

BUSINESS

Historic San Jose farmhouse saved after collaborative effort

The onetime home of Eiichi "Ed" Sakauye is expected to move to History Park in 2025



(Preservation Action Council of San Jose)

Building on the Sakauye Farm property located at 2620 Seely Avenue in north San Jose. (Preservation Action Council of San Jose)



By **SAL PIZARRO** | spizarro@bayareanewsgroup.com |

Bay Area News Group

UPDATED: December 2, 2024 at 2:27 PM PST

Just a couple of weeks ago, [things were looking grim for the 1930s house in North San Jose](#) that once belonged to local Japanese-American farming legend Eiichi “Ed” Sakaue.

The acres of land it sat on are slated for development, and the farmhouse wasn’t part of that plan. There was room at History Park for the house, but History San Jose CEO Bill Schroh Jr. was \$450,000 short of the money needed to move it — and he was facing a Nov. 15 deadline from the developer.

But by the time that weekend had ended, the historic house’s prospects were looking much, much better. The Hanover Company, which is developing the mixed-use project on Seeley Avenue, extended the deadline to raise money for the house’s relocation to mid-2025 — which should be plenty of time since Schroh says he’s heard from several interested parties already.

Schroh credits a large collaboration for working together on a new plan to ensure the house’s preservation, including the Japanese American Museum of San Jose, San Jose Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei and Councilmember David Cohen, the Preservation Action Council of San Jose, the Hanover Company and members of the Sakaue family.

When construction starts on the Seeley Avenue project in February, the farmhouse will be moved to a temporary staging area, and its final move to History Park will happen in spring or summer, when there's a greater likelihood of good weather. That also provides a bit more breathing room to figure out the logistics of relocating and restoring the house so it can be used as a way to teach students who visit History Park about the lives and contributions of Japanese Americans in the Santa Clara Valley.

The fundraising campaign is continuing, Schroh said, and anyone who wants to donate to the effort can email him at bschroh@historysanjose.org or go to www.historysanjose.org/get-involved/support.

My suspicion is that it took a bit of political will on the part of Kamei and Cohen — and probably others at City Hall — to encourage Hanover to ease up on the deadline and give the groups time to make sure the right outcome happened here. Even if that was the case, the original Nov. 15 deadline certainly got everyone to sit at the table with a sense of urgency.

“Preserving the Sakauye Farmhouse is not just about saving a building; it’s about protecting the legacy of those who shaped our community,” Kamei said in a statement. “This extended timeline allows us to work together to ensure the story of Eiichi Sakauye and his family endures for future generations.”