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) 205 Franklin Street/210-220 Fell Street

**P1. Historic name of building (if any):** Hoover Spring Company 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 Location:** *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 205 Franklin Street/210-220 Fell Street City San Francisco Zip 94102

d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 816, lot 3

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

This is a one-story-plus-mezzanine reinforced concrete auto repair shop that completely fills its 120-foot by 137'-6" lot at the northwest corner of Fell and Franklin streets. The Franklin Street façade is seven bays wide, five of which are devoted to vehicle entrances; and the Fell Street façade is five bays wide, four of which are devoted to vehicle entrances. A firewall divides the interior of the building into two parts, one to the east (at 205 Franklin/210 Fell) and one to the west (at 220 Fell). This firewall has a stepped top that rises slightly above the roofline. From the street it can be seen that wooden trusses support a wooden roof. The building is completely lacking in ornament or moldings; a blank frieze on both facades is used for painted signage and is supported by concrete columns that define the entrance bays. In the main story, large, fixed windows have wooden frames, and in the mezzanine level smaller windows have replacement aluminum frames, save for one of wood that appears to be original.

***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
1919-1920; building permit

***P7. Owner and Address:**
SFJ PROPERTIES LLC
3 EMBARCADERO CTR, LOBBY
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94111

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

***P9. Date Recorded:** September 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)

The western portion of the building, at 220 Fell Street

# BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD



***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 205 Franklin Street/210-220 Fell Street

B1. Historic Name: Hoover Spring Company shop

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: auto springs and shock absorbers shop

B4. Present Use: auto repair

***B5. Architectural Style:** none

***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
Built in 1919-1920.

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

***B8. Related Features:**
none

B9a. Architect: David C. Coleman b. Builder: unknown

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

**History**

This building was built during 1919-1920 for the de Laveaga Estate Company, to designs by architect David C. Coleman. It is uncertain whether the entire structure was built at this time, or whether it was built in two stages. However, the 1928 Sanborn map shows that both parts of the building, the eastern and western portions, were complete by that year.

The occupant of this building for its first 23 years, from 1920 to ca. 1943, was the Hoover Spring Company. (This firm is discussed on page 4.) Occupants of 1944-1945 are unknown. Next, from 1946 to at least 1964, this building had two simultaneous occupants. United Parts Service, which sold auto parts and accessories on both a wholesale and retail basis, occupied the eastern portion of this building, numbered variously 201 Franklin and 210 Fell. Four Wheel Brake Service occupied the western portion, numbered 220 Fell. This building is now occupied by an auto repair shop (at 205 Franklin) and a brakes shop (at 220 Fell), plus offices (at 210 Fell).

*(See Continuation Sheet, page 4.)*

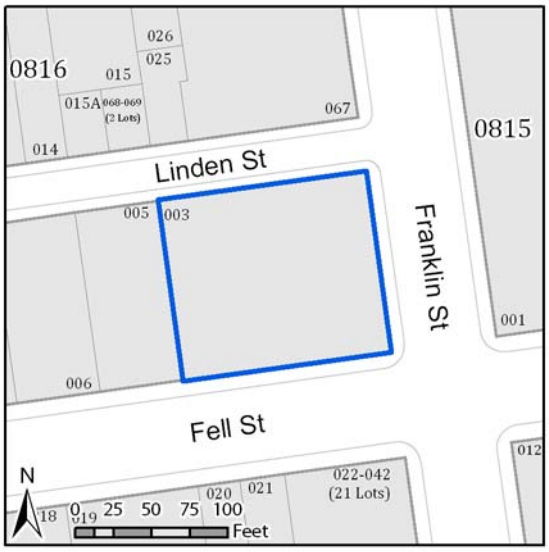
B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

***B12. References:**
Building permit #90002 (December 6, 1919), at S. F. Building Inspection Dept., 1660 Mission Street
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1912-1964

B13. Remarks:

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

(Sketch map with north arrow required)




(This space reserved for official comments.)

**History (continued)**

The first occupant of this building, the Hoover Spring Co., was founded in 1911 at the corner of Polk and Fulton streets. When that location was condemned to make room for the Civic Center, Hoover Spring moved (in 1913) to a new building at 617-637 Turk Street (now demolished). Hoover Spring remained there for seven years, then moved to this building, then numbered 201 Franklin, in 1920. In ca. 1943 Hoover Spring moved yet again, to a smaller structure at 1335 Larkin Street (extant), where it remained through 1953. The manager during most or all of these 42 years was Edward Downing.

On at least one occasion Hoover Spring Co. is listed in city directory classifieds as specializing in "Automobile Springs" (in 1918, before this building was built). More often, though, it is listed under the categories "Springs of all Kinds" (e.g. in 1914, 1921, 1924) and "Spring Manufacturers" (1927, 1929). In one year Hoover is also listed under "Automobile Supplies" (1921). There is little doubt that Hoover always made and sold springs for automobiles, but it is difficult to conclude that automobile springs was its specialty. It appears that two firms were more important as auto springs makers than was Hoover, at least during the 1920s. They were Gruss Air Springs and Betts Spring Company, each of which advertised under the "Automobile Springs" section of the classifieds and each of which ran a display ad in the 1927 city directory (on page 72) emphasizing their springs for automobiles.

**Integrity**

The integrity of this building is uncertain. The exterior shows no obvious signs of having been altered. Presuming this is so, the building can be said to retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Most buildings in the immediate vicinity date from recent decades, so this building has lost integrity of setting.

It is possible that this building has been altered more than is apparent. The many vehicle entrances are more than it would seem a springs manufacturer, the original occupant, would require. The lack of moldings or ornament also seems unusual for a building of this construction date, so perhaps it once had ornament that has been removed. A perusal of available building permits did not make these issues clear.

**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*.

**Evaluation (continued)**

This building had an automobile-related use from its completion in 1920 through at least 1964, and (it seems likely) to the present. During its first twenty years, however, its occupant was the Hoover Spring Company, which made "all kinds of springs" (per its city directory listings), and thus may not have specialized in automobile products. Thus, the automobile-related use of this building is strong only for the years 1946-1964. This is such a late date that, on balance, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1, for its automobile-related use.

The persons associated with this building were not particularly important in local automotive history. Accordingly, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2.

Architecturally, this building is severely plain, and thus this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.