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) 899 Ellis Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): _____
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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 899 Ellis Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 739 , lot 11

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

This is a one-story red brick commercial building which increases to two stories at its east end due to the down slope of Ellis Street. The brick surface of the building appears to have been sand blasted. Belt courses painted black run along the very top of the building and also at a level several feet below the top, on both the Van Ness and Ellis facades. In the frieze between these two belt courses brick headers are used to outline subtle panels. The only other ornament in the building facades are gray marble diamonds of various shapes within the frieze, and small rectangular blocks in the pier at the corner of Van Ness and Ellis. Windows have modern metal framing, while the transom and side-lights around the door have wood frames. The entrance doors on Ellis Street are decorative wooden replacement doors. Other windows and vehicle entrances apparently once existed in both facades, and their locations are marked by red brick infill of a shade slightly different from the older (original) brick.

*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 southeast
June 2009
*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1920; building permit
*P7. Owner and Address:
VAN NESS/ELLIS PROFESSIONAL
899 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) 899 Ellis Street

B1. Historic Name: _____

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: tire sales B4. Present Use: office

***B5. Architectural Style:** none

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

Built in 1920. Infill alterations at an unknown date.

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

***B8. Related Features:**

none

B9a. Architect: A. Molera b. Builder: W. C. Duncan and Co.

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

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

The earliest known occupants of this building were tire sales stores, including Costello-Ritchie and Willie Ritchie, which sold Samson and Erie tires and Tri-Bar bumpers (1922-1925); Charles B. Dunham, who sold Kelly Springfield tires (1926-1928); and J. P. Costello (1929-1931). There followed a period of at least twenty years when the building was devoted to water heater sales (Pittsburg Water Heater Co., 1933-1953). Auto-related use returned during 1955-1960, when automobiles and Vespa scooters were sold here. These tire, water heater, and auto and Vespa businesses all had an address of 898 Van Ness Avenue, indicating at least one entrance on the Van Ness side that no longer exists. By 1964 the building was used as offices, which it still is today. A search of building permits failed to turn up any permits for infill of former vehicle entrances or windows with new brick. However, an examination of the wall fabric strongly suggests such infill has occurred. If so, this work was most likely done when the building was converted to office use.

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

***B12. References:**

Building permit #92986 (May 11, 1920), and others for 1955-1960, at S. F. Building Inspection Dept., 1660 Mission Street

Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory, for occupants of this building, 1922-1964

1929 and 1948 Sanborn insurance maps ("store")

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** William Kostura

Date of Evaluation: July 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)

Integrity

The top part of the building and the corner pier remain intact, but most of the area below the belt courses and frieze is altered with brick infill. The altered portions take up the largest area of façade and the areas that most directly related to the automobile history of the building. Accordingly, the building lacks integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It retains integrity of location and perhaps setting.

Evaluation

Due to loss of integrity, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under criteria 1, 2, or 3. Even if the building retained integrity, it would lack significance for its history, because the use of the building for tire sales was only moderately early (the 1920s), and brief (about nine years).