State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code 6Z
Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 963 O'Farrell Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Grove Auto Reconstruction shop
P2. Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted
*b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date _____ T ___; R ___; ___¼ of ___¼ of Sec ___; _____B.M.
c. Address 963 O'Farrell Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 718, lot 17

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This is a one-story, reinforced concrete auto repair shop building that fills the width of its 30-foot wide lot. The façade is divided into two bays of unequal width that are separated from each other and defined by plain piers. The wider of the two bays is devoted to a vehicle entrance with a roll-up door, and the narrower bay is devoted to a window with louvered shutters. At the top of the building are a short parapet, a shallow profiled cornice, and a frieze decorated by four shields. This frieze is defined by rounded string courses along its top and bottom edges. In general, the top of the building (frieze, cornice, and parapet) and the piers appear to be unaltered, while the louvered window and garage door are non-original. The building has been painted to make it appear to be part of the much larger automobile showroom next door to the west.

*P3b Resource Attributes: HP8 – industrial building

*P4. Resources Present: ■ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other

P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)
View looking south
June 2009

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1924; building permit

*P7. Owner and Address:
950 VAN NESS AVE LLC
79 NEW MONTGOMERY ST, 6TH F
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94105

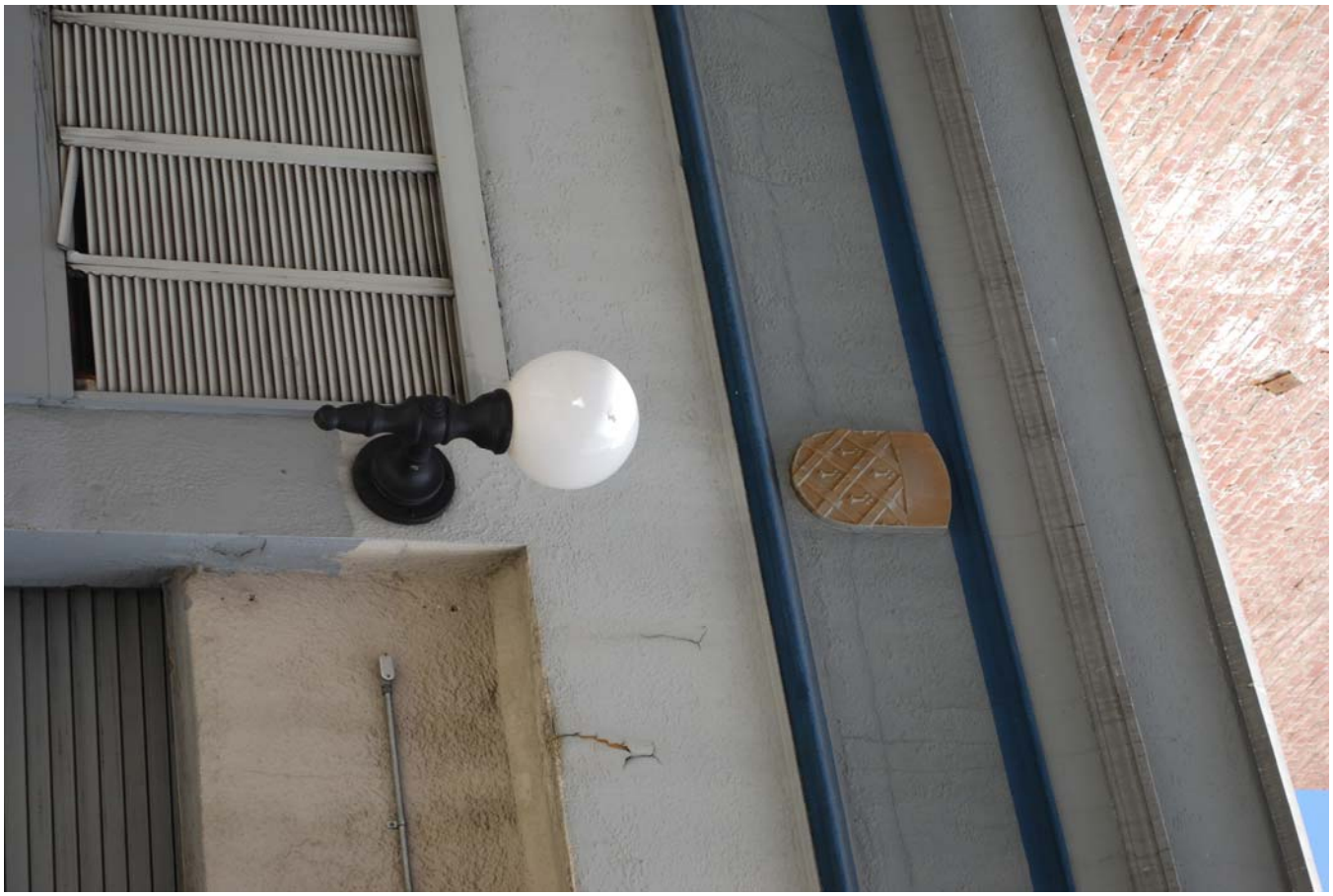
*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)
William Kostura
P. O. Box 60211
Palo Alto, CA 94306

*P9. Date Recorded: September 2009

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) intensive

P11. Report Citation*: (Cite survey report.) William Kostura. *Van Ness Auto Row Support Structures*. San Francisco Department of City Planning, 2009.

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ■ Continuation Sheet ■ Building, Structure and Object Record ☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record ☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List)



Detail of cornice area

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 963 O'Farrell Street

B1. Historic Name: Grove Auto Reconstruction shop

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: automobile brakes shop

B4. Most Recent Use: auto repair

***B5. Architectural Style:** Classical Revival

***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built in 1924.

***B7. Moved?** ■ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown **Date:** _____ **Original Location:** _____

***B8. Related Features:**

none

B9a. Architect: Benjamin G. McDougall b. Builder: Cahill Brothers

***B10. Significance: Theme** automobile industry **Area** San Francisco

Period of Significance n/a **Property Type** auto repair shop **Applicable Criteria** n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

History

This building was built in 1924 for the California City and Land Company to designs by architect Benjamin G. McDougall. Occupants for the first two years are unknown, while a succession of automobile repair shops and an auto part store occupied the building over the next 37 years. They included The Brake Shop (1927-1931); F. E. Murphy auto repair (1933-1935); Grove Auto Reconstruction, owned by Harold N. Grove (1936-1947); Smith and Dahl, auto parts and accessories (1948 to at least 1953); Coventry Motors (in 1959); and Tony's Body and Fender Repairs (in 1964). To summarize, auto uses of the building from 1927 to 1964 totaled about 36 years; auto repair shops occupied the building for at least 25 years; and the longest-term occupant was Grove Auto Reconstruction, for eleven years.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

***B12. References:**

Building permit #127870, at S. F. Building Inspection Dept., 1660 Mission Street

Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, PT&T reverse directory, and Yellow Pages listings for occupants of this building, 1927-1964

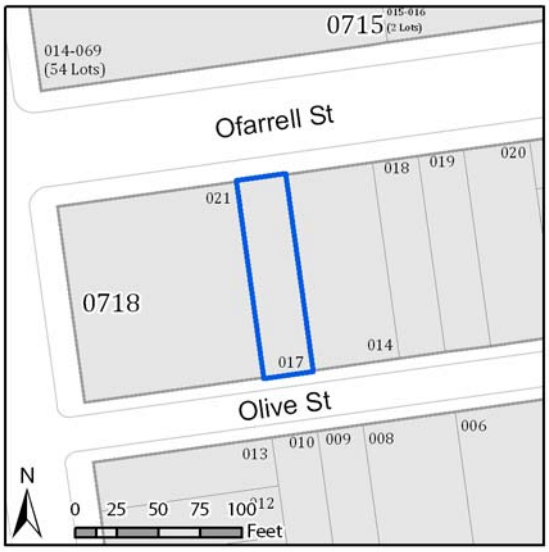
B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** William Kostura

Date of Evaluation: September 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)



Integrity

The openings in the lower part of the building, which account for most of its area, have been generally altered, although it should be added that the use of a non-original garage door opening is typical in the study area. In sum, the building retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association, while integrity of materials and workmanship have been diminished.

Evaluation

This is one of more than 115 buildings along the Van Ness Avenue corridor that have a history as automobile support structures, and that are being evaluated for possible historic significance according to the criteria of the California Register of Historical Resources. With a few exceptions, these buildings were auto showrooms, public garages, auto repair shops, auto parts and supplies stores, and auto painting shops. The time period that is being studied is from the initial years of the automobile industry in San Francisco through 1964. Among the factors that have been considered when evaluating a building are its date of construction, its longevity of auto-related use, the importance of its occupants in local auto industry history, integrity, and architectural quality. These factors, and how they apply to evaluations of buildings, are discussed in a cover report, *Van Ness Auto Row Support Structures, 1908-1964*.

Completed in 1924, this is a moderately early example of an automobile repair shop. With at least 25 years of such use in its history (through 1964), it has good longevity in this use. With about 37 years of total automobile-related use (through 1964), it has excellent longevity in this general use. Compared to other buildings of similar uses in the study area, this building is borderline in significance. The fact that much of the façade area (the openings in the lower part of the building) has been altered in finish diminishes its comparable significance. For this reason, the building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under criteria 1 or 2.

Architecturally, this building is modest, and of marginal integrity, and thus this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.