

Carlton grain elevator project under way, with plans to convert it to winery, tasting room

By Terry Richard on November 22, 2013,
updated November 24, 2013

Nail by nail, part of the four-building Carlton grain elevator complex in the heart of Oregon wine country is slowly yielding 120,000 board feet of lumber, mostly of old-growth Douglas fir that will be reused in replacement buildings.

The **elevator complex was sold** by local **winemaker Ken Wright** in July to Martin Doerschlag, a Washington, D.C.,-based historical preservation advocate and developer. Doerschlag announced at the time his intention to preserve the two grain towers, the tallest rising 110 feet, and use other space in the complex to build a new winery and tasting room.

The two buildings on the south side of the complex are presently being deconstructed, a term used in the "green building" trade to indicate that salvageable components will be reused.

The elevator complex, formally known as the Madsen Grain Mill, has sat unused (except for storage) for many years. Doerschlag will preserve the two tallest towers as a tribute to the century-old farming tradition of Carlton, which more recently has become one of Oregon's main wine tourism destinations.

Carlton is in Yamhill County, seven miles north of McMinnville.

Handling the project is **Cellar Ridge Construction** of McMinnville, a company that recently did something similar at the new Saffron Fields Vineyard outside Yamhill. **At that project**, Cellar Ridge dismantled most of an old barn, stacked the reclaimed wood under cover for future use in a winery and built the elegant modern tasting room that formally opened last week.

If anything, the Carlton project is a bigger challenge due to the height of the grain elevators. Architect **Nathan Coopridner** of Portland is working with Doerschlag on plans for the new complex. The lower parts of the elevators will be incorporated into the new winery and tasting room, while use (if any) of the upper levels is still to be determined.

The complex will likely have other hospitality components, including a restaurant.

Some of the grain handling equipment inside the elevators has been sold to farms in the area for reuse. Other equipment has been preserved and will become part of the decor of the future buildings.

The grain towers that remain will undergo a seismic upgrade. Their exteriors will remain mostly as they are, after repairs to sheet metal siding and other cosmetic upgrades. The mural that Wright had painted on the north side of the complex will be preserved, according to John Mead, co-owner of the construction company.

The time schedule calls for completion of deconstruction and the seismic upgrades in early winter, then new construction to being in early spring, once development plans are completed and permits are obtained.

The project does not have a formal name yet.



The two low structures at the Carlton grain elevator complex are being deconstructed and parts of them will be used in replacement buildings. (*Cellar Ridge Construction*)

