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

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code 3CS
Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1522-1524 Bush Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): McCoy Motor Supply Co. store and Crews and Mac Rae Automotive Service 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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ **Not for Publication** ■ **Unrestricted**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 1522-1524 Bush Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN ***e. Assessor's parcel #:** Block 666, lot 6

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

This two-story, brick masonry building fills the width of its 50' by 120' lot. It is faced in brick patterned with simple panels and painted light red or pink. Courses in the brick line up precisely with the adjacent building to the west, which was built at the same time for the same owner. The façade composition is symmetrical, with a cornice stretching across the top, bands of windows across the first and second stories, and a large, centrally-placed vehicle entrance in the first story. A smaller vehicle entrance can be found to the right of the large one, and wood paneling can be found to the left.

The band of second story windows is divided into three groups by wooden mullions. Each window sash is wooden, pivots at the middle, and is topped by a fixed transom. Below these windows is a paneled spandrel with a dragon sculpture in the center. Below the spandrel, stretching across the top of the first story, are fixed steel sash windows with a Greek key pattern faintly embossed in the steel. This band of windows is partially interrupted by, and helps to frame, the central vehicle entrance.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 2.)

***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 northwest
June 2009

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:** ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1916; building permit, Realdex

***P7. Owner and Address:**
NONG HELENA
3428 SAN BRUNO AVE
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94134

***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)

Description (continued):

Ornament is found mainly in the cornice and frieze. The leading edge of the cornice is embossed with a scroll pattern, while a course of vertical reels is in the frieze. Other ornament is as mentioned above: the dragon in the spandrel between the stories, the paneled patterning in the brickwork, and the faintly discernable key pattern in the first story window sash.

Materials in the first story below the windows are inexpensive in character and may be the result of an alteration. These materials consist of the wood paneling to the left of the main entrance, a vertical panel of stucco over wood between the two entrances, and possibly the framing around the entrances.

Despite the appearance of the materials in this lower zone, which suggest that alterations have occurred here, the size and position of the main vehicle entrance must be early, and may be original, as its outline is defined by the first story window sash of embossed steel. The size and position of the smaller vehicle entrance at right is probably also early.

Detail of the upper story and cornice

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 3CS

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 1522-1524 Bush Street

B1. Historic Name: McCoy Motor Supply Co. store and Crews and Mac Rae Automotive Service shop

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: auto supplies store B4. Present Use: public parking garage

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

***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
Built in 1916.

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

***B8. Related Features:**
none

B9a. Engineers: MacDonald and Kahn b. Builder: MacDonald and Kahn

***B10. Significance: Themes** automobile industry, design **Area** San Francisco
Period of Significance 1916-1928, 1931-1964 **Property Type** auto parts, auto repair shop **Applicable Criteria** 1, 3
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

History

Both this building and the one to the west (1540 Bush) were built in 1916 for owner Lawrence A. Myers, a prolific real estate developer. Myers purchased the land these buildings sit upon in January 1916; had these two buildings – both intended for the automobile industry – constructed upon the land; and then sold both buildings upon completion. Both this building and the one to the west, 1540 Bush (also built by MacDonald and Kahn), have brick courses that line up precisely, indicating their common development. The subject building (#1522-1524) was sold in August 1916 to the Melone Company, whose identity is otherwise unknown, and which must have purchased it as an investment.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 4.)

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

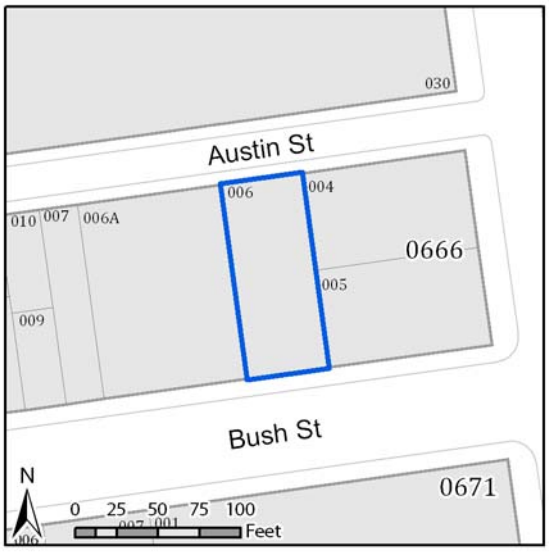
***B12. References:**
Original building permit of 1916
Sales Ledgers for 1916, at Assessor-Recorder's office, City Hall
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1917-1964

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)

MacDonald and Kahn

The engineers and builders of this building, MacDonald and Kahn, formed their partnership in 1907 or 1908, undoubtedly to capitalize on the rebuilding of San Francisco after the earthquake and fire of 1906. Both Alan MacDonald and Felix Kahn were engineers, and the latter co-owned a consulting firm specializing in reinforced concrete with offices in Detroit, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle. By 1916 they were designing and building substantial, four-story reinforced concrete buildings in San Francisco. Within the study area of this report they built at least ten buildings, seven of them of reinforced concrete. Due to their expertise in this material they became, during 1931-1935, one of the "Six Companies" that built Hoover Dam on the Colorado River.

Occupants of this building

The first occupant of this building was the McCoy Motor Supply Company, which sold automobile supplies on a wholesale basis here during 1916-1928. Henry D. McCoy was the president and presumably the principle owner, though there were three other officers as well. Previously (since ca. 1907) he had been an officer and manager of Chanslor and Lyon, San Francisco's most important auto supplies store. In 1918, of the 133 auto supplies, parts, and accessories dealers then in San Francisco, McCoy Motor Supply was the only one that advertised itself as a wholesale house in the city directory. In 1927, this was one of ten S.F. firms that advertised itself as a wholesale auto supplies house.

From 1931 through at least 1964 this building generally held two auto repair shops simultaneously, one at 1522 Bush (probably in the second story), the other at #1524 (the first story). A general auto repair business, Crews and MacRae Automotive Service, occupied #1524 for this entire period (1931-1964). Second floor occupants varied over the years, and included Atkins and Co. auto body works (1931-1933), Bush Street Body and Fender (1938), Philips and Hanson Automotive Reconstruction (1946), the P & D Auto Body Company (1950), Pacific Auto Body Co. (1953-1959), and Gregg's Body and Paint Shop (1964).

In sum, this building held a wholesale auto supply store for twelve years and auto repair shops for 34 years, for a total of 46 years of occupancy by auto-related businesses.

Integrity

All of the features in the upper zones of this building's façade – from the first story windows upward – appear to date to the original construction. The vehicle entrances in this building may not be original. They are consistent with entrances that would be needed for auto repair shops (the building's use after 1931), but not necessarily for an auto supplies store (the original use). The location and shape of the large vehicle entrance must date at least to 1931, and may be original (its shape is defined by the window sash, which does seem to be original). Some of the materials below the first story windows are probably the result of an alteration. Overall, the building retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association dating at least to 1931, and most likely to 1916 as well.

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 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 1916, this is an early example of an automobile supplies store. With 12 years of such use in its history, it has moderate longevity in this use. It is one of the four most important surviving auto supply stores in the study area. The former Chanslor and Lyon store at 740-768 Polk Street is by far the best example of this business type. Following that building in importance are three other buildings, including this one at 1522-1524 Bush; 1033-1037 Polk Street (which held an auto supplies store in its two storefronts from 1920-1933); and 1430-1480 Van Ness Avenue (which held an auto supplies store in one of its storefronts from 1912-1930, but which has been altered more than the others listed above).

This building also held auto repair shops from 1931 to at least 1964. This represents a moderately late date and excellent longevity for such use. Many surviving buildings in the study area were used an auto repair shop at an earlier date, but only about fourteen had comparable longevity of such use.

For these reasons, and because of its good integrity, the building appears to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1, at the local level, for its early use as an automobile supplies store and its long use an auto repair shop. The Period of Significance under this criterion is 1916-1928 and 1931-1964, the years the building had these uses.

H. D. McCoy was an early auto supplies dealer, but only one of many such in San Francisco by the mid-1910s. Neither he nor any of the auto repair shop owners stands out as being very important in his field. Accordingly, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2.

Architecturally, this building is modest. However, the pivoting windows in this building are a dramatic design feature, and they relate well to the cornice above, which has appealing detailing. Pivoting wooden windows, once fairly common, have become very rare in San Francisco as older windows are removed and replaced with aluminum or vinyl substitutes. Because of the rarity of such windows, and the length of this row, this building appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.

Character defining features

The character defining features of this building are its height and width, the brick façade, the cornice and frieze, all first and second story windows, the spandrel and dragon sculpture, and the dimensions and locations of the two vehicle entrance openings.

Austin Street facade