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) 652 Polk Street

P1. Historic name of building (if any): George H. Gallineau auto parts store
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 Location: *a: County San Francisco ☐ Not for Publication ■ Unrestricted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 652 Polk Street City San Francisco Zip 94109
d. UTM: Zone _____; _____mE/ _____ mN *e. Assessor's parcel #: Block 741, lot 9

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

This is a one-story, concrete commercial building that fills its 27'-6" wide by 82'-6" deep lot. The façade of the building is covered with a coat of stucco that, in the upper level, is scored to resemble masonry. Two storefronts occupy the lower part of the building. The one to the right, at 652 Polk, has wooden window frames and a paneled wooden door and could be original. The one to the left, at 652A Polk, is not original and fills what was probably once a vehicle entrance. A transom stretches across the top of both of these storefronts and is divided by muntins into many lights.

The top of the building takes the form of a gabled parapet. Within the tip of the gable is a classically-styled shield ornament. Beneath this is a boldly-scaled cornice whose peaked shape reflects that of the parapet above. This cornice is decorated with a course of leafy molding.

*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 east
June 2009

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

*P7. Owner and Address:
J KESTER DIMENT II TRUST
171 OAK SHADOW DR
SANTA ROSA CA 95409

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

*P9. Date Recorded: September 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

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z

***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) 652 Polk Street

B1. Historic Name: George H. Gallineau auto parts store

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: auto repair B4. Present Use: restaurant and laundromat

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

***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. Architect: William Helbing b. Builder: William Helbing

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

Period of Significance n/a **Property Type** auto repair shop **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

This building was built in 1920 for owner A. J. Helbing. No architect or builder was listed on the building permit, but the permit was signed by William Helbing, and the plans were said to be "by owner." William Helbing was a prolific builder who designed and owned many of the buildings he built; he was almost certainly both the designer and builder of this building.

This building had a mostly automobile-related history for its first 22 years. It was initially occupied by automobile repair shops. Their proprietors included "Harris" (first name unknown; 1922); Shannon and Willard (1925); and James F. Waters (1926-1928). Waters later became a prominent auto dealer in San Francisco, selling DeSoto and Plymouth from 1930-1963, and Buicks after that date.

(See Continuation Sheet, page 3.)

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

***B12. References:**

Building permit #94978 (Sept. 18, 1920), at S. F. Building Inspection Dept., 1660 Mission Street

Crocker-Langley and Polk's city directory, and PT&T reverse directory listings for occupants of this building, 1922-1953

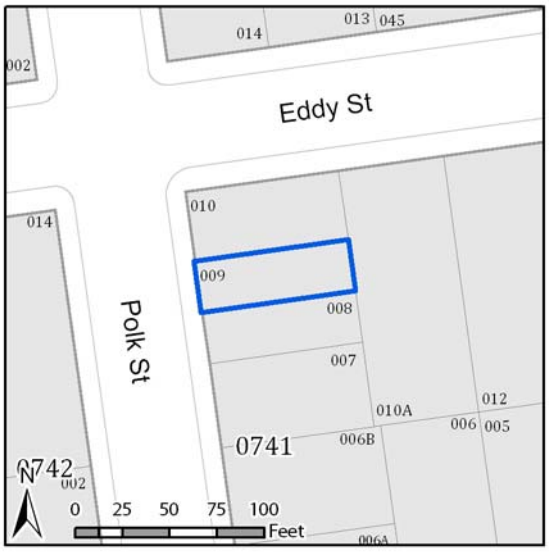
B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** William Kostura

Date of Evaluation: September 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch map with north arrow required)



History (continued)

Next, this building became the garage of the Luxor Cab Co. (1929-1932). It then returned to brief use as an auto repair shop, that of D&D Motor Service (1933-1934). The next occupant was here the longest of any of the auto-related uses; that was the George H. Gallineau Company's auto parts store (1935-1942). They sold Stehr piston rings and Winfield carburetors, among other products.

A 1945 building permit documents the removal of the garage doors and the new use of the building as a warehouse and office. Independent (or Industrial) Tape Corporation occupied the building for the next eight years, at least.

To summarize, this building had about seven years of use as an automobile repair shop and eight years of use as an auto parts store, for a total of fifteen years of automobile-related use. This is not counting its four years of use as a taxicab garage.

Integrity

The lower part of this building has mostly been altered, but the upper portion is intact. Overall the building retains integrity of location, materials, workmanship, setting, and feeling. Integrity of design is diminished, and integrity of association (for its automobile use) is lost, by the filling in of the vehicle entrance.

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 earliest known automobile use of this building was in 1922, a moderately early date. With about 15 years of such use in its history, it has moderate longevity in this use. Given these facts, and the fact that the vehicle entrance has been filled in, this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1. An proprietor here, James F. Waters, was later an important auto dealer, but a building where he sold DeSoto and Plymouth automobiles from 1930-1934, at 550 Van Ness, survives, and so this building does not appear to be eligible under Criterion 2.

Architecturally, this building has a dramatic parapet and cornice, but is otherwise modest. Many buildings by William Helbing survive that are much better than this one is, and thus this building does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.