

EDUCATE, PRESERVE, REUSE: THE GOOD (NOT GREAT)
GARAGE BUILDINGS OF SAN FRANCISCO

Mark Kessler
University of California, Davis
Design Program

While the preservation movement has made great strides in saving landmarks and historical districts, it has been less effective in protecting good, not great, buildings. Development continues to threaten existing, adaptable structures that make significant contributions to the scale and character of the city. When older buildings are tossed away, material is wasted and architectural diversity declines.

This paper studies one such example, the early 20th-century garage of San Francisco. Presenting an historicist façade over an industrial interior, the garage is typical of infill buildings that are contextual and enhance the street. These buildings are vulnerable because they financially underutilize their lots. They are taken for granted, because of age, use and anonymity. A heightened awareness is key to their survival.

To raise awareness, the author led a class of undergraduate design students in the organization of a building typology. The typological approach educates by engaging the observer in the relationships that bind the buildings together.

Concern for these structures is compatible with a broad view of sustainability that encompasses man-made as well as natural resources, cities as well as eco-systems. If we regard sustainability as a mandate to protect the diverse systems that sustain us, the study and appreciation of these systems is a necessary precursor to maintaining them. This study provides one example of how a sustainable approach to the diverse architecture of the city can reinvigorate the preservation movement.

**Educate, Preserve, Reuse: The Good
(Not Great) Garage Buildings of
San Francisco**

Mark Kessler
University of California, Davis
Design Program



Preface

This paper examines parking and repair garages built on the streets of San Francisco between the Great Earthquake and the Great Depression. It also documents a related study undertaken by students in my undergraduate studio class at UC Davis, who were assigned particular buildings to research, document and analyze. The study includes demolished and existing garages, as well as buildings adapted to new uses. Towards the end of the quarter, students developed original adaptive reuse designs for buildings they had researched. A sampling of the study, along with three reuse designs, is compiled as an Appendix at the end of this paper.

On December 11, 2008, the students made a presentation to the San Francisco Planning Department (SFPD). Taking the research outside the classroom and participating in the civic arena was a central pedagogical goal. Hopefully, the experience will encourage the students to become politically engaged as design professionals.

This study is not comprehensive in scope, as there are too many buildings for twenty-five students to cover in a ten-week studio course. However, the Appendix does constitute a representative sampling of the building type, and the scope is fleshed out by photographs included in the body of this paper. *Note: numbered references to figures in the Appendix are preceded by the letter "A."*



Figure 1: 740 O'Farrell Street (2006).



Figure 2: 740 O'Farrell Street (date unknown). San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Urban Context

Sight unseen, many would assume garages to be amongst the least deserving of attention, study and preservation. While the buildings are presented in a manner that suggests an *homage* to an overlooked aspect of architectural history, the goal is not a revision of the historical record. The garages are employed as a foil to argue in favor of increasing the scope and nature of our commitment to architectural preservation. So, while this work is undertaken with genuine affection for these particular buildings, it also exemplifies an approach that has more general application. The same arguments apply to the entire gamut of low-brow historicist structures located on city streets, including banks, theaters, utility buildings, train stations, piers and warehouses. Ultimately, the goal is to preserve the unique character, scale and diversity of our cities.

Why are these buildings worthy of consideration? They possess character by virtue of age, scale, use, structure, material, composition, style, and ornament. The façade often exerts a monumental presence, interrupting the flow of continuous building fronts that define the street (Fig. A5). These are extraordinary buildings in ordinary contexts.

The façades--white-collar compositions for a blue-collar use--are semiotically rich and allusive. Most are symmetrical and employ classically-derived elements to emphasize the center.

Oftentimes presenting a portal to the street, the façades recall triumphal arches, train stations, and the pier buildings along San Francisco's Embarcadero. Based upon Renaissance, Baroque, Gothic, and Mission-style precedents, these façades exemplify the inventive mix of styles that is typical of academic eclecticism (Fig. A7).¹

The garages are the improbable heirs to several grand architectural traditions. The same Beaux-Arts architectural principles and City Beautiful ambitions that guided the design of the city's larger civic buildings and transportation hubs are applied to these smaller buildings. The designers of this new building type looked to older, local precedents for inspiration. Moreover, both the garage and these local precedents share a common heritage in 19th-century structures that fuse the neo-classical compositions of the architect with the structural feats of the engineer.

Present Situation

The garages are old, industrial and retail, and, not surprisingly--they are vulnerable. Despite the odds, most have not fallen into disuse and continue to contribute to the economic and street life of the city. Convenient to locals and flexible in layout, these buildings continue to facilitate small auto repair and parking businesses, eighty to ninety years after construction. This is remarkable, considering the technological advancement in automobile design over this span, and the change in the garage business from one based on repair to one of maintenance and upkeep.

Roughly half of the 300 garages listed in the 1928 city directory still stand.² The majority of those are still used for parking or repair. However, most have undergone modifications that have altered their outward appearance for the worse, including the stripping of ornament, removal of parapets, widening of garage doors, and the addition of standard doors. Modern fabric awnings that obscure composition and ornamentation are ubiquitous in the Tenderloin (Fig. A9: 460 Eddy). A building's neglect hastens its demise, as its present condition, and not its original design, is the basis for assessment by government agencies. Who would guess, for example, that the shabby garage at 740 O'Farrell once looked as stately as it did (Figs. 1-2)?

Since garages are less monumental and far more numerous, demolishing one does not provoke the same level of concern or scrutiny that would a proposal to raze a major transportation hub like San Francisco's Ferry Building. However, as a group of buildings that are part of the transportation and cultural history of the city, they should not be taken for granted.

The gradual disappearance of these smaller-scale buildings is the consequence of the city's growth and modernization. Judging from the consistently good-to-excellent quality of the demolished garages for which there are photographs, it appears that many additional fine examples have been lost. The garages at 240 Pacific, 410 Stockton, 375 O'Farrell and 1737 Jackson, would be amongst the finest examples of the type--if they still stood (Fig. A10). It's important to consider the impact of their absence when assessing the need for increased protection for those that remain.

While structures of historic note, like the Ferry Building, may be saved to exploit the marketing potential of the old architecture and appease the preservationist community, common buildings of lesser merit don't fare as well. Those who value such structures are on the defensive: the structures are not landmarks, they may be dilapidated, and if so, they can contribute to the visual malaise of a neighborhood in decline. This is the argument advanced by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency for the Transbay Terminal, a project that will necessitate the demolition of several older structures. Consider the first stated objective of the project:

Eliminating blighting influences and correcting environmental deficiencies in the Project Area, including, but not limited to, abnormally high vacancies, deficient and unsafe buildings, incompatible land uses, poor economic performance of retail businesses, underutilized and vacant land, high crime rates, and inadequate or deteriorated public improvements, facilities and utilities.³

In addition to demolition that results from the larger patterns of city development, many garages and industrial buildings are lost due to a single property owner's decision to develop a particular piece of real estate. In this case, a small infill building is replaced with a larger one. Today, the most common reason for garages to be demolished is the development of the properties for residential use. The motivation is greater financial return. If the site is zoned for bigger bulk, full development of the property could reap substantial rewards.

Building owners have an understandable interest in maximizing the potential of their properties. One landlord and mechanic told me that if he did not own his own buildings, his auto repair business would not survive. "The rents are very high and the profit margins are very low." He owns one garage building in a very desirable neighborhood and plans to develop three houses on the property "if the city lets me." While he freely acknowledges the "distinctive look" of these buildings, and takes pride in ownership, he believes they will not endure, and that he should not be asked to make a personal financial sacrifice by preserving the examples that he owns.

To many, the suggestion of holding up the growth of a city to preserve a collection of antiquated garages--even architecturally and historically significant ones--is absurd. However, the environmental crisis and the developing response in the design and building communities introduces a dynamic new factor into the opposition of preservation and development: sustainability. There is a new notion of progress--one ironically predicated on the acceptance of a finite set of resources--that is a viable alternative to the traditional marriage of progress and growth. These buildings are indeed an existing resource, and their preservation would likely limit the economic return on their properties.

In order to fully appreciate the impact of sustainability on historic preservation (i.e., beyond the salvaging of building material), it is helpful to reference a global definition of sustainability, one not rooted exclusively in "green design." Dr. Vandana Shiva, physicist and environmental activist, defines sustainability simply as "the sustenance of the public good and the common good."⁴ She regards natural resources as a collective asset--a "commons"--to which all have access in order to sustain livelihoods.⁵ While Dr. Shiva writes about the preservation of the biodiversity that is a foundation of traditional Indian farming, her approach is relevant to the architecture of American cities.

The city can also be regarded as a commons that nourishes and sustains. Its physical dimension includes streets and built form specific to its culture and history. Its building stock is a man-made version of a natural resource, offering a rich diversity of types, scales, materials and ages. This diversity is irreplaceable, because the buildings were built over time, and the conditions that gave rise to them will not repeat.

Jane Jacobs said that a mingling of "buildings that vary in age and condition"⁶ is one of the essential pre-conditions to the generation of an "exuberant diversity in a city's streets and districts."⁷ She goes on:

Cities need old buildings so badly it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them. By old buildings I mean not museum-piece old buildings, not old buildings in an excellent and expensive state of rehabilitation--although these make fine ingredients--but also a good lot of plain, ordinary, low-value old buildings, including some rundown old buildings.⁸

The call for architectural diversity has an economic basis. Jacobs explains that so many of the businesses that contribute to the vitality of the city, like "neighborhood bars, foreign restaurants and pawn shops,"⁹ can't afford the higher rents associated with new construction. Cultural, economic and architectural diversity are mutually dependent and inseparable properties of a vibrant, sustaining city.

In other conflicts that arise between huge financial interests and vulnerable resources, we do require sacrifice, accommodation and coexistence. For example, the logging industry in northern California has been impacted by the mandate to save the spotted owl. The fishing industry has endured financial sacrifice--the cancellation of the season--to give salmon a chance to rebound in the ocean waters off the coast of Oregon and California. These examples demonstrate government's power to halt overdevelopment in order to protect an irreversible loss, the extinction of a species.

We can embrace an approach to architecture that is comparable to recycling and the salvation of threatened species. A preservation movement influenced by sustainability assumes a broader mandate that includes both the conservation of materials and the preservation of architectural diversity. We can consider, for example, imparting "endangered species" status to building types. The goal is not to stop growth, but to achieve a greater balance between the interests of development and the general good of the inhabitants of the city.



Figure 3: San Francisco Ferry Building, as renovated by Simon Martin-Vegue Winkelstein Morris (2003).

The principles of sustainability and typology encompass a holistic view that inspires greater respect for existing structures and their interrelationships. Both architectural typologies and biological morphologies create classifications that heighten our awareness of the diversity of our surroundings. If we do not classify, we generalize, and we stand to lose that diversity and an irreplaceable inheritance through *laissez-faire* indifference. We can say that there are other owls and other industrial buildings, or more precisely, decide that these distinctions do not deserve our attention. This negligence fosters vulnerability because it enables the developer to isolate the resource as commonplace or inessential. Education and heightened consciousness are therefore essential to preservation.

Adaptive reuse is a time-honored means of giving valued existing buildings a new economic life. It applies to large-scale and small-scale buildings alike. The Ferry Building, a once-vulnerable landmark that had fallen into disuse, has been converted into offices, restaurants and high-end food shops (Fig. 3). Reintegrated into the fabric of the city through the demolition of the Embarcadero freeway, the building has become a “destination architecture” for tourists and locals alike. While the building has lost some of its industrial grittiness, its “prettified” central space is again enjoyed by thousands.



Figure 4: Interior, 636 Shrader. Photo by Sharon Risedorph.

The garage buildings are small-scale analogues of the Ferry Building, particularly in the combination of historicist exterior and industrial interior. Remarkably adaptable, a list of new uses includes a clothing store, pharmacy, art gallery, music agency, architectural office, high school, condominiums, church, strip club, and high-end residence and artist’s studio. Some of these are illustrated in Figure A11.

The uneven quality of the new designs suggests that financial return, not architectural preservation, was the primary motive for the adaptations. Some of the façades have been renovated sensitively, like the Patagonia store at 770 North Point, while others have been stripped bare. The interiors vary, too. The music agency at 636 Shrader exploits the building’s tall ceilings and exposed trusses (Fig. 4), while the Walgreen’s Pharmacy on Polk Street (Fig A14) is indistinguishable from any other pharmacy. While adaptive reuse is crucial, it is a mixed bag as presently conceived and executed. The financial motive must be accompanied by a mandated restoration program so that the integrity of the building is not compromised. The goals of giving the building new life and respecting its aesthetic identity are not mutually exclusive.



Figure 5: Condominiums, 520 Chestnut Street.



Figure 6: Tower of Jewels, Panama-Pacific International Exposition (1915). San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Government Oversight

The San Francisco Department of Planning reviews all proposals to modify the garages, which lately have been officially recognized as “historical resources.”¹⁰ However, the review process seeks to balance the financial interest of the property owner with the preservation interest of the public. Due to its public nature and superior architectural quality, the façade is deemed to be the exclusive source of the historical significance of the entire infill structure.¹¹ Indeed, the façade is the only portion of the building that most San Franciscans encounter. The review of a proposal to alter a significant garage therefore focuses on the preservation of the façade. The interiors--industrial, anonymous and private--are considered insignificant. This policy usually enables owners to alter or demolish the industrial interior. It facilitates the development of the property and its conversion to residential use.

However, I don't believe that it is possible to preserve the significance of a structure by saving its most public fragment. The result is a stage-set that lacks architectural integrity. Plus, the functional requirements of the new use can adversely affect the façade. This is evident in the condominium project at 520 Chestnut Street (Fig. 5). The façade maintains its original proportions, Main Street-style parapet, decorative recessed lancets beneath the parapet, and strip of windows across the 2nd floor. The bulk of the new construction is set back on the lot, so that the façade maintains its presence on the street. However, despite these concessions, the façade is thoroughly integrated into the prevalent residential imagery. Its industrial roots are thoroughly obscured.

Dichotomy of Façade and Interior

Finally we shall argue for the symbolism of the ugly and ordinary in architecture and for the particular significance of the decorated shed with a rhetorical front and conventional behind: for architecture as shelter with symbols on it.

Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour
Learning from Las Vegas, 1977

These garage buildings are typical of small-scale commercial and residential structures situated on city streets. Front and side walls are built on the property line, with no more than a few inches separating adjacent structures. From the corridor of the street, perception of the structure is limited to the façade. The tight packing of rectangular buildings placed side-by-side precludes any notion of architectural object or autonomous form. Instead, the street becomes the primary architectural statement, defined by the continuous, if diverse, wall of building fronts that separate public from private property.

All of these buildings might be referred to as “decorated façades” rather than “decorated sheds” due to the extent to which the building is concealed and the façade relates to the theater of the street. In the service of a commercial venture, the façade assumes the thinness and communicative potential of a billboard. Rather than attempt to restore unity by treating the front as simply the fourth side of the industrial box--as a modern movement architect might do--the architects of these buildings revel in the opposition between inside and out and celebrate the public nature of these façades.

The dichotomy in the treatment of the outside and inside can be expressed as a series of oppositions: historicist/industrial, public/private, light/dark, planar/spatial, solid/void, semiotic/tectonic, composed/engineered, finished/unfinished.

Developed so late into the Beaux-Arts era, this building type was amongst the last to employ this dichotomy. The large-scale new building types of the 19th-century, train stations and exposition buildings in particular, pioneered and perfected it. But these types had the dual responsibility of expressing the aspirations of the urban polity while accommodating thousands of visitors. The symbolic program was deemed the province of architecture, which responded with monumental “head buildings” that employed giant portals to celebrate passage. The engineer, responsible for spanning great distances while admitting natural light, designed sheds of iron and glass. Sheds and trains were united as products of the industrial age.

The contrast between head building and shed was controversial throughout the evolution of the building type. Historian Carroll L.V. Meeks, describing the tension in the latter half of the 19th century, said,

Some architects felt that the two elements [head building and shed] were so discordant in character that unification was impossible, and that no relationship more subtle than contiguity could be attempted. St. Pancras was unique in that its shed was designed before the architect of the station had been selected. Whether or not the architect was concerned with both, the outcome was that a masonry forebuilding usually emerged victorious, with the alien metal shed hidden behind it, visible only from the sides.¹²

The garages are noteworthy for the adaptation of this dichotomy to buildings of such small scale, modest use and limited technical requirements. While the garages lack the extreme opposition between symbol and space that characterize train stations and exposition buildings, the constituent elements of the dichotomy function similarly: the façades communicate through signs and symbols, the structure efficiently spans over the interior space. Despite the similarity however, the significance and meaning of the formula is transformed in these later, smaller structures.



Figure 7: 1725 Sacramento Street.



Figure 8: 830 Larkin (date unknown). San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

The garages housed a progressive technology in an architecture both conservative and not technically ambitious. While the automobile represents technological progress relative to the train, the interior structure of the garage is no advance over the train shed. And, when viewed retrospectively through a modernist lens, *both* the head buildings of train stations and the garage façades are stale and corrupt architectural expressions, regardless of whether the buildings accommodated trains or cars.

When confronted with a new program, the architects relied on precedent, adapting a formula that had worked for a host of building types, large and small, including train stations, stables and fire stations. But the adaptation is devoid of the tension between architecture and engineering (inclusive of both shed and train) that is characteristic of the great urban station. Quite the contrary, the automobile is celebrated as a “liberated” form of progressive technology that literally jumps the tracks, assuming its rightful place as the object whose passage is framed by the portal on the head building. Indeed, this shift is already evident in photographs taken at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) of 1915 (Fig. 6). Here, automobiles and neo-classical architecture appear in perfect harmony—as evidence that human endeavor links a glorious past with a promising future.

The garages lack the scale, civic purpose and pomp of the exterior architecture of the PPIE, which was not designed with the automobile in mind. The exposition architects’ unilateral focus on the exterior half of the dichotomous equation is partly responsible for the frivolous aspect of their courtyard architecture.¹³ By contrast, the garages, which *were* designed with the automobile in mind, display a gritty integrity. In part, this results from the appearance of industrial windows and doors on the façade. More importantly, this integrity is rooted in the ability of the automobile, as a scaled-down and portable new mode of transportation, to sustain an analogous, scaled-down, and decentralized building type. The garage architects mediated the extreme opposition of architecture and engineering that characterized the earlier building types, replacing it with an urban grittiness and an urbane humor appropriate both to the automobile and to city streets. In doing so, they reinvigorated the formula.

The train station appears as a ubiquitous influence on the designers of the garages. This is evidenced in the simulation, on a micro-scale, of a juxtaposed neo-classical head building and industrial shed. On corner lots, for example, the historicist vocabulary and parapet of the façade is applied to the first bay of the side elevation. Beyond that, the side wall assumes the rough industrial treatment of the interior, i.e., the shed. This creates the illusion of an architectural volume in the front of the lot, defined by an historicist vocabulary that turns the corner (Fig. 7). In other instances, the extension of the historicist vocabulary to the side does have volumetric integrity, wrapping around a front bay that is uniquely two-stories in height.



Figure 9: 541 Ellis Street.



Figure 10: Interior, 3536 Sacramento Street. Photograph by Sharon Risedorph.

These examples reveal the self-consciousness with which the designers of these buildings pursued this dichotomy as a function of architectural precedent. They also expose the shortsightedness of applying current preservation criteria to these buildings. When we bisect these buildings in our assessments, extending “significance” and protection just to one half of a balanced equation, we fail to appreciate and forever ruin the conception of the architect. The significance of these buildings resides not in the façade alone, but in the adaptation of the dichotomy to a new building type devoted to an exciting technology.

The Buildings

The garages are either one or two stories, the former generally around 18 feet in height, the latter averaging about 30 feet. The neo-classical “skyscraper” garages, designed by the same architects, employ the smaller garage type as an architectural pedestal for a much taller building (Fig. A10: 375 O’Farrell). Their widths vary with the lot, but are generally between fifty and one-hundred feet.

One feature that distinguishes a garage from its residential or commercial neighbors is the scale and frequency of its entry doors, which are sized to accommodate automobiles. The lack of a standard door distinguishes the garage from most other building types on the street. While adjacent shops and apartment buildings may also offer overscaled portals to invite entry, the composition ultimately frames a conventionally-sized door.

The large voids dematerialize the wall at the street level. Even when the ratio of solid to void is still large, the contrast between the heavy exterior and the poorly-lit interior is striking--more so than a comparably composed façade of wall and *glazed* openings. Amongst the various building types that present a façade to the city street, this feature is unique to those--including garages and fire stations--that are usually open and dedicated to the passage of vehicles.

When the business is closed, the door--usually a modern metal roll-up type--serves as a symbolic stand-in for the industrial interior. If the building has steel sash industrial windows, doors and windows both project the interior aesthetic onto the façade. The façade at 830 Larkin, which boasts vast glazed openings separated by elaborately decorated pilasters, illustrates the balance that can be achieved between the historicist and the industrial (Fig. 8).

The façade always includes a parapet, 2-3 feet in height, that liberates the top profile of the façade from that of the roof behind. There are three major types of parapet profile, flat-topped, bowed, and pedimented. Mission-style and/or Main Street-style parapets are hybrid variations that string together flat and inclined segments, and arcs, all in the service of an overall symmetry that peaks at the center (Fig. 9).

The interiors are rugged, dirty and in various states of disrepair. Rational expressions of structure, the space is divided into rectangular, equally-spaced, structural bays. The program favors a clear span at the top level, which is usually accomplished with wood or metal trusses, the top chords of which match the profile of the shed. In perspective, the chords of the trusses foreshorten and gather together, forming complex, overlapping rhythms (Fig. 10). Wooden bowstring trusses are often filled in with a stabilizing grid of diagonal latticework (Fig. A8).

Flat roofs and floor slabs are supported by deep concrete beams; this structure--shallower than the truss--requires one or two rows of freestanding columns to break up the span. At the side walls, the spanning members drop their load on structural side walls, or applied brick or concrete piers.

Natural light is limited. On stories beneath the top level, natural light comes through the garage door openings. Occasionally there are windows across the rear. Skylights bring natural light to the middle of the top level, but they are usually too few in size and number to flood the space. In two-story garages, the darkness, squat proportions and heavy concrete ceiling of the ground floor contrasts with the light open space above.

Programmatically, these are simple buildings: a rectangular enclosure provides shelter for automobiles, mechanics/attendants and clients (Figs. A1-9: plan views). Tall ceilings and clear open space define a flexible interior that facilitates parking, circulation and service. Typically, a small administrative office is located on the façade, adjacent to the entrance--a good location for customer support and general monitoring. In a single-story, single-span structure, the façade might provide a single, central wide-bay opening, and flanking windows to light the interior and the office (Fig. A1: 4419 Geary). However, the single office--a programmatic asymmetry--demonstrates just how elusive simplicity can be. The office precludes the possibility that identical windows symmetrically disposed about a central garage-door opening will correspond to identical plan events behind.

The earlier brick garages from the 1910s are usually one story in height. Given the limitations of spanning over large openings, these façades have fewer and smaller openings than their concrete counterparts. As a result, these garages are more expressive of wall. When the brick is exposed--as opposed to covered in stucco--the façade imparts considerable weight and mass (Fig. A4).

Many of these buildings are converted stables (Fig. A1-2). Roughly half of the brick buildings feature a mezzanine that is inserted into the front structural bay. The floor aligns with the lower chord of the truss. While some building owners believe that these mezzanines were built as hay-lofts, they are generally detailed as small apartments. The mezzanine enables the architect to design the façade as if it were two-stories in height (Figs. A2-3). This “deception” is conceptually related to the false suggestion of a head building, discussed above; both strategies amplify the scale of the building as perceived from the street.

The buildings built in the mid-twenties are likely to have second stories and/or basements, both served by ramps. In one prominent sub-type that features two wide ground-floor arches, the ramps--up and down--are recessed several feet behind the façade (Fig. 7). In garages with three or more bays, ramps are articulated on the ground level of the façade as dedicated wide-bay openings. A common façade solution for a two-story building with basement includes three arched openings, one serving the street level, and the other two devoted to ramps leading up or down. If an office is not present in the front, this tripartite symmetrical composition is balanced and works well (Fig. A9: 460 Eddy). If an office needs to be accommodated, a 5-bay solution, with a bay rhythm of ABCBA, can incorporate the office behind one of the narrow “B” bays. (Fig. A3: 469 Eddy).

The ramps run--like the automobiles--perpendicular to the façade, and along the building's side walls. The accommodation of ramps in dedicated bays exerts considerable influence on façade composition. Typically, this structural arrangement, i.e., a multi-bay frame beneath a single-bay roof, is expressed on the façade as a sub-divided wall subsumed beneath a unifying roof-line or parapet. And while some garages present this sub-division as a wall with punctured openings (Fig. A3: 469 Eddy), and others as a gridded elevation (Fig. A9: 1550 Union), all of the true two-story buildings (as opposed to one-story buildings with mezzanines in the front) are related by this compositional organization.

The fact that the ramps begin their incline at the façade, and don't have an internal landing, maximizes the square footage devoted to service or parking. The ramps create levels that, while vertically stacked, are mutually exclusive because there is no internal link. This stacking is analogous to double and triple-decker houses with separate front doors and dedicated stairs for each flat.

The garages appropriate the public right-of-way to complete the circulation loop. Conceptually, this arrangement crystallizes attention on the façade as the thin membrane separating inside and out. As the ramps always occupy the end bays, and as the inclines--up and down--terminate at the plane of the façade, and as the circulation loop extends beyond the façade, vehicles going from the basement to the 2nd floor engage in a complex three-dimensional rotation about the middle of the façade. While this particular excursion may only occur rarely, its possibility illuminates an opposition between a stable and symmetrical two-dimensional elevation, and a dynamic, asymmetrical circulation pattern.

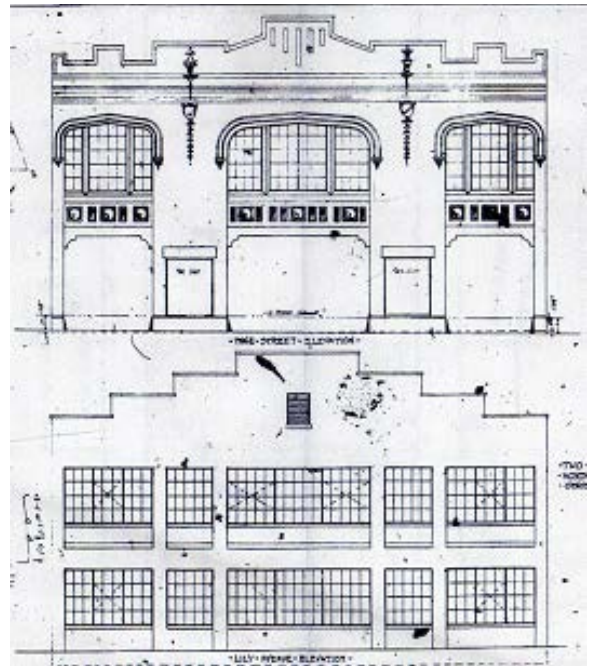


Figure 11: Front and rear elevations, 66 Page Street (1925).

As the number of cars increased in the 1920s, San Francisco passed ordinances limiting the time that cars could park by the curb to less than an hour.¹⁴ This was a major impetus to build garages. Also, the increasing number of cars required additional repair garages to service them. Analogous to train stations, the garage was a depot, a home for the automobile. The car was still a status symbol, even though Ford had already greatly reduced the price of buying a car.¹⁵ A portal-like entry into a stately façade enhanced pride of ownership.

While the combination of historicist façade and industrial shed is a formulaic inheritance, it also works well in accommodating the programmatic requirements of parking and repair. The façade glorified the comings and goings of a status-conscious clientele; once inside, the conceit of decorum was abandoned in favor of a raw space responsive to the needs of the automobile.

The garages are efficient and compact working buildings. Examples of this efficiency include the dedicated ramps, the tall, clear-span space at the top level, and the small offices. Even the original omission of conventionally-sized doors, now regarded as an oversight, is evidence of an efficient building catering to vehicles--not to people. The rational, concrete garages with ramps, contemporaneous with LeCorbusier's houses of the 1920s, can be interpreted as machines for *automotive* living.



Figure 12: 415 Taylor Street (1929). San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.



Figure 13: 415 Taylor (2008).

An appreciation of the entire architectural conception reveals to us again why it is shortsighted to determine that only one half of the dichotomy--the façade--is architecturally significant and worthy of preservation. When we demolish the shed, we forever disrupt the integrated, three-dimensional conceptualization and reveal the shallowness of our own grasp of the importance of these buildings. When we deem certain façades to have architectural integrity, based on the quality of the historicist overlay, we misunderstand that this overlay functions in a larger, more contemporary, architectural conception.

The formal compositions described above exist independently of the historicist overlay and semiotic communication that is such a compelling aspect of these façades. However, the ornamentation and historicist elements are deployed to visually reinforce structure and composition. Medallions and shields align with the centerline of major columns or structural bays (Fig. A9: 1550 Union). Panelized transoms form a horizontal band--continuous or discontinuous--above the ground floor openings and beneath the second floor windows. Arches define major bays in the composition, and appear on either the ground or second floor (Figs. A6-7). Entablatures typically extend straight across the façade, unifying the composition by placing a cap on the sub-divisions below. The continuity in the placement and function of the historicist elements--as opposed to the specific historical style employed--bind the buildings together as a type.

We can also distinguish between composition and historical narrative by comparing the front and back façades. At 66 Page Street, designed by the O'Brien Bros. in 1925, both front and back share an ABCBA composition, but only the front receives the Neo-Tudor treatment of shallow-pointed arches, crenellated parapet and medallions (Figs. 11, A9). By contrast, the rear façade--which fronts on an alley--has a singularly industrial appearance.

Consideration of the organizational and compositional patterns of the façades as an underlying source of continuity that exists independently of stylistic overlay is a modern mode of classification that we apply retrospectively. It emphasizes form over content, structure over sign and symbol, and type over individual building. While useful in defining the abstract integrity of the type, this approach does not address the historicism that is central to these façades.

A comparison of the archival and contemporary photos of the garage at 415 Taylor reveals the power of architectural signs to engage and communicate (Figs. 12-13). Originally, the façade relied on the active inflections of insubstantial parapet profiles to recall Mission style train stations in general, and the San Francisco train depot in particular. By contrast, today's stripped façade is like a blank billboard. This example demonstrates that while a structural approach tends to devalue historicist overlay as arbitrary and superficial, that overlay is nevertheless crucial to the typology.



Figure 14: 142 Tenth Street.



Figure 15: 1335 Fulton Street.

The O'Brien Brothers dressed up their garage façades in different styles, including Mission, Beaux-Arts, and Neo-Gothic. While the choice of style appears to have been arbitrary, the commitment to decorate was not. We may never know why one garage became Mission and another Neo-Tudor. However, the arbitrary reduction of entire stylistic vocabularies to two-dimensional façades provides further evidence that the dichotomy was appropriated for reasons other than the original symbolic program of the train station. Pride of ownership replaced civic grandeur as the message communicated, an ironic if fitting expression for this new technology that personalized and privatized mobility.

The irony was not lost on the architects, who approached their appropriations with a wry sense of humor, rather than naïveté or misguided adulation. One example is the garage at 142 Tenth Street (Fig. 14), that incorporates its side elevation to complete the symmetry of the front elevation (AABAA). Another example is the garage at 1335 Fulton, that mimics the classic train station motif of the triple pediment with arched openings (Fig. 15). The design quotes Atwood's station at the World's Columbian Exposition, the waiting room at Penn Station, and countless reincarnations across America. The humor resides in the flattening of the volumetric reference into mere signage, and the application of the motif to the lowly car garage.

Typology

Like any group of buildings constituting a type, the garages share essential properties, including siting, use, age, materials, and design approach (i.e., the dichotomy). Circumscribed within this commonality is a rich diversity of designs, attributable to the unique circumstances surrounding each project. A typological approach encompasses the simultaneous awareness of the continuities and discontinuities amongst the examples.

The buildings' vulnerability increases when they are considered in either of two ways, as a large, undifferentiated group, or as isolated buildings disconnected from one another. Both approaches are symptomatic of a critical myopia that stops a layered and detailed reality from coming into focus. The anonymity of the buildings contributes significantly to this myopia, either by precluding a *collective* appreciation, or by permitting the isolation of individual examples.

The garages are anonymous both in terms of attribution and the tendency of infill buildings to blend into the urban fabric. Attribution is difficult, diffuse and uncertain. In many instances, the architect is unknown. In other cases, design responsibility appears to have been assumed by a property owner, engineer, or building contractor.¹⁶ Many of the garages were designed by architects well-known in their day, but less so today. Two notable examples are the firms of Crim and Scott and the O'Brien Bros., who designed many exemplary and influential garages. However, while they enjoyed excellent reputations, and while their work often appeared in the pages of *Architect* and *Engineer*, their garage buildings were almost never published.¹⁷

The overall vagueness in authorship--in combination with the low-brow use--contributes to ambiguity in assessing architectural merit. In the absence of attribution to an architect of universal acclaim--Julia Morgan, Willis Polk or Bernard Maybeck, for example--the criteria used to establish merit shifts from the definitive and fixed to the relative and equivocal. Significance becomes a function of considerations that are literally and figuratively external: context, historical association and subjective evaluation.

The preservation of just the façade of an integrated (and willfully dichotomous) architectural statement is consistent with a relativistic approach that views the façade as a bit player, a “contributory building,” in a continuous streetscape. Ironically, the preserved fragment acquires an even greater degree of anonymity, as loss of character results in banality. The building’s autonomy and integrity, either as a “machine for *automotive* living,” or as a late example of Beaux-Arts design applied to a transportation use, has no inherent value.

This study organizes the buildings into a typology to counter the ill-effects of anonymity and indifference. The classification into sub-types establishes parallels and differences that encapsulates the group and fosters a finer-grained appreciation of the type.

The elemental components of the dichotomy--façade and plan type--are essential. “Façade” refers to composition and stylistic overlay. “Plan type” encompasses lot dimensions, structure, the number of stories and program. The plan type exerts influence over the façade in the number of structural bays, the profile of the roof, and the presence of ramps, mezzanine, and office. Whether the enclosing walls are brick or concrete is another basic means by which structure impacts façade.

The plan types divide into three major categories: one-story brick, one-story brick with mezzanine in the front, and two-story concrete. Basements, which are accessed by ramps and therefore influence the façade, can occur in any of these categories. The number of bays, a significant property of façade composition, is a function of lot width and the number of stories--the latter because basements and second floors require ramps, which are accommodated in dedicated bays.

The historical styles that grace the façades fall into three large categories: Mission, neo-Gothic and Beaux-Arts. While these labels are broad and intended to facilitate very basic divisions, there is some overlap and ambiguity resulting from an eclectic approach. The ambiguity is not only evident in the garage façades, but in the historical precedents upon which they are based. The architecture of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, for example, synthesized many antecedents into a generalized eclecticism (Fig. 6), referred to in contemporaneous accounts as “Mediterranean.”¹⁸

A matrix of categories charting façade style over plan type--a mix and match approach to the dichotomy--would yield nine groups. For example, Mission/one-story brick (Fig. 9), or, neo-Gothic/two-story concrete (Fig. A9). However, while these groups do indeed underpin the all-important relationship of façade to industrial shed, they fail to adequately capture the salient identifying characteristics that link particular buildings. For example, while 66 Page Street (Fig. A9) and 1725 Sacramento (Fig. 7) both qualify as neo-Gothic/two-story concrete, Sacramento has a stronger visual connection to both 240 Pacific (Fig. A10)--a one-story building--and 830 Larkin (Fig. 8), a Gothic/Renaissance hybrid.

The matrix is inadequate because it fails to take into account two influential factors: (1) overall width and number of bays, and (2) specific design motifs with strong identifying properties. Thus, in the example cited, a designation of “Gothic/two-story concrete” is too generalized in that it fails to acknowledge the identifying potential of a particular motif, the twin basket-handle arches. And, due to an eclectic approach, the Gothic motif does not always appear in the context of a singularly Gothic vocabulary.

However, if the basic categories of façade and plan type are acknowledged, we can introduce a more flexible classification system that is more responsive to the associative link between buildings. In some cases, the link will be a particular motif--like the basket-handle arches. In other cases, it will be the number of bays, the material, the historical style, or reference to a precedent building type. The proposed sub-types are therefore not mutually exclusive. For example, a particular building might reasonably fall into two categories simultaneously, like "Mission" and "Station," precisely because many train stations were designed in the Mission style. However, despite the occasional ambiguity, the basis by which buildings are grouped should always be intuitively clear and straightforward.

The typology is one of façade. This is ironic, given the centrality of the argument against preserving just the façade of a garage building. Hopefully, that argument has been convincingly made, i.e., that these buildings are *integrated* responses to the conditions that caused their construction. Here is a synopsis of the categories, each one referred to as a "type":

- *Adams Type*: Named after the Henry Adams House, designed by H.H. Richardson (1884-1886, Washington D.C.). The lower two floors describe its basic form: two adjacent basket-handle arches that are the primary features of a base that supports a piano nobile with a row of discrete, deeply-set, vertically-oriented windows (Figs. 7,8). It transforms into other sub-types with symmetry built around an odd number of bays (Fig. A9: 460 Eddy, 1550 Union).
- *Gothic Type*: Displays one or more characteristic motifs: elliptical, Tudor or depressed arched windows and garage door openings; "battlement" parapets of crenels and merlons; and, drip and label moldings. Whether one or two stories, these are typically concrete buildings built in the 1920s. They are closely related to the Adams type, but with livelier parapets that peak over a wide center bay (Fig. A9). Related buildings with Western or Main Street-type parapets are included here (Figs. 16, A8).
- *Mission Type*: Displays one or more characteristic motifs: a large portal centered beneath a cresting parapet composed of stepped and arced segments; shallow clay-tile roofs and eaves, used as ornaments applied to the vertical surface of the façade; Churrigueresque window surrounds; and, multiple two-dimensional vertical projections--topped with curvilinear profiles--that represent towers. The façades are symmetrical compositions, usually composed of an odd number of bays. Reflective of an early date of construction, there is a preponderance of brick façades, both one-story and one-story with front mezzanine (Figs. 9,12, A3).
- *Arcade Type*: A wide façade that is sub-divided into an arcade of arched openings (Figs. A6-7, A8: 1945 Hyde, A11: 750 Post). An early and influential example is at 64 Golden Gate (Fig. A3), a Mission-style garage designed by Crim and Scott in 1910. Includes all categories of construction and stylistic overlay.
- *Station Type*: Displays one of two characteristic portal motifs: a large arched opening centered beneath a pediment; or, three arched openings centered beneath a pediment or flat parapet (Fig. A6). While similar to the Mission type in composition, its stylistic overlay recalls Burnham-style train stations rather than Mission stations (Figs. 15, A2: 636 Shrader). Compositions are symmetrical. This type includes some of the most dramatic and monumental older brick garages, including 2405 Bush (Fig. A4) and 1641 Jackson (Fig. A5).
- *Palazzo Type*: A more generalized and inclusive classification that refers to rectangular, boxy fronts containing two stories and 3-6 bays. Usually the bays are outlined in applied pilasters and entablatures of Italianate derivation. This type includes three extraordinary demolished examples, 1737 Jackson, 410 Stockton and the base of 375 O'Farrell (Fig. A10).
- *Head Building Type*: Always situated on corner lots--which expose one side elevation to view--this type mimics the classic train station combination of historicist head building fronting industrial shed. The typical garage façade assumes a volumetric expression. The head building occupies the front structural bay of the building, and often involves a second story or mezzanine; the resultant side elevation exhibits a dramatic shift in height at the juncture between head building and shed (Fig. 14).



Figure 16: 2050 24th Street

This classification is visually based, giving priority to physical, sensory motifs over abstract, formal considerations. As a result, the typology confers respectability on the seemingly arbitrary and shallow assignation of historical style. Viewed retrospectively through a modernist sensibility (and a post Post-Modern sensibility), the historicist overlay is frivolous. As discussed earlier, there is even evidence that the architects themselves recognized the thinness of the historicist overlay.

However, despite their apparent bemusement, the architects always dressed up the fronts of their garages. The overlay is the means by which these architects celebrated the street, as well as the businesses within. Through this historicism, the architects met an intertwined civic and professional responsibility to beautify the surroundings. The academic skills that the architects brought to bear in this regard were the only tools at their disposal, given their training and the context in which they practiced. Trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition, they knew nothing else.

When we allow style and precedent to influence the classification criteria, we accept the priority bestowed on this aspect of design by the architects themselves. We also acknowledge the strength of historical motifs and symbols to establish identity in our consciousness. This communicative potential does not depend upon a viewer's firm grasp of historical styles. These buildings are eclectic, and are memorable as images rather than examples of historical style. The garage at 830 Larkin, for example, includes Gothic and Renaissance elements, but is memorable despite any confusion caused by its hybrid inspirations (Fig. 8).

Thus, while the criteria references particular styles, the identifying element is usually a particular motif derived from that style. On the façades, these motifs appear out of context from any comprehensive representation of the full set of elements associated with a style or the rules that govern their combination. Thus, the presentations are caricatured, which is consistent with the notion that these façades are billboards.

And, in the development of a particular historicist billboard, the parapet is especially influential. Whether flat (Fig. 8), pedimented (Fig. A1), curvilinear (Fig. 9), segmented (Fig. A8), or some combination of all of these, the parapet is allusive and a source of identifying character. This is so despite its obvious lack of architectural integrity. If we employ a traditional typological criteria--one based on underlying formal relationships--to classify and compare the garages at 2050 24th Street (Fig. 16) and 1550 Union (Fig. A9), we will conclude that they are essentially the same building. However, if we concede that the profile is a powerful determining motif, the buildings are indeed different.

Conclusion

Regarded individually, these buildings would not be as special or noteworthy. Some examples are better than others, a truism that today must take into account horrific modifications and benign neglect as well as original execution. The tendency to take these structures for granted results from the unevenness in the quality of individual examples, the prosaic, industrial nature of the enterprise, and the aura of anonymity that surrounds them.

When the buildings are reframed as a group, they assume an importance that transcends individual merit, becoming urban in scope. As examples of a type, the buildings refer to one another and to the elusive, abstract ideal. In the mind of an observer whose consciousness has thus been raised, a particularly mangled example transforms itself from urban detritus to a diamond-in-the-rough, followed by a conceptual restoration that reinforces and enhances the complete set of buildings.

The notion of typology is incompatible with either the demolition of examples or their reduction to stage sets that are preserved only to maintain the continuity of the street. When a garage is reduced to its façade, it ceases to exist as an example of the building type. By contrast, when preserved--as a functioning garage or through an adaptive reuse that respects its industrial character--it maintains its connection to all of the other examples of the type, city-wide. The preserved building knits the fabric of the city together through the repetition of motifs that recall the city's transportation heritage.

While façade motifs are the most visible elements of the connection that the buildings have to each other--and to us--the relationships run deeper than arches, crenellated parapets and ornamental friezes. These small monumental buildings, that house retail and light-industrial businesses, with large ground floor openings that invite the public to observe their cavernous interiors, are the very essence of heritage and character.

The typological approach extends protections to anonymous buildings and works against their isolation. It substitutes relationship for attribution and/or architectural distinction as the source of value. A building may merit preservation not for its individual excellence, but for its continuity with other examples of the type. The distribution of garages throughout the city, in neighborhoods on opposite ends of the economic spectrum--like the Tenderloin and Russian Hill--is a fortuitous source of harmony that the typological approach recognizes and celebrates.

We may glean valuable insights into the collection as a whole, and into our history and heritage, through the preservation of the entire collection--and other collections just like it. Yet older buildings are everyday threatened by bland new construction. If we "go with the flow" and abandon the past, we cede the high moral ground and encourage the process by which our cities lose authenticity and all look alike.

Architectural history has a vital role to play in raising public awareness about the connection between preservation--which many take for granted as the province of a few civic-minded celebrities and community activists--and sustainability, which has galvanized the nation. The historian is in a unique position to explain how the impulse to study and value a cultural and architectural legacy is compatible, if not identical, with the urge to sustain a diverse urban environment, to explain why bulky new live/work developments may not be preferable to existing urban fabric, and to demonstrate that the common garage is a valuable artifact of architectural history. And once the notion of sustainability through preservation gains general acceptance, the historian has an active role to play in assisting local government in the responsible exercise of its function.

Acknowledgements

The students and I wish to thank the following organizations and individuals: the American Institute of Architects, for providing the funding for this research; Mark Luellen, Elizabeth Skrondal and Ozzie Taeb of the San Francisco Planning Department for their generous time and spirit in working with us; Christina Moretta, of the History Center at the San Francisco Public Library, for instructing the students in archival research; Bill Holmes, structural engineer at Rutherford and Chekene, for instructing the class in typical seismic scopes of work required by these buildings; and Alissa Jones and Melanie Gong, two students who provided design templates, page layouts and graphic design for their colleagues. My personal thanks to Sharon Risedorph, a friend and collaborator whose photographic work is nothing short of inspirational. Her photo graces the article cover.

Notes

¹ Richard Longstreth, *On The Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1983; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 9-39. Citation is to the University of California edition. Longstreth provides a detailed account of the regionalist form of academic eclecticism to which Polk, Maybeck and others in northern California were responsive.

² Students determined the status of buildings listed in the directory by cross-referencing it against my database of extant garages, or by accessing the sites on Google Maps.

³ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, *Redevelopment Plan for the Transbay Redevelopment Project Area* (June 21, 2005), 8. [http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/site/uploadedfiles/sfra/Projects/TB20%Redevelopment%20Plan\(2\).pdf](http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/site/uploadedfiles/sfra/Projects/TB20%Redevelopment%20Plan(2).pdf) (accessed November 28, 2008).

⁴ Vandana Shiva, "Vandana Shiva in Conversation with Carol Tang" (City Arts & Lectures, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco, CA, July 13, 2008).

⁵ Vandana Shiva, *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005), 19-22, 40.

⁶ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, second printing (New York, NY: Random House, 1961), 187.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 188.

¹⁰ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Registration of Historic Places, Nomination of Uptown Tenderloin Historic District*, OMB no. 1024-0018 (May, 2008): section 7, 15-6. The Table of Buildings lists twenty-two garages as “contributors” to the proposed historic district. Garage buildings built during the 1910’s and 1920’s, situated throughout the city, are likely to qualify as historic resources by virtue of their age.

¹¹ Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, *CEQA and Historical Resources, CEQA Technical Advice Series; Background on Historical Resources Preservation* (May, 1996). <http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env LAW/ceqa?more/tas/page2.html> (accessed August 26, 2008). Under the California Environmental Quality Act, the governmental agency reviews a proposed scope of work to guard against “substantial adverse change...which would impair *the significance* of the historic resource [emphasis added].” It’s the significance of the building that is protected, not the building.

¹² Carroll L.V. Meeks, *The Railroad Station: An Architectural History* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956) 92. Citation is to the Dover Publications edition.

¹³ George Starr, “Truth Unveiled: The Fair and Its Interpreters,” in *The Anthropology of World’s Fairs: San Francisco’s Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915*, by Burton Benedict (Berkeley: Scholar Press, 1983) 162-163. Starr wrote, “It took no very penetrating analysis to conclude that the Exposition’s array of imposing facades was all sham and illusion (ibid., 163).

¹⁴ Leon J. Pinkson, “Opinion Divided Over New S.F. Traffic Regulations,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1924.

¹⁵ Stephen W. Sears, *The American Heritage History of The Automobile in America* (New York: American Heritage Books, 1977) 143.

¹⁶ US Dept. of the Interior, *National Park Service, National Registration of Historic Places, Nomination of Uptown Tenderloin*: section 7, 31-34. The article “Architects, Designers and Builders” describes the various relationships between the parties involved in design and construction of buildings in the neighborhood during this period. My research of original permits issued for the construction of garages confirms that the arrangements described in the article apply to garages located throughout the city.

¹⁷ An architect’s rendering of the wonderful Palace Garage at 111 Stevenson, designed by the O’Brien Bros., was published. See *Architect and Engineer* 64, no.1 (January 1921): 78.

¹⁸ Ben Macomber, *The Jewel City* (San Francisco and Tacoma: John H. Williams, 1915) 27. Macomber wrote, “While the palaces differ widely in details of decoration, they all have a common source; they are all Mediterranean,—not all Byzantine, or Roman, or Italian, or Spanish, or Moorish, but something of each.”

APPENDIX

University of California, Davis
Design Program
Design 180a Fall 2008

Contents:

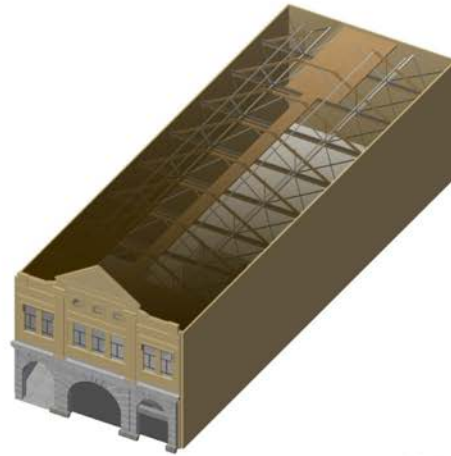
- Figure A1: 1336 Grove Street + Adaptive Reuse
Figure A2: 1776 Green Street
Figure A3: 624 Stanyan Street
Figure A4: 2405 Bush Street
Figure A5: 1641 Jackson Street
Figure A6: 1076 Howard Street
Figure A7: 525 Jones Street
Figure A8: 2715 Hyde Street + Adaptive Reuse
Figure A9: 66 Page Street + Adaptive Reuse
- Figure A10: "Demolished Buildings":
• 240 Pacific Street
• 410 Stockton Street
• 375 O'Farrell Street
• 1737 Jackson Street
- Figure A11: "Buildings Adapted to New Uses":
• 1770 North Point
• 2120 Polk Street
• 750 Post Street

Research by: Mark Kessler

Rabi Asghar
Rachael Cacharelis
Patrick Caughey
Jennifer Chang
Shiuan-Han Chang
Michelle Claudio
Lindsay Cooper
Megan Edgley
Melanie Aspeitia Gong
Katrina Goodwin
Kristina Greenshields
Jennifer Lee
Tracy Lee
Yu Ting Li
Cari MacPhail
Tao Pang
Roshan Patel
Yuan Fu Peng
Nicole Pierce
Josue Quintero
Cindy Seo
Diana Sharkawy
Elizabeth Whyte
Christine Yun

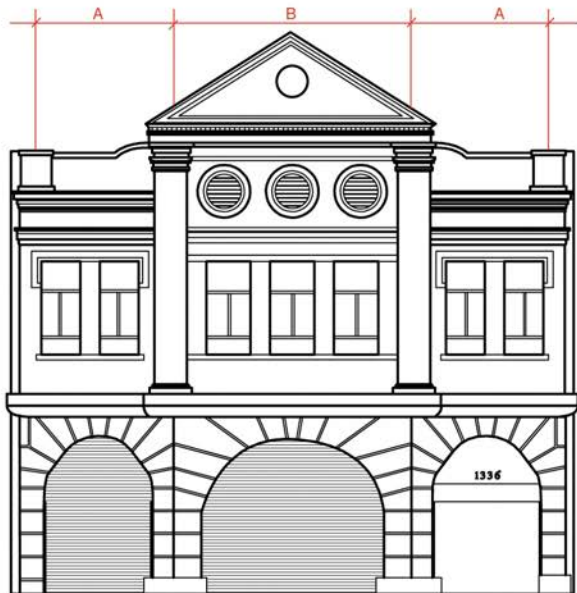
This project was undertaken with the generous support of the AIA Research Program.

Research was presented to the San Francisco Department of Planning on December 11, 2008



1336 GROVE STREET

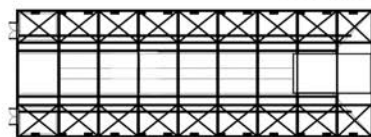
Construction Date: 1894
Historical Name: John Peters Livery & Stable
Present Name: Lewis Merlo Construction
Architects: William Smith & J. Freeman
Site Dimensions: 48 ft. x 135 ft.
Structure: Brick Masonry and Concrete
Zoning: NC-2 (Neighborhood Commercial, Small Scale)
Facade Type: Italianate & Renaissance Revival



Elevation



Section



Second Floor

Related Garages



4419 Geary



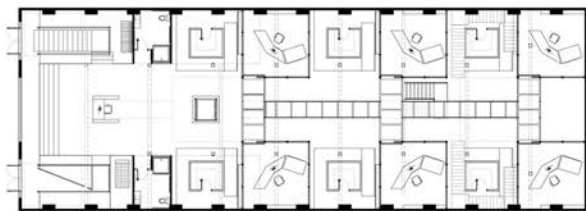
1550 Union



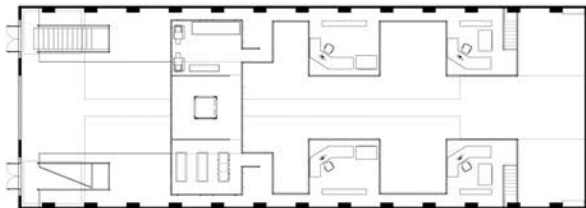
FIGURE A1



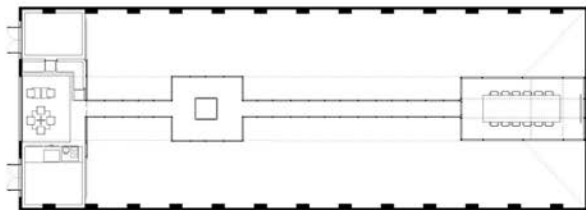
ADAPTIVE REUSE
1336 GROVE STREET
Graduate Student Architecture Studios



First Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor



Front Section



Longitudinal Section

Perspective Views

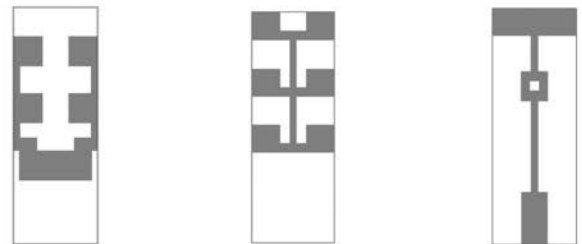
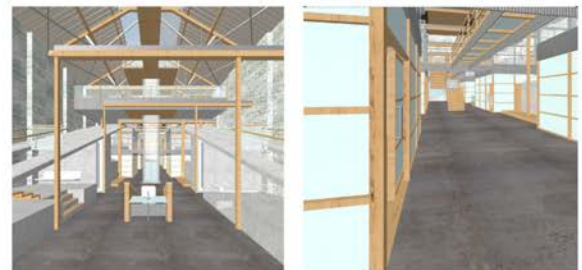
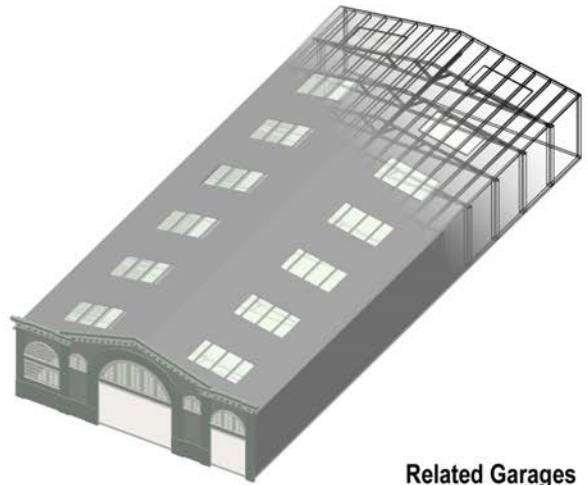


FIGURE A1.1



1776 GREEN STREET

Construction Date: 1914
Historical Name: California Garage
Present Name: Green Street Auto Body
Architect: Unkown
Site Dimensions: 50 ft. x 120ft.
Struture: Masonry/Concrete
Zoning: RH-2 (Residential-House, Two Family)
Facade Type: Station

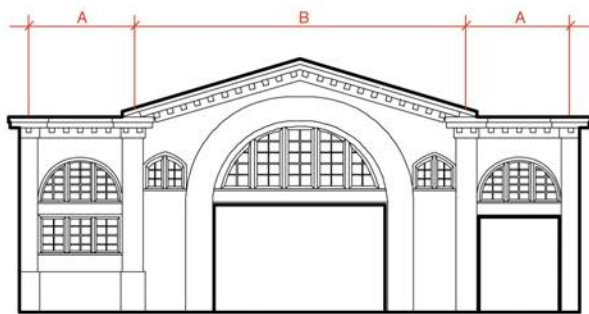
Related Garages



636 Shrader



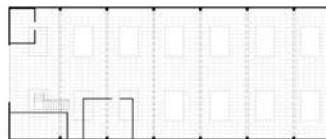
1675 Pacific



Elevation



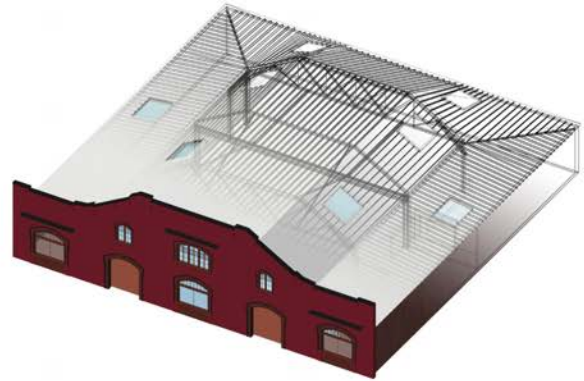
Section



Ground Floor



FIGURE A2



624 STANYAN STREET

Construction Date: 1911
Historical Name: Seiler & Nolan Garage
Present Name: Ted and Al's Service Center
Architect: Crim & Scott
Site Dimensions: 100 ft. x 100 ft.
Struture: Masonry and Concrete
Zoning: NC-1 Commercial
Facade Type: Mission

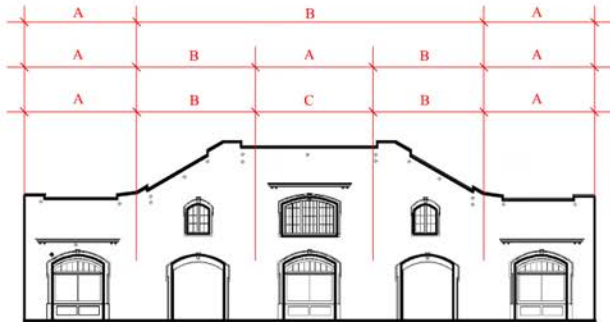
Related Garages



64 Golden Gate



469 Eddy



Elevation



Section

Ground Floor

FIGURE A3



2405 BUSH STREET

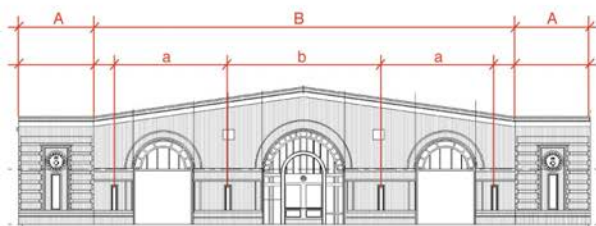
Construction Date: 1916
Historical Name: Unknown
Present Name: Hayes Auto Body Repair
Architect: Unknown
Site Dimensions: 145 ft. x 100 ft.
Structure: Brick, Steel and Wood
Zoning: RH-3
Facade Type: Station Type

Related Garages



1270 Bush

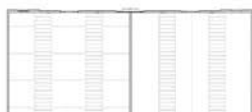
1675 Pacific



Elevation



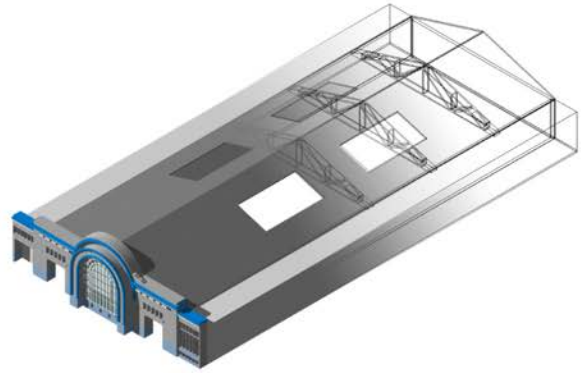
Section



Ground Floor



FIGURE A4



1641 JACKSON STREET

Construction Date: 1914
Historical Name: Jackson Garage
Present Name: Phaedrus
Architects: Unknown
Site Dimensions: 96.6 ft. x 124.25 ft.
Struture: Brick and Steel Beams
Zoning: Neighborhood Commercial
Facade Type: Station Garage

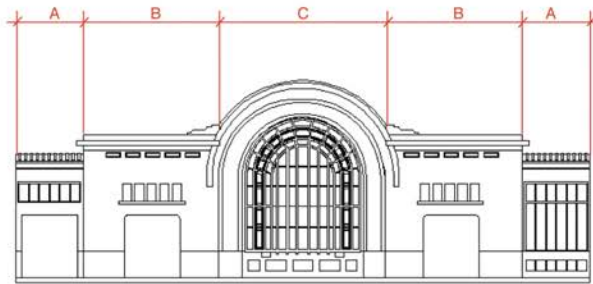
Related Garages



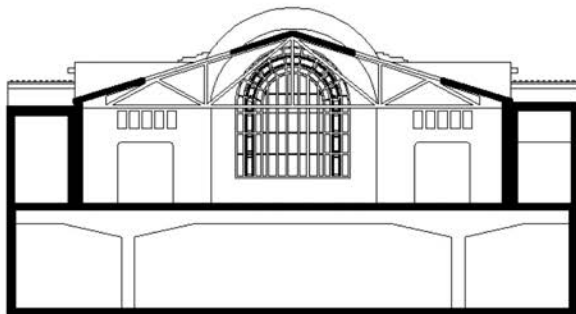
1270 Bush



541 Ellis



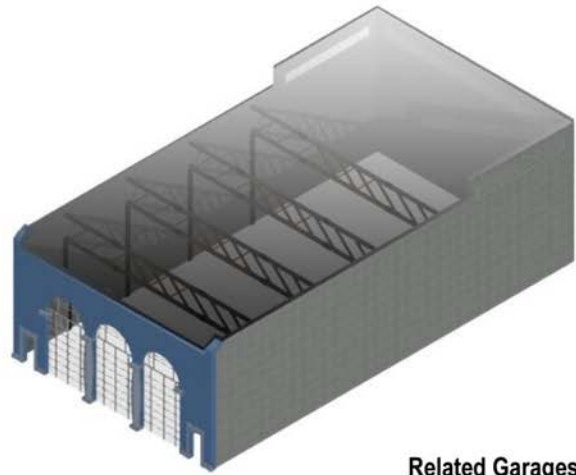
Elevation



Ground Floor

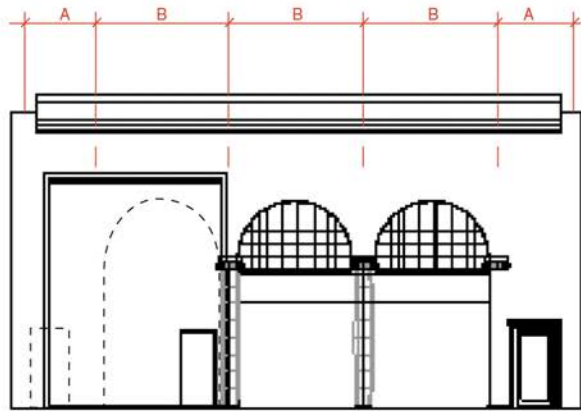


FIGURE A5

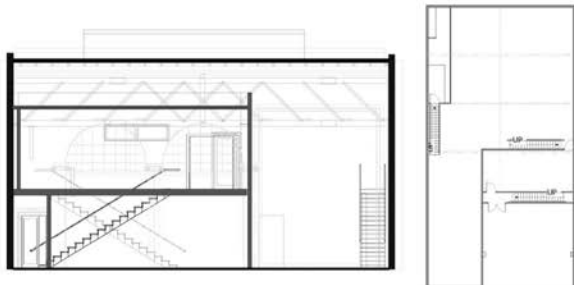


1076 HOWARD STREET

Construction Date: 1923
Historical Name: Unknown
Present Name: N/A
Architect: Unknown
Site Dimensions: 48 ft. x 90 ft.
Structure: Concrete Masonry
Zoning: SR2 (Light Industrial, Residential, Commercial)
Facade Type: Station



Elevation



Section Ground Floor

Related Garages



*375 O'Farrell

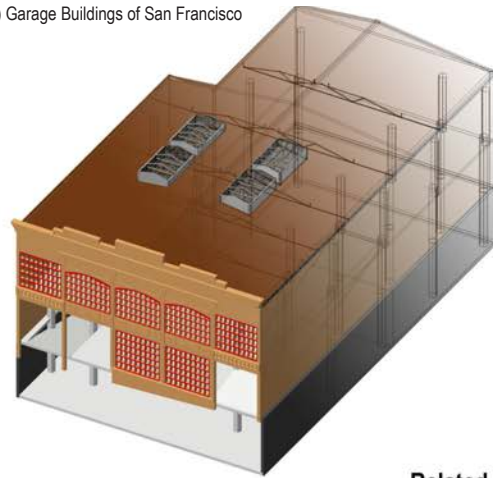


1840 Washington



*Photo: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

FIGURE A6



525 JONES STREET

Construction Date: 1922
Historical Name: Aetna Car Garage
Present Name: Best Parking LLC Company
Architect: O'Brien Brothers
Site Dimensions: 52.5 ft x 131.25 ft
Structure: Reinforced Concrete
Zoning: RC-4 (Residential - Commercial, High Density)
Facade Type: Arcade

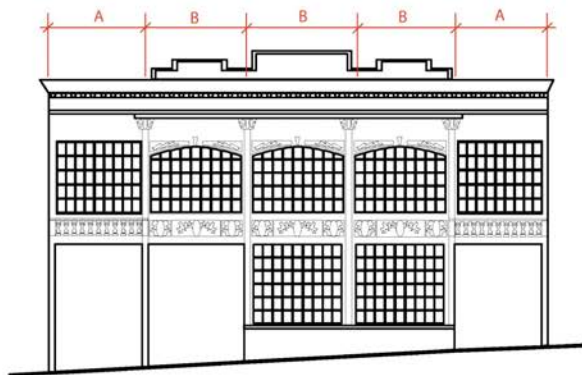
Related Garages



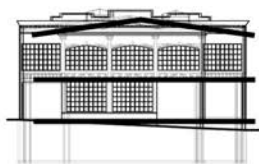
410 Stockton



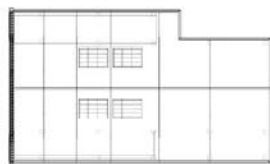
375 O'Farrell



Elevation



Section

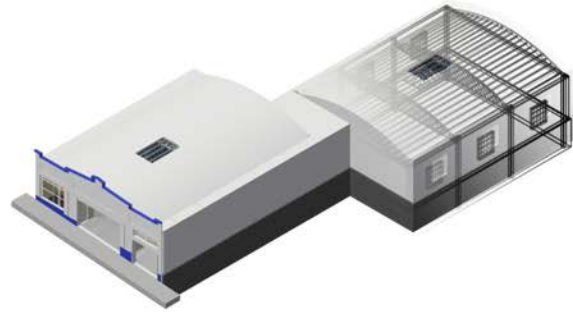


Ground Floor



All photos courtesy San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

FIGURE A7



2715 HYDE STREET

Construction Date: 1925
Historical Name: Vallejo Garage #2
Present Name: Blazing Saddles Bike Rentals and Tours
Original Builder: Pasqualetti
Site Dimensions: 52 ft. x 137.5 ft.
Structure: Concrete
Zoning: NC-1 Commercial
Facade Type: Gothic

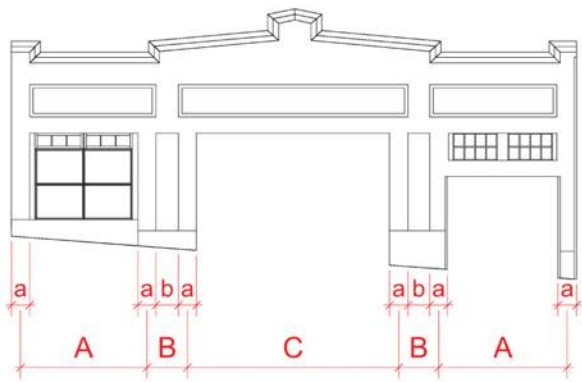
Related Garages



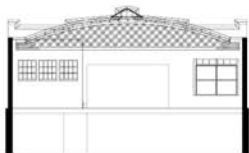
1945 Hyde



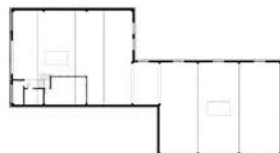
1565 Bush



Elevation



Section



Ground Floor



FIGURE A8

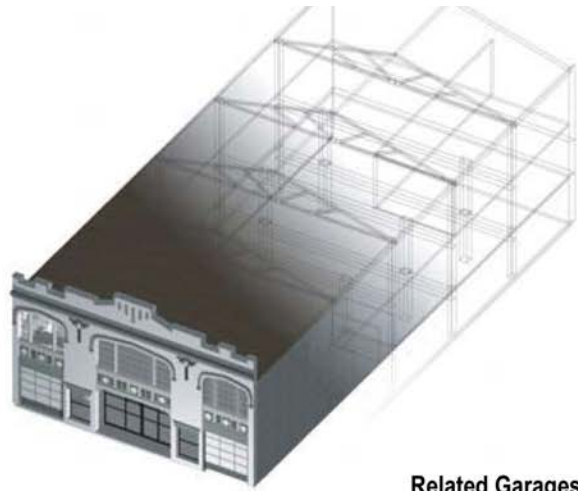
ADAPTIVE REUSE
2715 HYDE STREET
Cafe and Bookstore



Perspective Views



FIGURE A8.1



66 PAGE STREET

Construction Date: 1925
Historical Name: Grand Central Garage
Present Name: N/A
Architects: O'Brien Brothers
Site Dimensions: 55 ft. x 121 ft.
Structure: Concrete
Zoning: NC-3 (Page Street Neighborhood)
Facade Type: Gothic

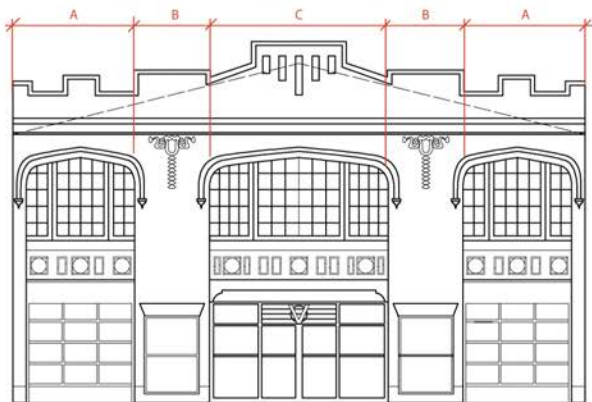
Related Garages



1550 Union



460 Eddy



Elevation



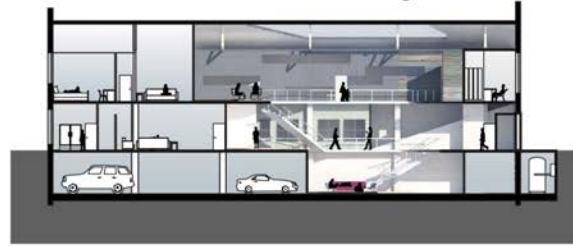
Section



Ground Floor



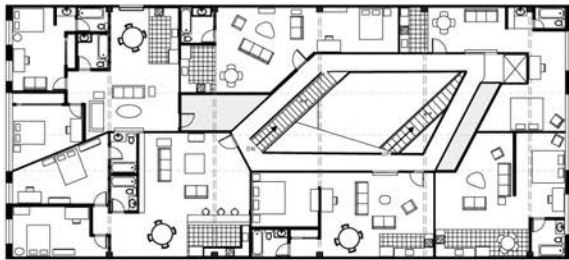
FIGURE A9



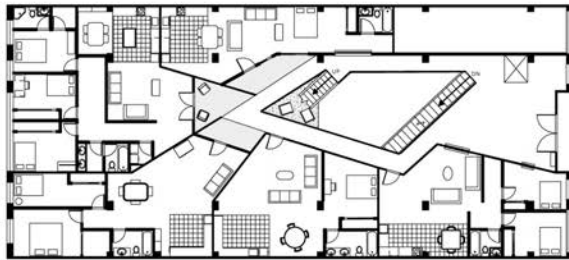
Concept



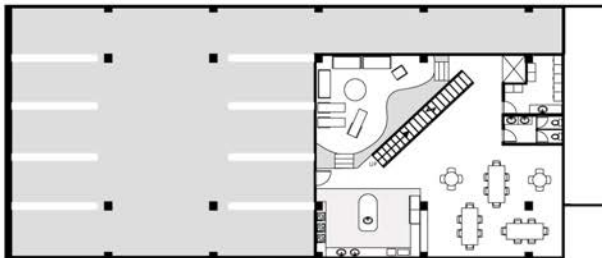
ADAPTIVE REUSE
66 PAGE STREET
Urban Cohousing Apartment Complex Units



Top Floor



Main Floor



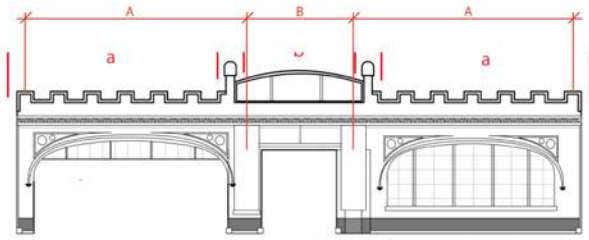
Basement Floor

Perspective Views



FIGURE A9.1

DEMOLISHED GARAGES



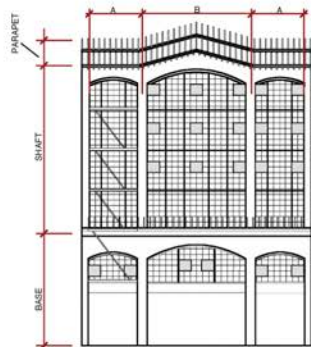
240 Pacific

Pacific Automotive Service



Built: 1920's

Demolished: 1994



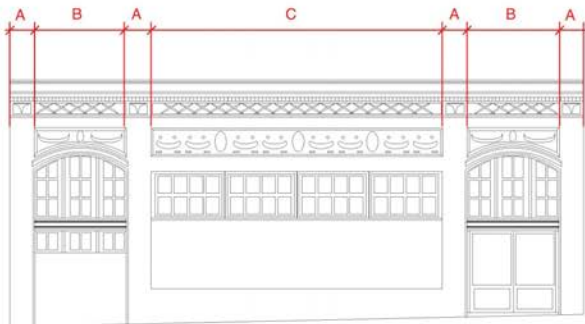
410 Stockton

Bohemian Garage



Built: 1923

Demolished: 1960's



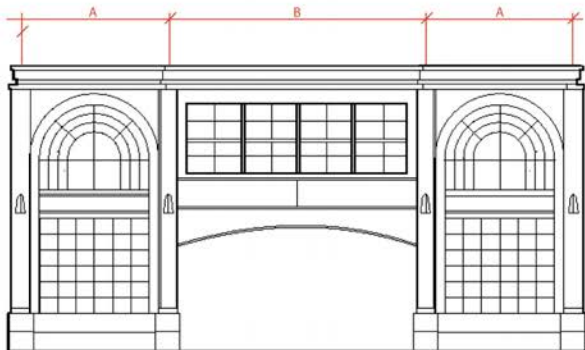
375 O'Farrell

Cunningham Car Distributing Agency



Built: Unkown

Demolished: Unkown



1737 Jackson

Garage

All photos courtesy San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.



Built: 1915

Demolished: Unknown

FIGURE A10

BUILDINGS ADAPTED TO NEW USES



770 North Point **Built:** 1924
Historical Name: J.G. Barsotti & Co. Automotive Service



Current Name: Patagonia



***750 Post** **Built:** 1913
Historical Name: Post Street Garage



Current Name: John Pence Art Gallery

*Photo: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library



2120 Polk **Current Name:** Walgreen's Drug Store

FIGURE A11