

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 _____

Page 1 of 3 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 38 Otis Street

- P1. Historic name of building (if any):** Hopkins 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 Location: *a: County San Francisco Not for Publication Unrestricted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 38 Otis Street City San Francisco Zip 94103
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____ mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 3505, lot 18

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

This one story, reinforced concrete, stucco-clad shop building fills its lot, which measures 53' in width along Otis Street by 130' in depth, to Chase Court in the rear. In composition the building is divided into three bays, with a central bay devoted to vehicle entry flanked by wider bays devoted to windows. A blank frieze stretches across the top of the building and connects with plain piers that define the bays. The façade is lacking in ornament. Windows have replacement aluminum frames or sash, and the pedestrian door (located in the bay at right) is also aluminum, with full-length glazing. A low bulkhead forms the base of each storefront window.

*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 northwest
June 2009

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:
 Historic
 Prehistoric Both
1924; building permit

*P7. Owner and Address:
RAIKE DAMON TRUSTEE
1170 SACRAMENTO ST #15D
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94108

*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

Page 2 of 3

*NRHP Status Code 6Z

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 38 Otis Street

B1. Historic Name: Hopkins auto repair shop

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: shop (unknown type) B4. Present Use: auto repair shop

*B5. Architectural Style: Classical Revival

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

Built in 1924. Window sash altered at an unknown date.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown

Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features:

none

B9a. Engineer: James H. Hjul b. Builder: James H. Hjul

*B10. Significance: Theme automobile industry Area San Francisco
Period of Significance n/a Property Type shop 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: Introduction and profile of J. H. Hjul

This building was built in 1924 for an attorney, George A. Clough, as an investment. It was designed by an engineer, James H. Hjul, who also acted as the contractor that built the building. Hjul was active in San Francisco from 1906 until his death in ca. 1957, both as a structural engineer and a building contractor. He usually combined these roles, designing the buildings that he constructed for clients. On many occasions he was also the owner of the buildings he built. Most of his known buildings are industrial in nature and are located in the South-of-Market district. Several from the decade of the 1920s have attractive facades that are decorated in the prevailing styles of the period. Fine examples of his works include industrial buildings at 34 Harriet Street (1925), 18 Otis Street (also built for George A. Clough; 1925), 1175 Folsom (1928), 200 Potrero Avenue (1928), and 568 Seventh Street (1929). 38 Otis Street, with its plain façade, is very different from these in its architectural character, although it is similar in its industrial use.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 3.)

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

***B12. References:**

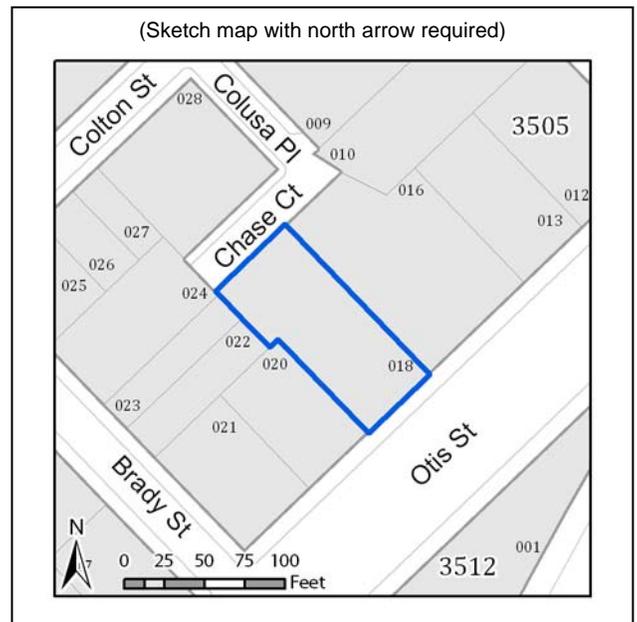
Building permit #132249 (October 15, 1924)
Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse
directory listings for occupants of this building, 1926-1964
1929 Sanborn insurance map ("auto hoist assembling")

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: William Kostura

Date of Evaluation: December 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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Recorded by William Kostura

Resource Identifier: 38 Otis Street
*Date December 2009 Continuation Update

History -- occupants

The original building permit for this building stated that it was to be a shop building, although what kind of shop is not discernable due to illegibility of handwriting. The earliest Sanborn map for this building, dated 1929, gives its use as “auto hoist assembling.” A thorough search of all automobile-related businesses (such as auto repair, tires, vulcanizing, auto painting, and auto supplies) in the classified sections of the 1926, 1927, and 1929 city directories, however, failed to turn up any businesses at this address. There is also no listing for this address in the PT&T reverse directory of 1933.

Occupants for this building have been identified for years from 1934 onward, and those for the first ten years of this period were auto-related. The first known occupant was William Osche, who had an auto repair shop here during 1934-1935. In 1935 Osche shared this building with the auto repair shop of Ryle G. Hopkins. Next, from 1937 to 1943, Elton R. Hopkins, no doubt a relation of Ryle, ran his own auto repair shop here, with a specialization in shock absorbers in 1940. He sometimes shared this building with other businesses, for example in 1937, with Alex Bava’s garage, and in 1940, with Vern’s Speedometer Repair. As one can see, none of these businesses was very successful; Elton R. Hopkins’s presence here (seven or eight years) was easily the longest. His business, too, failed, for in 1944 he worked elsewhere as a mechanic, and by 1945 he had left San Francisco.

Subsequent businesses in this building were non-auto-related. They included the Petri Distributing Co. (1946), the Mission Appliance Co. (1953), and the City Builders Annex (a warehouse) in 1964.

Integrity

The integrity of this building is difficult to assess. Clearly the original window sash and the doors have been replaced. There is no visual indication of other alterations, but a comparison of this building with others built by Hjul during the 1920s, including one just two doors down built for the same owner, suggests that this building might have once been much more ornamented. The best guess is that this building retains only integrity of location and setting, and has lost integrity of design, materials, workmanship, 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 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 auto-related use of this building had moderate longevity, at best – only about ten years – and none of the occupants (auto-related or otherwise) stand out in any way. In addition, the integrity of this building is probably poor. Thus, it does not appear to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under criteria 1 or 2. Architecturally, this building is very plain, and so it also does not appear to be eligible under Criterion 3.