

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 5 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder): Thrash Pontiac Motors

P1. Other identifier: Surf Rider Cafe

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

*a. County Santa Cruz County

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a location map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Santa Cruz Date Revised 1994 T .11 S. ; R .2 W. ; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address: 429 Front St.

City Santa Cruz Zip 95060

d. UTM:(give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10S ; 586842 mE/ 4092156 mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

southwest corner of Front and Cathcart Streets.

APN# 05-152-01

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

A post-World War II auto dealership, this Art Moderne style building was initially constructed in 1948 as a public garage for \$35,000, and in 1949 an addition was built onto the building for showrooms for \$10,000. It was designed by C. J. Ryland, a prominent architect from San Jose. As the automobile became increasingly prevalent in urban centers during the Interwar period of the twentieth century, commercial sales and services clusters began to appear, and in Santa Cruz, this occurred primarily along Front Street. Garages, automotive supply stores, and auto sales and showroom uses were prevalent on this street beginning in the 1920s and lasted into the early 1980s. This one-story stucco commercial building is a form of mid-twentieth century design known as Art Moderne. The building is a clear representation of this style, known for its use of "Modern" materials (including concrete, steel, plate glass and, often, contrasting stone or brickwork) in unembellished, primarily horizontal compositions, often formed with two or three discrete, geometric volumes. (continued on page 4. DPR523L)

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP6. 1-3 story commercial building

*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo:
(View, date, accession #)
View facing west, 2009.

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1948-1949, building permit, 60 years old.

*P7. Owner and Address:

*P8. Recorded By: (Name, affiliation, and address)

F. Maggi/L. Dill/J. Kusz

Archives & Architecture, LLC
PO Box 1332
San Jose, CA 95109

*P9. Date Recorded: 5/6/09

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)

Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none".)

Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey - Vol. III, Department of Planning and Community Development, City of Santa Cruz, 2012.

*Attachments:

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation Sheet | <input type="checkbox"/> District Record | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Art Record | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (List): |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location Map | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building, Structure, and Object Record | <input type="checkbox"/> Linear Feature Record | <input type="checkbox"/> Artifact Record | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sketch Map | <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Record | <input type="checkbox"/> Milling Station Record | <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph Record | |

DPR 523A (1/95)

* Required Information

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Page 2 of 5

*NRHP/CRHR Status Code 3CS

Resource Name (Assigned by recorder) Thrash Pontiac Motors

B1. Historic Name: Thrash Pontiac Motors, Marina-Pontiac Cadillac

B2. Common Name: 429 Front St.

B3. Original Use: Commercial retail

B4. Present Use: Mixed-use commercial

*B5. Architectural Style: Art Moderne

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

Original construction (SC BP #10060, August 20, 1948). Showroom construction (SC BP #10643, February 21, 1949). Remodel and alterations to building, roof, and frontage (SC BP #A15927, April 14, 1969). Interior remodel for restaurant use (SC BP#B4209, October 3, 1986). Remodel and repairs, 1990s.

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: n/a

Original Location: n/a

*B8. Related Features:

None.

B9a. Architect: C. J. Ryland

b. Builder: Orlo C. Hackbarth

*B10. Significance: Theme Commercial Development

Area: Downtown

Period of Significance: 1948 - 1964

Property Type: Commercial

Applicable Criteria: (3)

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

This Art Moderne building was initially designed by San Jose architect, C. J. Ryland, and constructed in 1948-1949 by contractor Orlo C. Hackbarth as an auto dealership for Thash Pontiac Motors. As the automobile became increasingly during the Interwar period, commercial sales and services clusters began to appear with urban areas throughout the United States. In Santa Cruz, Front Street (originally named Main Street) was initially developed as the primary downtown thoroughfare. In 1866, Thomas Wright and Solomon Foreman completed a survey (which became the two-part "Official Map of Santa Cruz" and "Official Map B of Santa Cruz") and Front Street then became a secondary street to the newly-named Pacific Avenue. Front Street then subsequently evolved as Santa Cruz's Chinatown; this period ended with a fire in 1894 that destroyed many of the early structures. Development of Front Street remained sporadic until after 1918 (with the exception of construction of the County jail and Hall of Records in the late nineteenth century) when structures relating to the burgeoning auto industry began appearing along here. (continued on page 5, DPR523L)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (list attributes and codes) None

*B12. References:

City of Santa Cruz building permits.
City of Santa Cruz Standard Map, 1929.
Lehmann, Susan. Historic Context Statement for City of Santa Cruz. 2000.
Polk. R. L., Santa Cruz City Directory. 1940-1989.
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1905-1950.

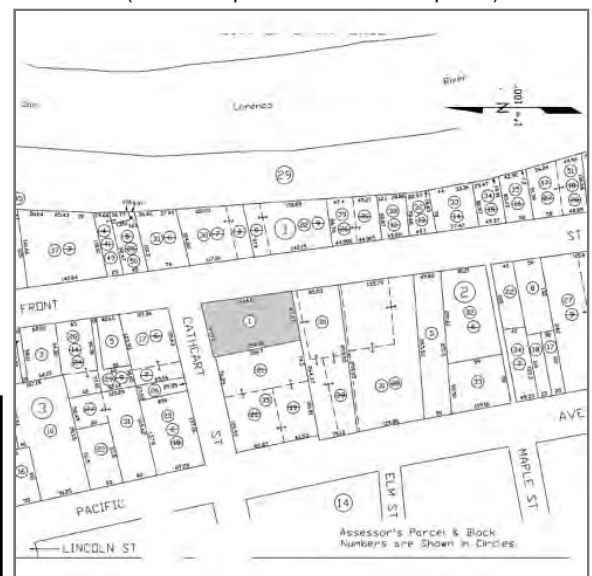
(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

B13. Remarks: None

*B14. Evaluator: Leslie Dill

*Date of Evaluation: May 6, 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
LOCATION MAP

Primary #
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Trinominal

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* Map Name: Santa Cruz, Calif.

* Scale: n.t.s.

* Date of Map: 1954 (revised 1994)



TN*/MN
14 1/2°

Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Page 4 of 5 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Thrash Pontiac Motors

* Recorded By F. Maggi/L. Dill/J. Kusz * Date 5/6/2009 ☒ Continuation ☐ Update

(Continued from page 1, DPR523a, P3a Description)

The Art Moderne building features a large curved aluminum storefront that was added early in 1949 to display the latest cars; its Arizona Fieldstone planters and vertical monument sign are signature design elements for the period. Both sections of the building were constructed by local contractor, Orlo C. Hackbarth.

The building has three wings; two can be considered original, as they were built within a year of each other and unified in their design, and the third wing is a later addition. The historic garage and showroom wings are unified by a full-width, wrapping Mid-Century Modern style awning and connected at a vertical monument sign. The garage volume is primarily utilitarian in design. It has a large, rectangular footprint that follows the sidewalk frontage and runs the full depth of the parcel at the southern edge of the corner property. This oldest wing of the building has a low-slope bow roof behind plain parapet walls.

The southern half of the Front Street sidewalk elevation has been altered with new walls, openings, and doorways beneath the historic awning; it is likely this area was glazed in the past, as there is a building permit from the mid 1960s, which indicates that curtain walls were removed and this location seems altered. The most significant portion of the building incorporates the northeast corner of the main wing and extends into a distinctive glazed showroom wing. The wing projects toward the parking lot and is exposed and glazed on three sides. Full-height aluminum display windows angle around the two curved corners; similar display windows extend into the main garage volume. Contrasting with the curtain walls is a low sandstone planter; this provides a heavy textural element that also is laid in thin rows, accentuating the horizontal lines of the masonry. A later wing follows the west property line, behind the corner parking lot. The long, one-story wing has a flat roof.

The structure and exterior walls are reinforced concrete. The exposed south side wall displays its concrete block materials, and the main front and north-side façades are faced with stucco. A vertical wall projects forward slightly from the main wall face, and project above the rooflines of the two main wings; this wall acts as a Moderne backdrop for applied signs. The display windows consist of large sheets of plate glass connected by narrow aluminum muntins. The base of the windows features Arizona sandstone planters that pass in front of the sign wall. The south-side wall is exposed at the parking area for the neighboring Greyhound station; the "bus" sign is immediately adjacent to the subject building. The concrete-block one-story wing has glass-block and recent storefronts that include glass block, high transoms, new signage, and recent entry doors.

(Continued from page 2, DPR523b, B10 Significance)

Thrash Motors occupied this modern building after taking over the local Pontiac dealership in 1934. A significant increase in sales volume post-World War II led Sylvan Thrash to commission Columbus J. Ryland to design this new Pontiac showroom and garage in 1948. Thrash Pontiac was in business until the early 1960s, when ownership changes to Marina Pontiac-Cadillac. The 1960s saw the beginning of a change in land use along Front Street as the City was undergoing a rapid outward expansion period. The building remained vacant for a number of years during this time, but was converted to retail commercial uses by the 1980s. In 1986, George Ow and Larry Chew opened the Pontiac Grill in this building with a retro-style theme related to the early days of the dealership. More recently it was Café La Vie, and now is occupied by a surf-themed restaurant called the Surf Rider Cafe.

(Continued on next page)

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(Continued from last page)

The Art Moderne style of this building is a distinctive representation of the work of architect C. J. Ryland. Columbus J. Ryland was born in San Jose in 1892. He studied at the Western Normal California School of Arts and Crafts, and later studied in France after service in World War I. He returned to the United States and established himself in Fresno, California working as a partner in the firm Swartz & Ryland. Swartz and Ryland worked mostly in small San Joaquin Valley towns as well as in Oakland, Monterey, and Salinas. In 1931, Ryland went into business with Santa Cruz architects, Lee Dill Esty and D. M. McPhetres. He completed such buildings as Monterey City Hall, Carmel Sunset Center, the Santa Cruz City Hall, Morris Abrams Store, and of course, Thrash Pontiac Motors. C. J. Ryland died in 1980 in Walnut Creek.

SIGNIFICANCE

The property was found eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion (3). The building is not individually significant to the development of the downtown area of Santa Cruz, and although it was one of a number of auto-oriented uses along Front Street, the important pattern of development of this portion of the downtown has lost much of its historic setting, and thus would not appear to be eligible under Criterion (1). The personages associated with the original auto body shop on this property are not known to be historically significant, therefore the property would not appear to be eligible under Criterion (2). The architect of the building, C. J. Ryland, is known to have made lasting contributions to the building fabric of the South San Francisco and Monterey Bay Areas. The building is a distinctive representative of its time, as an architect designed-Art Moderne commercial building, and appears eligible under Criterion (3).

When considered for listing within the Historic Building Survey of the City of Santa Cruz, the property meets the following criteria:

1. The building is a significant example of the built environment heritage of the City as a representative of late 1940s buildings constructed to serve the auto service industry; and
4. The building is associated with architect C. J. Ryland, whose work has influenced the development of the City; and
5. The building possesses special aesthetic merit and value due to its quality of architecture, retaining sufficient features that show its architectural significance; and
6. The building possesses distinctive stylistic characteristics of Art Moderne; and
7. The building retains sufficient integrity to accurately convey its significance.

Integrity

The property maintains most of its historical integrity as per the National Register's seven aspects of integrity. It maintains its original location on Front Street, in the downtown area of Santa Cruz; it is still surrounded by much, but not all of its apparent historic setting, including surrounding commercial buildings of similar age, scale and design and parcels with similar setbacks, parking, and streetscape. It retains its post-World War II commercial scale and feeling and continues, through its form, massing and detailing, to illustrate its associations with minor patterns of commercial design in the twentieth century. Although altered at one section, the majority of the front façade retains its integrity with the Art Moderne style, including: the vertical monument sign wall, full-width awning, curved showroom wing, full-height display windows, and low stone planters. The west-side addition, and front alterations do not detract from the original character-defining materials and workmanship, and the basic integrity of the subject property appears to have been preserved.