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) 1335 Larkin Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): Graystone Garage
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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 1335 Larkin Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 645, lot 3

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

This one-story-plus-mezzanine, brick masonry building fills its lot, which measures 57'feet in width along Larkin Street by 137'-6" in depth. The surface of the building is faced in brick that has been painted. In form, the building has a gabled parapet that is stepped at the top and is capped by a course of slightly projecting header bricks. A pent roof with imitation Spanish tiles and supporting block modillions is centered in this parapet.

In composition, the façade is essentially symmetrical, and divided into three bays. The entire composition rests upon a bulkhead covered in scored stucco. This bulkhead is five feet high at the south end and is much lower to the north, due to the slope of Larkin Street.

(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 west
June 2009

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ■ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1913-1914; published building notice

*P7. Owner and Address:
FERNANDEZ ALFREDO A
1335 LARKIN ST
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94109

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

*P9. Date Recorded:
January 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, 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 middle bay is devoted to a vehicle entrance with a roll-up metal door and an awning. Immediately above the entrance is a three-part window with wooden frame, sash, and mullions. Each part of this window has muntins that divide the glazing into six lights. In a historic photograph (below), this window sash is shown as pivoting.

The flanking bays are devoted to three-part windows, with frames, transom panels, mullions, and muntins of wood. The window at right (to the north) varies in that a wooden pedestrian door fills the middle section, below the transom panel. Also, in the bay at left (to the south), the glazing below the transom panels is not divided by muntins; instead each part is one large light.

Alterations to the façade have been few. The roll-up metal vehicle door and the awning are not original. In the south window, the glazing below the transom panels was probably originally divided into many lights by muntins that have since been removed.

Photo, ca. 1962. Assessor's negatives, San Francisco History Archives, Main Library. Approximately half of the façade of 1335 Larkin is visible in the left part of this photo, taken in the late 1940s or early 1950s. All elements of the building shown here are still in place. The only features that have been added are the current roll-up metal door and the awning. At right is 1349 Larkin, the building that was joined with this one in common use as the Graystone Garage during ca. 1915-1926.

Top photo: Detail of parapet

Bottom photo: Window in the southernmost bay. The lights below the transom panels were probably originally divided by muntins into smaller lights, as is still the case in the corresponding window in the northernmost bay.

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 3CS

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 1335 Larkin Street

B1. Historic Name: Graystone Garage
B2. Common Name: _____
B3. Original Use: public garage B4. Present Use: auto repair shop
***B5. Architectural Style:** Mission Revival
***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
Built in 1913-1914.

***B7. Moved?** ■ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown **Date:** _____ **Original Location:** _____
***B8. Related Features:**
none

B9a. Architect: John H. Powers b. Builder: John Biller
***B10. Significance: Theme** automobile industry **Area** San Francisco
Period of Significance 1913-1964 **Property Type** garage, auto repair shop **Applicable Criteria** 1, 3
(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 during 1913-1914 for owner A. Sbarboro, as an investment, to designs by John H. Powers. Powers was active as an architect in San Francisco from 1907 through the 1930s. He designed a mix of residential and commercial buildings and achieved distinction in each area. His residential work is mainly in Pacific Heights and on Russian Hill, in variously Craftsman, Classical Revival, and Mediterranean styles. His most notable commercial building is the Insurance Center Building, a sixteen-story office building at 200 Sansome Street with Tudor details (1925). The best known of his works, however, is in the study area of this report: the Packard showroom for Earle C. Anthony, at 901 Van Ness (1927), designed in collaboration with Bernard Maybeck. It is probable that Maybeck designed that building while Powers let the contracts and oversaw the construction.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 4.)

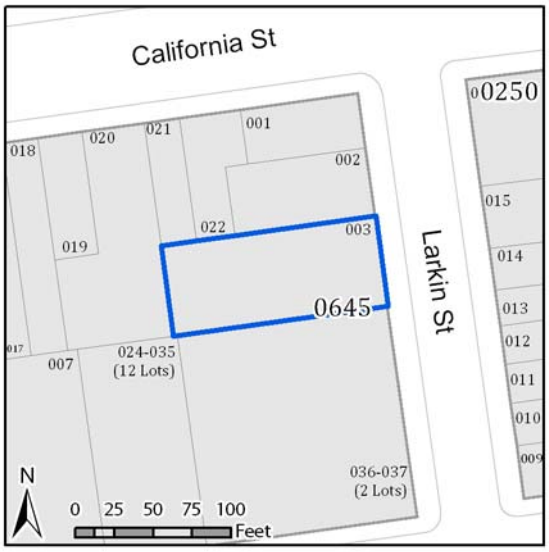
B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

***B12. References:**
Building and Engineering News, December 10, 1913, 25:2
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1915-1964
1918 and 1929 Sanborn insurance maps: brick, with steel truss roof; united with 1349 Larkin as one garage
1948 Sanborn map: 1335-1347 Larkin, "auto springs"
B13. Remarks:

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

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)



History -- Occupants

This building was built as a public garage and was used for that purpose continuously, under the name Graystone Garage, from 1914-1941. In 1915, soon after it opened, it merged with the building to the north, 1349 Larkin, and the two buildings operated as one garage for eleven years (to 1926). From 1943 to 1953 this building was occupied by a specialty service, the Hoover Spring Company, and after that date it became an auto engine rebuilding shop. The list of occupants through 1964 follows:

1914-1941: The Graystone Garage. Known proprietors during these years included John V. Kays (1920-1921); John V. Bahme (1923-1926); and Charles Obenhuber (1927-1941). From about 1915 to 1926 the smaller building next door, at 1349 Larkin, was incorporated into this business.

1943-1953: Hoover Spring Company. This auto springs business lasted for 42 years, from 1912 to 1953. This was its fourth location. All of the others were also in the study area (at Polk and Fulton streets, 1912, demolished; at 617-637 Turk, 1914-1920, demolished; and at 205 Franklin, 1921-1942, most likely altered). The president or manager from at least 1914-1946, and probably during the entire period, was Edward Downing. This was one of the few businesses in the study area to specialize in auto springs.

1955-1964: Automotive Engineering Company. This business performed auto engine rebuilding.

In sum, this building was used as a public garage for 27 years, as an auto springs shop for eleven years, and as an auto rebuilding shop for ten years. The building had a total of 48 years of occupancy for all automobile-related uses through 1964 (the end year of the period being studied).

History – Context

Within the study area of this report, nineteen public garage buildings still stand that have at least fair integrity. Eight of them were built and had such use before the 1920s and qualify as the oldest garages in the study area. For purposes of comparison with 1335 Larkin, they are listed here, in order of construction date, and with the number of years of garage use it had through 1964:

The Alaska Garage, 1349 Larkin Street. Built 1909-1910. Years of public garage use: 14 (beginning in 1913). During most of its years of garage use (1915-1926) it was joined in operation with its next-door neighbor at 1335 Larkin as a single garage. Its integrity is high.

The Pine Garage, 1461 Pine Street. Built 1911. Years of public garage use: 28. Its integrity has been harmed by the sandblasting of its brick façade and the installation of modern metal windows.

Graystone Garage, 1335 Larkin Street. (The building being evaluated here.) Built 1913-1914. Years of public garage use: 27. Integrity is high.

The Jackson Garage, 1641 Jackson Street. Built 1914. Years of public garage use: 31. Integrity is high.

Clay Street Garage, 1745 Clay Street. Built 1914. Years of public garage use: 33. Its windows have been altered, but otherwise integrity is high.

(Continued next page.)

History – Context (continued)

Marine View Garage, 2020 Van Ness Avenue. Built 1914. Years of public garage use: 22. Its initial use as a garage was brief (1914-1915); its main garage use was during 1922-1942. Integrity is high.

Inverness Garage #2, 1267 Bush Street. Built 1917-1918. Years of public garage use: 27. Integrity is high.

Patrick J. Kelly garage, 731-799 Van Ness Avenue. Built 1916-1917. Years of public garage use: 24 (beginning in 1919). Its integrity is high.

Besides these, four other public garages from the 1900s and 1910s still stand in the study area but have been heavily altered. At least ten garages from the 1900s and 1910s that once stood in the study area have been demolished.

Outside of the study area, only six other San Francisco public garages from the 1910s are known of. They include 618-634 Stanyan (1911), 1419 Pacific Avenue (1914), 1776 Green (1914), 2405 Bush (1916), 3536 Sacramento (1917), and 651-675 Post (1918). It is probable that a few others may be identified.

It is evident from the above list that 1335 Larkin is one of the oldest public garage buildings with high integrity in the study area, and almost certainly in all of San Francisco, as well.

Integrity

The façade of this building has undergone very few changes. It retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Integrity of setting has been slightly diminished by the construction of one new building adjacent to the south.

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*.

Completed in 1914, this is one of the earliest examples of a public garage in the study area and in San Francisco. With 27 years of such use in its history, it has good longevity in this use. This building also

(Continued next page.)

Evaluation (continued)

has very high integrity. Considering the early date of construction, longevity of use, and integrity as factors, this is clearly one of the best examples of a public garage in the study area and in San Francisco. For these reasons, the building appears to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1, at the local level, for its use as a public garage. The Period of Significance under this criterion is 1914-1941, the years the building had this use.

In addition, this building appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1 for its overall automobile-related use. This is one of the very few buildings in the study area that had as many as 48 years of total auto-related use through 1964 (the end year of the period being studied); this fact, considered with its high integrity, lends it significance. It thus appears to be eligible, with a Period of Significance of 1914-1964.

None of the proprietors of businesses here are known to have been individually prominent in their fields, except for Edward Downing, the long-time manager of the Hoover Spring Company, an auto springs firm. However, it is difficult to say that Downing's prominence in this category of business is sufficient to make him historically important. Accordingly, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 2.

Architecturally, this building is a fine example of a public garage. Stylistically, it has only faint references to the Mission Revival style, and for its time it was not distinguished. However, with the symmetrical, three-bay division of its façade and central vehicle entrance, it is quickly recognizable as an automobile garage. The detailing of its wooden windows is fine, and the survival of these windows and of its pent roof is remarkable. For these reasons this building appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3, for its design as a public garage. The Period of Significance under this criterion is 1913-1914, the years of construction.

Character defining features

The character defining features of this building are its height and width; its brick façade; its gabled parapet with stepped top; the pent roof; all windows with their wooden mullions, muntins, and transom panels; the location and dimensions of the vehicle entrance; and the bulkhead with its scored stucco surface.