

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 7 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1765 California Street

- P1. Historic name of building (if any):** Hanni and Girerd auto repair shop  
**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 Location:** \*a: County San Francisco  Not for Publication  Unrestricted  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 1765 California Street City San Francisco Zip 94109  
d. UTM: Zone \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN \*e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 647, lots 13, 14

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

This reinforced concrete auto repair shop fills the two lots it sits upon, and measures 160'-3" in width by 137'-6" in depth. Due to the slope of California Street this building varies in height from two stories (at its western end) to three stories (at its eastern end). The surface of the façade is coated in stucco. The central pavilion is divided by piers into six narrow bays, each filled at the top with Baroque ornament that is closest in feeling to the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The end bays in this pavilion rise above the parapet to form short Baroque towers topped by anthemions. Voussoirs forming a flat arch are near the base of each end bay. More Baroque ornament can be found in this pavilion in the spandrel between the stories.

The central pavilion is flanked by very broad wings that lack ornament and derive their character from wide expanses of industrial steel sash windows. Immediately west of the subject building is a recent, visually subordinate addition built for the building's conversion to a grocery store.

\*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 south  
June 2009  
**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:**  Historic  Prehistoric  Both  
1921, 1927: building permits  
**\*P7. Owner and Address:**  
ELLIS BROOKS CHEVROLET INC  
1395 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:** \_\_\_\_\_  
November 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)

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Top photo: Detail of central pavilion. Bottom photo: View looking southeast.

**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

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\*NRHP Status Code 3CS

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 1765 California Street

B1. Historic Name: Hanni and Girerd auto repair shop

B2. Common Name: Whole Foods Company

B3. Original Use: auto repair shop B4. Present Use: grocery store

\*B5. Architectural Style: Spanish Colonial Revival and early 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial

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

Western portion built in 1921 and eastern portion built in 1927. Converted into a grocery store in 1990s.

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes  Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features:  
none

B9a. Architects: T. Paterson Ross (1921); Hyman and Appleton (1927) b. Builder: unknown

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

Period of Significance 1921-1964 Property Type auto repair shop Applicable Criteria 1, 2, 3

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

**History: Construction and architects**

This building was built in two parts. The western end was built in 1921 for owner Ernest Hanni as his auto repair shop, to designs by architect T. Paterson Ross. The eastern portion, including the Spanish Colonial Revival style central pavilion, was added for Hanni and Girerd in 1927, to designs by architects Hyman and Appleton. Together these parts are 160'-3" in width and two-to-three stories in height, making the building the largest auto repair shop in the history of the study area, and probably in San Francisco. In the 1990s the building was converted into a grocery store, and at this time a new addition was made to the western end (at the corner of California and Franklin), where a vacant lot had been.

The architect of 1921, Ross, practiced in San Francisco during 1894-1922, and is well known for his spirited and occasionally exotic designs, such as the Philadelphia Seventh Adventist Church at 2570 Bush (1904), the Sing Chong and Sing Fat buildings at California and Grant (1908), and the Shriners' Temple at 650 Geary (1917). His plain design for Ernest Hanni was very different in character from these works. He was incapacitated by a construction accident in 1922, rendering him unable to design the addition of 1927.

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

**\*B12. References:**

Building permit #98210 (March 31, 1921) and #161315 (May 3, 1927)

Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1921-1964  
1936 Sanborn insurance map ("auto repair")

"Hanni Company Is Appointed Dealer of Marvel Product", *SF Chronicle*, March 28, 1920, p. A-11

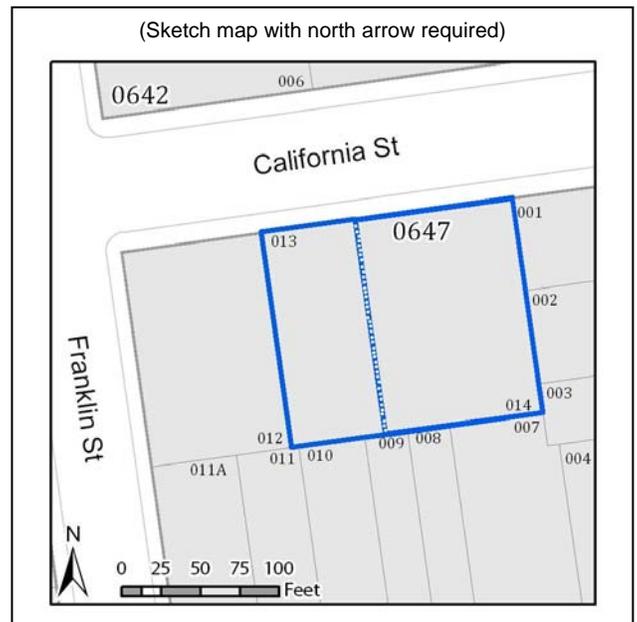
1920 U. S. Census, ED 299, for Hanni.

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: William Kostura

Date of Evaluation: November 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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**History: Construction and architects (continued)**

The addition of 1927 was instead designed by Hyman and Appleton. Samuel L. Hyman opened his office in San Francisco in 1917 and added a partner, Abraham Appleton, to his practice 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. After Hyman's death in 1948 the firm continued as Appleton and Wolford. This successor firm is best-known today for designing eight branch libraries, several of which (the best ones) featured brick walls, slanted roofs, and canted windows.

The central pavilion of 1765 California is very much in the style of Hyman and Appleton's Spanish styled houses and 625-627 Sutter, while the fenestration of that pavilion and the wing to the east follow the lead of T. Paterson Ross's original structure of 1921.

**History: Hanni and Girerd**

The older part of this building was built in 1921 for Ernest Hanni as his auto repair shop. By 1927 Andrew P. Girerd had been brought into partnership, and thus the addition of that year was built for the firm of Hanni and Girerd.

Ernest Hanni was one of the early auto repairmen in San Francisco. A native of Switzerland, he came to San Francisco in 1905, and after the earthquake and fire of 1906 opened his own auto repair shop on Fulton Street (no longer standing). He owned that shop through 1910, then went to work for the Jerome Garage as the manager of its service department and machine shop. Under its auspices he wrote several articles for the *Chronicle* newspaper on auto repair and maintenance (e.g. *S.F. Chronicle*: Feb. 25, 1912, p. 46; May 12, 1912, p. 45; May 19, 1912, p. 47; Nov. 17, 1912, p. 46; and October 5, 1913, p. 58).

Next, in 1914, he went to work for Charles S. Howard's Buick dealership, where he was the foreman of the repair shop, or "mechanical department." This experience with Buicks facilitated Hanni's next move: in 1917 he opened the Hanni Auto Repair Company, at 1630 Franklin Street, an authorized Buick repair shop. In 1920 he added another specialty, becoming the San Francisco sales and service representative for the Marvel brand of carburetors. (The building at 1630 Franklin no longer stands.)

His foreman at 1630 Franklin was Andrew P. Girerd, who had once owned his own shop and had also worked at the Jerome Garage. Girerd went with Hanni when the first wing of 1765 California was built in 1921 and soon became a partner. It is difficult to know for certain from city directory listings, but it does appear that Girerd was a majority partner by 1924. Hanni and Girerd continued to be an authorized Buick repair shop at least through the 1930s and also a Marvel carburetor representative.

A split in the firm occurred when Ernest Hanni left in 1935 or 1936 to open a new auto repair shop with his son. Andrew P. Girerd remained at 1765 California, where he was president of "Hanni and Girerd" until at least 1964; the business closed in 1966.

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**History: Context**

1765 California Street appears to have been the largest auto repair shop ever built in the study area. As a business it was also one of the longest-lasting, for among all of the other auto repair shops that still stand, only one (at 1433 Bush) held a single firm for as long as this building did. Judging by these criteria (size of the shop building and longevity of the business), Hanni and Girard could be considered to have been the most successful auto repair shop in San Francisco's history.

Seven other buildings that stand in the study area held auto repair shops for a period of time comparable to 1765 California. Six of these (all but the oldest) retain good integrity. All are much smaller buildings than 1765 California Street. They include:

1433 Bush Street. This was the shop of Albert E. Lattimore from 1918 to at least 1964. The integrity of this small building is poor, however.

1634-1644 Pine Street. Several auto repair businesses occupied this building from 1919 to at least 1964. Demolition of this building has been approved.

843 Polk Street. Two auto repair businesses occupied this small building consecutively from 1920 to at least 1964. Its integrity is good.

845 Polk Street. Several auto repair businesses occupied this small building from 1920-1931 and from 1935 to at least 1964. Its integrity is good.

650 Polk Street. Several auto repair businesses occupied this small building from 1920 to at least 1964. Its integrity is good.

824 Ellis Street. Many auto repair businesses occupied this building from 1920 to at least 1964. Its integrity is good.

300 Grove Street. Several auto repair businesses occupied this building from 1920-1941 and 1946-1964. Its integrity is good.

**Integrity**

While the vehicle entrances have replacement doors, as usual among automobile buildings in the study area, nearly all of the industrial steel sash windows remain, and the ornament in the central pavilion also remains intact. This building 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

*(Continued next page.)*

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**Evaluation (continued)**

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 older portion of this building was built in 1921, and the addition was built in 1927. This, then, is a moderately early example of an automobile repair shop. With 43 years of such use in its history (through the year 1964), it has excellent longevity in this use. In addition, as mentioned above, this is the largest auto repair shop in the study area, and it held one auto repair business for longer than any other shop building (except for one other that has poor integrity). For these reasons, the building appears to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1, at the local level, as one of the best examples of an automobile repair shop in the study area. The Period of Significance under this criterion is 1921-1964, the years the building had this use (considered through 1964).

Under Criterion 2: Ernest Hanni was clearly one of the earliest and most important auto repair shop owners in San Francisco's history. He opened his first shop in 1906, when the auto industry in San Francisco was still in its infancy, and ultimately built the largest auto repair shop in San Francisco's history. The 1927 addition to this building was made in partnership with Andrew P. Girerd, who worked in the field from the 1910s to the 1960s. Under one or both of these men this building, 1765 California, housed the largest auto repair shop in the city. Together, Hanni and Girerd stand out in the history of San Francisco's auto repair shop proprietors. Accordingly, this building appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2, for its association with these men. The Period of Significance under this criterion is 1921-1964, the years the building was owned by one or both of them (considered through 1964).

Architecturally, this building combines two aesthetics. The central pavilion is highly ornamented in a Baroque version of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, while the wings have a spare, industrial feeling. Even the central pavilion contains industrial steel sash windows. This merging of aesthetics – stylish and functional – was appropriate for an industrial building that was located close to a boulevard with major businesses and institutions (Van Ness Avenue) and an upscale residential neighborhood (Pacific Heights). Because of this blend, and because of the quality of the design of the central pavilion, this building appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3. The Period of Significance under this criterion is 1921 and 1927, the years of construction.

**Character defining features**

The character defining features of this building are its height and width, the stucco surface of the building, the Baroque ornament in the central pavilion, and the industrial steel sash windows throughout the façade. The 1990s addition to the far west for the grocery store is not a contributing feature.

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Photograph of 1765 California Street from the Department of City Planning's 1976 survey of historic buildings. At right is the original structure of 1921 built for Ernest Hanni, to designs by T. Paterson Ross. Left of this is the central pavilion and east wing added by Hyman and Appleton in 1927 for Hanni and Girerd.