

1 [Ordinance to Designate 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple/Redstone Building, As a
2 Landmark Under Planning Code Article 10.]

3 **Ordinance Designating 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple/Redstone Building, As**
4 **Landmark No. 238 Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4 Of The Planning**
5 **Code.**

6
7 Note: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;
8 deletions are ~~striketrough italics Times New Roman~~.
9 Board amendment additions are double underlined.
10 Board amendment deletions are ~~striketrough normal~~.

11 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

12 Section 1. Findings:

13 The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple /
14 Redstone Building, Lot 14 in Assessors Block 3553, has a special character and special
15 historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a
16 Landmark will further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of
17 the City Planning Code.

18 (a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, 2926-2948
19 16th Street, the Labor Temple / Redstone Building, is hereby designated as Landmark No.
20 238. This designation has been fully approved by Resolution No. 563 of the Landmarks
21 Preservation Advisory Board and Resolution No. 16638 of the Planning Commission, which
22 Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 031832
23 and which Resolutions are incorporated herein and made part hereof as though fully set forth.

24 (b) Priority Policy Findings.

25 Pursuant to Section 101.1 of the Planning Code, the Board of Supervisors makes the
following findings:

Supervisors Daly, Peskin, Gonzalez
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1 (1) The designation is in conformity with the Priority Policies of Planning Code
2 Section 101.1 and with the General Plan as set forth in the letter dated October 29, 2003 from the
3 Director of Planning. Such letter is on file with the Clerk of the Board in File No. 031832

4 (c) Required Data:

5 (1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site encompass the
6 footprint of 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple / Redstone Building, located at the
7 northeast corner of 16th Street and Capp Street.

8 (2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described
9 and shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation
10 Advisory Board on May 7, 2003 and other supporting materials contained in Planning
11 Department Docket No. 2003.0449L. In brief, the National Register characteristics of the
12 landmark which justify its designation are as follows:

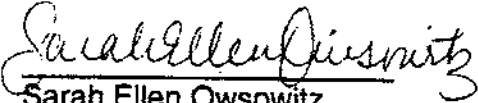
13 (a) Its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad
14 patterns of our history (National Register Criterion A); in the case of the Labor Temple /
15 Redstone Building, its association with historic labor events of San Francisco, particularly the
16 events of the 1934 San Francisco General Strike.

17 (3) The particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as
18 determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the
19 Landmark Designation Report, both which can be found in the case docket 2003.0449L,
20 which is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth. In brief, the
21 description of the particular features that should be preserved are as follows:

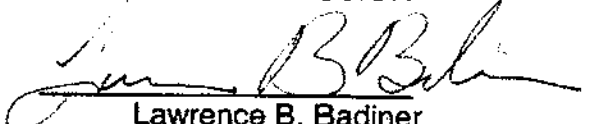
22 (a) The exterior architectural features, composition and materials, particularly the
23 red brick masonry, concrete cornice, the round arch tops with plaster keystone of the third
24 floor windows and the decorative medallions between pairs of third floor windows on the
25 primary façades.

1 Section 2. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures, pursuant
2 to this Board of Supervisor's Ordinance and Planning Code Article 10.
3

4 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
5 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

6 By: 
7 Sarah Ellen Owsowitz
8 Deputy City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:
PLANNING COMMISSION

By: 
Lawrence B. Badiner
Director of Planning

SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 16638

ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF 2926
- 2948 16TH STREET, THE LABOR TEMPLE / REDSTONE BUILDING, ASSESSOR'S BLOCK
3553, LOT 14 AS LANDMARK NO. 238.

1. WHEREAS, on November 20, 2002, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) established its Landmarks Designation Work Program for fiscal year 2002 - 2003. Up to 8 sites were chosen to have Landmark Designation Reports developed and brought to the Landmarks Board for review and comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included on that list was 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple / Redstone Building; and
2. Betty Traynor, Coordinator of the Redstone Tenants Association, prepared and submitted a draft landmark Designation Report for 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple / Redstone Building, for the Landmarks Board to consider initiation of the landmark designation of the property; and
3. At its regular meeting of May 7, 2003, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) adopted Resolution No. 563, initiating designation of and recommending to the Planning Commission that they approve the Labor Temple / Redstone Building as Landmark No. 238; and
4. The Landmarks Board finds that the Labor Temple / Redstone Building Designation Report describes the location and boundaries, of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark which justifies its designation, and describes the particular features that should be preserved and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Section 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1). That Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and
5. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the description, location, and boundary of the landmark site, which is the footprint of the building; and
6. The Planning Commission, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the "National Register of Historic Places" rating criteria and found 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple / Redstone Building to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under the criteria "A", association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, because of its association with San Francisco labor history and its role in the San Francisco 1934 General Strike; and
7. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation:

PLANNING COMMISSION

August 28, 2003

2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor
Temple / Redstone Building,
Assessor's Block 3553, Lot 14
Resolution No. 16638
Page 2

- Association with historic labor events of San Francisco, particularly the events of the 1934 San Francisco General Strike.
8. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:
- The exterior architectural features, composition and materials (depending on availability today), particularly the red brick masonry, concrete cornice, the round arch tops with plaster keystone of the third floor windows and the decorative medallions between pairs of third floor windows on the primary facades.
9. The Planning Commission has reviewed documents, correspondence and oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, at a duly noticed Public Hearing held on May 7, 2003.
- *The proposed Project will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved, such as the designation of the Labor Temple / Redstone Building as City Landmark No. 238. Landmark designation will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with the City's labor history, particularly with the General Strike of 1934.*
 - *That the proposed project will have no significant effect on the other seven Priority Policies: the City's supply of affordable housing, existing housing or neighborhood character, public transit or neighborhood paring, preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake, commercial activity, business or employment, or public parks and open space.*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby approves the landmark designation of 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple / Redstone building, Assessor's Block 3553, Lot 14 as Landmark No. 238, pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby directs its Recording Secretary to transmit this Resolution, the 2926-2948 16th Street, the Labor Temple / Redstone Building Landmark Designation Report and other pertinent materials in the Case File 2003.0449L to the Board of Supervisor's.

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

DATE: August 21, 2003

CASE NO.: 2003.0449L

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE: 6-0

APPROVED: 5/7/03

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:

APPROVED:

PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.: 238

PAGE 1

HISTORIC NAME: San Francisco Labor Temple

POPULAR NAME: Redstone Building

ADDRESS: 2940 16th Street (main entrance, includes 2926 to 2948 16th Street)

BLOCK & LOT: 3553-014

OWNER: Danya Records Limited Profit Sharing Trust (60%)
David and Sandi Lucchesi (40%)

ORIGINAL USE: labor union hall/office

CURRENT USE: commercial, office, art spaces, theaters

ZONING: C-M (Heavy Commercial)

National Register Criterion (a)

- (A) Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B) Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C) Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in History or prehistory.

° **Period of Significance:** 1914-1934; Secondary: 1935-1952

° **Integrity:** The building retains substantial integrity of location, design, setting, exterior materials and workmanship, feeling and association. The S.F. Labor Council built a sizeable addition to the building in 1939, a three-story east wing that was completely integrated with the existing exterior. Today the exterior of the building looks much the same as it appeared when built in 1914 with the addition of 1939.

Article 10 Requirements—Section 1004 (b)

° **Boundaries of the Landmark site:** The footprint of the 2926 - 2948 Redstone Building, located at the northeast corner of 16th Street and Capp Street.

° **Characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation:** Association with historic labor events of San Francisco, particularly the events of the 1934 San Francisco General Strike.

° **Description of the particular features which should be preserved:** The exterior architectural features, composition and materials (depending on availability today), particularly the red brick masonry, concrete cornice, the round arch tops with plaster keystone of the third floor windows and the decorative medallions between pairs of third floor windows on the primary façades.

DESCRIPTION (Architectural)

This building is a steel frame rectangular brick masonry and concrete structure, three stories high with a partial mezzanine at the first floor and a full basement with a deep, narrow lightwell on the north side. Designed by the prominent firm of O'Brien and Werner, it was built with red common brick layed in English bond pattern on the south and west facades which face 16th Street and Capp Streets respectively. The east and north walls are made of board formed concrete which has been painted.

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT**DATE: August 21, 2003****CASE NO.: 2003.0449L****LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE: 6-0****APPROVED: 5/7/03****PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:****APPROVED:****PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.: 238****PAGE 2**

There is a break line in the 16th street façade separating the portion of the building west of the lightwell from the rest of the structure. The larger, west end of the building was built in 1914 and had a symmetrical façade with 5 pairs of windows across the front and the main entry in the center below the central pair of windows. The east end was added in 1939 and continued the pairs of windows and the brick field with decorative bands to create a continuous façade.

The wide main entry on the 16th Street façade contains aluminum storefront double doors, sidelights and a transom surrounded by two levels of flat, unadorned concrete. The flat surround reaches to the underside of the second floor windows. At the west and east ends of this elevation are lower height entries also with aluminum storefront doors and transoms but with more decorative side moldings and projecting flat lintels overhead. The height of these entry openings is midway of the first floor window line. All three entries are directly off the sidewalk level which is mid way between the first and basement floors. Adjacent to the east entry is an aluminum commercial storefront approximately 10 feet wide with entry door and window.

Windows on the primary facades at the first, mezzanine, second and third stories are all double hung wood sash, one over one. All windows except those on the mezzanine have projecting concrete sills. The third floor windows have round arch tops with a plaster keystone which may once have had a decorative motif, but which are now predominantly flat. All other windows are simple rectangular shape. At the third floor there is a decorative medallion between each pair of windows. Windows on all floors align.

Decorative brick courses appear in several locations including a rowlock-over-stretcher-over-soldier course directly over the basement windows and two stacked rowlocks-over-stretcher-over-three-deep-basketweave-stretcher course directly below the second story windows. There is a rectangular decorative pattern of brick and plaster below the third floor windows with square plaster tiles at the corners and a larger rotated plaster square in the center surrounded by herringbone brick in the center with soldier and rowlock course at the edge from it. There is a continuous concrete cornice approximately six courses from the top of the building which is approx. 2 feet deep. This cornice contains interwoven geometric relief bands on both sides of a center pattern containing alternating circles; smaller circles with two levels of relief, and larger circles with three levels. There is one brick soldier course at the top of the parapet.

The west façade on Capp Street contains a utility entry on the far north side. This façade has seven equally spaced windows (similar in size to the south façade) with a fire escape at the second windows from the north.

The east façade is visible from an adjacent parking lot. A building projection at the southeast corner of the building has a windowless east face which contains a painted advertisement. There are three windows in the north face of this projection which houses a stairwell. The remainder of the façade has 4 pairs of windows aligned floor to floor. The second and third floor pairs have steel casement windows with divided transoms and bottom panes. Below the south pair of windows are similar ones at the mezzanine and first floors. Under the north three pairs at the first floor there are larger windows at the auditorium within which are pairs of five light steel casements with a two light transom above each casement. The north façade has unevenly spaced rectangular wood sash windows at the second and third floors with a fire escape and various utility ducts.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**CRITERION A (Historic events and patterns)**

The Labor Temple was built in 1914 by the San Francisco Labor Council to be its new headquarters and a center of union activity in San Francisco. There were over 130 member unions in the council at that time. The weekly union newspaper, *The Labor Clarion*, proclaimed it opened to the public February 26, 1915 with a first page article. The article heralded this "splendid new home of the Labor Council" with its large auditorium and assembly hall, jinks halls, seven lodge halls,

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT**DATE: August 21, 2003****CASE NO.: 2003.0449L****LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE: 6-0****APPROVED: 5/7/03****PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:****APPROVED:****PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.: 238****PAGE 3**

and 24 offices. It stated that "the opening of the new Labor Temple will add new life to Sixteenth street, as it will bring thousands of men and women daily into the district who formerly gathered in their headquarters and meetings elsewhere in the city."

The May 1916 Union Directory shows 54 unions using this building for their meetings. The bakers and bakery wagon drivers, the bindery women, blacksmiths, butchers, carriage and wagon workers, cigar makers, coopers, horseshoers, ice and milk wagon drivers, janitors, sail makers, and tailors all met at the Labor Temple. In the atmosphere of the times when American capitalists had an almost religious fervor for business and office buildings were built to resemble gothic cathedrals (look at the Russ Building at 235 Montgomery, sometime), this building was designated as a haven from the boss, and it was called The Labor Temple. It was the place where workers could come, away from the boss, and the boss' culture. A place where workers could help each other understand the world through working eyes, with a working sensibility. It was the one place the boss couldn't come.

To facilitate this, the Labor Temple had pool and billiard tables, as well as reading rooms, and on the south side of the auditorium, a ladies parlor. On the second floor, the west hallway was the hospital, and the north hallway, the dentist's offices. Medical care at prices workers could afford. In those days, a worker's union membership might be as important as their church or synagogue membership, and the Labor Temple was the center of working class life in San Francisco. Here workers had space for family gatherings, picnics, holiday parties, benefit dances, sports leagues, and theatrical events. The seamstresses might have a dinner with the webpressmen, or the Women's Bindery Union might have a dance with the plumbers. The San Francisco Labor Archives and Research Center has a dance card from just such an event many years ago. The Labor Archives has an article from the *Labor Clarion* dated May 19, 1916 which reported that "...a ball for the benefit of a disabled (laundry worker) ...was a financial success, more than \$300 was raised." This was a significant sum in a time when union machinists were striking to get \$4.50 a day.

The most significant historical events at the Labor Temple took place in July 1934 when the longshoremen and maritime workers led San Francisco workers in the momentous General Strike that changed the labor movement forever. The waterfront workers lived on the fringes of society in conditions that, even for those times, were abominable. The longshoremen had to pay for their jobs on the dock; the seafarers were little more than slaves on the ships. They wanted no more than any worker wants: dignity on the job and off, justice, a living wage. They were willing to strike because their conditions were so bad, and they had almost nothing to lose.

The longshoremen and seamen had been out on strike for about three months without much success, few other unions had joined them in sympathy, but the strikers hung on. The shipping companies were determined to bring the strikers to their knees and stop the strike. They had hired armed guards as well as San Francisco police to do their dirty work. For several days there had been fighting on Rincon Hill. On July 5, just outside of the strike kitchen at 113 Steuart, an unnamed policeman fired into a crowd of longshoremen and their sympathizers, shooting several of them. Two died. The deaths of Howard Sperry and Nick Bordoise stunned the public. This infamous day in San Francisco labor history became know as "Bloody Thursday" and galvanized the rest of the unions to support the struggle.

The next day (July 6) was the regular Friday night session of the San Francisco Labor Council. The Council members packed the auditorium in the Labor Temple; hundreds more spectators jammed the halls and overflowed onto 16th Street. A growing demand for a general strike was on the minds of the rank and file members. Fourteen unions had already taken action supporting a general strike and others were planning action. Harry Bridges was in attendance and asked for immediate action on an International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) resolution underscoring its position that the question of union hiring halls "cannot possibly be submitted to arbitration." The resolution was approved without dissent as was a second resolution condemning Governor Merriam for calling out the state militia. This resolution urged a peace based on 'simple justice and not military force.' At this meeting the S.F. Labor Council set up a Strike Strategy Committee to, in the words of the ILA Strike Bulletin, "make plans of a strike that will stop every industry in the city." The bulletin noted, too, that the council had endorsed the ILA's refusal to arbitrate the closed shop. Bridges declared,

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT**DATE: August 21, 2003****CASE NO.: 2003.0449L****LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE: 6-0****APPROVED: 5/7/03****PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:****APPROVED:****PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.: 238****PAGE 4**

"This is no longer the ILA's fight alone. Thursday's bloody rioting has crystallized labor's attention on the conditions under which the ILA works and labor is demanding concerted action. The Labor Council is definitely behind the marine strike."

On July 9, a funeral procession bearing the bodies of the two slain unionists walked down Market Street. Estimates range from 15,000 to 50,000 in the procession. Thousands more lined the sidewalks. Fearing that sight of police on the streets would incite workers further, City Hall agreed that the strikers would be in charge of crowd control. There was no talking, no sound except a quiet funeral dirge, and the tramp of feet, but the air was electric with that sound. Their deaths - and that march - forged the solidarity that became the West Coast General Strike. The march ended at 17th and Valencia at the mortuary, just two blocks away from the Labor Temple. No doubt many mourners walked over to the Temple afterward to be together, to try to make some sense of what was happening and to decide what to do next.

Although a number of unions, including the Teamsters, had already decided to strike by July 12, the Labor Council's Strike Committee had not yet formally acted. It was in the auditorium of the Labor Temple where the vote was taken that sent the 175 unions of the SF Labor Council out on strike in support of the Longshoremen and Seafarers. The new General Strike Committee had already written up the motion. You would recognize many of the names on that strike committee: Jack Shelly, A. Noriega, Mike Casey, and of course, Harry Bridges. The strike vote meeting was held on Saturday, July 14, with the strike to commence on Monday, July 16, at 8 am. The *S.F. Chronicle* of July 15 reported the strike decision inside the Labor Temple in a colorful description: "Amid scenes of wildest conditions, with hundreds of delegates shouting and scores of others in a condition approaching hysteria, labor made the most momentous decision in many years. Throngs mulled about the Labor Temple at Sixteenth and Capp streets during four hours..." Finally, a hod carrier by the name of Joe Murphy made the motion.

The historic San Francisco General Strike went on four days, ending July 19, 1934. The strike was a success, opening the way to end the longshoremen's and maritime workers' strikes but extending beyond their demands to change the relationship between worker and boss forever. The maritime workers won the most contested issue, hiring halls with a union selected job dispatcher. Longshoremen won a six-hour day and 30-hour workweek while seamen won an eight-hour day. The solidarity with their brothers on the docks shown by the General Strike in San Francisco was heard around America in the midst of the Great Depression. Labor historian David Selvin called it a "new day" when workers acted from a new awareness of common grievances and common purpose, a newly recognized class identity that inspired workers nationwide.

As unions got larger, stronger and more numerous, the Labor Temple expanded to meet the need, and in 1939 the building got an addition, reaching its current size with room for 40 union offices. But as times changed, the culture changed. The very moment that seemed to presage a golden age for unions was simultaneously sowing the seeds of disaster for the Labor Temple. As unions got richer, it became fashionable for them to build their own - separate - union hall. In the '50's, offices in the Labor Temple went vacant and even though the Labor Council renovated it in 1959, the building had become a financial drain. With only 10 unions still in residence, the Labor Temple was sold in 1968 to repay bank loans and other bills. Although the new owners renamed the building the Redstone, most old timers in San Francisco still remember it as the Labor Temple.

The labor history within the Redstone Building will always be present thanks to a few San Francisco artists. In 1997 the Clarion Alley Mural Project, named for the Labor Clarion Newspaper, spent six months doing research which culminated in the murals seen in the lobby and first floor of the Labor Temple/Redstone Building. Muralist Aaron Noble led the project which includes some of the finest labor murals in San Francisco. Susan Greene's mural over the elevator on the ground floor celebrates the Bindery Women's union founded in 1902. Going up the stairs and into the main hall you'll see the 1948 Emporium strike by the saleswomen of Local 1100, and the Chinese women's garment workers strike in 1938, marking their entrance into organized labor in San Francisco.

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT**DATE: August 21, 2003****CASE NO.: 2003.0449L****LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE: 6-0****APPROVED: 5/7/03****PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:****APPROVED:****PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.: 238****PAGE 5**

In the main portion of the first floor is the dramatic depiction by Aaron Noble of Dow Wilson throwing out the corrupt Secretary of the Painter's union in 1966. Unfortunately that wasn't the end of the story: next to Dow is the newspaper article, dated April 5, reporting Dow's murder just around the corner on South Van Ness days later. The inside front wall honors the original Native American inhabitants of this area, the Ohlones, with a bone harpoon tip being uncovered by a construction worker as he digs the foundation of this building. You know he was a union worker.

The most prominent labor mural as you walk by on the street is in the main entrance to the building painted by illustrator and muralist Chuck Sperry. It depicts scenes from the 1934 General Strike described above, particularly the strike vote meeting. Harry Bridges and other members of the Strike Committee are there as well as workers whose names we'll never know. An inset reproduces a picture of the two men shot at Steuart and Mission Streets on Bloody Thursday. This mural brings you back immediately to that day in July 1934 when a few hundred workers made labor history at the building they called the Labor Temple.

REFERENCES

A Terrible Anger: The 1934 Waterfront and General Strikes in San Francisco, David F. Selvin (1996).

The 1934 San Francisco Waterfront & General Strikes, Context Statement, adopted by the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board May 16, 2001.

Archie Green for deep background filled with the minute details of the labor movement that makes it live, and Susan Sherwood of the Labor Archives who shared her extensive knowledge and materials.

RATINGS

None.

PREPARED BY Betty Traynor, Coordinator, Redstone Tenants Association

ADDRESS 2940 16th Street, Suite 314, San Francisco, CA 94103 (for Betty Traynor)

Attachments: 523 A 523 B 523 L (Continuation sheet) Context Statement Other-

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) Redstone Building

P1. Other Identifier: Labor Temple

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County San Francisco and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad S.F. North Date 1995 T ; R ; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec ; B.M.

c. Address 2940 16th Street City San Francisco Zip 94103

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone , mE/ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)
Block: 3553; Lot: 014

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

This building is a steel frame rectangular brick masonry and concrete structure, three stories high with a partial mezzanine at the first floor and a full basement with a deep, narrow lightwell on the north side. Designed by the prominent firm of O'Brien and Werner, it was built with red common brick layed in English bond pattern on the south and west facades which face 16th Street and Capp Streets respectively. The east and north walls are made of board formed concrete which has been painted. (Continued)

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) C-M—Commercial Building

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



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #)

View of front of building on 16th St. and westside on Capp St.
8-20-02

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: Historic Prehistoric
 Both

Constructed in 1914, Filed Building Permit/Contract Notice Jan. 1914
Charles Hall Page & Assoc., Inc.

*P7. Owner and Address:
Danya Records Limited
Profit Sharing Trust &
David and Sandi Lucchesi
2170 Commerce Avenue,
Suite S
Concord, CA 94520

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

Betty Traynor, Redstone
Tenants Association
2940 16th St. #314
SF, CA 94103

*P9. Date Recorded: 8-21-02

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Local (San Francisco) Landmark Designation

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

*Attachments: NONE Location 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): Context Statement

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*NRHP Status Code

Page 2 of 5 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Redstone Building

- B1. Historic Name: Labor Temple
- B2. Common Name: Redstone Building
- B3. Original Use: Labor hall and offices
- B4. Present Use: Office, commercial, art spaces, theaters
- *B5. Architectural Style: Office
- *B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built in 1914, east wing added in 1939.

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

*B8. Related Features: N.A.

B9a. Architect: O'Brien and Werner b. Builder: _____

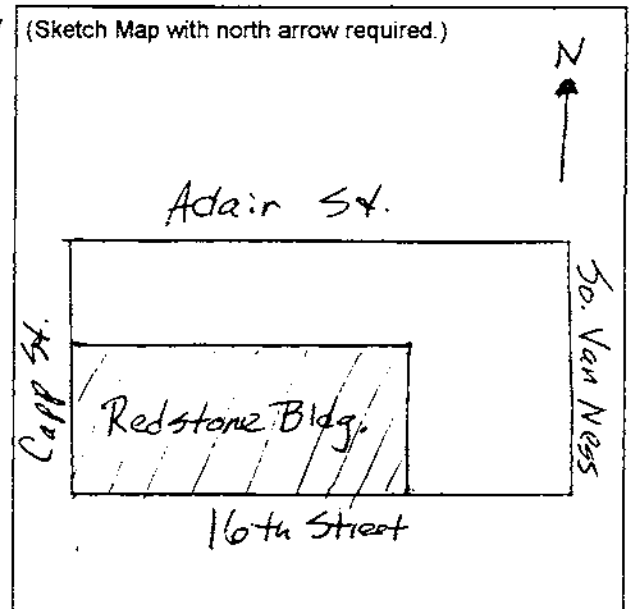
*B10. Significance: Theme Labor History Area: San Francisco
Period of Significance 1914-1934 (Primary) Property Type: Office/Commercial
Applicable Criteria: A (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

The Labor Temple was built in 1914 by the San Francisco Labor Council to be its new headquarters and a center of union activity in San Francisco. There were over 130 member unions in the council at that time. The weekly union newspaper, *The Labor Clarion*, proclaimed it opened to the public February 26, 1915 with a first page article. The article heralded this "splendid new home of the Labor Council" with its large auditorium and assembly hall, jinks halls, seven lodge halls, and 24 offices. It stated that "the opening of the new Labor Temple will add new life to Sixteenth street, as it will bring thousands of men and women daily into the district who formerly gathered in their headquarters and meetings elsewhere in the city." (Cont.)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) C-M -- Commercial Building

*B12. References: A Terrible Anger. The 1934 Waterfront and General Strike in San Francisco, David F. Selvin (1996) and The 1934 San Francisco Waterfront and General Strikes, Context Statement, adopted by The S.F. Landmarks Advisory Board, May 16, 2001, plus labor historian Archie Green and labor librarian Susan Sherwood.

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



B13. Remarks: Today the exterior of the building looks much the same as it appeared when built in 1914 with the addition of 1939.

*B14. Evaluator: _____
*Date of Evaluation: _____

(This space reserved for official comments.)

Page 3 of 5

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Redstone Building

*Recorded by: Betty Traynor

*Date 8-21-02

Continuation Update

P3a (Continued)

There is a break line in the 16th street façade separating the portion of the building west of the lightwell from the rest of the structure. The larger, west end of the building was built in 1914 and had a symmetrical façade with 5 pairs of windows across the front and the main entry in the center below the central pair of windows. The east end was added in 1939 and continued the pairs of windows and the brick field with decorative bands to create a continuous façade.

The wide main entry on the 16th Street façade contains aluminum storefront double doors, sidelights and a transom surrounded by two levels of flat, unadorned concrete. The flat surround reaches to the underside of the second floor windows. At the west and east ends of this elevation are lower height entries also with aluminum storefront doors and transoms but with more decorative side moldings and projecting flat lintels overhead. The height of these entry openings is midway of the first floor window line. All three entries are directly off the sidewalk level which is mid way between the first and basement floors. Adjacent to the east entry is an aluminum commercial storefront approximately 10 feet wide with entry door and window.

Windows on the primary facades at the first, mezzanine, second and third stories are all double hung wood sash, one over one. All windows except those on the mezzanine have projecting concrete sills. The third floor windows have round arch tops with a plaster keystone which may once have had a decorative motif, but which are now predominantly flat. All other windows are simple rectangular shape. At the third floor there is a decorative medallion between each pair of windows. Windows on all floors align.

Decorative brick courses appear in several locations including a rowlock-over-stretcher-over-soldier course directly over the basement windows and two stacked rowlocks-over-stretcher-over-three-deep-basketweave-stretcher course directly below the second story windows. There is a rectangular decorative pattern of brick and plaster below the third floor windows with square plaster tiles at the corners and a larger rotated plaster square in the center surrounded by herringbone brick in the center with soldier and rowlock course at the edge from it. There is a continuous concrete cornice approximately six courses from the top of the building which is approx. 2 feet deep. This cornice contains interwoven geometric relief bands on both sides of a center pattern containing alternating circles; smaller circles with two levels of relief, and larger circles with three levels. There is one brick soldier course at the top of the parapet.

The west façade on Capp Street contains a utility entry on the far north side. This façade has seven equally spaced windows (similar in size to the south façade) with a fire escape at the second windows from the north.

The east façade is visible from an adjacent parking lot. A building projection at the southeast corner of the building has a windowless east face which contains a painted advertisement. There are three windows in the north face of this projection which houses a stairwell. The remainder of the façade has 4 pairs of windows aligned floor to floor. The second and third floor pairs have steel casement windows with divided transoms and bottom panes. Below the south pair of windows are similar ones at the mezzanine and first floors. Under the north three pairs at the first floor there are larger windows at the auditorium within which are pairs of five light steel casements with a two light transom above each casement. The north façade has unevenly spaced rectangular wood sash windows at the second and third floors with a fire escape and various utility ducts.

B10 Significance (Continued)

The May 1916 Union Directory shows 54 unions using this building for their meetings. The bakers and bakery wagon drivers, the bindery women, blacksmiths, butchers, carriage and wagon workers, cigar makers, coopers, horseshoers, ice and milk wagon drivers, janitors, sail makers, and tailors all met at the Labor Temple. In the atmosphere of the times when American capitalists had an almost religious fervor for business and office buildings were built to resemble gothic cathedrals (look at the Russ Building at 235 Montgomery, sometime), this building was designated as a haven from the boss, and it was called The Labor Temple. It was the place where workers could come, away from the boss, and the boss' culture. A place where workers could help each other understand the world through working eyes, with a working sensibility. It was the one place the boss couldn't come.

To facilitate this, the Labor Temple had pool and billiard tables, as well as reading rooms, and on the south side of the auditorium, a ladies parlor. On the second floor, the west hallway was the hospital, and the north hallway, the dentist's offices. Medical care at prices workers could afford. In those days, a worker's union membership might be as important as their church or synagogue membership, and the Labor Temple was the center of working class life in San Francisco. Here workers had space for family gatherings, picnics, holiday parties, benefit dances, sports leagues, and theatrical events. The seamstresses might have a dinner with the webpressmen, or the Women's Bindery Union might have a dance with the plumbers. The San Francisco Labor Archives and Research Center has a dance card from just such an event many years ago. The Labor Archives has an article from the *Labor Clarion* dated May 19, 1916 which reported that "...a ball for the benefit of a disabled (laundry worker) ... was a financial success, more than \$300 was raised." This was a significant sum in a time when union machinists were striking to get \$4.50 a day. (Continued)

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

Primary #
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Page 4 of 5

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Redstone Building

*Recorded by: Betty Traynor

*Date 8-21-02

Continuation Update

B10 Significance (Continued)

The most significant historical events at the Labor Temple took place in July 1934 when the longshoremen and maritime workers led San Francisco workers in the momentous General Strike that changed the labor movement forever. The waterfront workers lived on the fringes of society in conditions that, even for those times, were abominable. The longshoremen had to pay for their jobs on the dock; the seafarers were little more than slaves on the ships. They wanted no more than any worker wants: dignity on the job and off, justice, a living wage. They were willing to strike because their conditions were so bad, and they had almost nothing to lose.

The longshoremen and seamen had been out on strike for about three months without much success, few other unions had joined them in sympathy, but the strikers hung on. The shipping companies were determined to bring the strikers to their knees and stop the strike. They had hired armed guards as well as San Francisco police to do their dirty work. For several days there had been fighting on Rincon Hill. On July 5, just outside of the strike kitchen at 113 Steuart, an unnamed policeman fired into a crowd of longshoremen and their sympathizers, shooting several of them. Two died. The deaths of Howard Sperry and Nick Bordoise stunned the public. This infamous day in San Francisco labor history became known as "Bloody Thursday" and galvanized the rest of the unions to support the struggle.

The next day (July 6) was the regular Friday night session of the San Francisco Labor Council. The Council members packed the auditorium in the Labor Temple; hundreds more spectators jammed the halls and overflowed onto 16th Street. A growing demand for a general strike was on the minds of the rank and file members. Fourteen unions had already taken action supporting a general strike and others were planning action. Harry Bridges was in attendance and asked for immediate action on an International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) resolution underscoring its position that the question of union hiring halls "cannot possibly be submitted to arbitration." The resolution was approved without dissent as was a second resolution condemning Governor Merriam for calling out the state militia. This resolution urged a peace based on "simple justice and not military force." At this meeting the S.F. Labor Council set up a Strike Strategy Committee to, in the words of the ILA Strike Bulletin, "make plans of a strike that will stop every industry in the city." The bulletin noted, too, that the council had endorsed the ILA's refusal to arbitrate the closed shop. Bridges declared, "This is no longer the ILA's fight alone. Thursday's bloody rioting has crystallized labor's attention on the conditions under which the ILA works and labor is demanding concerted action. The Labor Council is definitely behind the marine strike."

On July 9, a funeral procession bearing the bodies of the two slain unionists walked down Market Street. Estimates range from 15,000 to 50,000 in the procession. Thousands more lined the sidewalks. Fearing that sight of police on the streets would incite workers further, City Hall agreed that the strikers would be in charge of crowd control. There was no talking, no sound except a quiet funeral dirge, and the tramp of feet, but the air was electric with that sound. Their deaths - and that march - forged the solidarity that became the West Coast General Strike. The march ended at 17th and Valencia at the mortuary, just two blocks away from the Labor Temple. No doubt many mourners walked over to the Temple afterward to be together, to try to make some sense of what was happening and to decide what to do next.

Although a number of unions, including the Teamsters, had already decided to strike by July 12, the Labor Council's Strike Committee had not yet formally acted. It was in the auditorium of the Labor Temple where the vote was taken that sent the 175 unions of the SF Labor Council out on strike in support of the Longshoremen and Seafarers. The new General Strike Committee had already written up the motion. You would recognize many of the names on that strike committee: Jack Shelly, A. Noriega, Mike Casey, and of course, Harry Bridges. The strike vote meeting was held on Saturday, July 14, with the strike to commence on Monday, July 16, at 8 am. The *S.F. Chronicle* of July 15 reported the strike decision inside the Labor Temple in a colorful description: "Amid scenes of wildest conditions, with hundreds of delegates shouting and scores of others in a condition approaching hysteria, labor made the most momentous decision in many years. Throngs mulled about the Labor Temple at Sixteenth and Capp streets during four hours..." Finally, a hod carrier by the name of Joe Murphy made the motion.

The historic San Francisco General Strike went on four days, ending July 19, 1934. The strike was a success, opening the way to end the longshoremen's and maritime workers' strikes but extending beyond their demands to change the relationship between worker and boss forever. The maritime workers won the most contested issue, hiring halls with a union selected job dispatcher. Longshoremen won a six-hour day and 30-hour workweek while seamen won an eight-hour day. The solidarity with their brothers on the docks shown by the General Strike in San Francisco was heard around America in the midst of the Great Depression. Labor historian David Selvin called it a "new day" when workers acted from a new awareness of common grievances and common purpose, a newly recognized class identity that inspired workers nationwide.
(Continued)

Page 5 of 5

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Redstone Building

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Continuation Update

B10 Significance (Continued)

As unions got larger, stronger and more numerous, the Labor Temple expanded to meet the need, and in 1939 the building got an addition, reaching its current size with room for 40 union offices. But as times changed, the culture changed. The very moment that seemed to presage a golden age for unions was simultaneously sowing the seeds of disaster for the Labor Temple. As unions got richer, it became fashionable for them to build their own - separate - union hall. In the '50's, offices in the Labor Temple went vacant and even though the Labor Council renovated it in 1959, the building had become a financial drain. With only 10 unions still in residence, the Labor Temple was sold in 1968 to repay bank loans and other bills. Although the new owners renamed the building the Redstone, most old timers in San Francisco still remember it as the Labor Temple.

The labor history within the Redstone Building will always be present thanks to a few San Francisco artists. In 1997 the Clarion Alley Mural Project, named for the Labor Clarion Newspaper, spent six months doing research which culminated in the murals seen in the lobby and first floor of the Labor Temple/Redstone Building. Muralist Aaron Nobles led the project which includes some of the finest labor murals in San Francisco. Susan Greene's mural over the elevator on the ground floor celebrates the Bindery Women's union founded in 1902. Going up the stairs and into the main hall you'll see the 1948 Emporium strike by the saleswomen of Local 1100, and the Chinese women's garment workers strike in 1938, marking their entrance into organized labor in San Francisco.

In the main portion of the lobby is the dramatic depiction by Aaron Noble of Dow Wilson throwing out the corrupt Secretary of the Painter's union in 1966. Unfortunately that wasn't the end of the story: next to Dow is the newspaper article, dated April 5, reporting Dow's murder just around the corner on South Van Ness days later. The inside front wall honors the original Native American inhabitants of this area, the Ohlones, with a bone harpoon tip being uncovered by a construction worker as he digs the foundation of this building. You know he was a union worker.

The most prominent labor mural as you walk by on the street is in the main entrance to the building painted by illustrator and muralist Chuck Sperry. It depicts scenes from the 1934 General Strike described above, particularly the strike vote meeting. Harry Bridges and other members of the Strike Committee are there as well as workers whose names we'll never know. An inset reproduces a picture of the two men shot at Steuart and Mission Streets on Bloody Thursday. This mural brings you back immediately to that day in July 1934 when a few hundred workers made labor history at the building they called the Labor Temple.