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) 1601 Bush Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Crowe Tire Company
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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 1601 Bush Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 672, lot 1

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

This two-story steel frame and reinforced concrete automobile service building fills its 120-foot by 144'-9" lot at the southwest corner of Bush and Franklin streets. The surface of the building is covered in stucco. This stucco is scored on the first story support piers but is flat elsewhere. There is no cornice, but a slight indentation in the surface across the top of both façades may be an indication that a cornice once existed. Below this indentation is a blank frieze. Bands of industrial steel sash windows stretch across the second story of each façade. Other, smaller steel sash windows can also be found in the western half of the first story of the Bush Street façade. Non-original plywood panels fill the spandrel area between the stories on each façade. The first story is entirely open on the Franklin Street side (except for support piers) and is partially open along Bush Street. This open area allows for vehicle access to the shop area and serves in part as parking. Behind the parking area, set back from Franklin Street but visible from that street, is an office.

*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 southwest, showing Bush Street façade. June 2009.
*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1930; building permit
*P7. Owner and Address:
ROBERT A&SALLY M
REINGOLD R
126 SHOOTING STAR ISLE
FOSTER CITY CA 94404
*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)
William Kostura
P. O. Box 60211
Palo Alto, CA 94306
*P9. Date Recorded: October 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, 2010.

*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)

Franklin Street façade (the principle façade)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 1601 Bush Street

B1. Historic Name: Crowe Tire Company

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: tire service B4. Present Use: tire service

***B5. Architectural Style:** none

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

Built in 1930. The building has had its present appearance, including probable loss of cornice, possible loss of other ornament, and the addition of plywood to the spandrel area for signage, since at least 1954.

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

***B8. Related Features:**

none

B9a. Architect: construction supervised by Mel I. Schwartz b. Builder: unknown

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

Period of Significance n/a **Property Type** tires 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.)

This building was built in 1930 for owner Ray Schwartz. No architect was listed in the building permit, but architect Mel I. Schwartz was listed as the supervisor of construction, and he may have also designed the building. Mel I. Schwartz was not prolific, and is best known as the architect of the Dr. Albert Abrams house at 2151 Sacramento Street (1921). On his own he also designed a very fine house at 2112 Lake (1929) and some commercial buildings, most notably 79 New Montgomery Street. In partnership with S. Heiman, during the late 1910s, he designed a few houses in Forest Hill and three auto-related buildings on the 1600 block of Pine Street.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 4.)

History

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

***B12. References:**

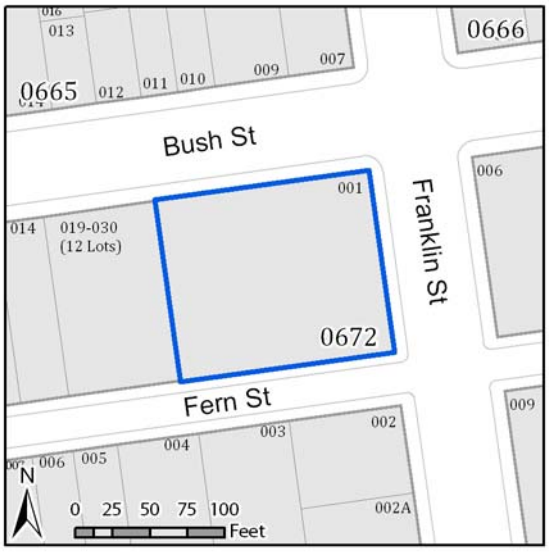
Building permit #183294 (December 24, 1929)
1936 Sanborn insurance map ("auto service, tires")
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1932-1964

B13. Remarks:

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

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)



History (continued)

This building has been occupied by tire dealers for most, and perhaps almost all of its history. A notation on the original building permit application of December 24, 1929 states that the Board of Supervisors had recently passed a resolution allowing the Firestone Tire Company to operate an auto supply station on this site. Evidence of Firestone's presence here is spotty, however. No tire company of any name can be found at this location in the 1931 city directory. The Crowe Tire Company occupied this building during 1932-1937, and the Tire Service Company was here during 1941-1942. They may have been Firestone distributors, but this is not known for a fact. A business called the Firestone Store definitely occupied this building during 1951-1953, and may have been here earlier, in 1938 and 1946. (R. L. Polk city directories for that period do not list Firestone or any other tire dealer here, but street address directories state, vaguely, that Firestone was at "Bush and Franklin" then. That could have been either in this building or at the southeast corner of the intersection.) A Goodyear tire distributor, Davis and Myers, occupied this building from 1954 to at least 1964, and a tire shop is here at present.

In sum, tire shops are known to have been here for about 21 years during 1930-1964. Although tire shops may have been here during other years, the record of their presence is lacking in city directories.

A photo of this building dated September 1954 (see p. 5) shows the building as it is today. If a cornice or frieze decorations had ever existed, such features had been removed by this date. The plywood across the spandrel area is present in the photo, and may have been newly installed for the purpose of signage.

Integrity

Original steel sash windows remain. A cornice probably once existed, and is now removed. Any frieze ornament that may have been present is now gone. Non-original plywood fills the area between the two stories. The ground floor area is largely open and may have been since 1930. A photograph dated 1954 shows that the building had its current appearance then.

The integrity of this building for two periods will be considered here. For 1930: The overall integrity of this building considered from that date is difficult to assess with confidence, but the building seems to retain integrity of location, setting, and association; while integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling are doubtful. For the period since 1954: The building retains integrity in all areas.

Evaluation

This is one of more than 100 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

(Continued on next page.)

Evaluation (continued)

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 1930, this is a moderately late example of an automobile tire shop. With at least 21 years of such use known in its history to 1964, it has good to excellent longevity in this use. The integrity of the building considered from 1930 is doubtful. The integrity considered from 1954 is high, but the importance of this building as a tire shop since that date is minor. For these reasons, the building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1.

No known occupant of this building appears to have had individual significance in his field. Accordingly, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2.

Architecturally, this building is quite plain. The large open area in the first story could be considered interesting as an early example of creating such a recess to allow auto access, as opposed to the usual vehicle entrance used in older buildings; but it is not certain this feature is original. In sum, this building does appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.

1601 Bush Street in September 1954, when Davis and Myers, a distributor of Goodyear tires, had newly opened in the building. The building looked essentially the same then as it does now. Note the band of plywood across the entire width of the Franklin Street façade and a third of the Bush Street façade (at the top of the first story). It serves as a place for signage and may have been installed in 1954 by Davis and Myers. From the San Francisco History Center, Main Library, photo #AAC-6704.