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) 819 Ellis Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Essex Garage
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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 819 Ellis Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 739, lot 15

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

This brick building is two stories plus a mezzanine in height and fills its lot, which is 60 feet in width and extends 120 feet through the block to Willow Street. The front is covered with a coating of stucco, an alteration from its original appearance. A vehicle entrance with a roll-up metal door is centrally-placed in the first story. The first story windows to the left of the entry are held in their original molded steel frames, while those at right are in modern metal frames. Both windows, to right and left, have lost their original transom muntins. In the mezzanine level, windows are held in replacement frames, probably of metal. The second story windows have original double-hung wooden sash; those in the center fit within an arch.

*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
1906; building permit

*P7. Owner and Address:
ACHILLES REVOC TRUST 2003
819 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) 819 Ellis Street

B1. Historic Name: Essex Garage
B2. Common Name: _____
B3. Original Use: furniture store B4. Present Use: auto rental
***B5. Architectural Style:** none
***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
Built in 1906. Converted to automobile use in ca. 1911. Façade heavily altered at an unknown date.

***B7. Moved?** ■ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown **Date:** _____ **Original Location:** _____
***B8. Related Features:**
none

B9a. Architect: Dodge and Allen (1906) b. Builder: Gillson and Macy (1906)
***B10. Significance: Theme** auto industry **Area** San Francisco
Period of Significance n/a **Property Type** public garage **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 building was built during July to November, 1906 to house the furniture store of Joseph Fredericks and Co. This firm had been founded in San Francisco in the 1850s and was burned out of its long-time Market Street home in 1906. This building was probably intended only as its temporary replacement store, and is located close to Van Ness Avenue, where many temporary stores and other commercial buildings were constructed soon after the earthquake and fire of 1906. In 1909 Joseph Fredericks and Co. built a much larger, and permanent, building for its business at 278-298 Post Street, opposite Union Square. It then left this Ellis Street building, just as other large firms left Van Ness Avenue when their new downtown buildings were complete.

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

***B12. References:**

See continuation sheet, page 3.

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):

This building was subsequently rehabbed for automobile-related use. During 1912-1914 it was occupied by M. J. Mendis Co., auto sales. What kinds of automobiles were sold here is unknown. From 1916 through 1944 the building was used as a public garage. Business names and proprietors during these years included M&H Garage (1916), Smith Garage (1918), Essex Garage (1921-1927), Jesse Hines (1933), and Charles Durand (1936-1944). From the late 1940s to the mid-1960s auto repair shops occupied the building.

Integrity

A drawing of this building published in the San Francisco Chronicle on November 23, 1906 reveals that the building has lost its original parapet, transoms and other window detail, and upper story trim, which appeared to be of stone. Accordingly, while the building retains integrity of location and setting, it has lost integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Evaluation

Despite this building's early history as part of San Francisco's temporary downtown in the few years following the earthquake and fire, and its long history of auto-related use, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under criteria A, B, or C due to loss of integrity. While it is possible the building was altered well before the year 1964, it was probably altered after 1930, and thus could not represent the early period of the automobile industry in San Francisco.

References

Building permit #1719, July 18, 1906
San Francisco Chronicle, November 23, 1906, p. 9
San Francisco city directory listings for occupants, 1908-1964
1913 and 1929 Sanborn insurance maps