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) 1645-1661 Pacific Avenue

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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 1645-1661 Pacific Avenue City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 595, lot 13

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

This building was built in two parts. The eastern portion, numbered 1645 Pacific, is much the larger of the two, being two stories in height and about 100 feet in width; while the western portion, 1661 Pacific, is one story in height and about 25 feet in width. The two structures occupy a single lot (125 feet along Pacific Avenue by 127'-8" in depth), appear to have been under common ownership since the early 1920s, and are shown as joined in an early Sanborn map; and hence are being evaluated together on this form.

The larger structure, 1645 Pacific, has a visible west wall that is clearly brick masonry; however, the 1948 Sanborn map states that this structure has a reinforced concrete frame. A slightly projecting frieze and end piers surround the façade and may be evidence of concrete framing within the structure. Similar projections can be found at the second floor level and in supporting piers below. Windows in the second story have industrial steel sash. Three vehicle entrances, one to a ramp leading upstairs, can be found in the first story. The façade is faced in stucco, and no trace remains of the considerable ornament that once existed.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 2.)

*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 southwest
June 2009

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1923; building permit

*P7. Owner and Address:
1645 PACIFIC AVENUE LLC
121 N SAN MATEO DR
SAN MATEO CA 94401

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

*P9. Date Recorded: December 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)

Description (continued):

The western portion of this building, at 1661 Pacific, is one story in height and faced in stucco. The structure seems to be primarily reinforced concrete, but there is also steel framing visible near the front. The composition consists of a single large vehicle entrance surrounded by plain end piers supporting a beam. The façade is topped by a single course of imitation clay tiles, a thin, molded cornice, and a decorative frieze with alternating Greek key patterns and rosette panels.

View looking southeast. #1645 is at left, and #1661 is at right.

Detail of 1661 Pacific (at left; an unrelated structure is at right)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 1645-1661 Pacific Avenue

B1. Historic Name: _____

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: auto repair shop B4. Present Use: auto repair shop and parking garage

***B5. Architectural Style:** Classical Revival

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

Probably built in 1923. The façade of #1645 was altered at an unknown date (1950s or later).

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

***B8. Related Features:**

none

B9a. Architect: August Headman b. Builder: unknown

***B10. Significance: Theme** automobile 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 has a complex construction history that is not fully understood. In 1913 a one-story brick stable stood on this lot. In 1918 that building was divided into two parts, a stable (where #1645 is today) and an auto repair shop (where #1661 is today). In December 1922 the owner, attorney Adolph A. Tiscornia, applied to make an alteration and addition to that building. That building permit application was withdrawn, to be replaced in January 1923 by a new permit application for a two-story building, designed by August Headman, to be used as a garage and paint shop. It is uncertain whether the current structure at 1645 Pacific was an all-new building built in 1923 or an addition to the older building. It is also uncertain whether the one-story structure at #1661 is a remodeling of the 1918 auto repair shop or a newer structure. Both parts of 1645-1661 Pacific have always had a common ownership, and they are shown in the 1948 Sanborn insurance map as a single structure of two linked parts, and thus it seems best to evaluate both parts together, as a single building.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 4.)

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

***B12. References:**

Building permit #113296 (Jan. 1923), filed under "1645 Pacific"; the measurements given = SS Pacific, 123' E Van Ness, 100' x 125'.

Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 19-1964

1918 Sanborn insurance map: a vacant stable at #1649-1653 (wood frame?); auto repair at #1661

1948 Sanborn insurance map: #1645-1649 (auto whse, reinforced concrete) is joined to #1661.

Assessor's negative, SF History Center, SFPL (block 595, #s 7&8)

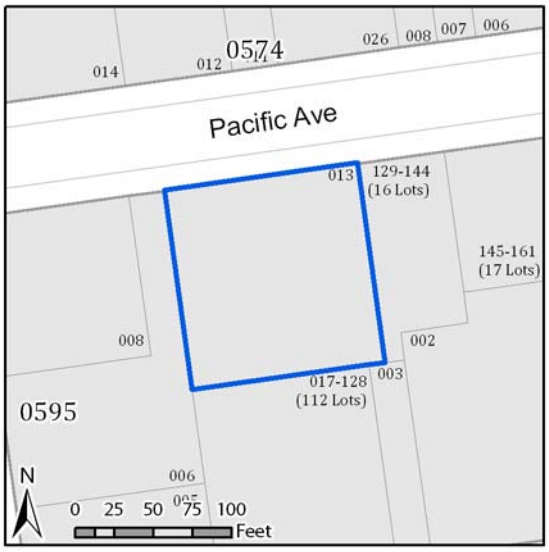
B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** William Kostura

Date of Evaluation: December 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)



History (continued)

A ca. 1940s or 1950s photograph of this building can be found at the San Francisco History Center of the Main Library (see Assessor's negatives, block 595, #s 7 and 8). It shows #1645 as having an elaborately decorated façade, proving that that portion of the building has been drastically altered since then. It was different in style from #1661, which was then as it is today.

Some occupants of the building from 1923 through 1964 are known. They include:

1923-1928: Peters and Co., motor, chassis, and body work (at #1645)
1923-1925: Mark West, auto repair (at #1661)
1927-1928: Universal Jack and Hoist (#1645)
1927-1928: Western Radiator and Fender (#1645)
1933: Alton Garage (#1645)
1933: Andrew J. Nelson, auto repair (#1661)
1936-1940: Pacific Van Ness Garage (#1645)
1940: Short's Auto Reconstruction (#1661)
1946 and 1953: occupants unknown; no listings for either address in directories
1957-1959: Van's Body Shop (#1645)
1961: Reynolds C. Johnson, body shop and storage
1964: Carlsen-Klemn Body Shop (#1645)

To summarize, this building had mostly auto repair uses over the years, although #1645 held a public garage during at least 1933-1940. The two structures may have had shared or common use during the 1950s-1960s, although they have separate occupants today.

Integrity

The portion at #1645 Pacific has been heavily altered and has thus lost integrity. The portion at 1661 Pacific, if considered separately, is unaltered and retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association.

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.*

(Continued next page.)

Evaluation (continued)

Due to the façade alteration at #1645, that portion of the building has no potential for historic significance under California Register criteria 1, 2, or 3. Because #1645 occupies 80% of the building's footprint and almost 90% of the total façade area, the same is true for the building as a whole.

The portion of the building at 1661 Pacific could be considered separately. Its history, however, is unremarkable, and no separate occupants are known for that address after 1940 and through 1964. It thus lacks significance under criteria 1 and 2. The façade is intact, but architecturally it is modest, and of little interest. It does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.