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

PRIMARY RECORD

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

Page 1 of 1 *Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder) 1540 Market St.

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted *a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956 (rev. 1973)

*c. Address: 1540 Market St. City: San Francisco Zip: 94102

d. UTM: Zone: 10 mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number (Map, Block, Lot): 0836-005

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

1540 Market Street is located on an irregularly shaped lot on the north side of Market Street between Franklin Street and Van Ness Avenue. Built in 1920 and designed in the International style, 1540 Market Street is a four-story commercial building with a reinforced concrete frame. The building has an irregular plan; a flat roof; and a south-facing primary façade that is seven bays wide. The building is clad in marble veneer on the first story textured stucco on the upper stories. The first story has entries in the second, fourth, and sixth bays with aluminum-frame, glazed doors with transoms and sidelights. The first story and upper stories have fenestration consisting of paired, divided, metal-frame windows with central awning sash. The windows are separated with metal spandrel panels on the upper stories.

The building appears to be in good condition.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (list attributes and codes) HP7: 3+ Story Commercial Buiding

*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other

P5a. Photo

P5b. Photo: (view and date)
View from south
8/14/2006

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources: ☒ Historic
1920
SF Assessors Office

*P7. Owner and Address:
1540 Market Street LLC
Matison & Shidler
26100 Northwestern Hwy 1913
Southfield, MI

*P8. Recorded by:
Page & Turnbull, Inc.
724 Pine Street
San Francisco, CA 94108

*P9. Date Recorded:
8/14/2006

*P10. Survey Type:
Reconnaissance

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none") None

*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)

State of California The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Primary #
HRI No.

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*NRHP Status Code 6Z

Page 1 of 2 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 1540 Market Street

B1. Historic Name 1540 Market Street

B2. Common Name 1540 Market Street

B3. Original Use B4. Present Use:

* B5. Architectural Style Renaissance/Baroque style

*B6. Construction History
1540 Market Street was constructed in 1920. Alterations include removal of all ornamentation, replacement of windows, re-cladding, and ground level reconfiguration in ca. 1956. The current primary façade entrances were installed in 1986. The secondary façade on Oak Street appears to have

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features none

B9a. Architect Reid Bros . Builder

*B10. Significance: Theme 1906 Earthquake and Fire Reconstruction Area: Civic Center/Market Street Corridor

Period of Significance 1906-1929 Property Type Commercial Applicable Criteria n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity)

In regard to California Register Criterion 1 (History/Events) this property is considered under the 1906 Earthquake and Fire Reconstruction context of the Historic Context Statement, Market & Octavia Neighborhood Plan Area, since it is both an identified building type (Commercial) and dates from the Period of Significance (1906-1929) of that context. There is no indication the property is eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2 (Important Persons), Criterion 3 (Design/Construction), or Criterion 4 (Information Potential).

Criterion 1:

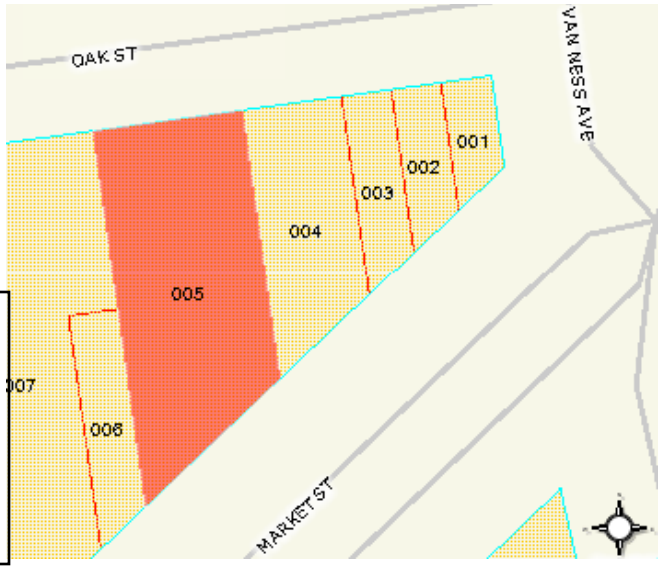
1540 Market Street was constructed in 1920 for Elise Drexler and designed by the Reid Brothers in the Renaissance/Baroque style. The building was designed as an automobile showroom for Clydesdale Motor Trucks with a retail front on Market Street and the parts department fronting Oak Street. According to the San Francisco Chronicle article, "Clydesdale's New Offices Are Opened," the freight elevator, one of the largest in the city, was capable of lifting a five or six-ton truck. (continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP7: 3+ Story Commercial Buiding

*B12. References: Historic Context Statement, Market & Octavia Neighborhood Plan Area, Page & Turnbull, Inc. July 20, 2007

B13. Remarks

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



*B14. Evaluator Kelley & VerPlanck
*Date of Evaluation 5/1/2010

(This space reserved for official comments)

B10: Significance (continued)

This building remained in use as an automobile showroom until 1956 when Dow Jones Co., publishers of the Wall Street Journal, remodeled the interior for use as a newspaper printing facility. This major renovation of the building appears to have included the removal of all ornamentation, replacement of windows, re-cladding, and ground level reconfiguration. However, the permits do not specify these exterior alterations. The current primary façade entrances were installed in 1986. The secondary façade on Oak Street appears to have been altered (at an unknown date), including window replacement, elimination of large vehicular bays, and removal of ornamentation.

James and Merritt Reid constituted one of the best-known and well respected architecture firms in San Francisco around the turn of the last century. James Reid, the principal designer in the Reid Brothers partnership, was born November 25, 1851 in St. John, New Brunswick. He studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and may have then attended the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, although he did not matriculate. James Reid first came to California in 1888 after being commissioned to design the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego. The following year, James moved to San Francisco and joined his brother Merritt. The brothers formed what would become a tremendously important firm that would last half a century, until Merritt's death in 1932. His brother James died in 1943. Much of their work took place during the reconstruction of San Francisco after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. Both before and after the earthquake and fire, the Reid Brothers designed hotels, office buildings, churches, single-family residences and theaters. Some of their most important works include the Fairmont Hotel (1906), the Call Office Building (1914), the First Congregational Church (1914), and the Cliff House (1908) among many other prominent San Francisco landmarks.

The building is located near the corner of Van Ness Avenue - San Francisco's first "Auto Row" - and is visible to traffic traveling down both Market Street and Van Ness Avenue. Early automobile retailers appreciated the advantages of relocating to Van Ness Avenue. Many of the blocks between the Civic Center and Pine Street are bisected into smaller blocks by a series of intersecting alleys. This arrangement allowed agents to build showrooms on lots with two frontages – one facing Van Ness for the showroom and another on an alley, where the service bays and car elevator would be located. The high visibility of Van Ness Avenue was another attraction. Even before the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937, Van Ness Avenue was the widest artery in the city and the most heavily traveled corridor after Market Street. Taking advantage of these factors, automobile dealers hired prominent architects to design showrooms that, similar to contemporary movie palaces, would be sure to grab the attention of passers-by. 1540 Market Street, with its 1920 construction date, Market Street/Van Ness Avenue location, and known association with the automobile industry, expresses a clear association with a broad pattern of San Francisco history.

Integrity:

1540 Market Street underwent substantial alterations in approximately 1956, including removal of all ornamentation, replacement of its original windows with aluminum, re-cladding in stucco, removal of the original cornice and ground level reconfiguration. However, the permits do not specify the extent of these exterior alterations. The current primary façade entrances were installed in 1986. The secondary façade on Oak Street appears to have been altered (at an unknown date), including window replacement, elimination of large vehicular bays, and removal of ornamentation. 1540 Market Street retains integrity of location only. It no longer retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, setting, or association.

Conclusion:

1540 Market Street does not appear to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources or local designation under any criterion. Although the construction date and building location demonstrate an association with the 1906 Earthquake and Fire Reconstruction context, it no longer accurately expresses this association due to the significant alterations to the exterior. As the building no longer conveys its original appearance at the time of construction, it does not clearly express an association with any broad pattern of events in San Francisco history or the State of California or significant persons, nor does it embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or possess high artistic values.