The Boston Mill Corporation

On May 31st, 1643, land bordering the Charles River was granted to a group of mill owners by the Town of Boston. The Proprietors of the Mill Pond, as they were known, controlled the Mill Pond, streams, mills, and surrounding properties. By 1670 there were four grist mills on the pond: two at the southern end near the Mill Creek, and two at the northeast end of the Mill Dam’s causeway, an area called Center Haven, and later North Mills. The Proprietors steadily expanded, adding a fulling mill in 1706 on the West End side of the Mill Dam, and two more grist mills were added at the North Mills in 1750.

In the latter half of the 18th century, however, these tide mills began to fall into disrepair, especially the South Mills (1769). Risking the loss of the property, due to neglect, the Proprietors quickly built a new South Mill on the mill creek (1770). A chocolate mill, which necessitated the use of fire, was added to the North Mills, later causing the wooden building to burn down in 1782. The North Mills were rebuilt, this time in a brick building.

At the turn of the century the mills were no longer needed within the Town of Boston, and land was becoming a scarce commodity. In response, the Proprietors incorporated as the Boston Mill Corporation on March 9th, 1804, and proposed filling the Mill Pond, a process that took over 25 years.