

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
CHR Status Code: _____

Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

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Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1646 SUTTER ST

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

*b. USGS Quad: San Francisco North, Californi Date: 1995

c. Address: 1646 SUTTER STREET City: San Francisco ZIP 94109

d. UTM Zone: Easting: Northing:

e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number 0674 003A

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

1646 Sutter Street is located on a 47' x 137.5' lot on the north side of Sutter Street, between Octavia and Laguna streets. Built in 1928, 1646 Sutter Street is a 4-story, wood frame, apartment building designed in a style consistent with the Edwardian period. The rectangular-plan building, clad in smooth stucco, is capped by a flat roof. The foundation is not visible. There are 2 integral garages at the first story level.

The primary façade faces south. The building includes 26 residential units with 1 entrance on the first story. The main entry is located at the center of the primary façade, and features a partially glazed, wood door with molded trim and sidelights. The recessed entry has a three-centered arched opening. Two angled bay windows span the first through third stories. The primary window type is a wood double casement sash with a transom lite and molded surrounds. The primary façade terminates in a parapet adorned with a cornice.

The building appears to be in good condition.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP3. Multiple Family Property

*P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other

P5a. Photo



P5b. Description of Photo:

View of primary façade, looking north. 11/9/2007

*P6. Date Constructed/Age:

Historic Prehistoric Both

1928 SF Assessor's Office

*P7. Owner and Address

LEVINSON FAMILY REVOC TRUST
% A FREDERICK LEVINSON
55 RAYCLIFF TER
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94115

*P8. Recorded By:

Page & Turnbull, Inc., DL
724 Pine Street
San Francisco, CA 94108

*P9. Date Recorded: 11/9/2007

*P10. Survey Type:

Reconnaissance - Level 2

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

Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan

*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 7R

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*Resource Name or # (assigned by recorder) 1646 Sutter Street

___ B1. Historic name: Yamamoto Apartments
 ___ B2. Common name: None
 ___ B3. Original Use: Apartments
 ___ B4. Present use: Apartments
 ___ *B5. Architectural Style: Edwardian-era

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

1928: Constructed. 1934: Wood retaining wall at rear of building replaced with concrete. 1961: New underpinning. 1972: New fire escapes installed, parking plaza improved, and dry rot repairs made.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features: None.

B9a. Architect: J.C. Hladik b. Builder: G.E. Watson

*B10. Significance: Theme Cultural community development Area: Japantown, San Francisco, California

Period of Significance 1949 – ca. 1970s Property Type Residential Applicable Criteria A/1

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

The subject parcel consists of the eastern half of what was originally a double-wide lot. The earliest owner of the property was George H. Winterburn, a lawyer from England, who owned it around 1894. The double-wide lot was split around 1913, with the subject property taking on its current dimensions at that time. The split probably occurred under the ownership of Samuel P. Davis. The property was subsequently owned by multiple parties over the years, but remained undeveloped until 1928, when the current building was constructed.

In 1928, the property was sold by H.D. Pittman to O.B. Hegert. Hegert only owned the property for approximately eight months. He then sold it to George E. Watson, who is listed as the builder on original building permits and plans. The building was designed by J.C. Hladik, an architect from Austria. Hladik was an architect of houses; however, he was also a prolific designer of apartment buildings. His other known works include the sixteen-story Crown Tower Apartments (1926) and a Spanish-Revival high-rise apartment building (1925), both located near Union Square.

(continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP3. Multiple family property, HP36. Ethnic minority property (JA)

***B12. References:**

The Japanese American Directory, San Francisco: The Japanese American News, Inc., 1941.
Japantown Task Force, *Images of America: San Francisco's Japantown*. San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.

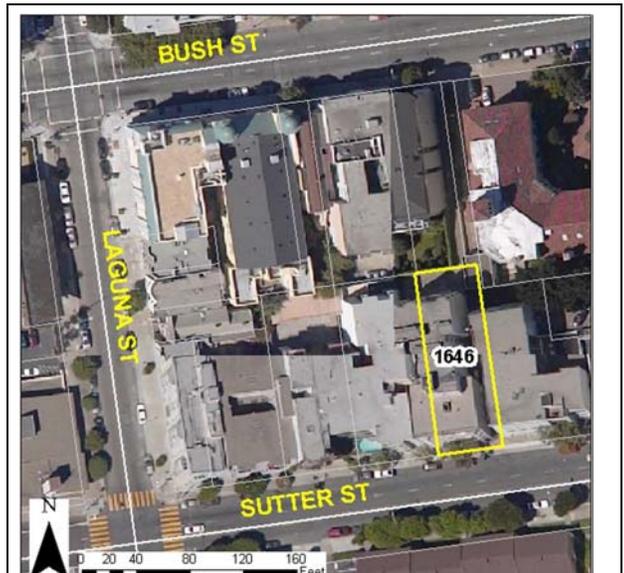
(continued)

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Caitlin Harvey, Page & Turnbull/
Matt Weintraub, SF Planning Department

*Date of Evaluation: May 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



State of California & The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary# _____

HRI # _____

Trinomial _____

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 1646 Sutter Street

*Recorded by: Page & Turnbull

*Date May 2009

Continuation Update

B10. Significance (continued)

After a short period of ownership by Watson, during which the building was constructed, the property went through a number of transactions involving the San Francisco Sheriff, the Golden West Credit & Adjustment Co., and the Guaranty Building & Loan Association. Eventually, it was sold to Alvin and Mary E. Harrison in March 1929. Alvin Harrison was a realtor with Western American Realty Co., which sold the property to the Anglo California National Bank of San Francisco in 1934. The bank held the property until 1938, when it was sold to George E. Austin, a real estate broker. It was then quickly sold to Bartholomew J. and Nell Murphy, who owned it until 1944.

Census records from 1930 indicate that Bartholomew Murphy was the manager of an apartment building and lived at 1705 Octavia Street, a block from the subject property. This proximity suggests that the Murphys may have managed the apartments at 1646 Sutter Street as early as 1930, though the building was under different ownership until 1938. The 1941 Japanese American Directory does not list the apartment building at 1646 Sutter Street, suggesting that it had few Japanese American residents, if any. In 1944, the property was sold to Otto E. Anderson, a building contractor, and his wife Celestine. In 1948, it was sold to May L., Percy P., and Cecil Grisez, then was quickly transferred to the California Pacific Title Insurance Co. By late 1949, it was sold to Ryosuke and Keiji Yamamoto and at this time became known as the Yamamoto Apartments. Though the property subsequently changed hands in 1956, passing to Gravson Realty and then to Herman G. and Mignon Gravitch and Aaron F. Levinson in 1959, the subject building continued to be known as the Yamamoto Apartments at least through the early 1970s. In 1953, under Yamamoto ownership, the building contained 26 occupied apartments, but had no Japanese American residents. By 1960, after the brief period of Japanese American ownership had ended, three of the apartments were occupied by Japanese Americans, which generally remained the case through 1980. The majority of residents were of European American ethnicity.

The continuous ownership of 1646 Sutter Street by owners of European American ethnicity until 1949, and the subsequent postwar transfer of ownership to Japanese American, illustrates a trend in property ownership and use that occurred throughout the Japantown neighborhood. The property's purchase by the Yamamotos in 1949 is reflective of Japanese Americans seeking to reestablish themselves and their community following the events of World War II internment. The property ownership history is also indicative of the difficulties faced by Japanese who were not able to own property due to laws like the Webb-Heney Alien Land Act, which was in effect from 1913 to 1956 and made it illegal for "aliens ineligible for citizenship" to own property or hold it in trust for eligible children. The property's first Japanese American owners were American-born and did not purchase the property until after World War II and the subsequent resettlement period.

1646 Sutter Street retains integrity of association, as it retains its original use as an apartment building. The building retains integrity of location and setting, having never been moved from the residential neighborhood where it is located among other apartment buildings. The building possesses high integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, as few major alterations have been made to the building.

1646 Sutter Street does not appear to be eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or for local listing. The building's associations with the Japanese American community began in 1949 and may have persisted through the 1970s. However, the demographics of the building's residents and tenants do not indicate a strong Japanese American component. Aside from a brief period of Japanese American ownership during the postwar resettlement of Japantown, the property does not appear to have strong community ties or cultural associations. The property may reflect historic trends as part of a historic district that is based upon the social and cultural history of Japantown; however, documentation of such a potential district has not been completed. The status code of 7R assigned to this property means that it was identified in reconnaissance-level survey but a final evaluation was not determined. Further research into the feasibility of a potential historic district may be required in order to fully evaluate the property. This property was not assessed for its potential to yield information important in prehistory or history, per National Register Criterion D.

B12. References (continued)

Pease, Ben. San Francisco's Japantown and Western Addition maps; 1910, 1920s, 1940, 1948-49, 1956-59, 1972, 2004.
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1893, 1899, 1913, 1950.
San Francisco Assessor's Office, sales ledgers.
San Francisco Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan Historic Context Statement, 2009.
San Francisco Block Books: 1894, 1901, 1906, 1909.
San Francisco City Directories.
San Francisco Department of Building Inspection, permit records and plans.
United States Federal Census records.