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) 1940 Van Ness 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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 1940 Van Ness Avenue City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 598, lot 10B

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

This one-story, stucco-clad concrete building fills its lot, which measures 25 feet along Van Ness Avenue and has a depth of 111'-6"; the lot also has a five-foot wide ell to Jackson Street. In composition the façade consists of a single storefront pavilion, with end piers supporting a parapet and frieze. The parapet is decorated with a simple cornice molding, from which decorative shields have been crudely chipped away. The inside perimeter of the piers and frieze is bordered with a thin molding that wraps around the storefront. Portions of this molding, along with the entire mezzanine area, are obscured by a long awning. The entrance has paired wooden doors with full-length glazing and is topped by a wooden hopper transom. To the right of the entrance is a narrow sidelight. To the left is a three-part, wood-framed storefront window over a brick bulkhead. This entrance, window, and bulkhead composition can be seen in a ca. 1940s-1950s photograph and probably date to that general time period.

*P3b Resource Attributes: HP6 – commercial building; HP8 – industrial building

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

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

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1921; building permit

*P7. Owner and Address:
MICHAEL A HONNERT TRUST
200
1940 VAN NESS AVE
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94109

*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)

Photo of 1940 Van Ness Avenue, ca. 1940s or 1950s. The shields in the cornice have been removed since this photo was taken, and the mezzanine window, if still extant, is now obscured by an awning. The storefront windows, paired doors, and brick bulkhead shown in this photo are still present today, and were probably installed after automobile use of the building ended in the 1930s. From the San Francisco History Center, Main Library. Assessor's negatives, block 598, #39.

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 1940 Van Ness Avenue

B1. Historic Name:

B2. Common Name: Honnert and Son

B3. Original Use: auto tires sales B4. Present Use: office/storefront

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

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

Built in 1921. Storefront area probably altered in the 1930s-1950s. Cornice ornament removed after that date.

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

***B8. Related Features:**

none

B9a. Architect: Samuel Lightner Hyman b. Builder: O. W. Britt

***B10. Significance: Theme** automobile industry **Area** San Francisco

Period of Significance n/a **Property Type** auto service building **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 – Construction and architect

This building was built in 1921 as an investment for the owners, prominent real estate developer L. A. Myers and his partner in this instance, architect Samuel Lightner Hyman, who also designed this building. Samuel Hyman was a prominent architect in his time, and several of his buildings are well-known today. He opened his office in 1917 and added a partner, Abraham Appleton, in 1922. They designed many institutional buildings in San Francisco, most importantly the Jewish Old People's Home at Geneva and Mission (Hyman, 1921-1922) and the Eureka Benevolent Society building at 1600 Scott (1930-1931); two notable downtown buildings, namely 625-627 Sutter, in the Spanish Colonial Revival style (1921, 1925), and the Art Deco style 343 Sansome (1930); and many fine houses and apartment buildings in Sea Cliff, Pacific Heights, and Russian Hill.

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

***B12. References:**

Building permit #97533 (March 4, 1921)
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1923-1964
1929 Sanborn insurance map ("radio service")
1948 Sanborn insurance map ("store")

B13. Remarks:

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

(Sketch map with north arrow required)

(This space reserved for official comments.)

History -- occupants

Automobile-related businesses – a tire shop, auto repair shops, and a used car sales room – occupied this building for approximately its first fifteen years. Each was here only briefly. They were:

1923: Norwalk Tire and Rubber

1924: Jack Lawson, auto repair

1926-1928: Edward W. Torello, auto repair

1933: Tuohy and Ercell Auto Service

1935: James H. Lemmon, used cars

Among the later occupants were the Artistic Piano Shop and M. A. Castell furniture repair (both here in 1938-1940), a bakery (here beginning in 1943); and Al Honnert, interior decorating (1953 to present).

Integrity

It is probable that the entire interior zone of this building, i.e. the area between the end piers and below the frieze, was altered after the last auto use of the building in the mid-to-late 1930s. In particular, the removal of the vehicle entrance has removed any association of this building with its early auto-related use. Regarding setting, a number of buildings in the vicinity have been altered. To summarize for the period through 1935, this building retains integrity of location, has diminished integrity of setting, has greatly diminished integrity of design and materials, and has lost integrity of workmanship, feeling, and association. For the period of the 1940s and 1950s (i.e., of the photograph on page 2), integrity has been further diminished by the removal of the cornice ornament.

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.*

This building was briefly occupied by very minor auto-related businesses through 1935. The later businesses here probably also lack historic importance. Architecturally, this building lacked distinction even in the 1940s-early 1950s, before further alterations occurred. For these reasons, and due to a substantial loss of integrity, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under criteria 1, 2, or 3.