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

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code 3CS
Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1946-1960 Van Ness Avenue

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Duesenberg showroom/Ahrens Bakery
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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 1946-1960 Van Ness Avenue City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 598, lot 10A

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

This three story reinforced concrete building fills its 65' by 111'-6" lot at the southeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Jackson Street. The building is clad in stucco that has been lightly scored to resemble masonry. In composition, the two upper stories of the Van Ness Avenue façade are divided into five bays of equal width, while the upper stories of the Jackson Street façade are divided into ten bays, also of equal width. The first story composition is different, with a single storefront running along the Van Ness Avenue side and along 40% of the Jackson Street side. The balance of the Jackson Street façade is devoted to service bays, with windows and doors loosely aligned with the division of bays above.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 2.)

*P3b Resource Attributes: HP6 – two-story commercial building

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

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

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1920; building permit

*P7. Owner and Address:
MCALLISTER REVOC MNGMNT TRU
ONE POST ST #800
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94104

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

*P9. Date Recorded: February 2010

*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, 2009.

*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 building is almost devoid of ornament or style details. Instead of possessing ornament, the building derives its architectural expression from the rhythm and proportions of its bays, the skeletal treatment of the upper stories, and its details and texturing. In these ways it is similar to many other multi-story, reinforced concrete industrial buildings in San Francisco that date from the 1910s to the 1930s.

A plain parapet runs along the top of the building on all sides. A rectangular cornice, also plain, projects from the wall plane at the base of this parapet.

The window bays in the second and third stories are surrounded, and defined, by a horizontal molding along the top (located immediately beneath, and lending support to, the cornice) and vertical piers along the sides. All of these elements are concrete, are curved or slanted in profile, and are clad in stucco that has been scored. They have been painted a peach color that contrasts with the beige window area within each bay. The piers are crowned with leaf ornaments that meet the horizontal molding. Aside from the scoring of the stucco, these are the only decorations on the building.

Windows in these upper stories are held by a concrete frame that runs along the inside perimeter of each bay. These frames are profiled in three layers, are clad in scored stucco, and as mentioned above are painted beige, in contrast to the adjacent peach piers and molding. Mullions and transom bars divide each bay into a 3x3 grid in each story. Within each grid segment is a casement window with a sash (probably wooden, but this is uncertain) divided by muntins into nine lights. Slightly recessed spandrels can be found at the top of each bay and at the third floor level.

The first story is topped by a cornice and a blank frieze that stretch across both facades. The storefront area consists of large plate glass windows held in place by steel frames and steel muntins strips that appear to be original. The main entrance is centered in the Van Ness façade and is boarded up. The transom area between the storefront windows and the second floor frieze has been painted over.

On the Jackson Street side, east of the storefront area, four tripartite windows and one single window, each divided by muntins into smaller lights, can be found in the mezzanine area. Below these, two tripartite windows and two single windows, each of which has lost its original muntins, can be found. There are also two vehicle entrance doors at this level. Each of these has glazing divided by muntins in the upper zone and panels below. This building is one of only three in the study area with automobile-related histories that retain their original vehicle doors.

Jackson Street façade

Top photo: Detail of window bays. Note the profiling of the piers, the leafy ornament at the top of each pier where it meets the slanted molding above, the scoring of the stucco surface, and the window sash divided by muntins. Bottom photo: Vehicle entrance doors, Jackson Street side.

Top photo: Van Ness Avenue façade in the 1950s. SF Public Library photo, Assessor's negative, block 598. Bottom photo: Jackson Street façade in 1946. SF Public Library photo AAC-6294.

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 3CS

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 1946-1960 Van Ness Avenue

B1. Historic Name: Duesenberg showroom/Ahrens Bakery

B2. Common Name: Ahrens Bakery

B3. Original Use: auto showroom B4. Present Use: vacant

***B5. Architectural Style:** Early 20th century reinforced concrete industrial

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

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

***B8. Related Features:**
none

B9a. Engineers: Macdonald and Kahn b. Builders: Macdonald and Kahn

***B10. Significance: Theme** automobile industry **Area** San Francisco
Period of Significance 1920 **Property Type** auto showroom **Applicable Criteria** 3
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

History – Construction and engineers

This building was built in 1920 as an investment for owner Leon Lewin, a coffee importer. It was both designed and built for Lewin by the firm of MacDonald and Kahn, engineers and contractors. The initial occupant of the building, the California-Oakland Motor Company, signed a lease with the owner before construction began, and their specific needs were incorporated into the design process.

MacDonald and Kahn formed their partnership in 1907 or 1908, undoubtedly to capitalize on the rebuilding of San Francisco after the earthquake and fire of 1906. Both Alan MacDonald and Felix Kahn were engineers, and the latter co-owned a consulting firm specializing in reinforced concrete with offices in Detroit, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle. By 1916 they were designing and building substantial, four-story reinforced concrete buildings in San Francisco. Within the study area of this report they built at least ten buildings, seven of them of reinforced concrete (see list on next page). Due to their expertise in this material they became, during 1931-1935, one of the "Six Companies" that built Hoover Dam on the Colorado River.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 7.)

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

***B12. References:**
Building permit #91197 (February 11, 1920)
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1920-1964
1929 Sanborn insurance map ("auto sales and service")
1948 Sanborn insurance map ("bakery and Venetian blinds")
See also last page of Continuation Sheets.

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** William Kostura
Date of Evaluation: February 2010

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)

History – Construction and engineers (continued)

MacDonald and Kahn usually performed all aspects of the design of the buildings they built. In such cases, they probably relied on their staff architects or draftsmen to perform the architectural aspects of their designs. One such person is known: George de Colmesnil, who formerly had his own architectural office, and who worked for MacDonald and Kahn in 1920. There must have been others as well. On some occasions, outside architects were involved in the buildings that MacDonald and Kahn built, and in these cases the latter firm performed only the engineering design.

One of the partners, Felix Kahn, published his thoughts on industrial design slightly over a year before construction of this building began. In "Comments on Industrial Engineering," in *The Architect*, September 1918, he wrote:

> While the fundamental requisite of a factory building must be utility, allied with it now stands attractiveness, or beauty. Beauty does not mean a lavish display of over decoration in form or color. A proper regard for proportion, mass, balance, good taste in color, disposition of members, and in the use of materials will result in attractiveness. Above all, a factory building should appear to be what it is. This does not mean that it should have a cold, hard appearance and be devoid of all architectural treatment. The employment of a minor amount of decoration or enrichment is certainly permissible. A factory building of good architectural appearance redounds to the credit side of the ledger in a variety of ways. As an advertising medium it is of decided value. A building pleasing to the eye will undoubtedly produce in the minds of the workmen a different attitude towards their work, one tending to greater enthusiasm and contentment, unconsciously creating efficiency.

Generally speaking, these guidelines or principles were closely adhered to in the design of MacDonald and Kahn's buildings.

One other structural engineer was also prolific as a building contractor in San Francisco before the 1940s. That was James H. Hjul. He produced notable works, but MacDonald and Kahn had a much more important career than he did.

History -- Occupants

This building was occupied by automobile dealerships during its first ten years. During this time two low to mid-priced brands, Oakland and Kissel, and three luxury brands, Duesenberg, Auburn and Delage, were sold here. The building then passed out of automobile use and was next occupied by a bakery from 1938 into the 1990s.

<u>Automobile dealerships, 1920-1930</u>

1920-1923: California-Oakland Motor Company and Oakland Motor Car Company

The first occupant of this building was here for only two years. Its brief occupancy is illustrative of the ephemeral nature of many auto dealerships during the early decades of the industry in San Francisco.

(Continued next page.)

History – Occupants (continued)

This first occupant was the California-Oakland Motor Company. Their name indicated that they were distributors of the Oakland brand of automobile for the state of California. This firm was founded in Los Angeles as Hawley, King and Company, dealers of wagons and farming implements, and it began selling the Oakland brand of autos in southern California in 1908. They were so successful that in 1916 the national Oakland Motor Car Company, by then a subsidiary of General Motors, named Hawley, King and Company as distributors of their autos for the entire state.

Instead of selling Oakland autos directly to the northern California public, Hawley, King and Co. chose to limit its role to that of a wholesaler and to appoint local dealerships around the region. The two Oakland dealerships it appointed in San Francisco – first at 1525 Van Ness (in 1916) and then at 1600 Van Ness (1917-1918) were both short-lived. (Both of these buildings still stand, with poor to fair integrity.) Disappointed by these results, Hawley-King began to sell Oakland autos on a retail basis at 1130-1138 Polk, which had been their service center and parts storehouse. It was not suitable as an auto showroom, and they began to search for a permanent home on "Auto Row," Van Ness Avenue.

Hawley-King's northern California manager, Reeve Gartzmann, selected a site at the southeast corner of Van Ness and Jackson Street, near the north end of Auto Row. From articles published in the S. F. *Chronicle* it is clear that Gartzmann leased the new building from owner Leon Levin before construction began, and he must have specified aspects of its plan. The showroom was at the front of the first story and was finely finished in order, it was said, to appeal to women, who were increasingly interested in Oakland's fully enclosed cars. Here the four models of Oakland autos would be displayed. A mezzanine level was devoted to "wholesale departments," meaning, probably, offices for the company's wholesale distribution system. The parts and service departments were in the rear of the first story. The second story housed automobiles and tires, and the third story was used as a machine shop. An elevator was used instead of ramps to move vehicles between floors in order to conserve space. A private alley behind the building aided vehicle access to it.

Upon moving into 1946-1960 Van Ness, Hawley, King and Company changed its name to the California-Oakland Motor Company. The building opened in August 1920, but Oakland-California remained there for less than two years. In March 1922 the national Oakland company took over 1946-1960 Van Ness as a factory branch, one of eighteen it established in the country. It is unknown whether the local distributor, California-Oakland, failed, forcing the manufacturer to step in; or whether Oakland ended the relationship in a desire to have more control of local markets. Two events outside of the local firm's control may have precipitated the change. One was the national recession of the early 1920s, which caused many local dealers to fail. Another was quality control problems in Oakland autos, which emerged in early 1920 just as construction of this building commenced, and may have driven customers away from the brand at the worst possible time for California-Oakland.

Oakland proclaimed that it expected its factory branch in San Francisco to become its second largest in the country, after the one in New York. Despite this purported optimism, Oakland's SF branch remained in this building for only one more year, to 1923. Afterward, Oakland returned to the former system of selecting local distributors to sell their automobiles in San Francisco.

History – Occupants (continued)

A few words should be added about the Oakland brand. (This account is from the Wikipedia entries on Oakland and Pontiac automobiles.) The Oakland Motor Car Company was founded in the city of Pontiac, in Oakland County, Michigan, in 1907. It initially made a two-cylinder car, then began making four-cylinder cars the following year. This was about the time Hawley, King and Co. began selling the brand in Los Angeles. Oakland did well, and the company was purchased by the newly formed General Motors Corporation in 1909. After V-8 engines began to be used in Oakland autos in 1916 the brand became even more popular, and production increased. As mentioned above, quality control problems emerged in early 1920, but were addressed the following year.

In the General Motors hierarchy, Chevrolet was the least expensive car, followed by Oakland. Oldsmobile was a mid-priced car, Buick was the next most expensive brand, and Cadillac was the most expensive brand. In 1926, General Motors developed a new model or companion brand for Oakland, named Pontiac, in order to fill the price gap between other Oakland models and Chevrolet. Pontiac immediately outstripped the rest of the Oakland brand in popularity, and in 1931 Oakland was discontinued, leaving Pontiac in its place. Today, the Pontiac brand is in the process of being discontinued by GM.

1926-1930: The Lloyd S. Johnson Company, dealers in Duesenberg, Auburn and Delage automobiles

Occupants of this building for the years 1924-1925 are unknown. During the following five years the Lloyd S. Johnson Company sold three brands of luxury autos here: Duesenberg (during 1926-1930), Auburn (during most of the same period), and Delage (in 1927 and 1930).

Duesenberg was founded in 1913 in Des Moines, Iowa by Fred and August Duesenberg, self-taught German-born engineers. According to Wikipedia their first cars were sports cars and racing cars. The brothers were great automotive engineers but not such great businessmen, so in 1919 the brothers sold their company to investors and stayed on as employees, and the plant was moved to Indianapolis. Duesenberg then began to make hand-crafted luxury autos in very small numbers. It continued to make racing cars as well, winning the Indianapolis 500 three times and many other races in the 1920s. Despite the brand's racing prowess, it struggled financially, and was sold again in 1926, to E. L. Cord, a major industrialist who also owned numerous other automotive, aircraft, and shipbuilding businesses. Cord instructed Fred Duesenberg to make "the biggest, fastest, and most expensive car ever made," according to Wikipedia. About the expense there is no doubt, for Duesenbergs sold for tens of thousands of dollars, often to major movie stars. They were also extremely stylish, if not breathtaking, in appearance. Meanwhile, August Duesenberg continued to make racing cars in a separate plant. The brand continued until 1937, when E. L. Cord suffered Depression-related setbacks.

Wikipedia states that only about 1,140 passenger Duesenbergs were ever built during 1921-1937. About half of all of these still survive and are extremely collectible.

(Continued next page.)

History – Occupants (continued)

Duesenbergs were first sold in San Francisco in 1922, at 928 Van Ness Avenue, by the A. W. Rawling Company. This business did not last long, but in 1924 Lloyd S. Johnson, who had been Rawling's sales manager, opened a new Duesenberg showroom at 1930 Van Ness Avenue. After two years there, in 1926, he moved two doors to the north, into the building being evaluated here, 1946-1960 Van Ness, where he stayed through 1930. In the last year here he had a partner and operated as the Johnson-Blalack Company.

The year Johnson moved to 1946-1960 Van Ness corresponds to the year that E. L. Cord purchased the Duesenberg company. Johnson also carried a second brand owned by E. L. Cord, the Auburn, which he sold here at least during 1926 and 1929-1930. That brand had been founded in 1900 in Auburn, Indiana, by Frank and Morris Eckhart, sons of a wagonmaker, and was relatively successful until World War I material shortages put an end to production. The company was sold and revived in 1919 and was sold again in 1925, on the latter occasion to E. L. Cord. Under his ownership the Auburn became another stylish luxury car, albeit without Duesenberg's power. Like the Duesenberg, it continued production until 1937.

Instead of diversifying his line with a mid-priced car, like some luxury auto dealers in San Francisco did, Lloyd S. Johnson added a third luxury brand to his line. This was the Delage, which was made in France during 1903-1953. Like the Duesenberg, this was also a prominent racing car during the 1920s. Johnson sold this brand at least during 1927.

Johnson could not have sold very many Duesenberg cars at 1946-1960 Van Ness, for not many were made during the entire history of the company. Johnson may have had space to spare in this building, and in 1928 he shared it with the Kissel Motor Car Company, makers of a popular mid-priced car.

In sum, auto dealerships occupied 1946-1960 Van Ness for eight years, during 1920-1923 and 1926-1930. There is some evidence that Lincoln autos were sold or stored in this building in the early 1930s, but no further information is available regarding this.

Ahrens Bakery, 1938-1980s

During the years 1929-1938 three former auto showrooms at the north end of "Auto Row" were converted into restaurants. These three included 2050 Van Ness (in 1929), 2100 Van Ness (in 1936), and 1946-1960 Van Ness. The latter became a bakery known as Ahrens Brothers Pies in 1937 or 1938. The business had been founded four years earlier as Ahrens Brothers Pie Stores, with retail locations downtown, on Polk Street, and in the Marina District, plus a wholesale plant on outer Geary Boulevard. By 1938 this business had consolidated at one location, in the building being evaluated here.

There are uncertainties regarding the scope of their business here. The building was certainly large enough to accommodate a wholesale operation, but it is unknown whether they continued to operate on this scale. At an unknown point in time, perhaps from the beginning, this business also included a restaurant, and the business ultimately became known as Ahrens Bakery and Coffee Shop, then Ahrens Bakery and Restaurant. It remained in business into the 1990s.

History – Occupants (continued)

There are several very brief items on the internet about Ahrens Bakery. They concern memories of going there in childhood, of working there as staff, and of wanting a recipe for one of Ahrens' pastries; and there are photos of the bakery's signs. No detailed descriptions of the business could be found, however.

Historical context

Showrooms in the study area where Oakland autos were sold

Approximately seven buildings in the study area housed Oakland showrooms through 1931, when the Oakland brand name was discontinued. They included:

324 Van Ness (1909-1910; demolished)

550-590 Van Ness (1912-1914; windows altered)

1525 Van Ness (1916; about 50% altered)

1600 Van Ness (1917-1918 and 1926-1930; windows covered with grilles)

1130-1138 Polk (Housed Hawley, King and Co.'s service and parts centers during 1916-1918 and served as their Oakland showroom ca. 1919-1920. Possibly demolished.)

1946-1960 Van Ness (the building being evaluated here; 1920-1923; extant)

1625 Van Ness (1924; extant)

Only one of these served for more than three years as an Oakland showroom. That building, 1600 Van Ness, was an Oakland showroom for seven years, but has only fair integrity.

Showrooms in the study area where Duesenberg and Auburn autos were sold

Duesenberg and Auburn showrooms were located in eight buildings in the study area. They were:

555 Golden Gate. Auburn autos were sold here in 1910-1912; demolished.
1430-1480 Van Ness. Auburn sold here in 1914; windows altered.
2050 Van Ness. Auburn sold here in 1917. Integrity uncertain.
928 Van Ness. Duesenberg sold here in 1922 by A. W. Rawling; altered.
1930 Van Ness. Duesenberg sold here in 1924-1925 by Lloyd S. Johnson, and Auburn sold here in 1927 by L. H. Knittel; altered.
1946-1960 Van Ness (the building being evaluated here.) Duesenberg sold here in 1926-1930, and Auburn sold here in 1926 and 1929-1930, by Lloyd S. Johnson.
1155 Van Ness. Duesenberg sold here by Johnson-Blalack in 1931; demolished. Auburn and Cord autos were also sold here during 1931-1934, and Duesenbergs may have been sold here then as well.
1625 Van Ness. Auburn sold here in 1934-1936. Integrity is good.

Thus, 1946-1960 Van Ness is the only surviving Duesenberg showroom in San Francisco with good integrity, and is one of two surviving showrooms where Auburn autos were sold for more than a year.

(Continued next page.)

Bakeries

Undoubtedly many buildings in San Francisco still stand that held well-known bakeries, pastry shops, and related businesses before the 1960s. As far as is known, no effort has been made to identify these buildings or to document which ones were the earliest, were especially popular, or had great longevity. One of the best-known, Blum's, had two locations, one at the southwest corner of California and Polk streets (since the 1920s) and one on Union Square. The former building, at least, has been demolished.

Examples of the works of MacDonald and Kahn

Their largest known building in San Francisco that was designed and built by this firm was the seven-story reinforced concrete National Paper Products Co. warehouse at 1789 Montgomery (ca. 1918). It still stands, but all of its windows have been removed, and replacement windows are deeply recessed, a major alteration.

In or adjacent to the study area of this report, MacDonald and Kahn constructed ten buildings that are known of. Seven of these were reinforced concrete buildings, all of some prominence. They included:

1563-1565 Mission (1916-1917; extant)
1701 Van Ness (1917; altered)
1700-1720 Van Ness (1919; demolished)
2001 Van Ness (1919-1920; altered)
1625 Van Ness (1919-1920; extant)
1835-1849 Van Ness (1920; extant)
1946-1960 Van Ness (1920; the building being evaluated here)

One of these, 1835-1849 Van Ness, had a minor architect associated with the design. The others appear to have been designed as well as built by MacDonald and Kahn. One, 1625 Van Ness, is faced in brick, while the others are clad with a coat of stucco.

Their other three buildings in the study area are brick masonry buildings. They include 1522-1524 Bush (1916; extant), 1540 Bush (1916; extant), and 214 Van Ness (1917; altered).

Integrity

No alterations of note have occurred to the façade of this building. Most notably, it retains its industrial steel sash windows and two vehicle entrance doors. It 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

(Continued next page.)

Evaluation (continued)

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*.

Criterion 1

Completed in 1920, this building is a moderately early example of an automobile showroom. With eight known years of such use in its history, it has brief to fair longevity in this use. It is most important for its history as a showroom where two luxury auto brands owned by E. L. Cord, Duesenberg and Auburn, were sold during 1926-1930. No other Duesenberg showroom in the study area survives with good integrity, and only one other showroom survives where Auburn autos were sold for more than a year. Nevertheless, these brands were sold here for relatively brief periods of time.

On balance, because of the brevity of time when these brands were sold here, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1, as a Duesenberg and Auburn showroom. Regarding this building's overall history as an auto showroom, this history was also fairly brief (eight years), and thus the building does not appear to be eligible in this way, as well.

Regarding this building's history as a bakery, there is no doubt that Ahrens had great longevity, and that it was well-known among residents in the northern part of San Francisco. Without doing more research it is difficult to say that it was renowned, however. In order to properly evaluate this building for its history as a bakery, more research on Ahrens should be performed, and a historic context statement on San Francisco bakeries of the 1930s-1960s should be developed. Therefore, no evaluation of this building based on its history as a bakery is being attempted.

Criterion 2

None of the proprietors of businesses in this building is known to have been individually important in his field. Accordingly, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3

Architecturally, this building is a notable example of reinforced concrete construction by MacDonald and Kahn, an important firm of engineers and contractors. The building is skeletal in its expression, well-proportioned, and finely detailed while being possessed of a minimum of ornamentation. It also retains very high integrity. The industrial steel sash windows, virtually all of which survive, contribute to the building's textured feeling. Another building in the study area by MacDonald and Kahn, at 1625 Van Ness, is somewhat atypical for this firm in that it is made of reinforced concrete but clad in brick. Another example, at 1563-1565 Mission, is very similar to 1946-1960 Van Ness, but is not quite as fine in its detailing. Among known buildings by MacDonald and Kahn, 1946-1960 Van Ness is the

(Continued next page.)

Evaluation (continued)

surviving building that best exemplifies Kahn's architectural philosophy of uniting utility with beauty through clarity of expression and a restrained use of ornament. Regarding its design as an automobile showroom, this is one of only three buildings in the study area that retain their original (or early) vehicle entrance doors. For these reasons, this building appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3 for its design. The Period of Significance under this criterion is 1920, the year of construction.

Character defining features

The character defining features of this building are its height and width, its scored stucco surface, all of its industrial steel sash windows, the parapet, the cornices at the base of the parapet and at the second floor level, the molding and piers that enframe the bays, the storefront windows with their frames in the first story, and the wooden vehicle entrance doors in the Jackson Street side of the building.

References (continued)

On sales of the Oakland brand in San Francisco:

Leon J. Pinkson. "Big Southern Auto Firm to Invade the Field." SF *Chronicle*, May 25, 1916, p. 4. On Hawley, King and Co.'s arrival in San Francisco as an Oakland distributor.

_____. "Big Southern Auto Firm Ready to Come Here." SF *Chronicle*, June 6, 1916, p. 11.

_____. "Reliance Company New Oakland Agents." SF *Chronicle*, June 28, 1916.

"New Establishment Will Be Opened at Top of Row." SF *Chronicle*, January 18, 1920, p. A-7.

"New Building Houses Agency." SF *Chronicle*, August 8, 1920, p. A-8. See also a display ad for the opening of 1946-1960 Van Ness on the same date, p. A-3.

"Direct Branch Opens Here." SF *Chronicle*, March 19, 1922, p. A-3. On the supplanting of the California-Oakland Motor Co. by a factory branch.

On sales of the Duesenberg brand in San Francisco:

"Duesenberg '8' in Line Here." SF *Chronicle*, February 12, 1922, p. A-22.

On MacDonald and Kahn:

Felix Kahn. "Comments on Industrial Engineering." *The Architect*, September 1918.

Plus entries on Auburn, E. L. Cord, Delage, Duesenberg, Oakland, and Pontiac in Wikipedia.

Display ad for the opening of 1946-1960 Van Ness. SF *Chronicle*, August 8, 1920, p. 3.