteria. The study is based on two site visits and primary resources including historic building permits, historic newspaper articles, historic photographs, maps, periodicals, books, and other archival materials. Historic research was conducted at the Gale Family Library at the Minnesota Historical Society, the Minnesota State Archives, the Minneapolis Collection of the James K. Hosmer Special Collections at the Hennepin County Library, the Northwest Architectural Archives at the University of Minnesota, and the Borchert Map Library at the University of Minnesota.

Summary of Findings

The C.A. Smith Lumber District is a historic resource for the City of Minneapolis. The properties located within the district represent the late stage of the Minneapolis lumber industry (c. 1890-1921), the city's short-lived but robust "post-lumber" industry (c. 1921-1935), and 19th and 20th century manufacturing. The C.A. Smith Lumber District meets three landmark designation criteria under Section 599.210 and, as such, is historically significant under Criterion 1 for its association with the late-lumber and post-lumber industries in Minneapolis, under Criterion 2 for its association with C.A. Smith, Arno Mereen, and Charles Johnson, and under Criterion 3 for its association with distinctive elements of the identity of the Camden neighborhood. The period of significance for the district is 1892-1966.

Figure 1: **C. A. Smith Lumber Historic District Map**

Figure 1: CA Smith Lumber Historic District*



Key

- C.A. Smith Lumber Historic District resource
- property analyzed in designation study
- unrelated building
- site features
- proposed historic district

*For each numbered resource above, see pages 31-35 for individual resource forms.

Figure 2: **C.A Smith Lumber District List of Resources and Status**

ID #	Address	Status	Resource Type
1	4400 Lyndale Ave N	Contributing	Building
2	4400 Lyndale Ave N	Non-Contributing	Building
3	4401 Lyndale Ave N	Contributing	Building
4	4401 Lyndale Ave N	Contributing	Building
5	4401 Lyndale Ave N	Non-Contributing	Building
6	Railroad Siding: 4401, 4420, 4430 Lyndale Ave N	Contributing	Site
7	4410 Lyndale Ave N	Contributing	Site
8	Billboard: 4410 Lyndale Ave N	Non-Contributing	Structure
9	4430 Lyndale Ave N	Contributing	Building

PART 1: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

District location, shape, and size

The C.A. Smith Lumber District is located in the Camden Industrial neighborhood on either side of Lyndale Avenue North, where it intersects 44th Avenue North (Figure 1). The district is composed of five lots – one on the west side of Lyndale Avenue North, and four on the east side of Lyndale Avenue North.

The district includes the following properties:

- 4400 Lyndale Avenue North, PID 1311821120019
- 4401 Lyndale Avenue North, PID 1311821210026
- 4410 Lyndale Avenue North, PID 1311821120018
- 4420 Lyndale Avenue North, PID 1311821120017
- 4430 Lyndale Avenue North, PID 1311821120023

The C.A. Smith Lumber District includes four contributing and two non-contributing buildings, as well as contributing landscape elements such as the extant "Soo" Line railroad siding (See Figures 1 and 2, and Part 4). Contributing buildings include two office buildings and two larger factory buildings. The office buildings are one to two stories tall with modest masonry detailing and some distinctive architectural features. The factory buildings range from one to three stories in height, are of utilitarian masonry construction, and were designed with minimal architectural detailing. As working buildings on an industrial site, each of the contributing buildings has undergone additions and alterations over time; these additions and alterations are easily identifiable at building exteriors through changes in building materials, roof heights, setbacks, and window opening articulation. The exception to this is the office building at 4400 Lyndale Avenue North – it is designed in the Queen Anne style and has undergone minimal exterior alterations. Non-contributing buildings include a concrete block garage and a corrugated metal shed. (Figure 10 tracks the physical development of the district).

Neighborhood context

On the west side of Lyndale Avenue North, the surrounding neighborhood is primarily residential, with modest single family homes to the west and north of the district. An industrial complex covers the block immediately to the south of the district. Shingle Creek and Webber Park are located just southwest of the site.

On the east side of Lyndale Avenue North, commercial and industrial buildings line the street to the north and south of the district. The Interstate 94 trench is located just east of the site, cutting between the district and the Mississippi River.

Description of building(s) in the C.A. Smith Lumber District

Mereen Johnson Machine Company
4401 Lyndale Avenue North PID 1311821210026

4401 Lyndale Avenue North, historically the Mereen-Johnson Machine Company property, includes two contributing and one non-contributing buildings, and a contributing site element – the Soo Line rail corridor. The property occupies roughly three-quarters of the city block bounded by Lyndale Avenue North to the east, 44th Avenue North to the south, Aldrich Avenue North to the west and 45th Avenue North to quarter of the block at 4435 Lyndale Avenue North.

The Mereen-Johnson Machine Company office building (contributing, Figures 4-9) is located at the southeast corner of the parcel fronting Lyndale Avenue North. A large factory building (contributing, Figures 11-19) covers the bulk of the parcel, fronting Aldrich Avenue North and 44th Avenue North. Just north of the office building is a concrete block garage (non-contributing, Figures 20-21). A flat asphalt L-shaped yard is located at the northeast portion of the parcel (Figure 22).

Office Building

The office building is a single-story brick building originally constructed in 1917, with a brick addition added at the north side in 1953 (Figures 4-6). The original building was 32-feet 4-inches x 50-feet and the 1953 addition expanded the structure by 26-feet.[1] The original building was designed by architect John Schwab and constructed by Carlsted Brothers. A newer concrete block addition (non-contributing) extends across the west side of both the 1917 building and the 1953 addition. The exact date of this western addition is unknown as a building permit cannot be located, aerial photographs of the site show that the addition dates to sometime between 1967 and 1971.

The building has a flat roof. A clay tile parapet is present at the original portion of the building. At the original building, the cornice features corbeling with a stringcourse below and the water table stands proud of the upper portion of the walls. There are no notable architectural details in the brickwork at the 1953 addition or the later addition. Original architectural drawings of the building show that the pattern of window openings has been altered over time – no historic windows are extant, however limestone sills

and soldier course headers are present marking the location of the original window openings (Figures 7-9).

The office building's primary façade fronts Lyndale Avenue north, a door is located at the southern edge of the façade. A secondary entrance is located at the western edge of the southern façade (facing 44th Avenue).

Date(s) of construction:
1917, 1953, unknown (between 1967-1971).

Location, placement, and orientation of building on the site:
The Mereen Johnson Office Building is located at the southeast corner of PID 1311821210026, at the intersection of Lyndale Avenue North and 44th Avenue North.

Size and massing:
Rectangular, single story brick building with flat roof, approximately 76-feet x 76-feet

Architectural style: (or styles if it is a mixed-style building):
Twentieth-century commercial

Known original elements that are deteriorated or missing:
Missing: Historic window sash and frames and some historic window openings

Factory Building

The factory building has undergone significant changes - with many alterations, additions, and demolitions taking place over time (Figures 10-19).

The original portion of the building, historically the "machine shop" was constructed in 1916 (contributing, Figures 11-12). The 40-foot by 245-foot machine shop is the section that extends east from Aldrich Avenue, fronting 44th Avenue until reaching the railroad spur, where the building turns northeast (Figure 13).[2]

This earliest portion of the building is organized into a series of bays. Each bay features a pair of radial arched windows with stone sills. A brick string course extends the full length of the façade fronting 44th Avenue and the railroad spur. The window openings on this façade have been infilled with plywood (Figures 11-13).

In 1917, a 18-foot by 32-foot concrete block addition was added to the north side of the machine shop (contributing, Figure 17).[3]

In 1919, a 55-foot by 72-foot brick foundry was added to the east end of the machine shop, extending the building along the railroad spur (contributing). A second 19-foot by 62 foot brick "addition to machine shop and foundry" followed in 1920 (contributing).[4] Building permit cards for both of these additions credit Mereen-Johnson executive Arthur B. Johnson as architect (Figures 14, 15, and 16).

In 1922, Arthur B. Johnson served as architect for another addition to the building – a 32-foot by 48-foot "brick pattern vault" constructed to the northeast of the foundry (contributing).[5]

Unspecified repairs were made to the building following a fire in 1938.[6]

In 1940, a 12-foot by 92-foot brick addition was added to the north side of the machine shop (contributing).[7]

A series of large, concrete block additions were added to the north of the machine shop beginning in 1943. These additions have a different architectural character from the earlier sections of the building, notably their larger size and difference in material and detailing. These additions include (see also Figure 10 for Development Diagram):[8]

- A 8-foot by 37 foot addition in 1943 (contributing)
- A 60-foot by 100-foot addition in 1946 (contributing, Figure 10)
- A 40-foot by 60-foot addition in 1950 (contributing, Figure 14)
- A 60-foot by 80-food addition in 1953 (contributing)
- A 100-foot 10-inch by 172-foot 7-inch addition in 1960 (contributing, Figure 18)
- A 13-foot by 19-foot addition in 1963 (contributing)
- A 62-foot by 50-foot addition and a 81-foot by 266-foot in 1966 (both contributing)
- A 62-foot by 119-foot addition in 1969 (non-contributing, Figure 19)

Date(s) of construction:
1916, 1919, 1920, 1922, 1940, 1943, 1946, 1953, 1960, 1963, 1966, 1969

Location, placement, and orientation of building on the site:
The Mereen Johnson Factory Building extends the full length of the western edge of PID 1311821210026.

Size and massing:
Irregular single story brick building, 76,115 square feet

Architectural style: (or styles if it is a mixed-style building):
Twentieth-century commercial

Known original elements that are deteriorated or missing:
Missing: Some historic window sash and frames

Garage

To the north of the office building is a two story 24-foot x 60-foot garage constructed in 1959 (Figures 20-21).[9] It is constructed of concrete masonry units (CMU) laid in stacked bond; the exterior is painted. The building has a flat roof with a utilitarian parapet cap. Three overhead garage doors are centered on the south façade. At the east façade, a double man door is located at the northern end of the second story. The stair that served this door has been removed. A single man door is located at ground level on the eastern edge of the north façade. The west faced is an uninterrupted plane of CMU.

Historically, the garage building was separated from the office building by a Soo Line railroad spur (Figure 21).

This building is non-contributing to the district – it is a garage and never housed factory or office space that were integral to Mereen Johnson Company operations.

C.A. Smith Lumber Company Office
4400 Lyndale Avenue North: PID 1311821120019

4400 Lyndale Avenue North, historically the site of the C.A. Smith Lumber Company office building. The property is bounded by Lyndale Avenue North to the west, 4410, 4420, and 4430 Lyndale Avenue to the north, the Interstate 94 trench to the west, and 4360 Lyndale Avenue to the south.

The C.A. Smith Lumber Company office building (contributing, Figures 23-25) is located at the eastern edge of the parcel with a small green lawn setting it back from Lyndale Avenue North. A corrugated metal shed (non-contributing, Figure 26) is located to the east of the office building.

Office Building

The C.A. Smith Office Building was constructed in 1903 (Figures 23-25). The two-story buff brick building is designed in an interpretation of the Queen Anne style. The building

has a stone foundation and a flat roof. A brick parapet wall with decorative stringcourse projects above the roof (Figure 25).

The building has a rectangular massing with a projecting rounded “turret” at the northwest corner (Figure 24). A single-story brick addition extends from the southern half of the eastern façade; there is no building permit dating this addition, however aerial photographs of the site narrow the range of potential construction dates to between 1937 and 1956 (Figure 25).

At the southwest corner of the building, the ground level features a cut corner where the building’s main entrance is located (Figure 23). A set of stone steps rises from grade to the top of the water table “completing” the corner of the building. A single Corinthian column rises from the top of the steps to support a stone lintel and the second story of the building. At the second story, series of brick corbels accentuate the corner of the building. The entry itself is comprised of a single swing door flanked by wood panels. A transom window also flanked by panels is located above the door.

A secondary entrance is located at the eastern end of the north façade (Figure 24). At this entrance a set of metal steps rises to a single swing door.

At the ground and second levels, rows of double-hung arched windows with stone sills stretch the length of the south, west, and north façades. Arched three-over-three fixed windows are present at the garden level on these façades. At the east façade only two arched double-hung windows are present. Throughout the building, the windows are a mixture of historic wood sash and replacement sash. Changes in the brickwork show that various openings have been infilled over time.

A ghost sign band for the “Machine Specialties Mfg. Co.” is present between the ground and second levels of the west and south façades.

Date(s) of construction:
1903, unknown (between 1937 and 1956)

Location, placement, and orientation of building on the site:
The C.A. Smith Office Building is located at the western edge of PID 1311821120019, fronting Lyndale Avenue North.

Size and massing:
Rectangular two-story brick building, 8,018 square feet.

Architectural style: (or styles if it is a mixed-style building):
Queen Anne

Known original elements that are deteriorated or missing:
NA

Metal Shed

A corrugated metal shed is located to the east of the office building (Figure 26). The 30-foot by 100-foot shed was constructed in 1927 and has a flat metal roof.[10] There are doors on the east and north sides of the shed. The shed is significantly rusted and in otherwise poor repair. This deterioration has compromised the integrity of the shed, and it is non-contributing.

C.A. Smith Lumber Company Yards
4410 Lyndale Avenue North: PID 1311821120018

4410 Lyndale Avenue is a vacant parcel, which was part of the C.A. Smith Lumber Company yards during the period of significance (contributing, Figures 32-33). The parcel is located to the east of 4400 and 4430 Lyndale Avenue – between those parcels and the Interstate 94 trench. There is a billboard at the southeast corner of the parcel (non-contributing). The parcel is generally flat and covered with volunteer vegetation including grasses and trees. This parcel is representative of the formerly expansive C.A. Smith Lumber Yards, and is contributing to the district.

C.A. Smith Lumber Company Yards
4420 Lyndale Avenue North: PID 1311821120017

4420 Lyndale Avenue is a vacant parcel, which was part of the C.A. Smith Lumber Company yards during the period of significance (contributing, Figures 32-33). The parcel is located to the east of 4400 and 4430 Lyndale Avenue – between those parcels and the Interstate 94 trench. The parcel is generally flat and covered with volunteer vegetation including grasses and trees. The parcel is the former location of a Soo Line railroad siding, and is contributing to the district.

Northwestern Compo Board Company and C.A. Smith Lumber Company Factory
4430 Lyndale Avenue North: PID 1311821120023

Factory Building
4430 Lyndale Avenue North was historically the site of the Northwestern Compo-Board and C.A Smith Lumber Company factory building (Figures 27-31). The building has an

overall rectangular massing with a flat roof. The majority of the building is two stories, with a relatively small three-story section comprising the northeast portion of the building (this remaining three-story portion survived the 1966 fire). The building is clad in a combination of buff, tan, and red brick. A single-story corrugated metal lean-to has been attached to the southern façade (non-contributing, Figure 29).

The original portion of the building was constructed in 1892. A fire in 1894 necessitated what building permits suggest was a substantial (130-foot by 36-foot and 126-foot by 140-foot) reconstruction and addition to the building (contributing).[11]

A series of expansions to the factory building were constructed over the next 25 years (See also Figure 10 for Development Diagram):[12]

- 1903, a 22-foot by 104 foot addition for a lumber drying kiln (contributing)
- 1906, a 15-foot by 60-foot addition for a lumber drying kiln (contributing)
- 1906, two more “additions” to the factory sized 20-feet by 30-feet and 14-feet by 18-feet (contributing)
- 1917, “new brick walls” were added to the building (contributing)
- 1920, a 50-foot by 74-foot warehouse addition to the building (contributing)

In 1966, a fire destroyed the third floor of the building.[13] Repairs were made to stabilize the remaining portion of the third floor (rear bays at the northeast corner of the building), however, the majority of the third floor was lost to the fire and not rebuilt.

The primary façade fronts Lyndale Avenue North and is clad in buff brick (Figures 27-28). At the second level, a row of regularly spaced six-over-six double-hung windows with stone sills extends the length of the façade. At the first level, a series of six-light awning windows with stone sills are located beneath roughly half of the second level windows. The main entrance to the building is located at the southern end of this façade; a single six-over-six double hung window is located just north of the entrance. An overhead garage door is located at the northern end of the façade.

The buff brick walls and pattern of window openings present at the west façade also turn the corners to the north and south facades. At the north façade (Figure 31), these materials extend east for six bays. At the ground level, a metal garage door and double man door are present on the ground level of this portion of the building. The eastern two bays of this portion of the building retain a third story.

Moving east along the north façade, the next four bays are also three stories high, though the parapet steps up slightly. This portion of the building is clad in tan brick and features rounded arch window openings at all three stories.

Continuing to the east, the final four bays of the building are also three stories. Here, the parapet steps back down slightly and the building is again clad in buff brick. Windows in this section of the building are similar to those in the middle section.

At the south façade, the materials from the primary façade extend east for ten bays (Figure 29). This portion of the building is two stories. A corrugated metal lean-to obscures the first six bays of the ground level. The building's brick wall is extant behind the lean-to. To the east of the lean-to, two large openings spanned by a steel I-beam are present at the first level (Figure 30). One opening is currently filled with an overhead garage door, the second is partially infilled with brick and partially filled with a double man-door, sidelights, and transom.

Moving east along the façade, the rear portion of the building is constructed with red brick (Figure 30). The roof line rises higher than at the buff portion of the building and steps down as it moves east. Two additional openings spanned by steel I-beams are present at the first level; each is filled with an overhead garage door. At the second level, this portion of the building is solid brick with two wooden hoists protruding from the façade.

The east façade of the building is entirely obscured by vegetation (Figure 32).

Date(s) of construction:
1892, 1894, 1903, 1906, 1917, 1920, 1966

Location, placement, and orientation of building on the site:
The Northwestern Compo Board Company and C.A. Smith Lumber Company Factory Building is located at the western edge of PID 1311821120023. The primary façade faces Lyndale Avenue North.

Size and massing:
Rectangular two-story brick building, 44,438 square feet

Architectural style: (or styles if it is a mixed-style building):
Nineteenth Century Industrial

Known original elements that are deteriorated or missing:
Missing: Portions of third floor due to 1966 fire.

Description of landscape and landscape features

Topography, terrain, and vegetation

The topography of the C.A. Smith Lumber District is generally flat. Landscaping is limited to a small lawn at the boulevard of 4400 Lyndale Avenue, and low plantings at south and east sides of the office building at 4401 Lyndale Avenue. Volunteer plants including grasses and trees are located at the eastern portions of the 4400 and 4430 Lyndale parcels and at 4410 and 4420 Lyndale (Figures 32-33).

A large asphalt yard covers the northern portion of 4401 Lyndale Avenue (Figure 22). The yard is enclosed by a chain link fence.

Other landscape features

The most notable landscape feature in the district is the former Soo Line railroad siding (contributing, Figures 21 and 30). Moving from west to east through the district, the siding is extant where it crosses 44th Avenue North. From there, it extends along the southern edge of the Mereen Johnson factory building at 4401 Lyndale Avenue and then between the Mereen Johnson office building and the garage. The siding then crosses Lyndale Avenue and continues between 4400 and 4430 Lyndale Avenue and the length of 4420 Lyndale Avenue.

PART 2: HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The C.A. Smith Lumber District is a historic resource for the City of Minneapolis. The properties located within the district represent the late stage of the Minneapolis lumber industry (c. 1890-1921), the city's short-lived but robust "post-lumber" industry (c. 1921-1939), and 19th and 20th century manufacturing in the Camden neighborhood. The period of significance for the district is 1892-1966.

The C.A. Smith Lumber District meets three landmark designation criteria under Section 599.210; the district is significant under Criterion 1 for its association with the late stage of the Minneapolis lumber industry and with the city's short-lived but robust "post-lumber" industry, under Criterion 2 for its association with C.A. Smith, Arno Mereen, and Charles Johnson, and under Criterion 3 for its association with the industrial nature of the Camden neighborhood throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries.

The *North Minneapolis Historic Context Study (1998)* identifies the C.A. Smith Lumber Company, the Compo-Board Company, and other industrial sites in Camden as a "significant economic force in encouraging the development of North Minneapolis." The study further states that, "the sawmills provided work for new immigrants as well as American-born, and encouraged the subdivision of land and building of homes for workingmen and well-to-do residents. The sawmills dominated the North Minneapolis economy in the growth period between 1880 and 1920." Furthermore, the *Historic Resources Inventory Capstone* (2013) determined 20th Century manufacturing is an under-represented category of properties throughout the city. The C.A. Smith Lumber Company, its subsidiary Compo-Board Company, and the Mereen Johnson Machine Company represent this significant area of the city's history.

Minnesota's Lumber Industry c. 1830-1930

Minnesota's White Pine industry began in the St. Croix River Valley, with mills at Marine on St. Croix and Stillwater, in the 1830s.[14] White Pine trees can grow as tall as 200 feet high, with a diameter as wide as 5 feet, and produce soft wood that is "strong, slow to decay, light in weight, odorless, and easy to cut."[15] These characteristics, combined with the vast stands of white pine throughout the state, quickly made Minnesota one of the major lumber centers of the United States.[16]

The first sawmill in Minneapolis was established at St. Anthony Falls by Ard Godfrey and Franklin Steele. The mill consisted of "two up and down saws and a lath saw" that Godfrey and Steele had shipped from Maine. The mill had an average daily output of 15,000 feet of lumber.[17] By 1860, Minneapolis had overtaken the St. Croix River Valley as the center of commercial saw-milling in Minnesota.[18] Minneapolis received the nickname "the Sawdust City," because the city became a world center of lumber production.[19]

Writing of Minnesota's lumber industry in 1892, Horace Hudson claimed that

> The [Mississippi] river (and its tributaries entering *above* Minneapolis) drain a basin containing a larger area of pine land than any other river in the country. This pine timber can be most conveniently sawed into lumber at Minneapolis, and the river affords a direct and inexpensive highway. The pine is practically inexhaustible.[20]

Despite Hudson's boosterish claim, by the close of the 19th century, most of the forested lands along the rivers were exhausted, which forced the logging industry further north and, because of fewer rivers, required most of the harvested trees to be transported to lumber mills by rail.[21]

Between 1900 and 1910, the peak years of Minnesota's lumber industry, Minnesota was producing 2.1 billion feet of white pine per year. Cuts began to drop after 1910, forcing many lumber mills to close their doors.[22] The world's largest white pine lumber company, Virginia, Minnesota's Virginia and Rainy Lake Lumber Company ceased operations in 1929, marking the end of Minnesota's dominance of the white pine industry.

After 1929, lumber mills that sought to stay in business began to diversify, shifting production to "paper, pulp, matchsticks, and manufactured building materials."[23]

The C.A. Smith Lumber Company

C.A. Smith

In the opening years of the twentieth century, C.A. Smith had established the largest sawmill in the city of Minneapolis and his mill had garnered a national reputation in the lumber industry for its commitment to eliminating waste and maximizing the raw material derived from each and every log. According to a profile on Smith and his plant in the 1903 "Silver Anniversary Edition" of *The Minneapolis Journal*, Smith's reputation extended from Minneapolis to the east coast to Norway because

> …no other mill in the United States comes so near utilizing the entire log…[and] economy of material is the tendency of the white pine lumbermen in these latter days, when the forests of the north are thinning, the price of logs and white pine lumber steadily advancing, and it has come to a point where it pays the manufacturer to take time and extra machinery in order to get out of a log all that is possible….In this new movement the C.A. Smith Lumber company has been setting the pace for several years and it is now turning out a line of high-grade by products that is a great revenue producer."[24]

Charles A. Smith was born in Ostergotland, Sweden in 1852 and immigrated to the United States with his father and sister in 1867. Smith studied at Minneapolis public schools and then spent two years at the University of Minnesota. While studying at the University, Smith worked for John S. Pillsbury at Pillsbury's St. Anthony hardware store.[25] Health problems forced Smith to abandon his studies and he was able to secure a full-time position at the hardware store, where he worked until 1878, when he and Pillsbury formed C.A. Smith & Co (Figure 34). [26]

Smith relocated to Hermann, Minnesota, where he sold grain and farm machinery and managed a lumber yard until 1883. During this period, he also partnered with C.J. Johnson in lumber yards in Evansville, Brandon, and Ashby. These business ventures put Smith in the fortuitous position of being able to return to Minneapolis and take advantage of an offer that came from Pillsbury in 1884.[27]

According to historian Agnes Larson, Pillsbury had been investing in pineries since 1857, long before he became famous for his flour mills.[28] In 1884, Pillsbury had loaned money to a group of loggers who could not repay the debt; Pillsbury took possession of their logs and approached Smith with the opportunity to process the logs into boards and sell the lumber. Smith had the logs cut at specialty mills and entered the lumber wholesaling business.[29]

Three years later, C.A. Smith & Co. purchased an existing saw mill on Minneapolis' east side. Disaster struck after only two months of operation; the saw mill was one of five destroyed by a large fire. Smith and Pillsbury returned to outsourcing the sawing to other mills until 1890. [30]

During the same period, Smith entered a second partnership and established the Smith and Kilgore mill, after purchasing a two-thirds share in the existing Clough Brothers & Kilgore mill, also on the east side. This mill was quickly sold to the Nelson-Tenney Company, which continued to process boards for Smith and Kilgore until 1892. Smith's business savvy, demonstrated by his successful partnerships and relationships, left him with capital totaling nearly $800,000 by the close of 1892, when he incorporated the C.A. Smith Lumber Company.

The C.A. Smith Lumber Company 1892-1929

C.A. Smith established his eponymous lumber company on 20 acres along the west bank Mississippi River in the north Minneapolis Camden neighborhood. Smith constructed a factory building in 1892 and began construction of his mill in 1893.[31] A fire insurance map from 1894 shows that the C.A. Smith Lumber Company was one of seven lumber concerns along this stretch of the Mississippi(Figures 35-36).[32] Smith's neighbors included:

- Bovey-DeLaittre Lumber Co.
- Gull River Lumber Co.
- Carpenter Bros. & Co.
- E.W. Backus Lumber Co.
- H.C. Akeley Co.
- Geo. W. Higgins & C

The C.A. Smith Lumber Company and the Bovey-DeLaittre Lumber Company, which was located on the east side of the river, were the largest concerns.[33] In the 1890s, the C.A. Smith mill was reported to employ 800 men at a time and produce 750,000 board feet per day (Figure 37).[34]

During the peak white pine production years of 1900 to 1910, Smith significantly expanded his operations in Camden. He added drying kilns to his factory in 1894 and 1895. The mill received a 66 ft. by 90 ft. addition in 1899 and a 48 ft. by 80 ft. addition in 1902. Additional drying kilns were constructed in 1903 and 1906. The factory was also expanded in 1906. A frame saw mill was constructed on the site in 1907. Another mill expansion took place in 1908.

In 1904 Smith served as the president and primary stockholder of the Minneapolis, Red Lake and Manitoba Railway Company. Smith used the railroad to transport white pine from the pineries of Bemidji to his Minneapolis sawmill.[35]

In order to effectively utilize all of the wood that passed through his mills, Smith had a factory where he used “waste” lumber to produced “shooks,” bundles of wood that, when assembled, formed a wooden box. The shooks were shipped to manufacturers who would construct the boxes, stamp them with their name or logo, and use them to transport products, including soap and crackers.[36]

Northwestern Compo Board Co.
Smith secured the patent for a “composite material designed to take the place of ordinary plastering," from George S. Mayhew in 1892. Smith would call the material, which consisted of thin strips of pine edgings, heavy paper, cement, and glue, “Compo Board” and he would produce it in his Camden factory.[37] Smith incorporated a separate company – the Northwestern Compo Board Co. –to produce the composite.

Compo Board was advertised for use as an interior finish material appropriate to be installed on all surfaces of the home (Figure 38). A pamphlet from 1895 describes the proper way to install the material on walls and ceilings to serve as both a plaster substitute and a form of insulation (Figure 39). The product was also marketed for use to schools and churches as a material for blackboards, to theaters for set construction, and to art museums for exhibit installation.[38]

As with the other mills in Minneapolis, as Minnesota’s reserves of white pine were exhausted after 1910, the mill’s production dwindled and Smith closed his mill in 1912 and moved his operations to Oregon, where he had significant land holdings and there was still lumber to mill.[39] While the mill had closed in 1912, Compo Board production continued at the Lyndale Avenue site through 1939.

The expansive C.A. Smith Lumber yards were quickly repurposed for new development. The former yards on the west side of Lyndale were platted and developed as residential property by the mid-1920s. An aerial photograph dated 1937, shows that the riverfront portion of the C.A. Smith site had all been demolished by that year, leaving only the Compo Board Factory, the Office Building, and a metal shed to the east of the Office Building on the site.[40]

In 1984, the section of Interstate 94 that connects Brooklyn Center to Minneapolis was completed. Construction of the highway severed the connection between the upper portion of the C.A. Smith site (along Lyndale) and the lower portion (along the Mississippi River), leaving the site in the general configuration that is extant today.

Mereen Johnson Machine Company 1905-1966

As Pillsbury invested in his employee C.A. Smith, so did Smith invest in his employees, Arno Mereen and Charles Johnson. Mereen and Johnson both began their careers as foreman in the C.A. Smith sawmill. A mechanically gifted pair, Mereen and Johnson filed two patents on behalf of the C.A. Smith Company that would change the milling industry (Figure 40). The Horizontal Band Re-Saw was used to cut thin strips of wood from a slab. The strips were then used for constructing flat-packed kit-of-parts shipping boxes known as "shooks."

In addition to running his lumber company, C.A. Smith operated subsidiary companies, including the Northwestern Compo Board Company and a shook making company. In 1905, when Mereen and Johnson left C.A. Smith to start the Mereen Johnson Machine Company, of which Smith was an investor, one of the first machines that Mereen Johnson manufactured was the horizontal band re-saw for producing shooks.

Both the *Minneapolis Journal* and the *St. Paul Globe* covered Mereen Johnson's incorporation. In an article titled "New Industries are Begun Here," the *Journa*l notes that the Mereen Johnson Machine Company is a manufacturer of box-making machines with capital of $25,000. Incorporators are listed as Arno Mereen, C.A. Smith, Victor Johnson, and Charles Johnson.[41]

Mereen Johnson Company's operations were originally housed near the river within the larger C.A. Smith site. As an unofficial component of the lumber company's operations, the Mereen Johnson shop was located near C.A. Smith's "pattern shop" and "box sorting shop (Figure 41)."

A *Minneapolis Journal* article from November of 1906 notes that after nearly two years of business, Mereen Johnson was ready to expand their production facilities.[42] "Fifty thousand dollars will be spent in enlarging the Mereen-Johnson Machine company plant adjoining the C.A. Smith sawmill," the article reported,

> "[The money] will be used in building and equipping a foundry to make the casting which the company has been buying outside. Robert Johnson, who is manager of the box shook department of the lumber company, is also superintendent of the Mereen-Johnson company. He reports that the company [C.A. Smith] has patents for a new twin band saw for sawmills, which it [Mereen Johnson's expanded plant] will manufacture. The company has been in operation more than a year manufacturing patent resaw machines for sawing slabs into box

material, also trimmers, squeezers, and a self-feed rip-saw for all boxwork (Figure 42-44)."

While the two businesses enjoyed a symbiotic relationship during Mereen Johnson's early years, by the 1910s Minnesota's white pine stands were rapidly depleting, and C.A. Smith Lumber Company began closing down its Lyndale Avenue plant. During this time, Mereen Johnson Company filed a series of patents for machine types that diversified production. The introduction of "Matching and Gluing" machines, an improved resaw, and "Machines for Uniting Boards" ensured that Mereen Johnson Company was able to remain successful as it separated itself from C.A. Smith and the shook making business.

In 1916, Mereen Johnson Machine Company completed its break from C.A. Smith, branding itself as a fully independent company by constructing a new machine shop on the west side of Lyndale Avenue. The spacious brick machine shop measured 40-feet by 245-feet and featured large windows along its length. In addition to raising Mereen Johnson's profile, the shop was located directly alongside a Soo Line rail siding, allowing for easy loading and distribution of the machines the company manufactured.

In 1917, Mereen Johnson constructed an office building alongside their machine shop. The single-story brick office building was designed by architect John Schwab. At the ground level, the building included an open plan "general office" space, two private offices (presumably for Mereen and Johnson), a vault, an engineer's drawings room, and toilets. The basement of the building was reserved for service space, housing a coal bin and boiler.

Business during the 1910s and 1920s was clearly successful – Mereen Johnson followed the initial construction of its machine shop and office building with a series of expansions to the machine shop, construction of a foundry, and construction of a pattern vault (see footnote 5).

Throughout the twentieth century, Mereen Johnson marketed its products at a national level, taking out advertisements in publications such as *The Wood Worker*, *American Lumberman* and *Hitchcock's Woodworking Directory*. These advertisements marketed individual products at an industrial level and to "garage woodworkers (Figure 45)."

The late 1930s and 1940s appear to have been a particularly dynamic time for the Mereen Johnson Company. The company filed six new patents during these years – for machines ranging from a "Conveyer Chain with Readily Detachable Feed Lug" to a

"Veneer Edge Gluing Machine" to a "Plywood Coring Machine." Significant additions to the factory were added in 1943 and 1946, suggesting an increase in production accompanied this diversification in product offerings.

The mid-twentieth century saw the introduction of the Dip Chain Gang Rip Saw in 1963, and the Computerized Panel Saw in 1969. The introduction of these tools marked a transition for Mereen Johnson, they nolonger solely produced machines to serve the lumber industry, but also produced tools for more generalized woodworking. Likewise, the factory building received additions in 1960, 1963, two in 1966, and a final addition in 1969.

In 1973, Mereen Johnson opened a second factory and foundry in Webster, SD. The Webster factory was expanded in 1995. The continued growth of the Webster factory marks the shift in production from Minneapolis to South Dakota. Mereen Johnson continued to maintain offices at 4401 Lyndale Avenue until 2012, when the company was acquired by NC Equity. Mereen Johnson still maintains offices in the city of Minneapolis.

Patents Held by the Mereen Johnson Machine Company*

Patent Award Date	Machine	Inventor	Patent Number
August 25, 1903	Horizontal Band Saw For Resawing Box Lumber	Arno Mereen	No. 737,434
November 1, 1904	Machine for Feeding Boards	Victor Johnson	No. 773,939
February 5, 1905	Matching and Gluing Machine	Victor Johnson and Charles Johnson	No. 782,342
January 29, 1907	Resawing Machine	Arno Mereen	No. 842,572
November 5, 1907	Machine for Uniting Matched Boards	Arno Mereen, Charles Johnson	No. 869,923
March 16, 1909	Machine for Uniting Matched Boards	Arno Mereen	No. 915,096
December 4, 1923	Board Feeding Device for Resaws	Charles Johnson	No. 1,475,950
December 14, 1937	Conveyer Chain With Readily Detachable	Roy Johnson	No. 2,102,569

	Feed Lug		
May 17, 1938	Work Holder for Endless Conveyers	Oscar E. Westlund	No. 2,117,641
March 6, 1945	Cuttoff Saw Mechanism for Sheet Feeding Machines	O.S. Bolling	No. 2,370,932
April 10, 1945	Edge Gluing Machine	O.S. Bolling	No. 2,373,376
April 16, 1946	Veneer Edge Gluing Machine	O.S. Bolling	No. 2,398,353
November 22, 1949	Plywood Coring Machine	O.S. Bolling	No. 2,488,759
July 5, 1994	Gang Rip Saw Assembly	Max A. Green, Marvin W. Lee	No. 5,325,751
*It is possible that further research may yield additional patents.			

PART 3: RATIONALE FOR LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION

Local historic designation is an official action that promotes the preservation of historic resources by recognizing specific people, places, and events that are deemed to be significant in relation to the history and heritage of Minneapolis. Through the requirements set out in the Heritage Preservation chapter of the City's Code of Ordinances, the act of designation establishes a series of protections that are administered through the ordinance to ensure protection of significant places throughout the city against demolition or inappropriate alterations.

Designation Criteria

Title 23, Chapter 599.210 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances lists seven criteria which shall be considered in determining whether a property or district is worthy of local designation as a landmark because of its historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance. The C.A. Smith Lumber District is considered below in relation to each of the seven designation criteria.

Criteria #1: The district is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic, or social history.

The C.A. Smith Lumber District is significant under Criterion 1 for its association with the late stage of the Minneapolis lumber industry and with the city's short-lived but robust "post-lumber" industry as described in Part 2 of this study.

Criteria #2: The district is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.

The C.A. Smith Lumber District is significant under Criterion 2 for its association with the lives of C.A. Smith Lumber Company and Mereen-Johnson Machine Company founders – C.A. Smith, Arno Mereen, and Charles Johnson as described in Part 2 of this study.

Criteria #3: The district contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity.

The C.A. Smith Lumber District is significant under Criterion 3 for its association with the industrial nature of the Camden neighborhood throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries – from the lumber industry of the late 19th century to Mereen Johnson Machine Company's innovations in saw technology during the mid-20th century -

industrial development has played a defining role in Camden's neighborhood identity. See Part 2 for more detail.

Criteria #4: The district embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.

The district is not significant under Criterion 4. The buildings in the C.A. Smith Lumber District are representative of their respective buildings types and era of construction (masonry industrial buildings at 4430 and 4401 Lyndale and masonry office buildings at 4400 and 4401 Lyndale), however they do not meet the standard of embodying distinctive characteristics of an architectural of engineering type of style, or method of construction.

Criteria #5: The district exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.

The district is not significant under Criterion 5. The properties in this district do not exemplify a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or quality of design or detail. The overall development pattern of the district is typical of an industrial corridor, with relatively large parcels present on both sides of Lyndale Avenue North.

Criteria #6: The district exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.

The district is not significant under Criterion 6. The properties in this district do not exemplify the work of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen, or architects.

Criteria #7: The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Archeological investigation is outside the scope of this study. As part of the district includes the site of an early lumber yard, with further investigation, the district may be eligible for designation under Criteria 7.

Integrity of historic resource

The following is an assessment of the C.A. Smith Lumber District as relates to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the Department of the Interior:

Location: The District retains integrity of location.

None of the buildings within the District have been moved from their original sites, therefore the District retains integrity of location.

Design: The District retains integrity of design.

As a whole, the district was not a highly designed group of buildings. C.A. Smith/Compo Board and Mereen Johnson factory buildings were utilitarian structures that were added on to and adapted over time. The C.A. Smith Company office building and the Mereen Johnson Company office building feature more design elements, and retain a level of exterior detailing that sets them apart from their associated industrial buildings. The Northwestern Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory building suffered a fire in 1966, resulting in a partial loss of the building's third story.

Setting: The District has lost much of its integrity of setting.

While the Camden neighborhood and Lyndale Avenue continue to be a working industrial area and the spatial relationships among the buildings and their relationship to the Soo Line rail siding remain intact, the setting beyond the boundaries of the district has changed dramatically.

The site no longer has a direct physical connection to the Mississippi River, that connection was severed within the period of significance as a result of the construction of Interstate 94. Additionally, the neighborhood to the east and north of the district has changed from lumber yards to single-family residential development. Much of the historic industrial and commercial fabric along Lyndale Avenue North has been replaced with mid-to-late 20th century commercial buildings.

Materials: The District retains its integrity of materials.

The contributing structures within the district retain their original masonry exteriors (both 19th century brick and early-to-mid 20th century CMU construction) along with details including stone windowsills, some original windows, and ghost signs.

Workmanship: The District retains much of its integrity of workmanship.

The district's two office buildings retain integrity of workmanship which is expressed through their masonry details and construction quality.

The district's two factory buildings are utilitarian structures constructed without a high degree of architectural detail. The articulated additions and straightforward construction methods reflect the quality of workmanship common in 20th century factory buildings constructed by day labor.

Feeling: The District retains its integrity of feeling.

The C.A. Smith Lumber District began as a working lumber yard, and continued to be used for industrial purposes throughout the 20th century. The utilitarian nature of the buildings, flat industrial yard, and extant railroad siding maintain integrity of feeling in the District.

Association: The District retains much of its integrity of association.

While the district's factory buildings are often associated with their current tenants – Atomic Recycling and Guilded Salvage, the district's office buildings retain integrity of association with their original owners – C.A. Smith and Mereen-Johnson.

<u>Other Considerations:</u>

Minneapolis Historic Contexts

North Minneapolis Historic Context Study (1998) identifies the C.A. Smith Lumber Company, the Compo-Board Company, and other industrial uses in this area as a "significant economic force in encouraging the development of North Minneapolis." The study further states that, "the sawmills provided work for new immigrants as well as American-born, and encouraged the subdivision of land and building of homes for workingmen and well-to-do residents. The sawmills dominated the North Minneapolis economy in the growth period between 1880 and 1920."

Relationship to the 1990 Minneapolis Preservation Plan

The business and industry context and the early lumber milling sub-context of the plan identify the C.A. Smith Lumber Company as one of ten large lumber companies located

on the Mississippi in 1894. The plan states, “lumber milling is significant to the city as one of the earliest industries to take hold in the city. As lumber milling flourished, the city flourished. The industry created jobs, produced cheap building materials for the booming town and ultimately provided capital for the growth of other industries, especially flour milling. The entrepreneurs who established the mills would become leaders in business and politics and would contribute to the social and cultural development of the city. “

Relationship to the body of locally-designated properties in Minneapolis

There is a single local landmark in Camden neighborhood:

- Camden State Bank

Lumber related local landmarks include:

- Lumber Exchange Building
- St Anthony Falls Historic District

The Historic Resources Inventory Capstone (2013) determined that there are types of landmarks that are under-represented in the inventory of landmarks in Minneapolis. One under-represented category is 20th Century manufacturing. The study lists C.A. Smith Lumber Company and Compo-Board Company at 4400 and 4430 Lyndale Avenue North respectively, as well as the Mereen Johnson Machine Company at 4401 Lyndale Avenue North, as examples of sites that could be included in this under-represented category that are worthy of further exploration and possible designation.

Comprehensive and Long-Range Planning

Title 23, Chapter 599.260 of Minneapolis Code of Ordinances requires the planning director to submit all proposed designations to the Minneapolis City Planning Commission for review and comment on the proposed designation.

The designation of these buildings could be a part of an economic development strategy for the North Lyndale Corridor, as the subject properties could have mixed-use in a manner envisioned by the goals of the comprehensive plan. The designation of the buildings an historic district by the City will require the preservation of buildings significant for their association with historic patterns of cultural, political, economic, or social history, significant persons, and distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity in an area underrepresented by historic landmarks and districts.

In its review, the City Planning Commission shall consider but not be limited to the following factors:

(1) The relationship of the proposed designation to the city's comprehensive plan.

The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth designates this part of North Lyndale Avenue as a Community Corridor and the subject properties as Transitional Industrial. The area adjacent and to the north of the properties is a Neighborhood Commercial Node.

The land use chapter the comprehensive plan stats that Transitional Industrial Areas area industrial areas located outside of Industrial Employment Districts that will be labeled “transitional” since they may eventually evolve to other uses compatible with surrounding development. Although they may remain industrial for some time, they will not have the same level of policy protection as areas within industrial districts.

The plan states the following about landmark designations: “One of the driving forces behind the current survey is to balance the designated properties. The re-survey of the city attempts to balance the historic properties by investigating properties from the recent past, variety of geographic locations in the city, and land uses. Certain areas, such neighborhoods in and around downtown, have a wealth of designated properties. Other parts of the city have historic resources; however, many have not been identified through historic surveys.”

Policy 8.1: Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city's architecture, history, and culture.

> 8.1.1 Protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance.

The plan says the following about historic preservation as an economic development tool: “Historic preservation can be a strategy in redevelopment or revitalization of a neighborhood or area of the city. Reuse and rehabilitation of historic buildings can be a catalyst for other investment, especially in neighborhoods with barriers to economic success. While renovating an older building has many positive impacts to the community, the cost of renovating a historic building to property owners and developers can often be a major issue. Working with developers early in the process can help to streamline preservation requirements and increase the project success.”

Policy 8.10: Promote the benefits of preservation as an economic development tool and a method to achieve greater environmental sustainability and city vitality.

> 8.10.1 Encourage rehabilitation of buildings and landscapes to stimulate economic activity in depressed areas.

8.10.2 Establish property tax relief for historic building owners whose building is in an economically depressed area.

8.10.3 Establish a local funding stream for preservation work which directly contributes to the city's economic growth.

8.10.4 Encourage the occupation and reuse of historic structures in areas targeted by the city for revitalization by contributing resources to make older buildings more energy efficient and therefore less expensive to operate.

8.10.5 Prioritize the reuse of the city's historic buildings as a strategy for sustainable development.

8.10.6 Market the city's high quality, architecturally interesting, readily available and affordable housing and commercial properties.

8.10.7 Use planning tools, such as transfer of development rights and historic variances, as well as economic incentives, such as tax increment financing and tax abatements, to retain historic structures while compensating for the loss of development potential.

8.10.8 Promote financial preservation incentives for property owners and developers.

8.10.9 Develop heritage tourism strategies.

The designation of the buildings as an historic district by the City will require the preservation of buildings significant for their association with historic patterns of cultural, political, economic, or social history, significant persons, and distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity in an area underrepresented by historic landmarks and districts. It could also be a part of an economic development strategy for this area of North Lyndale Avenue, as the subject properties are the type of buildings that could have mixed-use in a manner envisioned by the goals of the comprehensive plan.

(2) The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area.

A designation will serve as a reminder of the industrial history of the area and could catalyze mixed-use reuse of the buildings in conformance with the goals of the comprehensive plan. This would have a positive effect on the surrounding area.

(3) The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council.

There are no development objectives or small area plans adopted for this area of North Lyndale Avenue.

National Register Status

Neither the C.A. Smith Lumber District nor any of the individual properties included therein are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The owners are encouraged to pursue such listing in the future with the intent of pursuing tax credits from the State of Minnesota (20%) and the National Park Service (20%).

State Designation

The property have not been designation by the State of Minnesota as a historic district, historic place, of historic site.

Proposed Period of Significance:

The proposed period of significance for the C.A. Smith Lumber District is 1892-1966. The period of significance begins when C.A. Smith Lumber Company and Northwestern Compo Board Company first moved to the site in 1892. The period of significance ends in 1966, at which point Mereen Johnson Machine Company was still operating at 4401 Lyndale Avenue North but had transitioned from solely producing machines to serve the lumber industry to producing tools for more generalized woodworking.

PART 4: REGISTRATION AND CLASSICIFICATION: Individual Resource Forms

For purposes of this description, the resources in the C.A. Smith Lumber Historic District are arranged numerically in sequence by their street addresses. All photos taken by the staff of Preservation Design Works (consultants to the project).

See Figure 1 for a district map and key to the location of resources.

1. Address: 4400 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: C.A. Smith Lumber Company Office Common Name: N/A Historic use: Office Current use: Vacant Architect: N/A Year Built: 1903 Status: Contributing The building was built in 1903, with a rear addition added between 1937 and 1956. The building is two-story brick construction in the Queen Anne style. The building housed the C.A. Smith Lumber Company's offices.	
2. Address: 4400 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: N/A Common Name: N/A Historic use: Shed Current use: Shed Architect: N/A Year Built: 1927 Status: Non-Contributing Corrugated metal shed constructed in 1927. The shed is rusted and in otherwise poor repair, to the point that it no longer retains integrity.	

3. Address: 4401 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: Mereen Johnson Office Building Common Name: N/A Historic use: Office Current use: Office Architect: John Schwab Year Built: 1917 Status: Contributing The building was constructed in 1917, with a side addition in 1953 and a non-contributing rear addition constructed between 1967 and 1971. The single-story brick building is constructed in a Twentieth Century commercial style. The building housed the Mereen Johnson Company's offices and drafting department.	
4. Address: 4401 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: Mereen Johnson Factory Building Common Name: N/A Historic use: Industrial Current use: Industrial Architect: N/A Year Built: 1916 Status: Contributing The initial portion of this industrial building was constructed in 1916. The building has been added on to repeatedly over time. It is a one-story masonry vernacular industrial building. A significant CMU addition at the north of the building was constructed in 1969 and is non-contributing. The building housed the Mereen Johnson Company's factory and production facilities.	

5. Address: 4401 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: Mereen Johnson Garage Common Name: N/A Historic use: Garage Current use: Garage Architect: N/A Year Built: 1959 Status: Non-Contributing The two-story Mereen Johnson Garage was constructed in 1959 of concrete masonry units. This building is non-contributing to the district – it is a garage and never housed factory or office space that was integral to Mereen Johnson Company operations.	
6. Address: 4401, 4420, 4430 Lyndale Ave N (foreground of image) Historic Name: Soo Line Railroad Siding Common Name: N/A Historic use: Railroad Siding Current use: N/A Architect: N/A Year Built: N/A Status: Contributing The C.A. Smith Lumber Company, Northwestern Compo Board Company, and Mereen Johnson Company were all served by a Soo Line railroad siding that bisected the district.	

7. Address: 4410 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: C.A. Smith Lumber Company Yards Common Name: N/A Historic use: Lumber Yard Current use: N/A Architect: N/A Year Built: N/A Status: Contributing 4410 Lyndale Avenue North is generally flat and covered with volunteer vegetation. A billboard (see Individual Resource Form 8) is located at the southeast corner of the parcel. The parcel is contributing as a representative of the once expansive C.A. Smith Lumber Yards.	
8. Address: 4410 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: N/A Common Name: Billboard Historic use: Current use: Architect: N/A Year Built: N/A Status: Non-Contributing A non-contributing billboard is located at the eastern edge of 4430 Lyndale Ave N, overlooking Interstate 94.	

9. Address: 4430 Lyndale Ave N Historic Name: Northwestern Compo Board Company and C.A. Smith Lumber Company Factory Building Common Name: N/A Historic use: Industrial Current use: Industrial Architect: N/A Year Built: 1892 Status: Contributing 4430 Lyndale Avenue North was historically the site of the Northwestern Compo Board and C.A. Smith Lumber Company factory building. The building is primarily two stories, with a three story portion at the northeast corner of the building. The building is masonry construction.	

PART 5: PHOTOGRAPHS, DRAWINGS, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

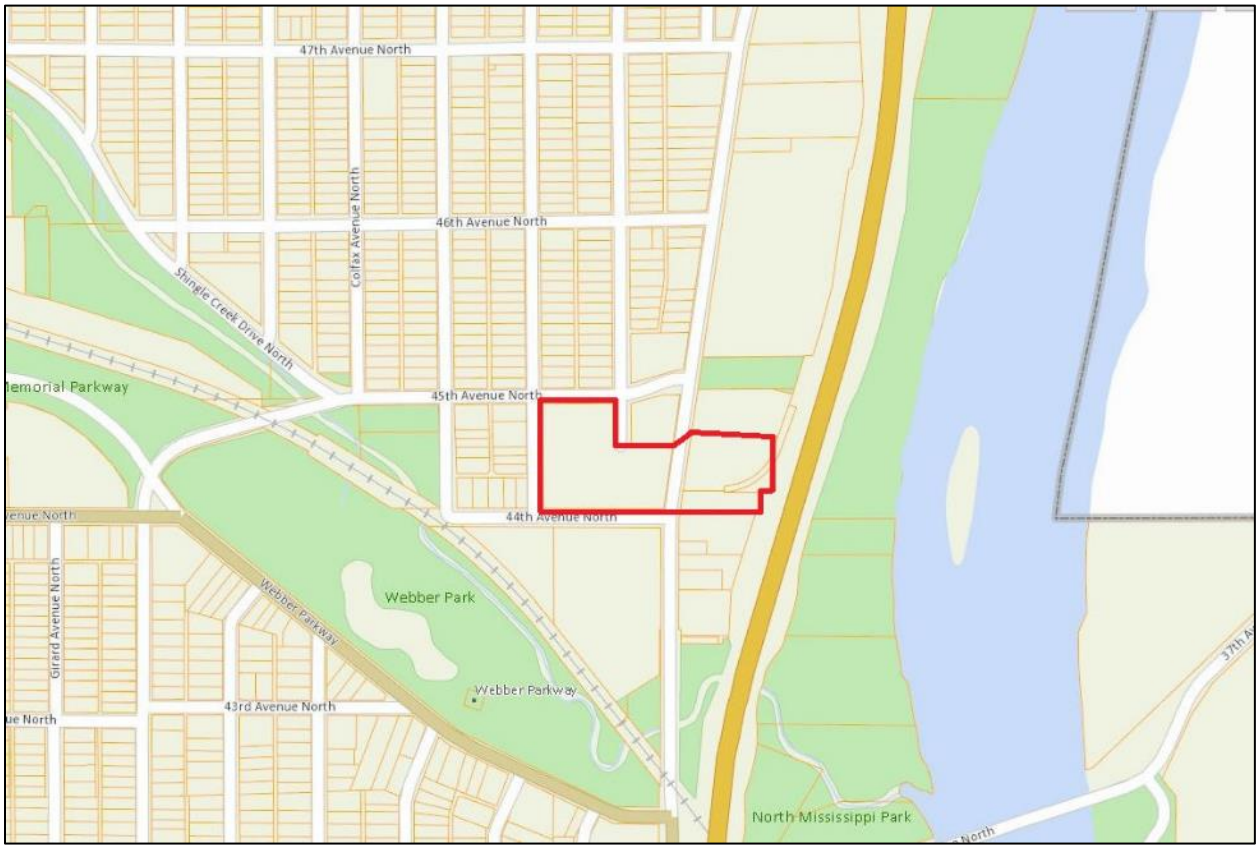


Figure 3: Site map for location of C.A. Smith Lumber District. Background map via Hennepin Country Interactive Property Map.

Figure 4: Mereen Johnson Office Building, view of east elevation, facing west. 1917 Building at left of image, 1953 addition at right of image.

Figure 5: Mereen Johnson Office Building, view of south elevation, facing north.

Figure 6: Mereen Johnson Office Building, 1953 addition, view of north elevation, facing southeast.

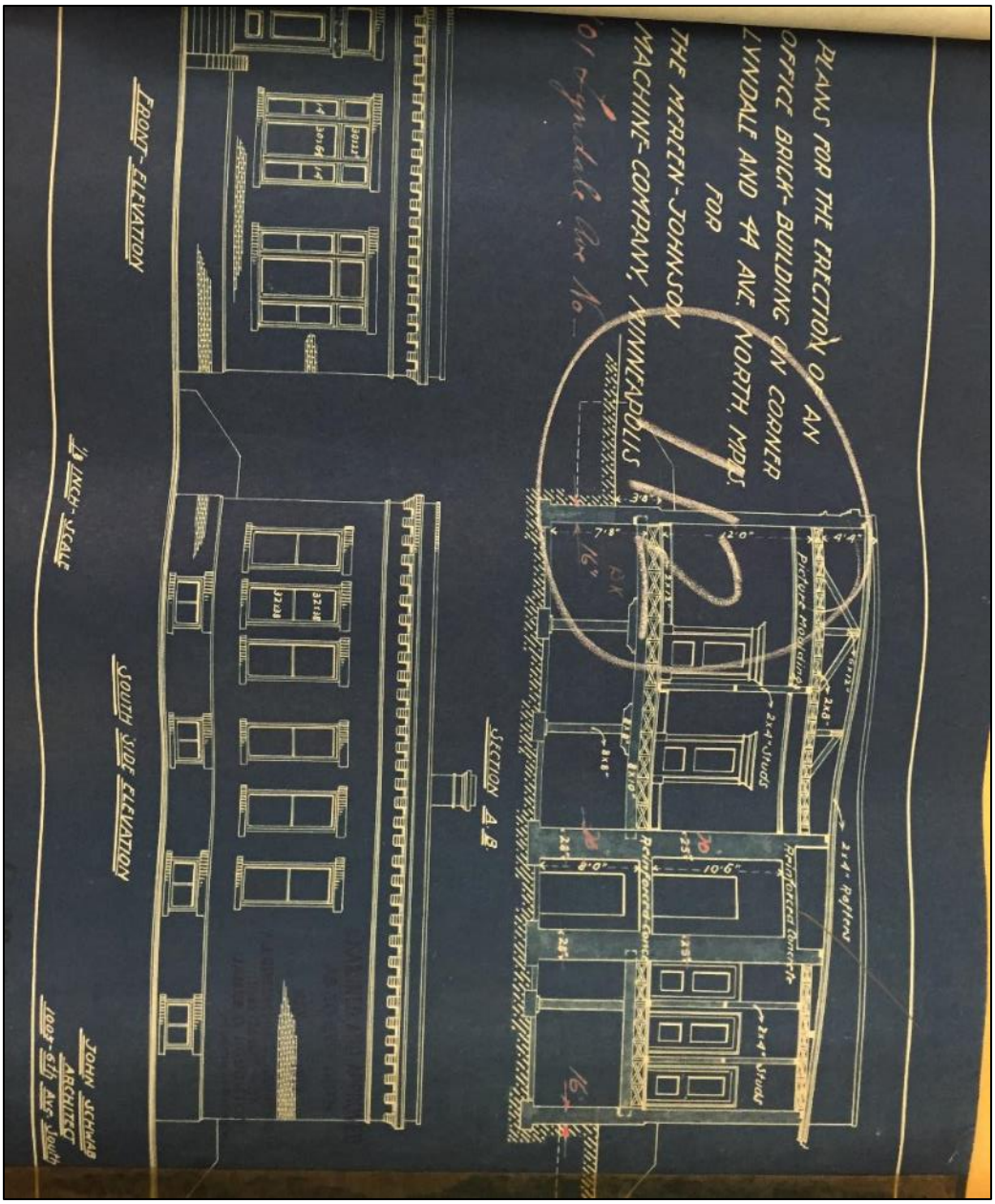


Figure 7: Mereen Johnson Office Building front elevation, south side elevation, and section A and B elevation. “Mereen-Johnson Machine Company,” Minneapolis Plan Vault Collection, Box 304, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota.

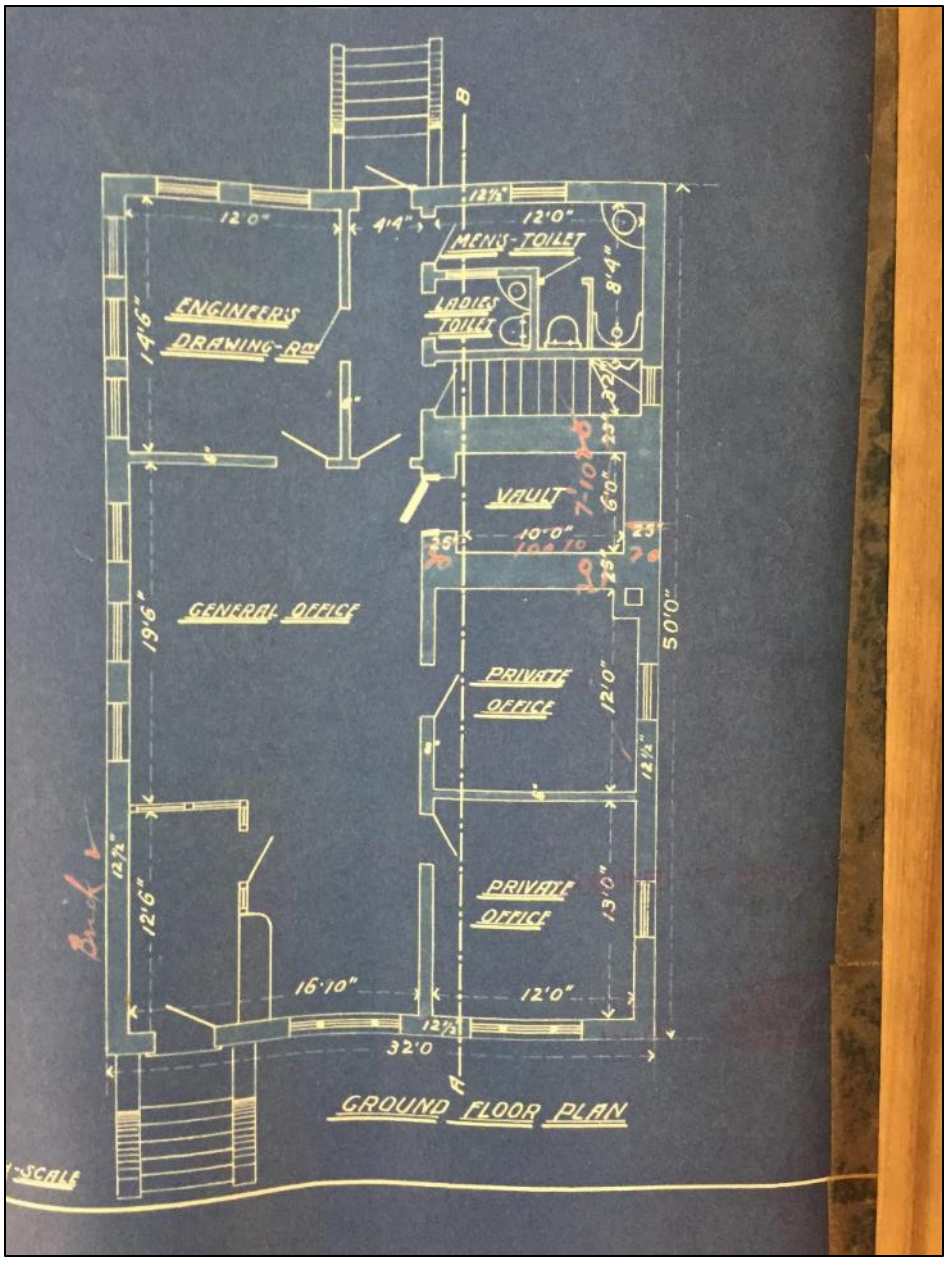


Figure 8: Mereen Johnson Office Building ground floor plan. "Mereen-Johnson Machine Company," Minneapolis Plan Vault Collection, Box 304, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota.

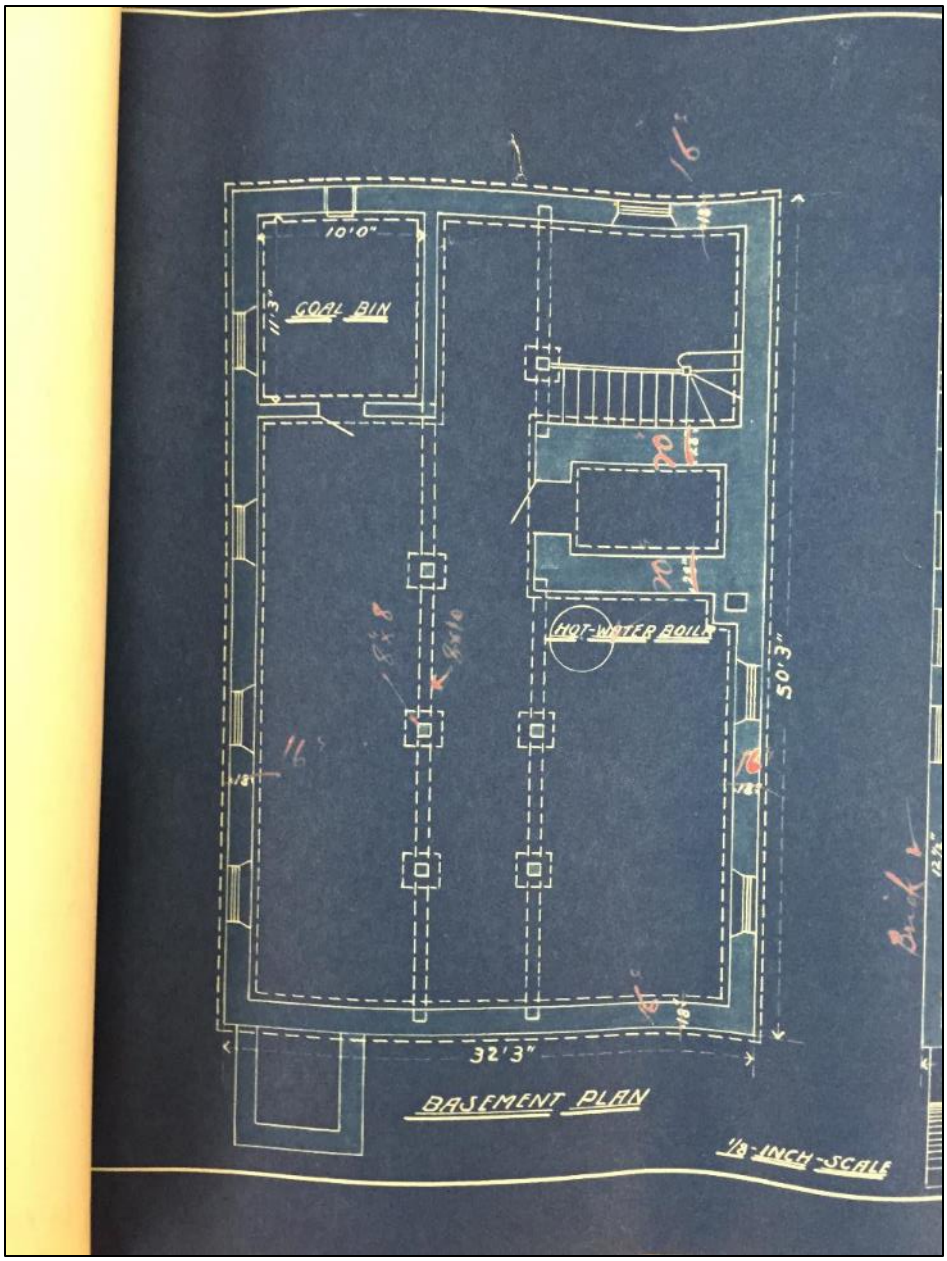
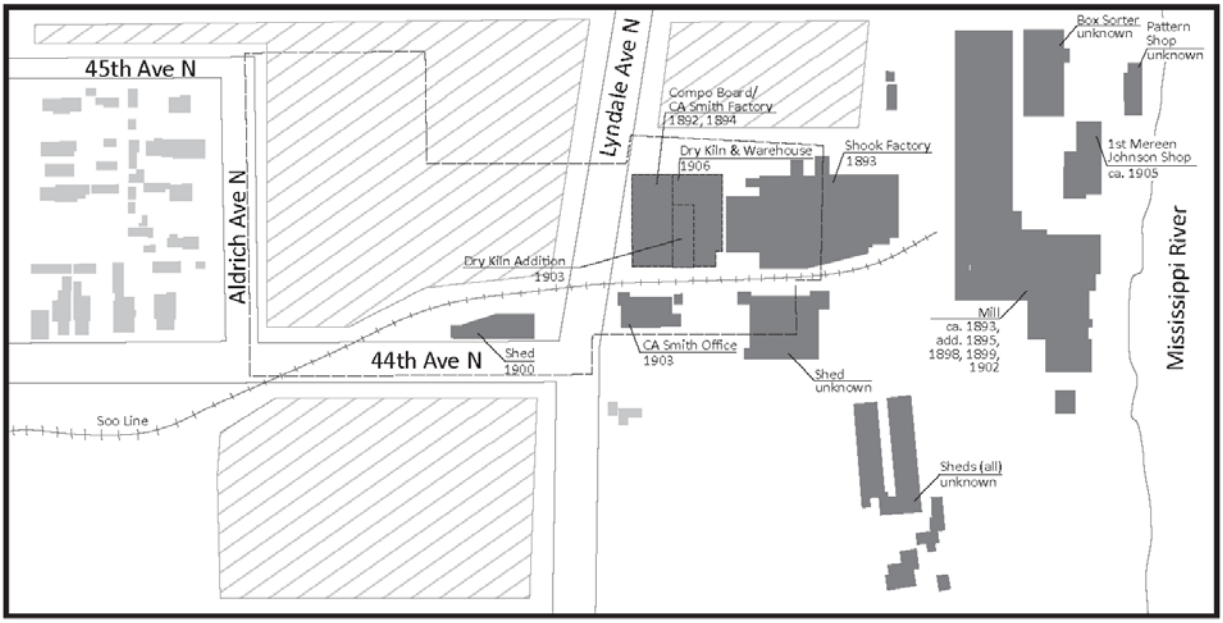


Figure 9: Mereen Johnson Office Building Basement Plan. “Mereen-Johnson Machine Company,” Minneapolis Plan Vault Collection, Box 304, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota.

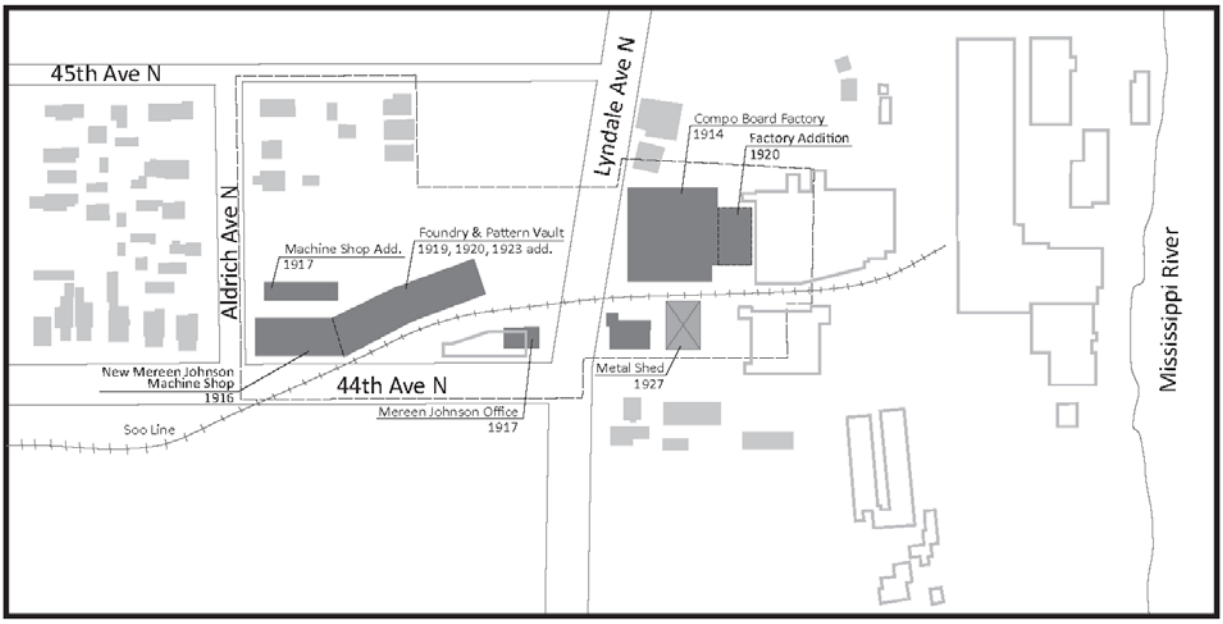
Development of 4400, 4401, 4410, 4420, 4430 Lyndale Avenue North

Produced by Preservation Design Works based on historical Sanborn maps and aerial photography

1912



1937



Key

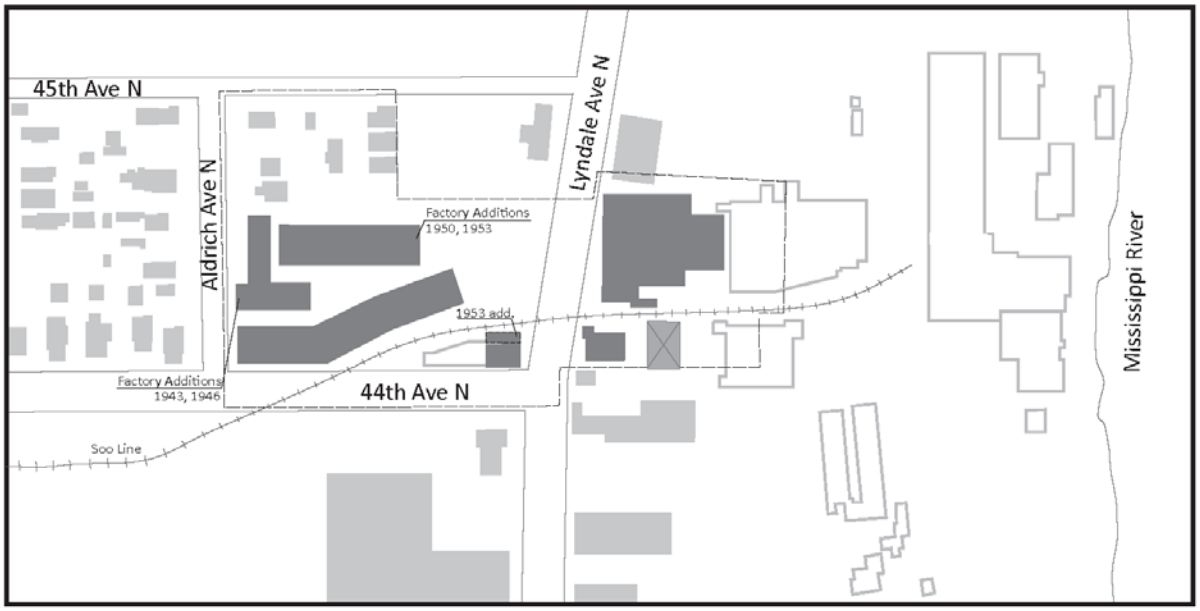
- CA Smith/Mereen Johnson existing building
- non-contributing building
- unrelated building
- demolished building
- 1945 year built
- site features
- proposed historic district
- lumber yard

Figure 10.

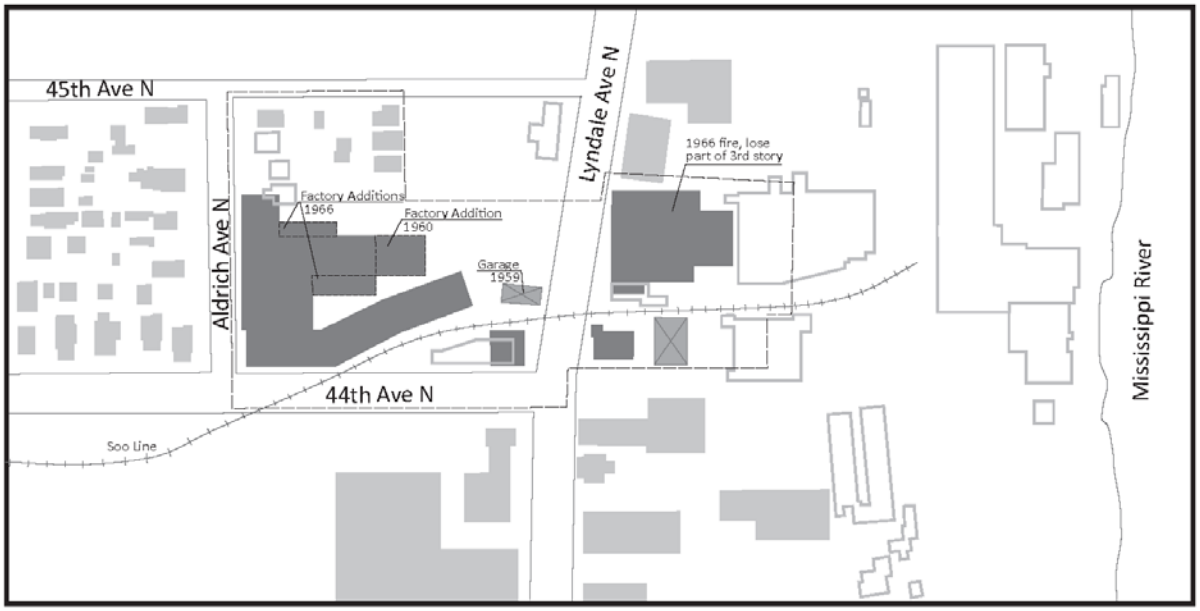
Development of 4400, 4401, 4410, 4420, 4430 Lyndale Avenue North

Produced by Preservation Design Works based on historical Sanborn maps and aerial photography

1956



1967



Key

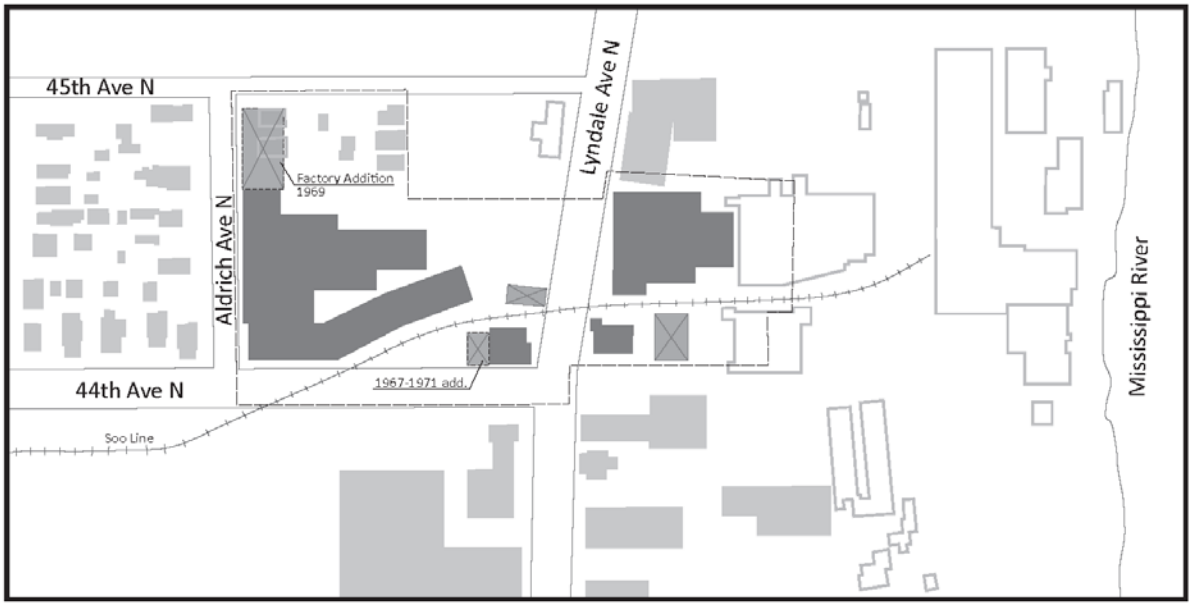
- CA Smith/Mereen Johnson existing building
- non-contributing building
- unrelated building
- demolished building
- 1945 year built
- site features
- proposed historic district
- lumber yard

Figure 10 Continued.

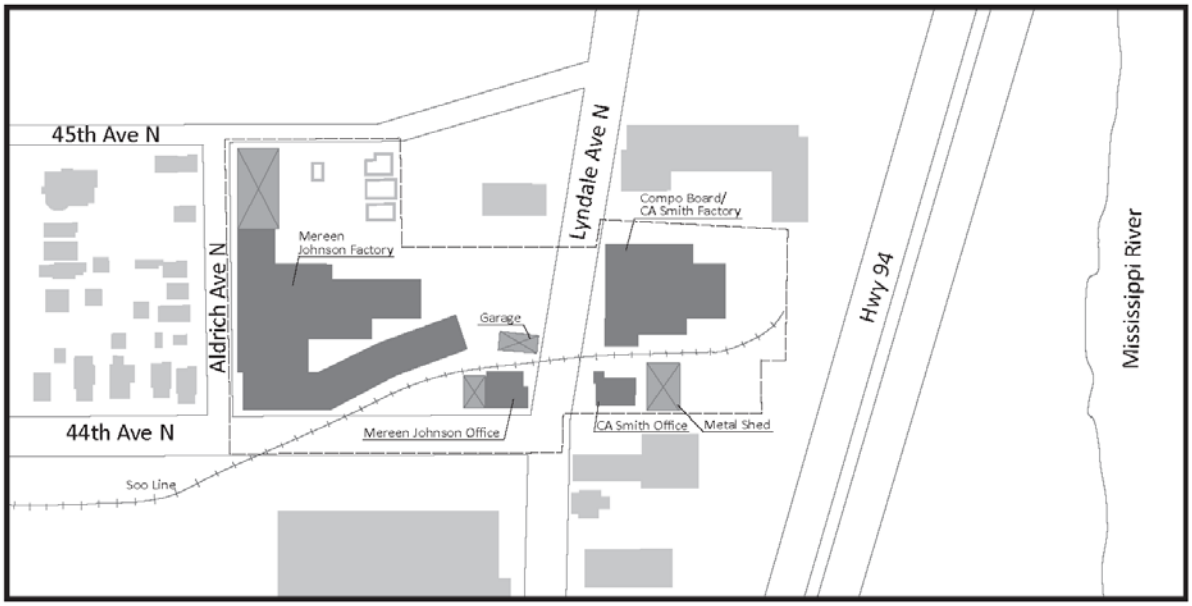
Development of 4400, 4401, 4410, 4420, 4430 Lyndale Avenue North

Produced by Preservation Design Works based on historical Sanborn maps and aerial photography

1971



2016



Key

- CA Smith/Mereen Johnson existing building
- non-contributing building
- unrelated building
- demolished building
- 1945 year built
- site features
- proposed historic district
- lumber yard

Figure 10 Continued.

Figure 11: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, west façade, facing east. The three bays at the right of the image are the 1916 machine shop, the fourth bay at the left of the image is the 1940 addition.

Figure 12: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, southwest corner, facing northeast. 1916 machine shop at right of image with gable roof, 1940s addition at left with flat roof.

Figure 13: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, south façade, facing northeast. 1916 machine shop, the door at the left of the photo denotes the location where the faced turns to angle northeast along the railroad siding.

Figure 14: Mereen Johnson Factory Building facing southwest – 1919 foundry and 1920 addition to machine shop at left of image, 1950s addition at right of image.

Figure 15: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, 1919 foundry and 1920 addition to machine shop, facing northwest.

Figure 16: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, 1919 foundry and 1920 addition to machine shop, facing west.

Figure 17: Mereen Johnson Factory Building looking south - 1916 machine shop at left of image and 1917 addition at the right of image.

Figure 18: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, north façade of 1960 addition facing south. Note painted sign.

Figure 19: Mereen Johnson Factory Building, northwest corner facing southeast –1969 addition.

Figure 20: Mereen Johnson Garage Building, view of north elevation, facing south.

Figure 21: Mereen Johnson Garage Building, view of east façade, facing west, Soo Line Railroad Siding at left of photo.

Figure 22: Mereen Johnson yard, facing north.

Figure 23: C.A. Smith Office Building, southwest corner, facing northeast.

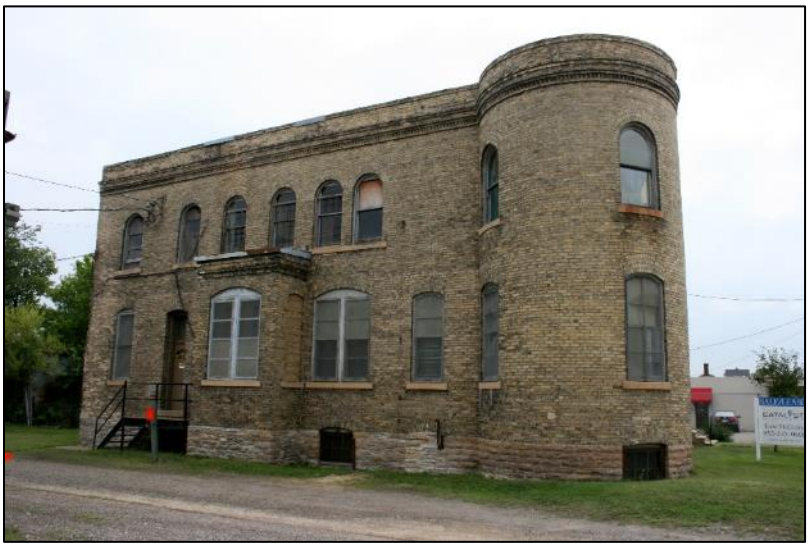


Figure 24: C.A. Smith Office Building, north façade facing southeast.

Figure 25: C.A. Smith Office Building, east façade facing southwest.

Figure 26: Metal Shed, west façade facing southeast.

Figure 27: Compo-Board Factory Building, no date, courtesy Guilded Salvage.

Figure 28: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, west façade.

Figure 29: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, west and south façades and 1920 metal shed addition, facing northeast. Soo Line railroad siding in foreground.

Figure 30: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, south façade, facing northeast. Soo Line Railroad siding in foreground.

Figure 31: Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building, north façade, facing southeast.

Figure 32: 4410 and 4420 Lyndale Avenue, looking west. East façade of Compo Board and C.A. Smith Factory Building behind tree cover.

Figure 33: 4410 and 4420 Lyndale Avenue, looking east. Barrier for Interstate 94 trench in background.

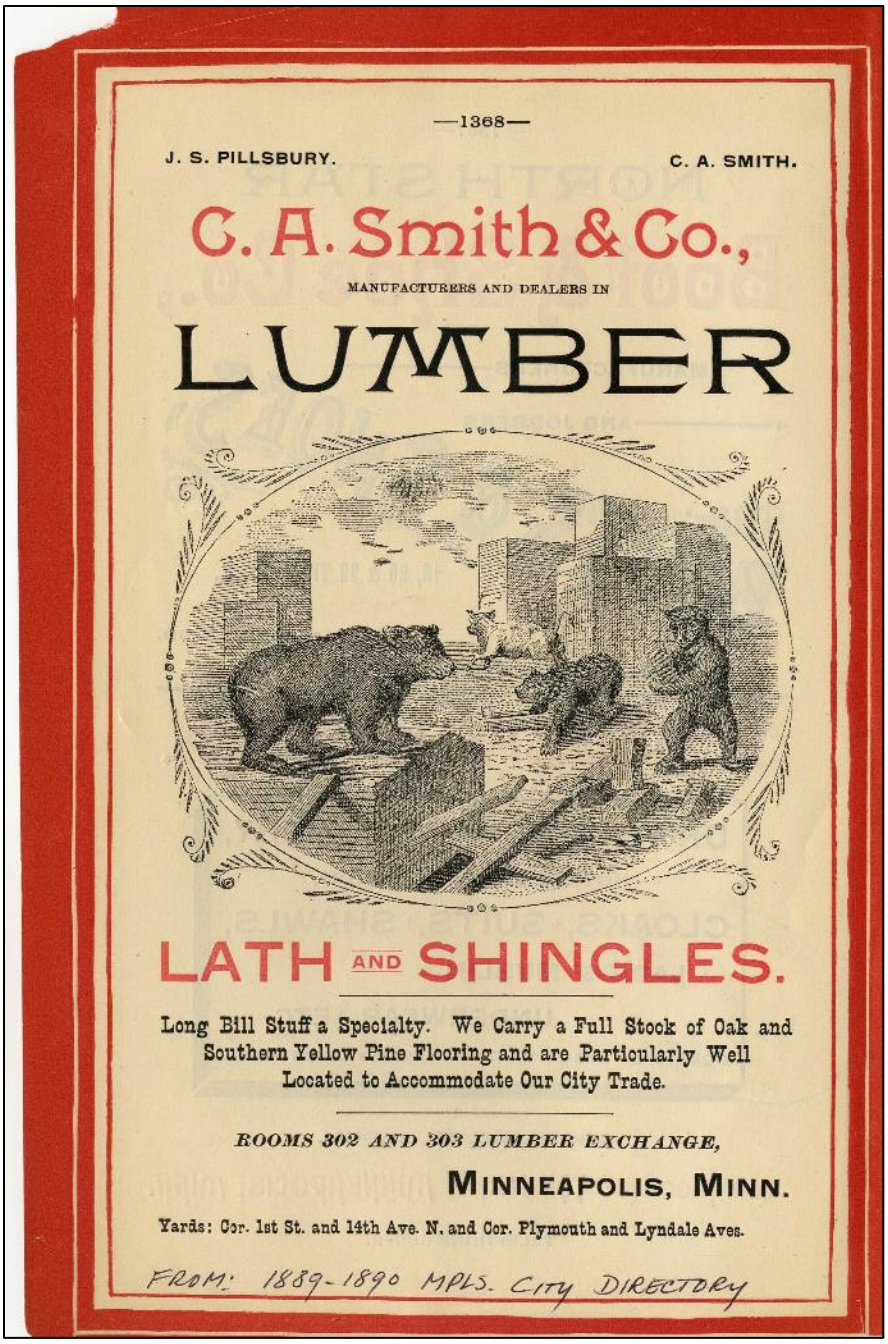


Figure 34: Advertisement for C.A. Smith & Co (Minneapolis City Directory, 1889, Hennepin County Library Special Collections)

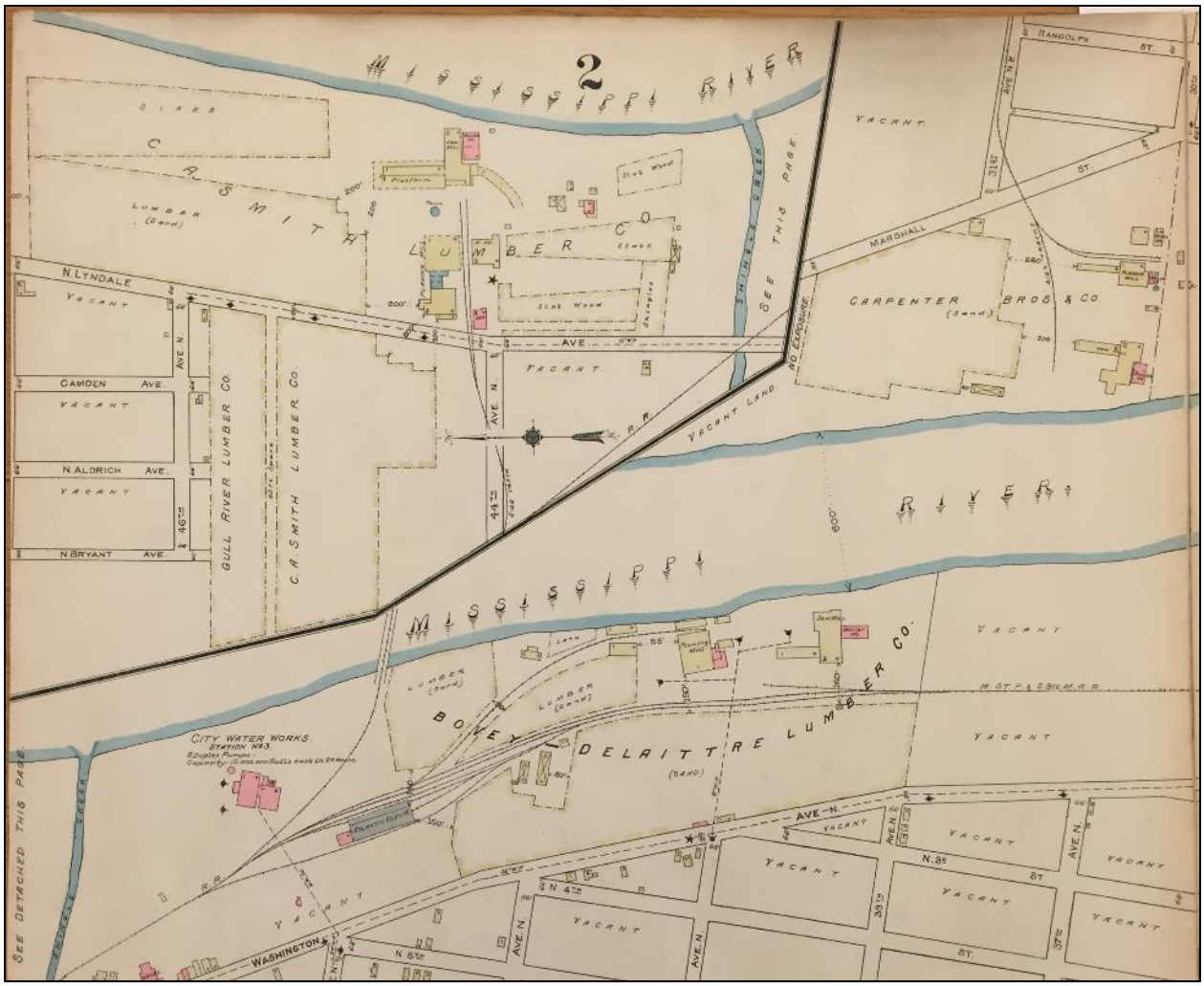


Figure 35: Map showing C.A. Smith Lumber Company was one of seven lumber concerns along this stretch of the Mississippi. (Yerkes Map of the Lumber Districts of Minneapolis, 1894)

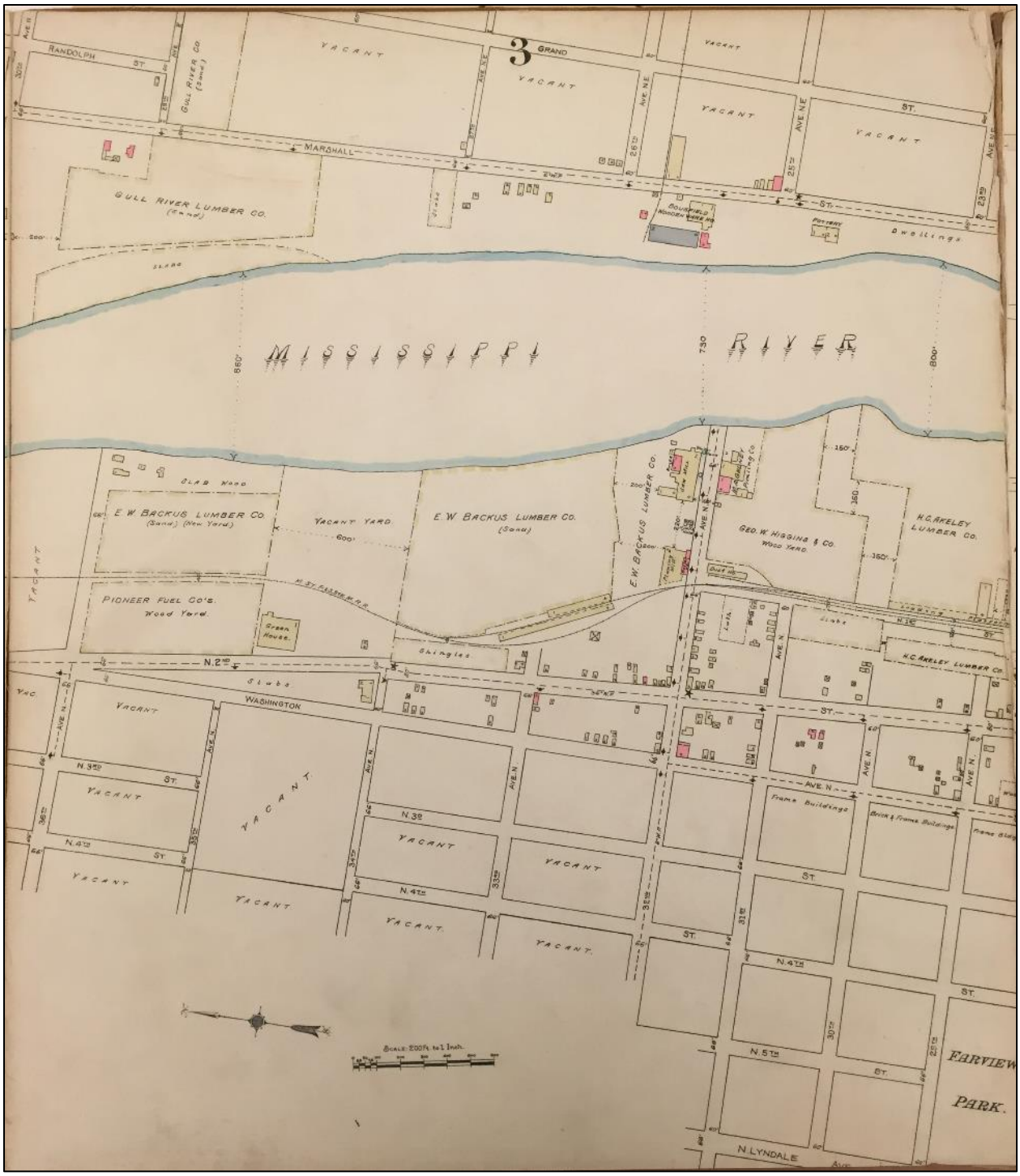


Figure 36: Map showing C.A. Smith Lumber Company was one of seven lumber concerns along this stretch of the Mississippi. (Yerkes Map of the Lumber Districts of Minneapolis, 1894)

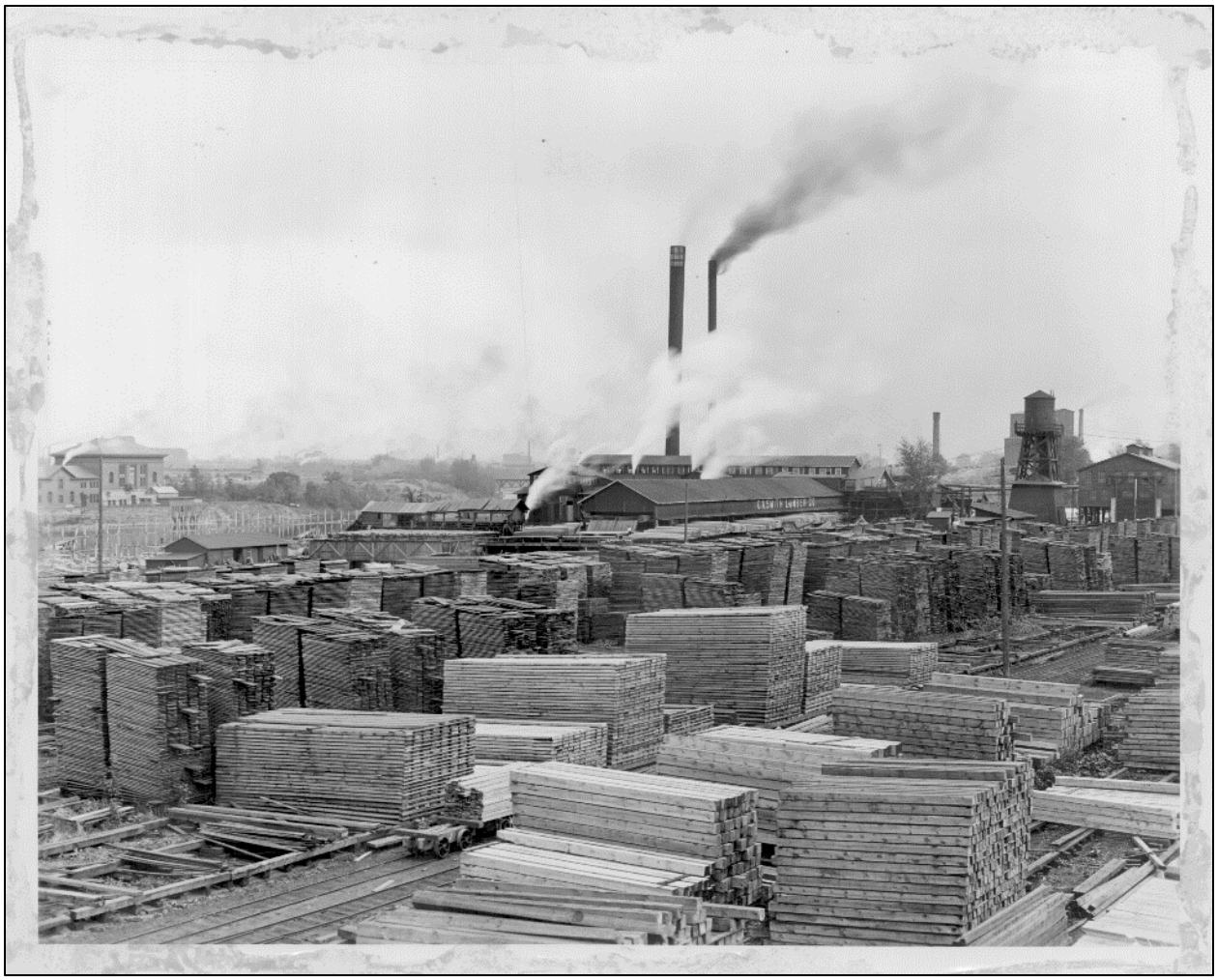


Figure 37: Photograph showing considerable amounts of lumber production along the Mississippi River. (C.A. Smith Sawmill and Yards, Norton and Peel, photographers, June 4, 1910, Hennepin County Library Special Collections.)

Figure 38: Compo Board advertisement clipping exhibiting installation on varying surfaces. *"Waterproof Compo Board and How to Use It,"* product catalog (Self Published, Minneapolis, MN: 1905), Gale Family Library, Minnesota Historical Society.

Figure 39: Comp Board advertisement clipping showing its composite material design. *"Waterproof Compo Board and How to Use It,"* product catalog (Self Published, Minneapolis, MN: 1905), Gale Family Library, Minnesota Historical Society.

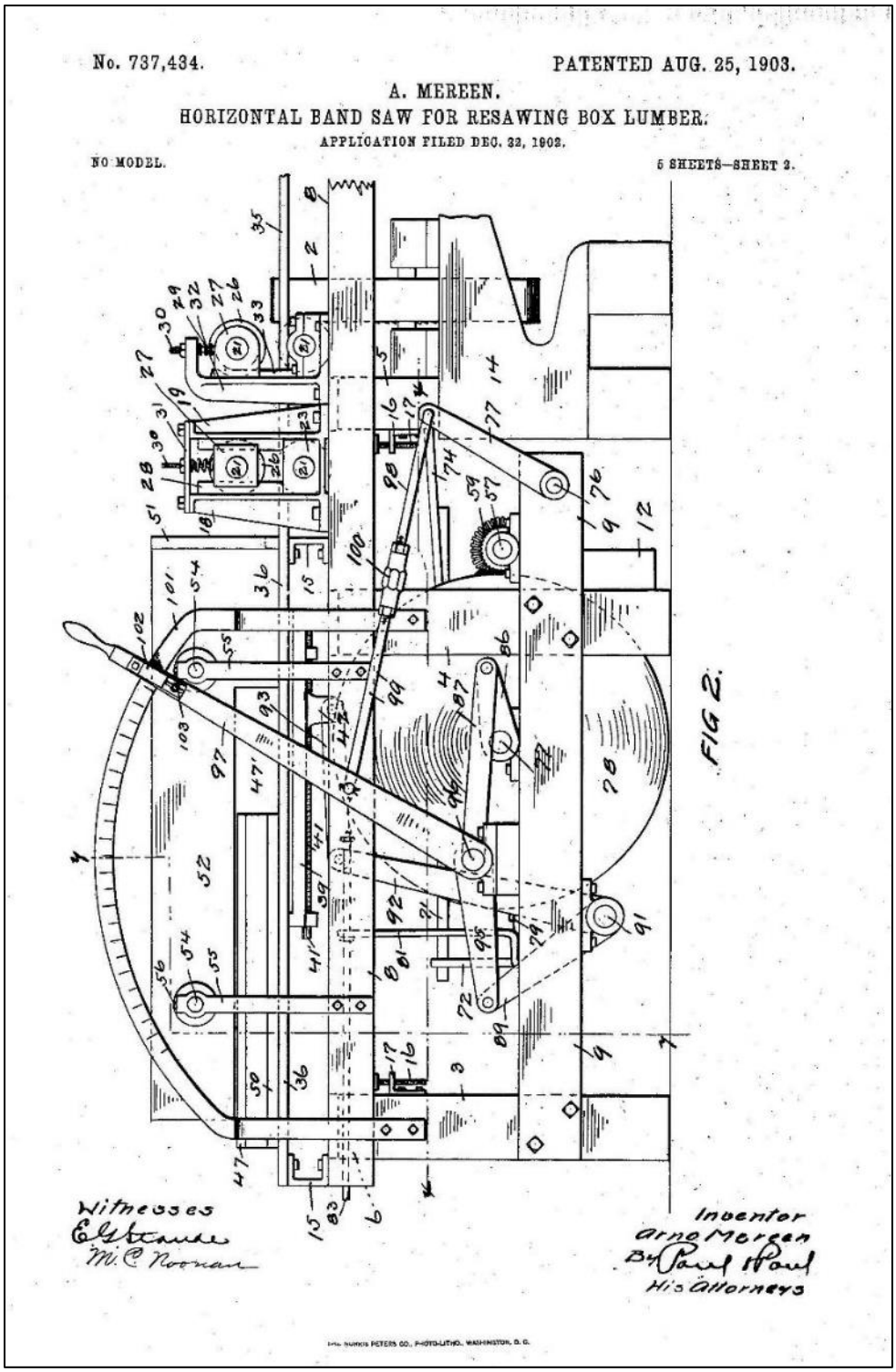


Figure 40: C.A. Smith Company patent drawing of Horizontal Band Re-Saw. Mereen, A. "United States Patent 737,434 – "Horizontal Band Saw for Resawing Box Lumber", August 25, 1903.

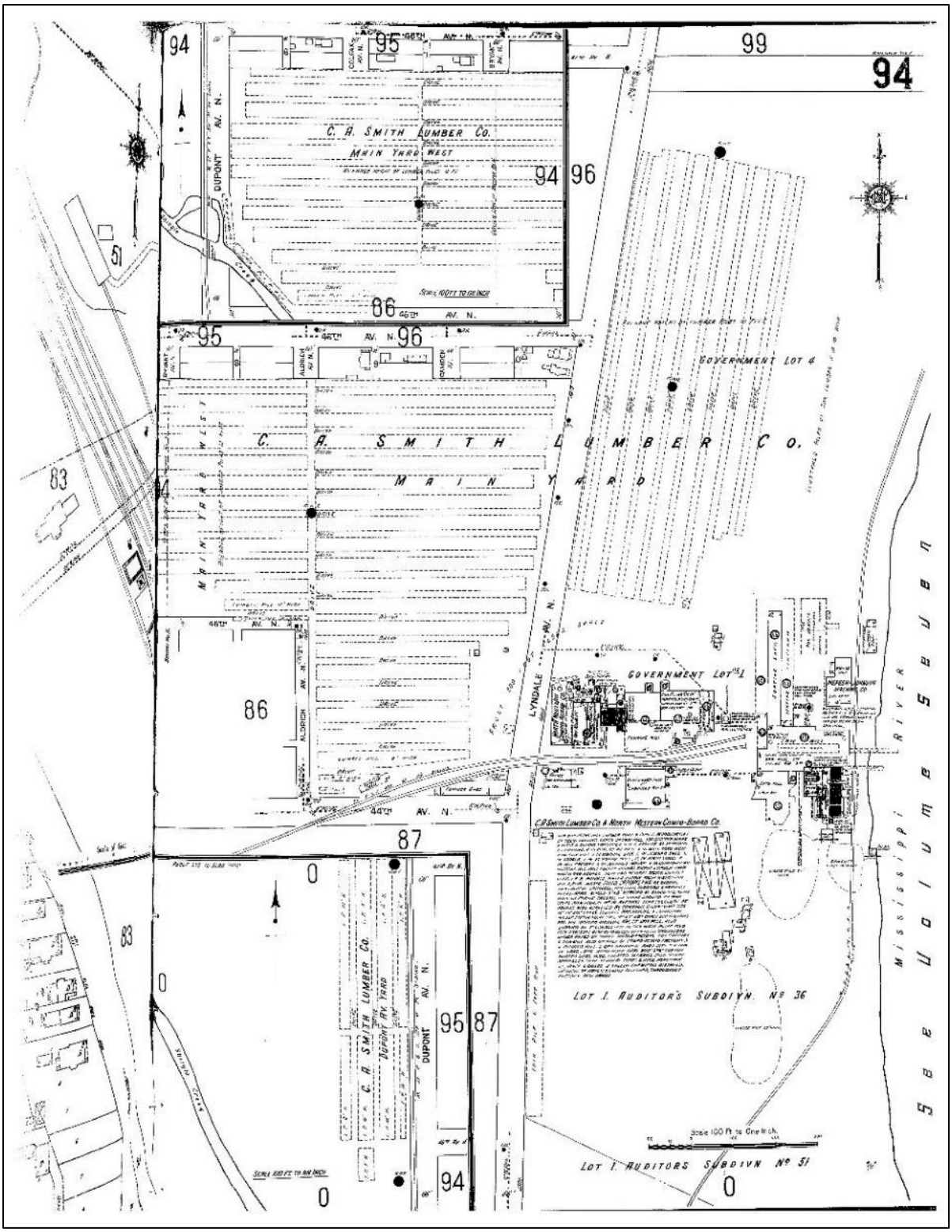
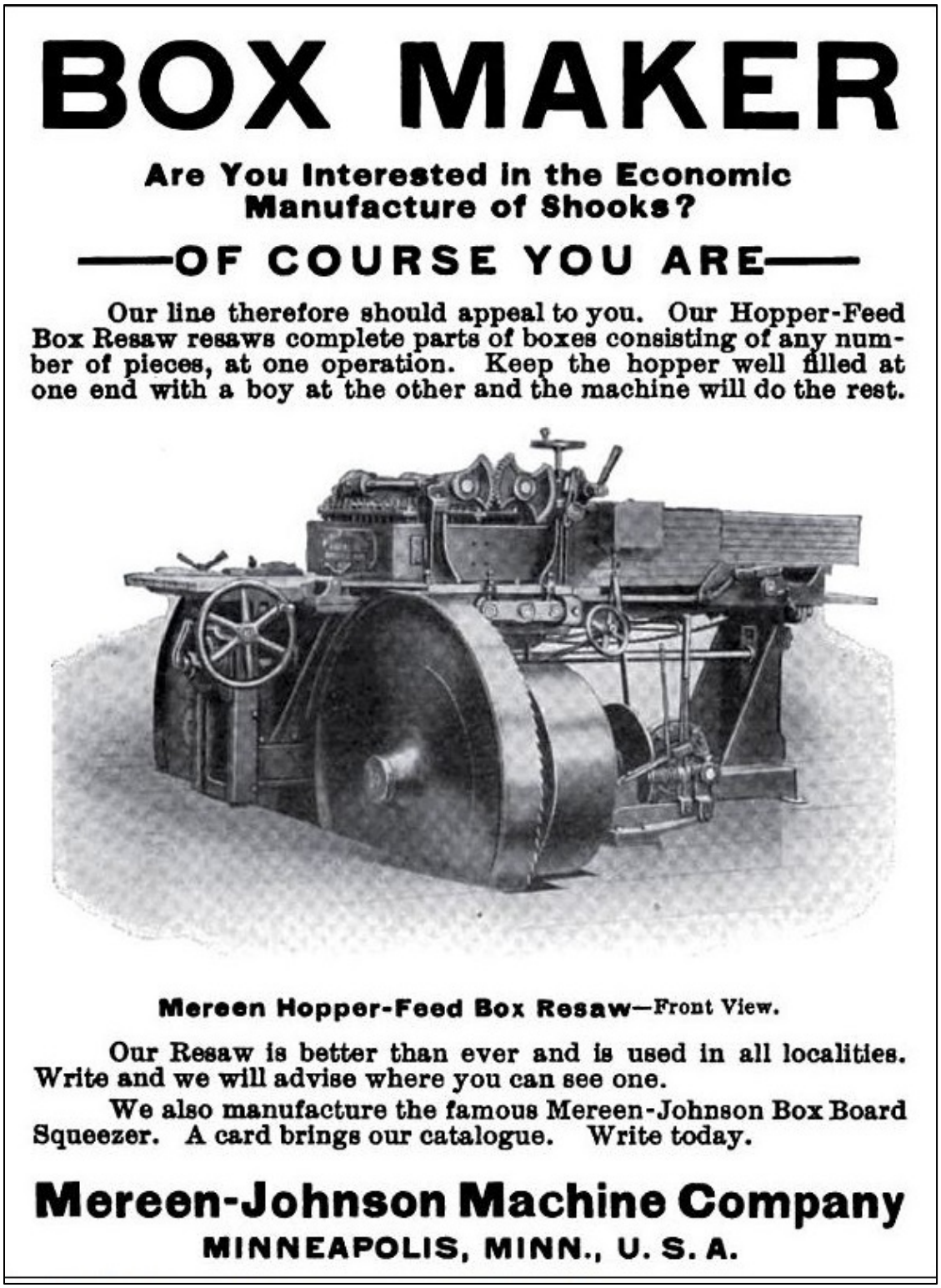


Figure 41: Sanborn map showing the Mereen Johnson Company's shop location near C.A. Smith's "pattern shop" and "box sorting shop". "Minneapolis, Minnesota Sheet 94." 1912. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1867-1970 – Minnesota.



BOX MAKER

Are You Interested in the Economic Manufacture of Shooks?

—OF COURSE YOU ARE—

Our line therefore should appeal to you. Our Hopper-Feed Box Resaw resaws complete parts of boxes consisting of any number of pieces, at one operation. Keep the hopper well filled at one end with a boy at the other and the machine will do the rest.

Mereen Hopper-Feed Box Resaw—Front View.

Our Resaw is better than ever and is used in all localities. Write and we will advise where you can see one.

We also manufacture the famous Mereen-Johnson Box Board Squeezer. A card brings our catalogue. Write today.

Mereen-Johnson Machine Company
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., U. S. A.

Figure 42: Mereen Johnson Machine Company Box Maker advertisement.
via http://vintagemachinery.org/mfgindex/imagedetail.aspx?id=5328, originally published "The Packages," Volume 12, January 1909, p. 85.

86 Sawmill Equipment Section LUMBER'S Catalog

HORIZONTAL SLAB RESAW

For working up Bolts, Slabs, Edgings, etc., into box lumber, lath or other marketable stock

No. 25 SLAB RESAW

The No. 25 is provided with lever and counterweights for instantly raising or lowering the table for resawing different thicknesses.

The feed rolls are in sections—thus two or more pieces may be fed through at the same time.

Friction feed—speed quickly adjusted to feed from 40 to 175 lineal feet per minute.

Complete catalog of Slab Resaws gladly mailed upon request.

MEREEN JOHNSON MACHINE COMPANY

Minneapolis, Minn., U. S. A.

Figure 43: Mereen Johnson Machine Company No. 25 Slab Resaw advertisement. via http://vintagemachinery.org/mfgindex/imagedetail.aspx?id=2160, originally published Lumber's Catalog of Mechanical Equipment and Supplies, 1921.

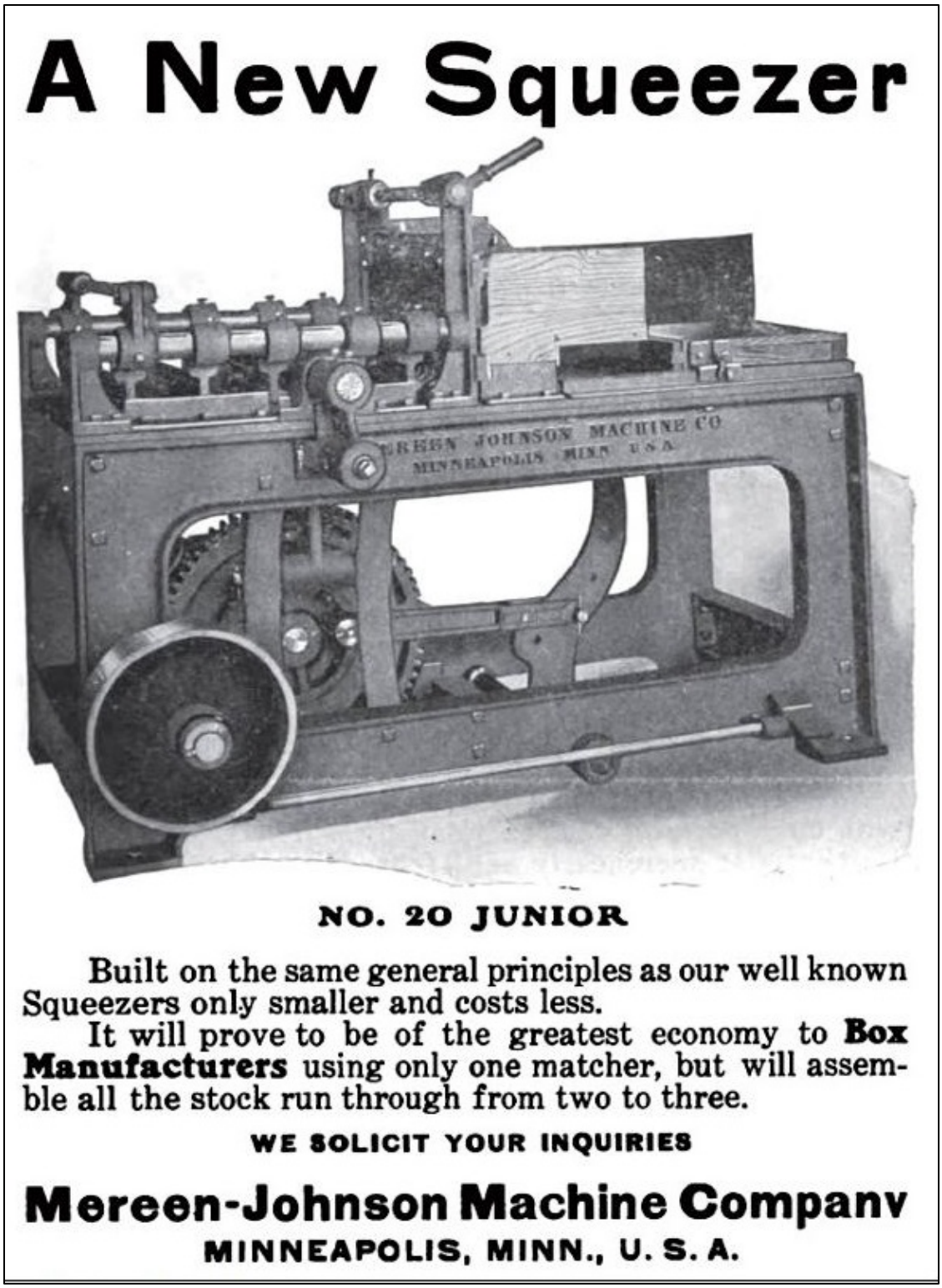


Figure 44: Mereen Johnson Machine Company No. 20 Junior "squeezer" advertisement. viahttp://vintagemachinery.org/mfgindex/imagedetail.aspx?id=5361; originally published "The Packages," Volume 12, December 1909, p 95.

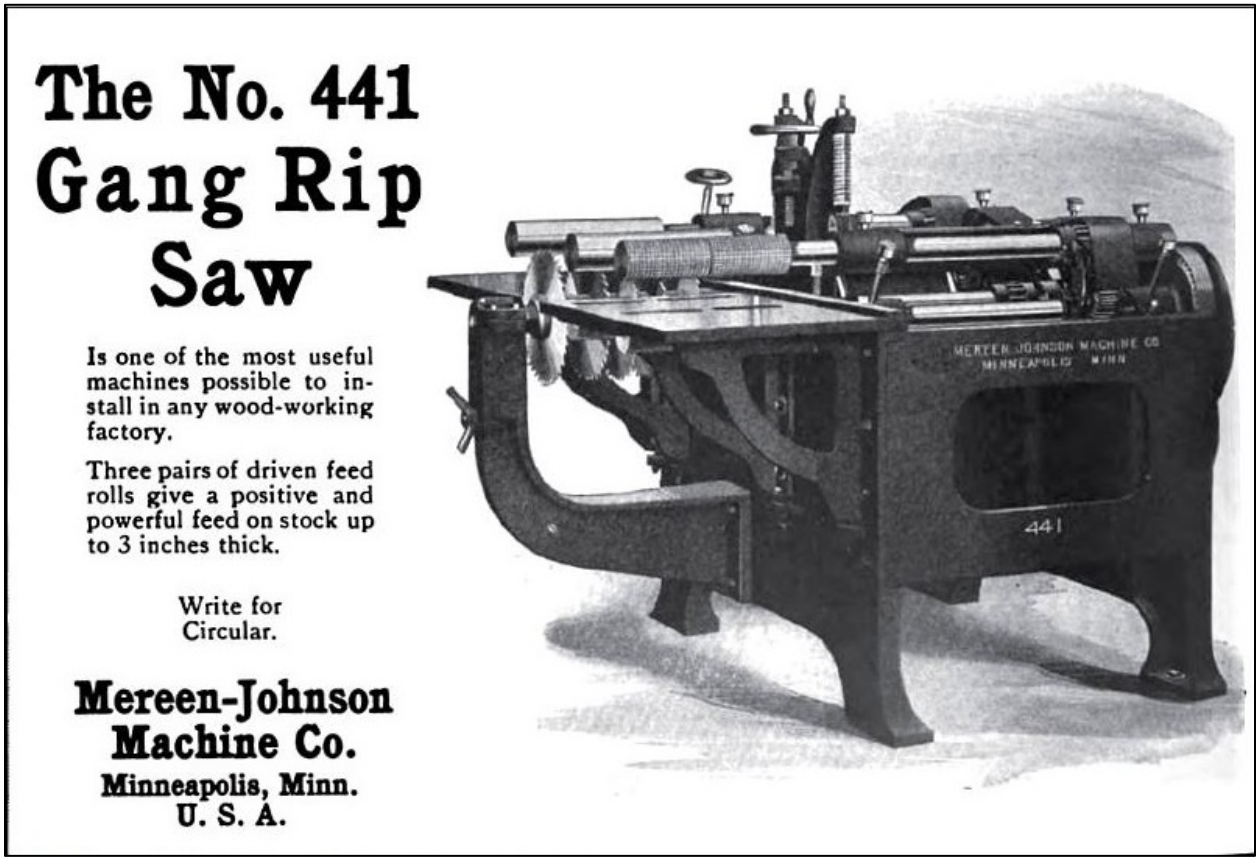


Figure 45: Mereen Johnson Machine Company No. 441 Gang Rip Saw advertisement. Via http://vintagemachinery.org/mfgindex/imagedetail.aspx?id=6573; originally published "The Wood Worker," Volume 38, February 1920, p. 104.

END NOTES

[1] Minneapolis Building Permits B127927 (May 25, 1917), B334816 (June 11, 1953).

[2] Minneapolis Building Permit B122278 (June 2, 1916).

[3] Minneapolis Building Permit B 128479 (July 5, 1917).

[4] Minneapolis Building Permits B139962 (December 22, 1919), B143889 (August 9, 1920).

[5] "Wood and metal patterns were used in metal casting and other molding operations and also served as models for various types of products. Sets of master templates either supplemented or substituted for shop drawings as the design record. The fabrication and storage of these materials were important components of the [foundry] and special rooms [pattern vaults] were erected for their safe-keeping."

Betsy Hunter Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architectural of the United States*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37.

[6] Minneapolis Building Permit B2253224 (May 13, 1938).

[7] Minneapolis Building Permit B263552 (July 30, 1940).

[8] Minneapolis Building Permits B276082 (October 21, 1943), B286437 (March 8, 1946), B314368 (July 14, 1950), B332730 (March 16, 1953), B369581 (March 25, 1960), B369691 (April 5, 1960), B397630 (June 15, 1966), B418483 (October 7, 1969).

[9] Minneapolis Building Permit B368841 (November 17, 1959).

[10] Minneapolis Building Permit B204878 (June 7, 1927).

[11] Minneapolis Building Permits B33678 (October 11, 1894), B34001 (February 2, 1895).

[12] Minneapolis Building Permits B54899 (May 2, 1903), B66792 (April 24, 1906), B68996 (September 21, 1906), B134184 (March 13, 1917), B145019 (October 4, 1920), B145042 (October 5, 1920).

[13] Minneapolis Building Permit B399381 (October 5, 1966).

[14] Agnes M. Larson, "When Logs and Lumber Ruled Stillwater," *Minnesota History* 18, no. 2 (1937), 165.

[15] Agnes M. Larson, *The White Pine Industry in Minnesota: A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1949, 2007), 5.

[16] "A Model Lumber Manufacturing Plant," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 23, 1903, 5.

[17] James T. Wyman, "Manufactures," in Isaac Atwater's *History of Minneapolis, Volume I* (New York: Munsell Publishing Co., 1895), 536-537.

[18] Minnesota Historical Society Forest History Center, Forest History Center Timeline, http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/forest-history-center/timeline

[19] University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, *Studies in Politics and Economics* 1, no. 1 (June, 1891), 107; B.W. Phillips, "The Lumber Industry of Minneapolis," unpublished (1936), 30, Gale Family Library, Minnesota Historical Society.

[20] Horace B. Hudson, "Trade and Commerce," in Isaac Atwater's *History of Minneapolis, Volume I* (New York: Munsell Publishing Co., 1895) 734.

[21] Harold T. Hagg, "Logging Line: A History of the Minneapolis, Red Lake, and Manitoba," *Minnesota History* 3, no. 4 (Winter, 1972), 123.

[22] Minnesota Historical Society Forest History Center, Forest History Center Timeline, http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/forest-history-center/timeline

[23] Minnesota Historical Society Forest History Center, Forest History Center Timeline, http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/forest-history-center/timeline

[24] "A Model Lumber Manufacturing Plant," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 23, 1903, 5.

[25] Agnes M. Larson, *The White Pine Industry in Minnesota: A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1949, 2007), 38.

[26] Later in life, C.A. Smith was a significant member of the Minneapolis business and political world. Smith was notable not just as the owner of his lumber company and its subsidies, but also as a director of the Swedish-American National Bank, president of the Northern Life Association, the 1892 state delegate to the Republican National Convention, and as a monetary partner in the Mereen-Johnson Company. "A Model Lumber Manufacturing Plant," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 23, 1903, 5.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Agnes M. Larson, *The White Pine Industry in Minnesota: A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1949, 2007), 38.

[29] "A Model Lumber Manufacturing Plant," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 23, 1903, 5.

[30] "A Model Lumber Manufacturing Plant," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 23, 1903, 5.

[31]"A Model Lumber Manufacturing Plant," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 23, 1903, 5.

[32] *Yerkes Map of the Lumber Districts of Minneapolis,* (Chicago: Charles S. Yerkes, 1894).

[33] Charles S. Yerkes, *Insurance Map of the Lumber Districts of Minneapolis, Minn.* (Chicago, 1894).

[34] B.W. Phillips, "The Lumber Industry of Minneapolis," unpublished (1936), 33, Gale Family Library, Minnesota Historical Society.

[35] Harold T. Hagg, "Logging Line: A History of the Minneapolis, Red Lake and Manitoba," *Minnesota History* 3, no. 4 (Winter, 1972), 128, 131.

[36] "Made in Minneapolis," *The Journal Junior*, November1, 1901.

[37]George Woodward Hotchkiss, *History of the Lumber Industry of the Northwest* (Chicago: George W. Hotchkiss and Co., 1896), 553; "Made in Minneapolis," *The Journal Junior*, November1, 1901.

[38] "The Art Bulletin," College Art Association of America, Vol II, Sept. 1919- June 1920, 22.

[39] Hagg, "Logging Line," 131.

[40] "WN-3-266," aerial photograph, 1937, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online, Borchert Map Library, University of Minnesota. https://www.lib.umn.edu/apps/mhapo/

[41] "New Industries are Begun Here," *The Minneapolis Journal*, Feb 18, 1905; "New Incorporations," T*he Saint Paul Globe*, Feb 14, 1905.

[42] "Will Enlarge Factory," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 3, 1906.

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"A Model Lumber Manufacturing Plant," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 23, 1903, 5.

Bradley, Betsy Hunter, *The Works: The Industrial Architectural of the United States*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37.

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Hagg, Harold T., "Logging Line: A History of the Minneapolis, Red Lake, and Manitoba," *Minnesota History* 3, no. 4 (Winter, 1972), 123.

Hotchkiss, George Woodward, *History of the Lumber Industry of the Northwest* (Chicago: George W. Hotchkiss and Co., 1896), 553; "Made in Minneapolis," *The Journal Junior*, November1, 1901.

Hudson, Horace B., "Trade and Commerce," in Isaac Atwater's *History of Minneapolis, Volume I* (New York: Munsell Publishing Co., 1895) 734.

Larson, Agnes M., *The White Pine Industry in Minnesota: A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1949, 2007), 5.
Minnesota Historical Society Forest History Center, Forest History Center Timeline, http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/forest-history-center/timeline

Larson, Agnes M., "When Logs and Lumber Ruled Stillwater," *Minnesota History* 18, no. 2 (1937), 165.

"Made in Minneapolis," *The Journal Junior*, November 1, 1901.

Minneapolis City Directories, 1859-1917, available James K. Hosmer Special Collections at Hennepin County Library and Gale Family Library at Minnesota Historical Society.

Minnesota Historical Society Forest History Center, Forest History Center Timeline, http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/forest-history-center/timeline

"New Industries are Begun Here," *The Minneapolis Journal*, Feb 18, 1905; "New Incorporations," T*he Saint Paul Globe*, Feb 14, 1905.

Phillips, B.W., "The Lumber Industry of Minneapolis," unpublished (1936), 33, Gale Family Library, Minnesota Historical Society.

"The Art Bulletin," College Art Association of America, Vol II, Sept. 1919- June 1920, 22.

University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, *Studies in Politics and Economics* 1, no. 1 (June, 1891), 107.

"Will Enlarge Factory," *The Minneapolis Journal*, November 3, 1906.

Wyman, James T., "Manufactures," in Isaac Atwater's *History of Minneapolis, Volume I* (New York: Munsell Publishing Co., 1895), 536-537.

Yerkes, Charles S., *Insurance Map of the Lumber Districts of Minneapolis, Minn.* (Chicago, 1894).