

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 6 Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder) American Can Co. Building

**P1. Other Identifier:** 96

**\*P2. Location:** ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

**\*a. County** San Francisco

**\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad** San Francisco North **Date** 1995

**\*c. Address** 2301 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

**City** San Francisco

**Zip** 94107

**\*e. Other Locational Data:** Assessor's Parcel Number Block: 4109 Lot: 1

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

A large-scale industrial complex fully covering a super block of industrial land. The current building, constructed in phases over two decades, represents the latter development of the complex; masonry buildings replacing wooden structures built at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The oldest extant phase is a three-story, concrete building on the southern portion of the block (segment A) and twelve bays of two-story industrial building (segment B1). The next phase replaced the older wooden buildings on the site: a four-story brick component set back from the street (segment C) and nine bays of two-story industrial building (segment B2). Finally, the large "L" shaped, four-story concrete building on the northern portion of the block (segment D).

(See Continuation Sheets for descriptions of individual segments).

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** (list attributes and codes) HP 8 Industrial Building

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

**P5a. Photo 1**



**P5b. Photo:** (view and date)

View northwest from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
between 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> streets; left  
to right: segments D, C and B.

11-29-2000

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and**

**Sources:** ☒ historic

1915 – Segments A and B1: Building Permit

1923 – Segments B2 and C: Building Permit

1929 – Segment D: Building Permit

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**

Angelo Markoulis

2345 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

San Francisco, CA 94107

**\*P8. Recorded by:**

Planning Department

City & County of San Francisco

1660 Mission Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

San Francisco, CA 94103

**\*P9. Date Recorded:** 01-19-2001

**\*P10. Survey Type:**

Intensive

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

Segments A and B1: Building Permit #64140; B2 and C: Building Permit #117718; D: Building Permit #180605

**\*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)

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**CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) American Can Co. Building

\*Recorded by Planning Department – City and County of San Francisco

\*Date 01-19-2001 ☒ Continuation ☐ Update

Segment A: Dating from 1915, a three-story rectangular-in-plan concrete warehouse fronting on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and Illinois Streets. Each bay is articulated by a concrete pilaster. There is a belt course between the first and second floors, a stringcourse above the second story windows and a bracketed cornice above the third floor windows. There is a brick parapet capped in concrete, which is shaped as gables in the corners. All bays on the second and third levels have a low brick spandrel panel and a thin concrete windowsill. Above the flat roof rises a two-tier concrete water tower platform, missing its tanks as well as a flagpole at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Streets.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> street façade has 6 bays, the first and sixth bays divided by additional concrete pilasters into three window segments. The second and fifth bays divided into three window segments by brick columns. Large industrial steel sash windows fill the third and fourth bays. The ground floor spandrel panels rise to a height of ten feet above the sidewalk.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> street façade, similarly designed, has two bays in six sections divided by concrete pilasters. Transitional bays divided into three sections with brick columns and three central bays having two windows and a single brick column all steel industrial sash windows. The ground floor has loading docks in central 5 bays, some having been in filled.

The Illinois Street façade has six identical bays in three stories with a ground floor mezzanine. Each bay has low brick spandrel panels and a large area industrial sash window.

Photo 2. View northeast from 3<sup>rd</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> streets.



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Segment B: Constructed in two phases, this two-story with first-story mezzanine, seven-segment building, each segment in three bays, is defined by the prominent light monitors on the roof. Segment B spans the width of the block and fronts both 3<sup>rd</sup> and Illinois Streets. Both facades are nearly identical with each large bay on the first floor containing either industrial steel sash, a steel overhead door or a pedestrian door. Bays are defined by articulated concrete pilasters.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Street façade consists of 21 bays representing seven sections of three bays each. A belt course runs between the first and second levels. The four southern sections (segment B1) were built under the same permit as segment A in 1915, while the northern three sections (segment B2) were built under the same permit as segment C in 1923.

The Illinois Street façade differs from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in that the first floor interior space is recessed the length of this segment allowing for a rail spur to enter the building sheltered by the second floor and open on the east. The second floor on both façades contains industrial steel sash windows with low brick spandrels. Each bay is articulated by heavy concrete columns. A long iron framed gabled canopy added in 1940 begins on the last two bays of segment D, continuing across nine bays of segment B. It has a corrugated mineral cement roof and sheltered rail cars loading and unloading goods from the warehouse. Light fixtures project about twenty feet from the second floor spandrels over the street and rail spurs.

Photo 3. View east from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.



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Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) American Can Co. Building

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Segment C: Dating from 1923, a four-story, fifteen-bay, red-brick industrial building with an articulated central entry pavilion and a flat roof. The main entry has a simple molded surround. Belt courses are located above the first and fourth floors. There is a plain brick parapet above. The main block of the building in 13 bays is further articulated by brick pilasters between the bays. Each bay on each floor contains a pair of double hung one-over-one wood sash windows with a concrete sill. The spandrel panels of the fourth floor bays contain a diamond pattern of brick. Every second pilaster also contains a similar element at the top of the first floor, as well as both the bottom and top of the fourth floor. On the southern edge of the façade, two additional bays are set back from the building wall and make the connection to segment B2. A newly built (2001) brick and glass addition with clock tower connects segments C and D to the north.

Photo 4. View southeast from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.



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Segment D: Constructed in 1929, this is a four-story concrete industrial building, "L" shaped in plan, fronting on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and Illinois Streets. Exposed structural columns and floor plates become decorative elements as pilasters and stringcourses. Each bay contains five sections of industrial steel sash windows and a thin concrete sill. There is a plain brick parapet with concrete capping. The columns have molded concrete elements running vertically nearly the full height of the fourth floor. Two mechanical rooms rise an additional two stories above the flat roof. The Illinois Street façade features a recessed ground floor with an open area to allow for the passage of two rail spurs into the loading areas of the building.

Photo 5. View southeast from 3<sup>rd</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Streets.



**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

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\*NRHP Status Code 3B

\*Resource Name or # American Can Company

B1. Historic name: American Can Co. Building

B2. Common name: None

B3. Original Use: Can manufacturer

B4. Present use: Multiple: industrial and office

\*B5. Architectural Style: Industrial

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

Built in 1915. Additions constructed in 1923 and 1929.

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

\*B8. Related Features: Annex located at 2501 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (Block 4173 Lot 1).

B9a. Architect: N.M. Loney (engineer)-1915; C.G. Creis-1923; American Can Co.-1929

b. Builder: Lindgren Co.-1915,1923; Lindgren & Swinerton Inc.-1929

\*B10. Significance: Theme Industrial Development and Settlement Area San Francisco's Central Waterfront

Period of Significance 1854-1948

Property Type Industrial

Applicable Criteria A

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

The original portion of this building, dating from 1915, is referred to in the above description as Segment A and is a three-story rectangular-in-plan concrete warehouse fronting on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and Illinois Streets. The 1923 addition was constructed in two phases. The first phase, referred to in the above description as Segment B, spans the width of the block and fronts both 3<sup>rd</sup> and Illinois Streets. Both façades are nearly identical with each large bay on the first floor containing either industrial steel sash, a steel overhead door or a pedestrian door. The second phase of the 1923 addition, referred to in the above description as Segment C, is a four-story, fifteen-bay, red-brick industrial building with an articulated central entry pavilion and a flat roof. Segment D, constructed in 1929, this is a four-story concrete industrial building, "L" shaped in plan, fronting on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and Illinois Streets. The American Can Co. buildings represent the evolution of an industry in San Francisco's Central Waterfront area.

By 1910 there were few large industrial parcels remaining in Dogpatch or elsewhere on Potrero Point. The American Can Company was the last major industry to construct a large-scale industrial plant in the largely built-out Potrero Point industrial zone. Early in 1915 the company, the largest manufacturer of tin cans in the United States, purchased a large two-square block tract of land bounded by Kentucky Street on the west, 20<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, Illinois Street on the east and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street on the south for \$172,000. The factory was completed in June 1916 and it employed 1,200 workers, becoming one of the largest employers of workers in the Central Waterfront during the 1930s. Following World War II, the company became the single-largest employer in Dogpatch. American Can Company manufactured tin cans and also canned fruit, employing a large number of women who were reputedly better at the work.

While minor modifications have been made over the years the complex retains a good deal of integrity to its original design through the retention of its form and materials. It is significant under Criterion A: Resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The property contributes to a historic district that has been fully documented according to the California Office of Historic Preservation. The resource also appears eligible for separate listing in the National Register.

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

\*B12. References:

Building Permit #64140, 117718, 180605.

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator:

Tim Kelley, historian, Central Waterfront Survey Advisory Committee

\*Date of Evaluation:

July 20, 2001

(This space reserved for official comments.)

Sketch Map

