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) 751 Ellis Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Benandie auto repair 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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 751 Ellis Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 740, lot 21

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

This is a one-story brick masonry auto repair shop that fills the width of its 27'-6" lot. The façade is covered with a coat of stucco. The gabled parapet of this building follows a progressively stepped and slanted course, and is flattened at the peak. The only ornament on the façade is a course of bricks along the top edge. The composition is dominated by a large vehicle entrance that crowds the left (eastern) edge of the building. Adjacent to this entrance is a pair of interior-lit signs that were mounted here in 1976. To the right is a tall, and very narrow window with a much wider sill. Although this is uncertain, it appears this narrow window is non-original, having replaced windows of different dimensions some time after 1976.

*P3b Resource Attributes: HP6 – 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
1920; published building contract

*P7. Owner and Address:
PAUL E & MARIANNE L GRECH
751 ELLIS ST
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94109

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

*P9. Date Recorded: July 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)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 751 Ellis Street

B1. Historic Name: Benandie auto repair shop

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: batteries shop B4. Present Use: auto repair shop

***B5. Architectural Style:** none

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

Built in 1920. The narrow window to the right of the entrance was probably made after 1976.

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

***B8. Related Features:**

none

B9a. Architect: C. O. Clausen b. Builder: Martin Show

***B10. Significance: Theme** auto history **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.)

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History

The original, intended use of this building, as stated on the 1920 building permit, was that of an auto repair shop. The architect was C. O. Clausen, and the original owner was Oliver Flahaven.

The first occupant was Carl L. Maritzen, who ran an automobile battery shop here from 1920-1924. The next occupant, and the longest lasting until recent years, was Nasie Benandie, who sold auto supplies here during 1926-1927 and subsequently, under the name Nasie's Carburetor Specialty Service, ran a carburetor service shop here from 1929 to 1946. Other occupants through the 1950s were general auto repair shops, e.g. E. H. Sharon auto repair (1948), Lively and Low auto repairs (1953), and Tri Auto Service (1959). The next known occupant, Allied Engine Rebuilding (1964), may be the same business that currently occupies the building. In all, this building was occupied by auto repair shops or related businesses for at least 42 years through 1964, as well as since that date.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 3.)

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

***B12. References:**

Building and Engineering News, April 28, 1920
Building permit #453451 (dated 1976) for a new sign
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1921-1964
1929 Sanborn insurance map (use: "carburetor service")

B13. Remarks:

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

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)

History (continued):

A building permit for a new sign, dated 1976, includes a drawing that shows different fenestration for this building than currently exists. (See this drawing on page four.) If the drawing is accurate, then two square windows, one placed above the other, and each containing four lights, were replaced by a single tall, narrow window some time after 1976. If this was done, it was probably to strengthen the wall of the building. Supporting the probability that the fenestration has been changed is the fact that the sill of the existing window is much wider than the window itself. No building permit for such a window reconstruction, or for any other façade alterations, could be found in a search of all available permits for this address. Other building permits reveal that the parapet was reinforced twice, in 1936 and 1988.

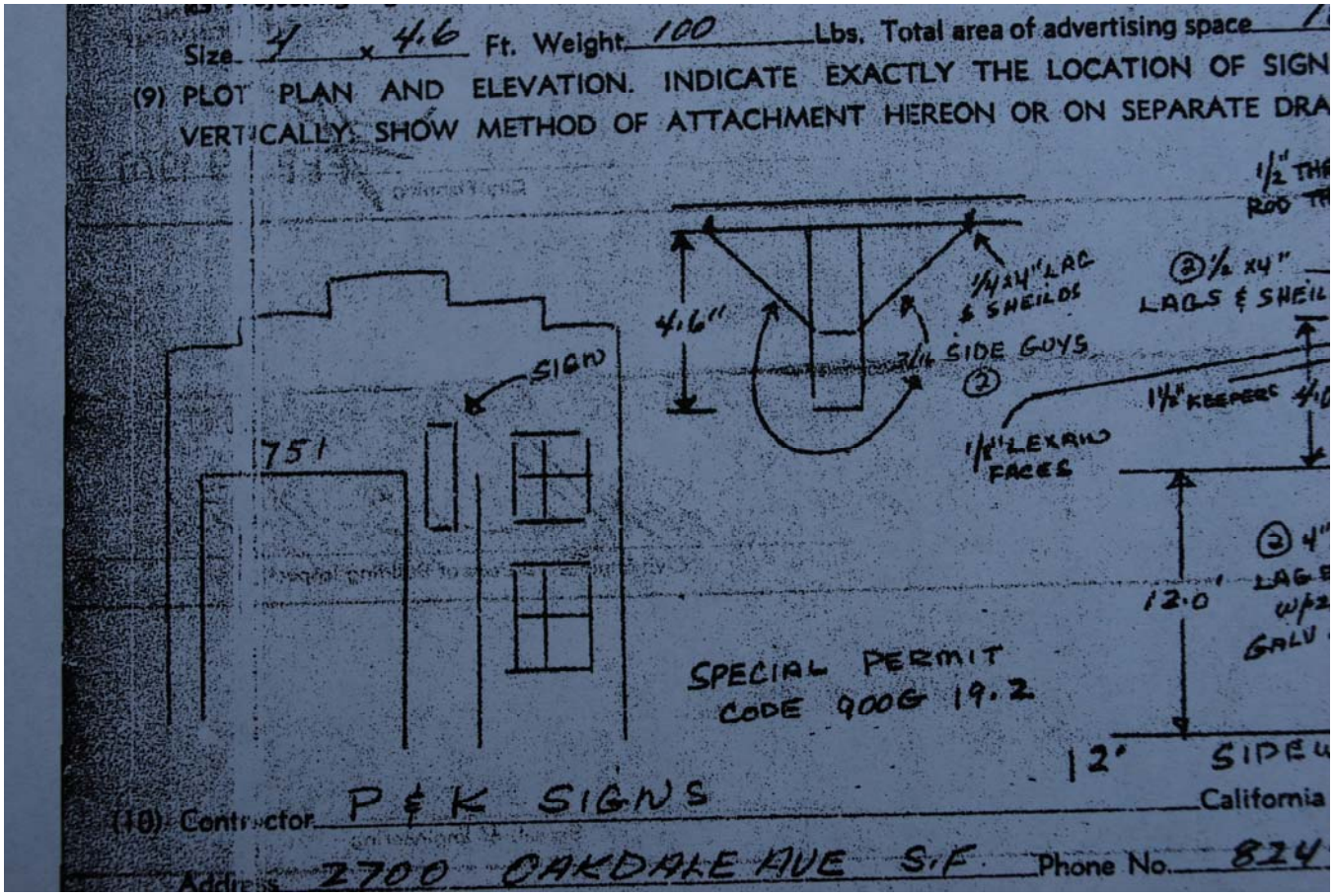
Integrity:

This building is exceedingly plain in appearance. It is unknown whether more ornament or detailing once existed on this façade, but the façade is more severe than would be expected for an architect-designed building built in 1920. A search of building permits for this address failed to turn up any permits for façade alterations. However, as stated above, one permit (dated 1976) shows a different fenestration than currently exists. Nothing is certain, but it does seem likely that this building has undergone some façade alterations over time. Accordingly, this building retains integrity of location, setting, and association, while integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling are doubtful or diminished.

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*.

Among automobile support buildings in the study area, 751 Ellis Street was built at a moderately early date (1920). Its use as an auto repair shop was moderately early (beginning in 1920) and had excellent longevity (at least 40 years through 1964). However, the integrity of this building is doubtful. A moderate number of auto repair shops that have a similarly early construction date and that (most likely) retain better integrity can be found in the study area. Therefore, despite the moderately early construction date of this building and the great longevity of its auto-related use, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under criteria 1, 2, or 3.



A drawing of the façade of 751 O'Farrell Street, from a 1976 building permit for the installation of the present sign. The outline of the parapet of this building is slightly inaccurate. Along the right side of the building two square windows, one placed above the other and each containing four lights, are shown. If this aspect of the drawing is accurate, then these windows were removed and replaced by the present tall, narrow window after 1976. The sill of the existing window is much wider than the window itself, and this fact supports the probability that the fenestration of the building has been altered.