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) 1560 Pacific Avenue

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Reliable Auto Body Reconstruction
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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 1560 Pacific Avenue City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 573, lot 10

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

This one story brick building is reinforced with a steel frame, according to the original building permit. It fills its lot, which measures 35'-10" along Pacific Avenue and has a depth of 127'-8". Originally the building and lot were only 34'-4" wide, but they seem to have been widened by the addition of brick buttressing adjoining the west wall. The building has a high parapet, most of which is devoted to signage. Subtle brick corbelling at the very top of the parapet consists of three courses of stretchers and one of headers. Immediately beneath the sign is a simple profiled cornice and a course of dentils. The balance of the façade is divided into three bays of equal width, each devoted to a vehicle entrance with non-original roll-up steel doors. Save for the brick buttress, the doors, and the signs, the façade of this building appears to be unaltered.

*P3b Resource Attributes: HP8 – industrial building

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

P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)
View looking north
June 2009

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1922; building permits

*P7. Owner and Address:
ICARDI EXEMPTION TR
1044 SILVER HILL RD
REDWOOD CITY CA 94061

*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)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 1560 Pacific Avenue

B1. Historic Name: Reliable Auto Body Reconstruction

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: unknown B4. Present Use: auto repair

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

***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
Built in 1922. Vehicle entrance doors replaced at an unknown date.

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

***B8. Related Features:**
none

B9a. Architect: M. J. Lyon 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: A. J. Rich Company and Moses J. Lyon

This building was built in 1922 as an investment for the A. J. Rich Company, a real estate firm, to designs by Moses J. Lyon. Lyon worked in San Francisco from 1890 to 1931. He is best known for his Venetian Gothic-style Ohabai Shalome synagogue at 1881 Bush Street. It is the last survivor of his many prominent 19th century institutional and commercial buildings, many of which were designed for Jewish clients. Among his more important post-earthquake and fire buildings are the Hildebrand Stables, of clinker brick, at 721 Filbert Street (1906); the J. E. Adams Building at 381-383 Bush (1907); and Charles S. Howard's Buick showroom at 1595 Van Ness Avenue (1913), the latter being within the study area of this report. Some very fine houses and apartments by Lyon also still stand.

For a few years in the early 1920s Lyon did not maintain his own office, but instead worked in the employ of the A. J. Rich real estate company, the owner of the building being evaluated here. In all likelihood Lyon designed other buildings for Rich besides this one.

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

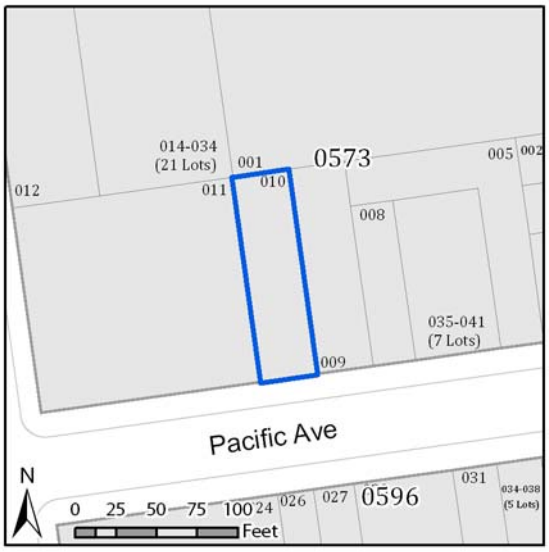
***B12. References:**
Building permits #106332 (for the grading and foundation) and #106824 (for the superstructure) (April 11 and 27, 1922)
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for the first owner and occupants of this building, 1921-1964
1929 Sanborn insurance map ("auto repair")

B13. Remarks:

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

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)



History -- Occupants

The occupants of this building during its first five years remain unknown despite a substantial research effort. The original building permit merely states that this building was to be used for "commercial purposes," which is not very helpful. With its three vehicle bays this building definitely has the appearance of having been built for automobile related use. However, a search through automobile-related categories (such as auto repair, auto tops and trimming, auto painters, tires, and vulcanizing) in classified listings in city directories for 1924, 1925, and 1927 failed to turn up any businesses at this address. The Kelts Directory of 1927 (arranged by address) also does not list any occupant here.

Occupants of this building from 1928 onward (except for a few years) have been identified, and all were auto repair shops. They were:

1928-1930: Fred Kahn and Son, auto repair

1932-1933: Roe M. Dodge, auto repair

1937-1939: Brondolo and Icardi, Reliable Welding Works. This business performed welding, radiator repairing, fender and body repairing and painting. Previously it had been at 1620 Pacific Avenue. Then in 1937 the two partners split up, Joseph Icardi moving to 1560 Pacific under the old firm name, and Frank Brondolo remaining at the old address.

1940-1964: Reliable Auto Body Reconstruction. This was Joseph Icardi's business, now (in 1940) with a new partner, Guy Paulazo, and under a new name. This business remained here through at least 1964, and the present business here has virtually the same name.

In sum, this building had 33 years of use as an auto repair shop beginning in 1928 (through 1964).

This building holds a record of sorts. Counting Reliable Welding Works (1937-1939) and Reliable Auto Body (1940-present) as the same business, it has been the longest-lasting auto-related business in one building in the study area. (One other comes very close, namely Hal Metzel, the Auto Tailor, at 42 Twelfth Street, 1938-present). However, this study employs 1964 as an end date for consideration of buildings for potential historic significance, and using that end date, this building is considered to have had 33 years of known auto repair use.

History -- Context

The best examples of auto repair shops in the study area would be the oldest examples (i.e. buildings whose auto repair use began at the earliest dates), those with the greatest longevity of such use, and those with the highest integrity. Larger repair shops are also better examples than smaller ones (age, longevity, and integrity being roughly equal). A list of "best examples" would not include automobile showrooms where auto repair was subordinate activity to auto sales. It would also not include buildings that had a narrow, specialized use such as tires, brakes, or battery service, or an auto painting shop; those might be best considered as separate building types.

(Continued next page.)

History – Context (continued)

A summary of the best examples in the study area (compared with 1560 Pacific) follows below:

Eight buildings in the study area are clearly older and longer-lasting examples of auto repair shops relative to 1560 Pacific. Beginning with the earliest examples, they are: 1465 Pine (30 years of such use beginning in 1917), 1634 Pine (45 years beginning in 1919), 843 Polk (44 years beginning in 1920), 650 Polk (41 years beginning in 1920), 845 Polk (39 years beginning in 1920), 300 Grove (37 years beginning in 1920), 824 Ellis (35 years beginning in 1920), 1765 California (43 years beginning in 1921).

Four buildings are similar in age and longevity to 1560 Pacific, but are better examples of auto repair shops because they are substantially larger buildings, and thus had greater capacity. They include: 1528-1540 Pine (33 years beginning in 1926), 550 Turk (30 years beginning in 1927), 55 Oak (35 years beginning in 1929), and 1522 Bush (34 years beginning in 1931).

Two buildings have less longevity than 1560 Pacific, but they are much earlier examples, and on balance should be considered as better examples of auto repair shops. They are 155 Grove (23 years beginning in 1915) and 731-799 Van Ness (25 years beginning in 1917). The latter building also had much greater capacity than 1560 Pacific.

One building has less longevity than 1560 Pacific, and became an auto repair shop at a substantially later date, but is so much larger that it should probably be considered as a slightly better example. That building is: 730 Ellis (29 years beginning in 1936). It also has a long history of other auto-related uses.

In all, fourteen buildings in the study area should be considered as much better examples of auto repair shops than 1560 Pacific is, and one should be considered a slightly better example.

Approximately 20 other buildings in the study area were used as auto repair shops for several years or longer in their history. Some of these have poor integrity and thus can no longer be considered as good examples of this building type. Some began their auto repair use in the 1930s, rather late in the history of this building type. Some had only brief longevity in this use. Several were built for other uses, such as public garages, and are better considered as examples of those building types. It is unknown how many good examples of auto repair shops survive elsewhere in San Francisco.

Integrity

The only alteration of any note to the façade of this building has been the replacement of the three original vehicle entrance doors with new ones. This kind of alteration has been almost universal among auto-related buildings in the study area. What makes such an alteration more serious in the case of 1560 Pacific is that the three vehicle entrances of this building make up a large percentage of its façade area. On balance, this building retains integrity of location, design, and association, while integrity of materials, workmanship, and feeling have been somewhat diminished. Integrity of setting has also been diminished through new construction in the vicinity.

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*.

The earliest known use of 1560 Pacific as an auto repair shop was in 1928, making it a moderately early example of such a building. With 33 years of such use in its history (through 1964), it has excellent longevity in this use. The integrity on the whole is good, though it is diminished because the three non-original vehicle entrance doors take up a large percentage of the total façade area.

As outlined above, 1560 Pacific is (by the criteria given in the Context section above) the sixteenth best example of an auto repair shop in the study area. An argument could be made that all good examples of this building type have historic significance, on the grounds that sixteen (or 20, or 25) is not a large number of examples to represent this aspect of San Francisco's early automotive history. However, of the fifteen better examples cited above, fourteen of them are so much better that 1560 Pacific does seem to lack significance by comparison. The large percentage of its façade area that is devoted to modern vehicle doors reinforces this evaluation.

For these reasons, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1, at the local level, for its use as an automobile showroom. For similar reasons, it also does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2. Architecturally, this building is very modest, and thus it also does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.