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) 925 O'Farrell Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Alemite Lubricator Co. store

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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ **Not for Publication** ■ **Unrestricted**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 921-925 O'Farrell Street City San Francisco Zip 94109

d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN ***e. Assessor's parcel #:** Block 0718 lot 20

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

This one-story commercial building fills the width of its 40-foot wide lot. According to the building permit, the structural type is steel and reinforced concrete. The façade material, however, is brick that has been painted. In composition, the building is three bays in width, with bays defined by brick piers with plain brick capitals. Near the top of the building is a profiled cornice with four brackets and an otherwise blank frieze; and above the cornice is a parapet two to three feet in height. The centrally-placed entrance and sidelights have modern aluminum framing and a filled-in transom. To the right is a storefront window in its original profiled metal frame. To the left is a storefront window with a modern aluminum frame.

***P3b Resource Attributes:** HP6 – one-story commercial 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
1927; building permit

***P7. Owner and Address:**
DAVID J OCONNOR1991TRUST
1348 ENCHANTED WAY
SAN MATEO CA 94402

***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)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 925 O'Farrell Street

B1. Historic Name: Alemite Lubricator Co. store

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: auto lubricant store B4. Present Use: auto repair

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

***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
Built in 1927. Storefront entrance altered in 2003.

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

***B8. Related Features:**
none

B9a. Architect: Arthur S. Bugbee b. Builder: John Spargo

***B10. Significance: Theme** automobile industry **Area** San Francisco
Period of Significance n/a **Property Type** auto supplies store **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 commercial building was built in 1927 for owner E. B. Noble to designs by architect Arthur S. Bugbee. The first occupant, from 1927 to 1936, was the Alemite Lubricator Company, which, under manager R. W. Foyle, sold automobile lubricants here. By 1934 Alemite was joined in this storefront by the automobile accessories firm Stewart-Warner Company, also managed at this time by Foyle. After 1936 Alemite moved to the South-of-Market district.

Occupants of this building over the next twelve years are unknown. None of the subsequent occupants through 1964 was automobile-related. They included a wholesale grocery business (1948-1953), a mail advertising company (1959), and an office for the San Francisco Conservancy of Ballet and Theater Arts (1964). This building was used again as an auto parts store during at least 1969-1970.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 3.)

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

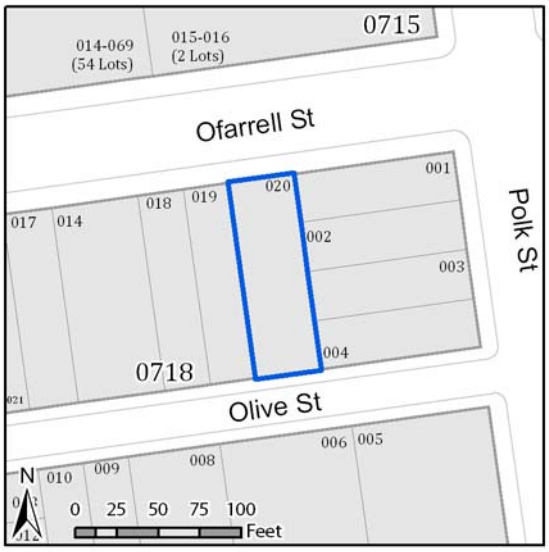
***B12. References:**
Building permit #157046 (Feb. 7, 1927), at S. F. Building Inspection Dept., 1660 Mission Street
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1927-1964

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** William Kostura
Date of Evaluation: September 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)



History (continued)

The architect, Arthur S. Bugbee

The architect of this building was the grandson of Samuel C. Bugbee, who had designed four of the famous Nob Hill Mansions during the 1870s (Colton, Tobin, Stanford and Crocker), Mills Hall at Mills College (1870-1871), and numerous other important buildings of the 1860s-1870s. Arthur's older brother was Maxwell G. Bugbee, who is best-known for his Shingle style and other rustic houses in Marin County, Alameda, and San Francisco (1890s-1910s). Arthur Bugbee's career as an architect was diversified, including the design of residential and small commercial and industrial buildings in San Francisco. Concurrently, during the 1920s, he was the partner of Will E. Schirmer, with whom, as the Schirmer-Bugbee Company, he designed numerous fine Mediterranean styled houses in Oakland, Piedmont, and Berkeley. Within the study area of this report, Bugbee also designed an auto parts storefront at 1033-1037 Polk Street (1920) and a public garage at 1725 Sacramento Street (1923).

Integrity

The alteration of the storefront entrance with new aluminum framing is the only major change to the façade, and it does qualify as major. The rest of the façade is essentially intact however. On the whole, this building retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association.

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 1927, this is a moderately early example of an automobile accessories shop. With only nine years of such use in its history (through the year 1964), it has brief longevity in this use. None of the subsequent occupants of this building appear to be of historical interest. For these reasons, 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, with minimal detailing and an altered entrance, and thus this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.