



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE DECEMBER 12, 2016

SAM JORDAN'S BAR

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-022
Business Name: Sam Jordan's Bar
Business Address: 4004 3rd Street
District: District 10
Applicant: Ruth Jordan, Treasurer
Nomination Date: October 3, 2016
Nominated By: Mayor Edwin Lee
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Founded in 1959 by Sam Jordan, an important local African American community leader, Sam Jordan's Bar (formerly Sam Jordan's Tavern) has served as a neighborhood gathering spot and as hub of African American community organizing for over 50 years. The business is located on Third Street between Galvez and Hudson avenues in the Bayview neighborhood. The building is designated as San Francisco Landmark #263 for its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan. Through Jordan's advocacy and leadership, the bar was used to support the educational, economic, political, and cultural vitality of the Bayview's African American community by hosting scholarship fundraisers, hosting African American businessmen's luncheons, political brainstorming sessions, and the Black Panther Breakfast Program that provided hot meals to school children. Cultural events at the bar highlighted local musicians as well as famous musical performers including Ike and Tina Turner, Sugar Pie DeSanto, and Bobby Freeman. Jordan was the first African American to run for San Francisco Mayor and although he did not win, he made significant contributions to the local African American civil rights movement and left a lasting impact on his community. Upon Jordan's passing in 2003, his wife, Bertha Ruth Jordan, and their two children, Ruth and Allen, took over the bar operations. Today, Sam Jordan's Bar continues to function as a thriving social gathering place for Bayview residents, offering karaoke nights, live broadcast of sports games, and SF Open Studios events that display the work of local artists. The bar serves local beer from a fellow Bayview-based business, Speakeasy Brewery, as well as traditional American bar fare such as fried chicken, seafood, burgers, and salads. The family-owned business is committed to serving as a place where the neighborhood can convene, drink, eat, and enjoy each other's company.

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes, the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

4004 3rd Street from 1959-Present (57 years)



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Bayview neighborhood's history and identity.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- Sam Jordan's Bar is associated with the tradition of serving as a neighborhood and community gathering spot, especially for the neighborhood's African American working class community.
- Sam Jordan's Bar has contributed to the Bayview community's history and identity by serving as a neighborhood and community gathering spot, especially for the neighborhood's African American working class community.
- The building is designated as San Francisco Landmark #263 for its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan, a person significant in our past. Jordan was an American Navy veteran, a longshoreman, a professional boxer, entrepreneur, and community leader. He was the first African American to run for San Francisco Mayor. When in 1959 he opened Sam Jordan's Tavern, as it was named at the time, the establishment became a hub for the Bayview neighborhood's African American working class community. Jordan worked tirelessly to advance the condition of his community, hosting scholarship drives and political brainstorming sessions.
- The business is mentioned in the Draft Citywide African American Historic Context Statement
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - Curbed SF, 6/20/2012, "Bayview's Sam Jordan's Bar Up For Landmark Status," by Alex Bevk.
 - SF Examiner, 7/4/2012, "Sam Jordan's seeking landmark status after 5 decades in Bayview," by Ari Burack.
 - SF Gate, 1/24/2013, "Sam Jordan's Bar gets landmark status," by C.W. Nevius.
 - The Examiner, 6/22/2014, "Sam Jordan's in Bayview keeps its unique vibe alive," by Rhys Alvarado.
 - The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2/25/2016, "Sam Jordan's Bar and Grill in San Francisco," by Lauren Walser.
 - Hoodline, 7/11/2016, "Next Chapter for Bayview's Historic Sam Jordan's: A 'Bar Rescue' Makeover."

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, Sam Jordan's Bar is committed to maintaining the physical features that define its tradition of serving bar food and drinks, hosting social and nightlife events, and continuing to promote the legacy and history of the bar's namesake, Sam Jordan.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Sam Jordan's Bar qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER / SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681
Small Business Assistance Center (415) 554-6134 / Small Business Commission (415) 554-6481

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Tradition as a communal space for the Bayview neighborhood where customers convene, drink, eat, and enjoy each other's company.
- Function as a social gathering spot and nightlife destination offering karaoke nights and televised broadcasts of sports games.
- Offerings of bar food and drinks, including local products.
- Promotion of the history and legacy of Sam Jordan.
- Location within the historic building at 4004 Third Street, where it has operated since its founding.
- Character-defining features that are listed in the designating ordinance for Landmark #263.
- Historical photographs of the Sam Jordan's community that are on display inside the bar.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Sam Jordan's Bar currently located at 4004 3rd Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program



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Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE DECEMBER 12, 2016

SAM JORDAN'S BAR

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-022
Business Name: Sam Jordan's Bar
Business Address: 4004 3rd Street
District: District 10
Applicant: Ruth Jordan, Treasurer
Nomination Date: October 3, 2016
Nominated By: Mayor Edwin Lee
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR SAM JORDAN'S BAR, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 4004 3RD STREET.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on December 12, 2016, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Sam Jordan's Bar in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Sam Jordan's Bar:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Tradition as a communal space for the Bayview neighborhood where customers convene, drink, eat, and enjoy each other's company.
- Function as a social gathering spot and nightlife destination offering karaoke nights and televised broadcasts of sports games.
- Offerings of bar food and drinks, including local products.
- Promotion of the history and legacy of Sam Jordan.
- Location within the historic building at 4004 Third Street, where it has operated since its founding.
- Character-defining features that are listed in the designating ordinance for Landmark #263.
- Historical photographs of the Sam Jordan's community that are on display inside the bar.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on December 12, 2016.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –



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**Legacy
Business
Registry**

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-022
Business Name: Sam Jordan's Bar
Business Address: 4004 3rd Street
District: District 10
Applicant: Ruth Jordan, Treasurer
Nomination Date: October 3, 2016
Nominated By: Mayor Edwin Lee

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? X Yes No

4004 3rd Street from 1959-Present (57 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community? X Yes No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms? X Yes No

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: October 17, 2016

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program





October 3, 2016

Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi
San Francisco Office of Small Business
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi,

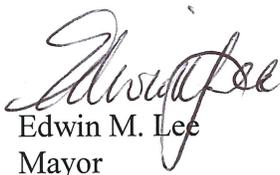
I am writing to nominate Sam Jordan's Bar for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

The purpose of the City's legacy business registry is to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City. Per ordinance, a legacy business may be nominated by a member of the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor to be reviewed, processed and approved by the Small Business Commission at a public hearing if it meets the criteria set forth.

Originally founded in 1959, as Sam Jordan's Tavern, this neighborhood tavern quickly became a gathering place for the neighborhood's African American working class community. Operating as Sam Jordan's Bar for over 50 years, it has fostered the activities that strengthen the community and cultural fabric and vitality of the Bayview. Sam Jordan's Bar continues to be owned and operated by the Jordan family and retains many of the traditions and community driven values that Sam Jordan established. It remains a true tribute to the legacy that Mr. Jordan created in support of the educational, economic, political and cultural vitality of both the African American and Bayview communities.

It is an honor to recognize the legacy and contributions of Sam Jordan's Bar to our great city of San Francisco.

Sincerely,


Edwin M. Lee
Mayor

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
SAM JORDAN OF CALIFORNIA CATERING, INC.		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
RUTH JORDAN SAM JORDAN PATRICIA JOHNSON		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
4004 3RD STREET SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94124		(415) 824-0155
		EMAIL:
		SJORDANSBAR@gmail.com
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
SAM JORDANS BAR GRILL and		

APPLICANT'S NAME		
RUTH JORDAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE		
TREASURER		
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
		(415) 218-3696
		EMAIL:
		ST SJORDANSBAR@gmail

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0015048	

OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff	
NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
4004 3RD STREET	94124	1/23/1959
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes		

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
N/A		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
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		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

RUTH JORDAN

9/20/16



Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

Sam's Grill Legacy Business Registry Application

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

Sam Jordan's Bar derives its historic significance from its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan. The bar is located at 4004-4006 Third Street in the Bayview neighborhood of San Francisco. The two-story Italianate-style building was constructed c. 1883 and consists of a commercial bar at the first story and a residential unit at the second story. The original owner of the property was a French immigrant named Bernard Lagrave. Lagrave's Tavern served as a gathering place for the area's working men, employed largely in the animal processing trades, which dominated the neighborhood then known as Butchertown. The Lagrave family retained ownership of this property for approximately 75 years, and in 1958 sold the property to Bayview entrepreneur Sam Jordan.

Sam Jordan was an African American Navy veteran who arrived in San Francisco directly after World War II. After a decade spent working as a longshoreman, boxing in the Golden Gloves league, and trying out a variety of entrepreneurial business activities, Jordan purchased the property at 4004-4006 Third Street, renovated it, and reopened it in 1959 as Sam Jordan's Tavern. The bar, which has undergone several minor name changes but has long been referred to simply as "Sam's", quickly became a gathering place for the neighborhood's African American working class. Jordan himself spearheaded a community-minded attitude that distinguished both himself and the bar. Jordan and his bar fostered activities that strengthened the community fabric of the Bayview neighborhood, ranging from scholarship drives and evenings highlighting local musicians, to African American businessmen's luncheons and political brainstorming sessions. Jordan ran for mayor of San Francisco in 1963—the first African American to do so—running on a progressive platform of social justice and racial equality. Although he was not elected mayor of San Francisco, by the time of his death in 2003, Jordan was widely referred to as the "Mayor of Butchertown" and his influence and reputation have expanded well beyond the bounds of the Bayview neighborhood. The property at 4004-4006 Third Street has been in near-continuous operation as a working-class neighborhood bar for almost 130 years—with 57 of those years as Sam Jordan's Bar. The property continues to be owned and operated by the Jordan family, and retains many of the traditions and the community-supportive tone that Sam Jordan established.

b. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

Sam Jordan purchased the building Sam's is located in and opened the bar on January 23, 1959 from the Lagrave Family. In the beginning, Sam owned and operated the bar by himself, managing the food and drink service as well as managing live entertainment. The original bar was configured with a stage where live performances took place weekly. In the late 1990s, Sam Jordan's wife Bertha Ruth Jordan stepped in to manage the business for him. After the bar closed for a brief time, Bertha reopened the bar on Super Bowl Sunday in 2001, in part to cover the medical expenses for Sam.

Sam's wife Bertha and children Ruth and Allen took the reins after the bar reopened helping with catering, cleaning, and bartending. Ruth and Allen had a long history of working at the bar, preparing food, cleaning the bar and assisting with all parts of the business as they had done since they were young themselves. Young Ruth and Allen also worked at Sam Jordan's Restaurant, which was located at 984 Gilman Avenue and had grown up working in the Bayview community under their father's brand. Nieces, nephews, and cousins all from the Jordan family contributed to keeping Sam Jordan's a mainstay in the community. Ruth managed the bar and Allen reopened the kitchen in 2003. Today, Sam Jordan's serves a full menu and is still owned and operated by Ruth and Allen.

c. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

Sam Jordan's has always been a family-owned and operated business, since its inception in 1959 until the present. The previous tavern that was located in the building was the Lagrave family, French immigrants that purchased the building in 1883. To this day, only two families have owned and operated businesses out of the building at 4004-4006 Third Street.

d. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

Sam Jordan's is located at 4004-4006 Third Street, in a two-story Italianate-style building built in 1883. Much of the current façade resembles the original construction such as the horizontal wood channel drop siding and the front gable roof, which is obscured by a large, ornate wooden parapet. The front façade is largely a brick and stucco construction with an overhang with arch supports, construction of wood. There are two entranceways, one of which to the bar itself and one leading to the private residential unit above, which is gated with a transom window above. The building was designated as an official San Francisco landmark by the Historic Preservation Commission on June 20, 2012.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

Sam Jordan's has long been a mainstay in the Bayview neighborhood of San Francisco. This neighborhood is traditional the heart of the African-American community in the City, and Sam Jordan was a very active member of this community. The bar at times served as the epicenter for civil rights in San Francisco. Civil rights leaders often met at Sam's to discuss civil rights and neighborhood issues. The Bayview community also was a prime destination for African-Americans relocating from the South and returning from World War Two. Many community members frequented Sam Jordan's as a neighborhood mainstay.

Sam himself was heavily involved in the civil rights movement in the community and was long-considered a leader in the neighborhood. Sam was an advocate of non-violent civic involvement in pushing for these rights. In 1963, after attending the March on Washington with Martin Luther King Jr., the Bayview community held a community meeting that was ignored by the local political establishment. Sam's reaction to this was to run a mayoral campaign of his own. To the shock of the establishment, Sam came in fourth of eight potential mayoral candidates in the 1963 mayoral race, eventually won by John F. Shelley. Sam ran on a platform of equal work opportunity, equal representation in government, low-cost housing, greater access to education, civil defense, and equal pay for women and minorities. Though he did not win the mayoral campaign, he became known thereafter as the "Mayor of Butchertown" for his dedication to the Bayview community, while also being the owner of his bar.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

Being a long-term establishment in the Bayview political community, Sam's has always been a destination in the neighborhood for civil rights activists and political figures. In the early 1990s, Mayor Frank Jordan, a good friend of Sam, made a visit to Sam's and brought along with him the Mayor of Cork, Ireland. A large contingency of Frank Jordan's support came from San Francisco's Irish community, and this visit further solidified Sam's as a community and historically significant establishment. The visit was made even more unique when the Mayor of Cork serenaded Sam's wife, Bertha Ruth Jordan at Sam's. Sam's currently, hosts SF Open Studios events for local artists and displays work within the establishment.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

Even before obtaining Landmark status in San Francisco, Sam's has been widely referenced in local media outlets such as the San Francisco Chronicle by Herb Caen, the San Francisco Examiner by Warren Hinkle, Sun Reporter, Bayview Times, and Hoodline. Articles about Sam's range from civil rights activism at the bar to Sam himself being Bayview's

connection to the rest of the City, to Sam's induction into the African-American Sports Hall Fame as a boxer.

Sam's was also featured more recently in June 2016 on the popular television show *Bar Rescue*, and will be airing October 16th on Spike TV. A wide range of media has covered Sam's and its 57-year history in the Bayview community.

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

Sam's first historically significant association is its original owner and founder Sam Jordan. After arriving in San Francisco after World War Two, Sam spent a decade as a longshoreman and boxer in the Golden Gloves league. Sam, or "Singing Sam" as he was known in the boxing circuit, was inducted to the African American Sports Hall of Fame and won the Golden Gloves Diamond Belt in 1948.

As Sam's was originally a nightclub, it was often frequented by celebrities that would perform on the stage that was located where the kitchen is now located. Ike and Tina Turner, Sugar Pie DeSanto, and Bobby Freeman. The bar was also frequented by other political and sports figures from San Francisco such as Diane Feinstein, Dusty Baker, Frank Jordan, Sammy Davis Jr., Willie Brown, Ronnie Lott, and Freddie Solomon, among others.

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

Sam's has had a long-standing commitment to serving the Bayview community. As the "Mayor of Butchertown," Sam Jordan ran a mayoral campaign focused on eliminating discrimination and increasing opportunity for its residents. As for Sam's involvement in the Civil Rights movement, he often hosted the Black Panthers breakfast program at the restaurant, which provided hot meals for neighborhood children that might not have been able to afford it. Sam's also was a refuge for the grizzled hard working-class members of the community and provided a space for the local Bayview residents to convene after putting in shifts at the various local industrial businesses in the area.

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

Bayview is one of the fastest-growing working-class neighborhoods in San Francisco. It is an extremely diverse community with the largest African-American community in San Francisco. When Sam's first opened in 1959, the neighborhood was largely African-American, Italian, Chinese, and Maltese. Currently, the neighborhood is likely the most diverse neighborhood in San Francisco with Latinos, African-Americans, and large White and Asian communities as well. The community and surrounding area is also currently facing several large development projects in Bayview-Hunters Point such as Pier 70, the Shipyard, Candlestick Point, the Chase Arena, and Build Inc. Though the Jordan family owns the building that Sam's is located in, with 12,000 new residential units slated for construction, Sam's presents a unique opportunity to grow and expand with the neighborhood that it has long called its home.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

4004-4006 Third Street is a two-story rectangular plan residential-over-commercial Italianate-style building clad primarily in horizontal wood channel drop siding and capped with a front gable roof obscured by a tall paneled parapet. The building is located on the west side of Third Street, between Galvez Avenue and Hudson Avenue. The footprint of the building occupies the majority of the 2,667 sq. ft. lot on which it sits, and the front facade of the building is angled to match the angle of Third Street. The building was designated as a San Francisco landmark in June of 2012.

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

Sam's has been serving the Bayview community for over 57 years. The building and business have been family-owned and operated throughout its entire history. As the business also owns the property, Sam's is not at an immediate risk of displacement, however, the Italianate-style structure from 1883 is a look into the history of San Franciscan architecture and its uniqueness. New development in the neighborhood, while necessary to provide additional housing, does not have the unique character that Sam's bar has. The ornate wooden parapet and support arches, are reminiscent of old San Francisco and its unique contribution to American architecture. The bar itself represents a tradition of multi-generational business ownership, and a dedication to the community in which it is located. Sam's has very deep roots as a neighborhood institution for the Bayview community and Third Street would not have the same character without it.

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

Sam's is a family-owned bar and restaurant, that as long been a communal space for the neighborhood. On weekends, Sam's holds karaoke and provides for a nightlife destination for the neighborhood. It is also a popular space to watch the local sports teams and has large crowds for Warriors, 49ers and Giants games. The bar fare includes fried chicken, seafood, burgers and salads, traditional neighborhood bar food. Sam's also patronizes and supports the local neighborhood bar Jazz Room, as they are both community-serving establishments that benefit from each other. Sam's also serves beer from the local Speakeasy Brewery, also located in the Bayview neighborhood. Sam's essential features besides its unique architecture, is its commitment and dedication to the neighborhood where it is located.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

As a 57-year old establishment, Sam's operates as most neighborhood bars. It is a place for the neighborhood to convene, drink, eat, and enjoy each other's company. Sam's has a classic menu featuring traditional bar fare, and while they no longer have a stage for performances, they keep the traditional alive by hosting karaoke every Sunday. The outside of the building has been minimally changed over the years and further helps the bar retain its historical character. Through this symbiotic relationship with the community, Sam's is largely defined by Bayview and Bayview is largely defined by Sam's.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

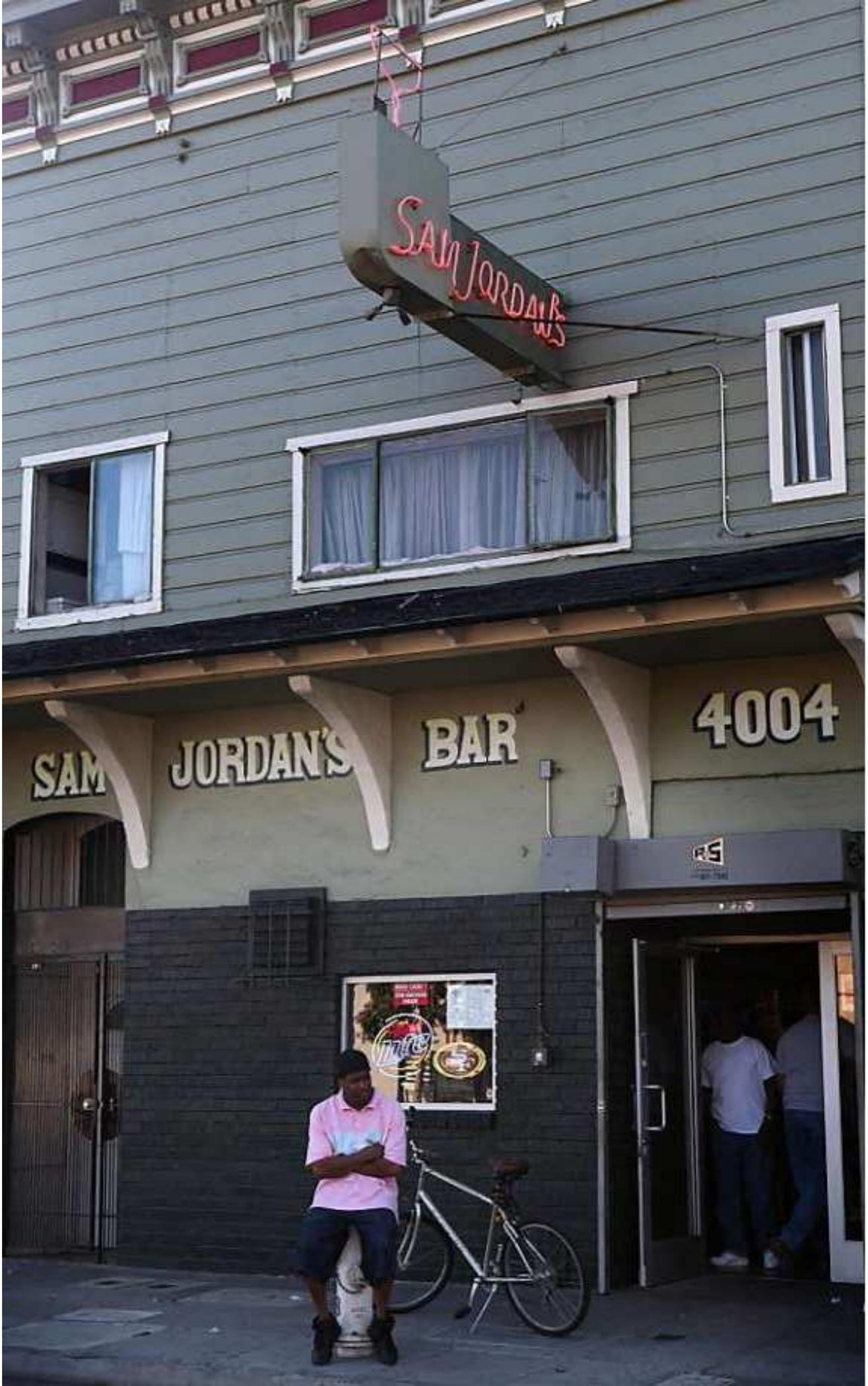
The building in which Sam's is located in was built in 1883 by a French family by the last name Lagrave. The building today is largely unchanged aside from paint jobs to keep the façade current over the years. The Italianate structure is defined by its ornate wooden detail in the parapet and its arch-supported overhang in the front. The interior is defined by wood-paneled walls with crown molding over most doorways, many original to the structure aside from fresh coats of paint once again. The Jordan family owns the building in which the bar is located and does not have any to change its physical features. Furthermore, the bar and building are designated landmarks and therefore, will continue to appear much as they do today amidst all of the development occurring in the Bayview community.



SAM JORDAN'S

4004

JORDAN'S BAR



SAM JORDAN'S

SAM

JORDAN'S

BAR

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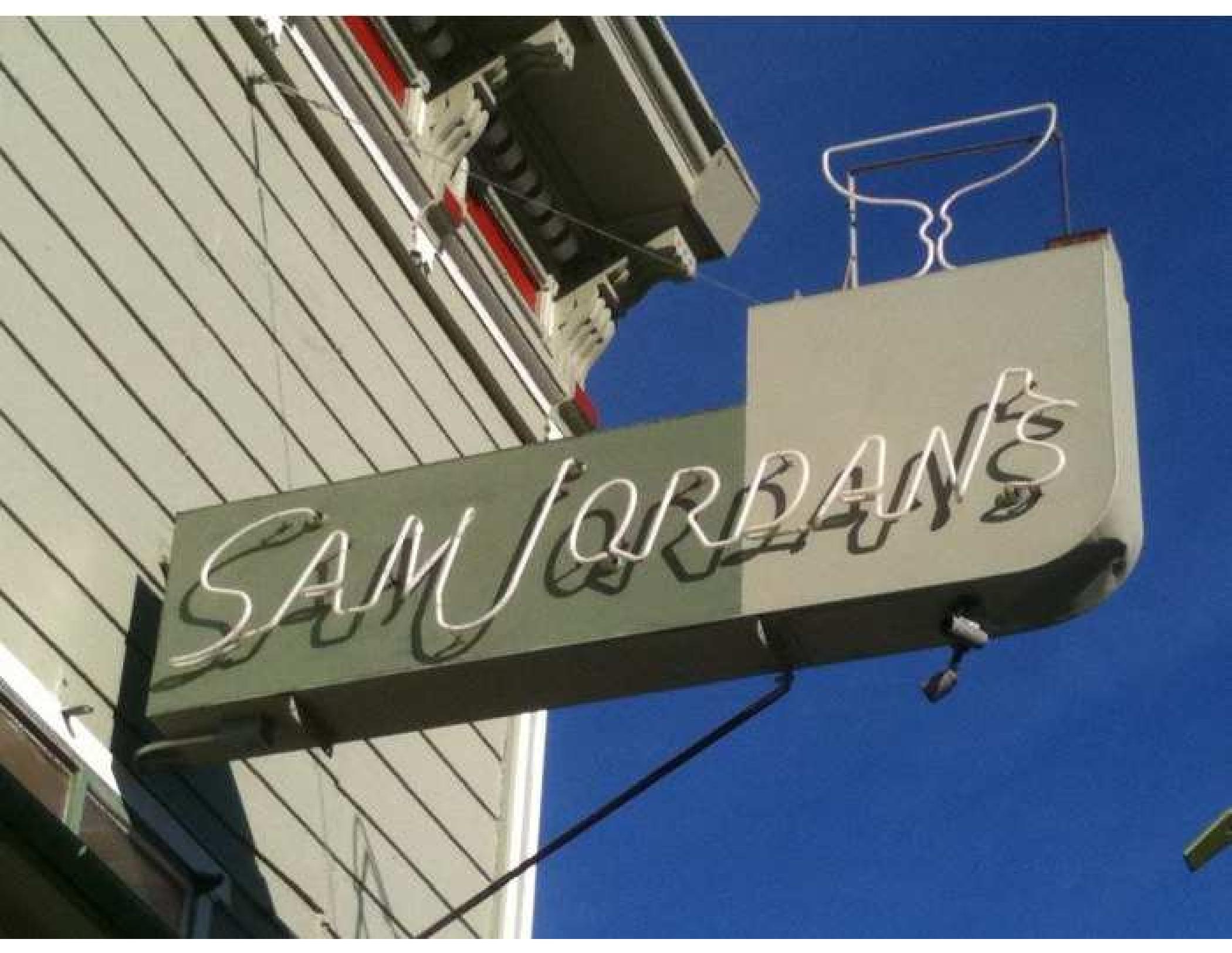
MTC

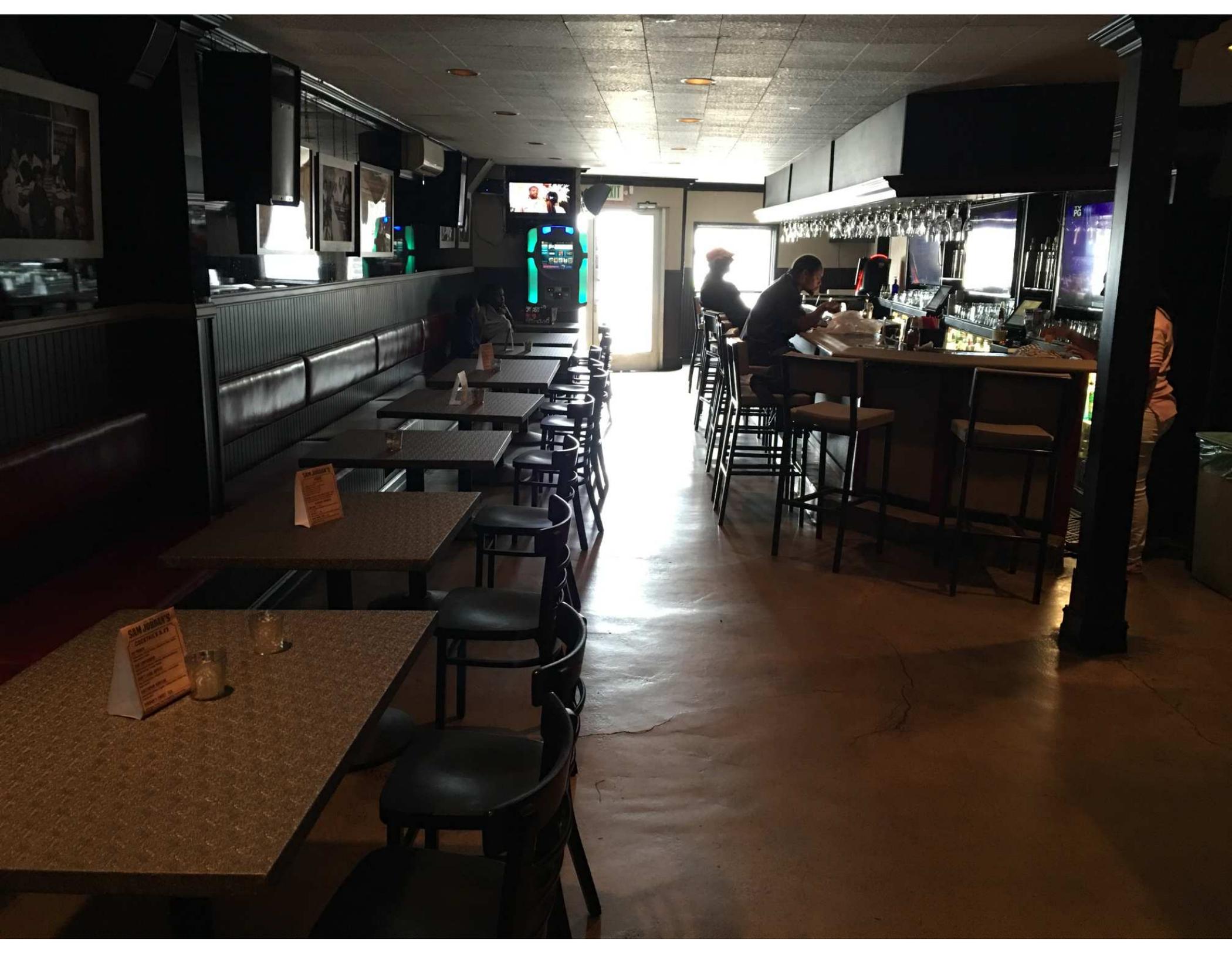
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BAR

4004

SAM JARDBAN'S









SAM JORDAN'S BAR

ON THIS SITE IN 1959, AFRICAN AMERICAN NAVY VETERAN SAMUEL JORDAN, "THE MAYOR OF BUTCHERTOWN", FOUNDED THIS TAVERN FOR THE COMMUNITY OF BAYVIEW. JORDAN AND HIS BAR FOSTERED ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE BAYVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD, INCLUDING SCHOLARSHIP DRIVES, LOCAL MUSIC, AND POLITICAL BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS THAT EMPHASIZED HIS BELIEF IN EQUALITY, CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF THE WORKING CLASS.



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Bayview's Sam Jordan's Bar Up For Landmark Status

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BY ALEX BEVK · JUN 20, 2012, 11:00A

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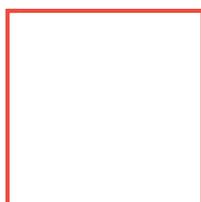
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GRID VIEW



< em> Sam Jordan's Bar at 4004 Third Street [Photo: <a href=

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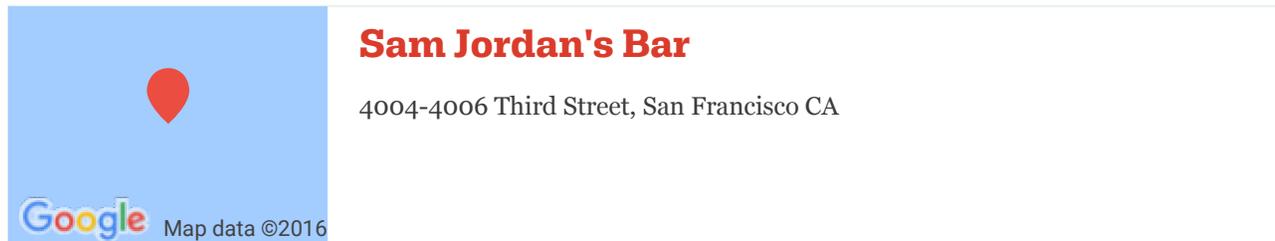
Today the Historic Preservation Commission will vote on landmarking Sam Jordan's Bar, located in the Bayview at 4004 Third Street. Built in 1883, the building has served as the bar since 1959 when African American Navy veteran and former boxer Sam Jordan bought the place.

 **The bar became the local anchor for the community, and hosted scholarship drives and business luncheons. It also acted as a political center.** In 1963, Jordan made history as the first African American to run for San Francisco mayor, **emphasizing equality, civil rights and the rights of the working class.** He lived in the building and ran the downstairs bar for almost 50 years, until his death in 2003. Jordan's two children still own and run the bar, and support the landmark nomination.

Landmark the building would be a big deal for San Francisco. **Currently, there's only two landmarks associated with African American history (the Madame C. J. Walker House and the Leonard/Poole House) and only five of the city's 262 landmarks are in Bayview/Hunter's Point.** If the HPC vote yes on landmarking the bar, it'll go forward to the Board of Supervisors for a final approval.

Check out the **landmark designation report** for the full awesome and impressive history on the bar and Sam Jordan.

· **Landmark Designation Case Report: 4004-4006 Third Street** [SF Planning]



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July 04, 2012

Sam Jordan's seeking landmark status after 5 decades in Bayview

By Ari Burack



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Sam Jordan's in Bayview keeps its unique vibe alive
 By Rhys Alvarado

S.F. EXAMINER FILE PHOTO

Pride on the menu: Sam Jordan, originally from Texas, launched his namesake bar in the Bayview district in the late 1950s. Though Jordan passed away in 2003, his daughter still runs the Third Street bar, which has hosted notable figures such as Herb Caen.

Much more than a place to get a drink, Sam Jordan's Bar has been a gathering spot for the Bayview working class since the late 1950s, a refuge for the hungry and a center of community activism. And soon it could have an official place in city history.

The bar, located in a modest two-story building on Third Street, is no architectural masterpiece. But the effort to make it a historic city landmark is more about what happened there, what it has meant to the community, and the man whose powerful personality was behind it all.

"Everybody always feels welcome and wanted, and that's what my dad always exuded," Ruth Jordan, 48, said of the bar's namesake. "And he always let everybody know — he would feed you, he would help you."

After a stint in the Navy, the Texas-born Sam Jordan moved to the Bayview in 1947, landing a job as a longshoreman. Also an entrepreneur and avid boxer, Jordan in 1958 bought Lagrave's Tavern — owned by French immigrants since the 1880s — and renovated and reopened it the next year as Sam Jordan's.

The charismatic Jordan became known for mentoring local youths and other black businessmen.

At a time when bars refused to serve blacks, Jordan welcomed all races — and made women feel welcome too. In 1963, Jordan became the first black person to run for mayor of San Francisco. Running on a platform of social justice and racial equality, Jordan finished fourth in the race, but nevertheless became known locally as the "Mayor of Butchertown," a reference to the neighborhood's former slaughterhouse industry.

Famous visitors to the bar have included U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Herb Caen, Willie Brown, Sammy Davis Jr. and Maya Angelou.

Ruth Jordan, with her boyfriend Clyde Colen, 48, and her family, has continued to run the bar since her father's death in 2003. But on a recent afternoon, while serving food to homeless residents, Ruth Jordan admitted that she had been ready to sell the place after the economy tanked in late 2008. She credits Colen for sparking the effort to make Sam Jordan's a historic landmark.

"He brought it back, and people are starting to see that we're still here, we still exist," Ruth Jordan said.

On June 20, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend landmark status for the bar. The Board of Supervisors is expected to consider final approval in September.

"We're going to keep it until the wheels fall off," Ruth Jordan said.

aburack@sfxaminer.com

Historic locations approved by city

Of the more than 260 historic city landmarks, four have been designated since 2008.

- Carnegie Noe Valley Branch Library, 220 Buchanan St. (2008)
- Tobin House, 1969 California St. (2008)
- Metro Theater, 441 Jersey St. (2009)
- Marina Branch Library, 1890 Chestnut St. (2010)

Source: Planning Department

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SFGATE

Sam Jordan's Bar gets landmark status

ON SAN FRANCISCO Sam Jordan's has been the place in Bayview for decades

By **C.W. Nevius**

Updated 3:01 am, Thursday, January 24, 2013

As a bar, barbecue restaurant and nightclub, Sam Jordan's on Third Street isn't very big. But as a cornerstone of the Bayview community, it is huge.

On Sunday, Sam Jordan's will celebrate its 54th year as the place in the neighborhood where everybody goes. If you are running for office, taking out a first date, or hankering for a turn at the karaoke microphone, there's only one choice, Sam's.

"On Sunday, we will probably have some old-timers," said Allen Jordan, son of the founder, Sam. "And we will have their kids and their kids' kids."

This week, Sam Jordan's will officially be designated a San Francisco historic landmark. Which raises the question: What took so long?

Honestly, this isn't about the merits of the building, which was erected in 1883. There are other structures from that time in the area.

This is really about Sam's as a cultural outpost and about the legacy of Sam Jordan.

"I am just excited to see an African American establishment recognized," said Supervisor Malia Cohen, who represents the district. "As we feel the pinch of gentrification and urban flight, there will be a record of this African American business."

There's a reason Sam Jordan named the bar after himself when he took it over in 1959. He'd become a recognizable figure in the city from his boxing success in the San

San Francisco Golden Gloves. A light-heavyweight, Jordan won the championship diamond belt in 1948.

But there were lots of boxers. Jordan distinguished himself by serenading the crowd after every win. That's how he became known as "Singing Sam." He continued to benefit from that outgoing personality when he opened the bar.

As Sam Jordan's Tavern (the bar's original name) became well known, he became a friend of Sammy Davis Jr., and brought in major acts like Big Mama Thornton and Sugar Pie DeSanto, an award-winning Bay Area blues singer. Jordan also earned a reputation for lending a hand in the community.

Longtime patrons remember a small table that was set up at the front of the bar. A man who couldn't afford to pay could come in, sit down and wait for Sam to bring him a free meal.

"He was a father to a lot of kids," Allen says. "Some through blood and some through love."

By the time Jordan took over the bar, the neighborhood was still considered Butchertown, where slaughterhouses and meat-packing companies were prevalent, but heavy industry and the ship-building effort of World War II also helped create a neighborhood clientele that supported the bar.

That was how Sam Jordan earned his other nickname, "The Mayor of Butchertown."

Ruth Jordan, Sam's daughter, who manages the books at the bar, remembers when they walked the streets of San Francisco, everyone seemed to know her dad.

"I knew he was somebody, but to me he was just Dad," she said. "He wasn't just in this neighborhood. He was named an honorary Irishman in the Mission and he used to know everybody in North Beach."

In 1963, Jordan became the first African American to run for mayor. Jordan finished fourth in a field of eight, despite the FBI local field office's attempts to "undermine" his campaign by sending a letter suggesting communists had infiltrated his campaign, the city's landmark designation report said.

It was such a colorful legacy that after Sam died in 2003, the family was repeatedly asked why there was no historical recognition. Clyde Colen, Ruth's fiance, says he was asked so often he decided to look into it.

The process turned out to be long, tiring and complicated. But with the help of others, he followed it through. On Friday, Mayor Ed Lee will sign documents officially designating Sam Jordan's as a historical landmark.

"And," Colen said, "although I never met the man, I like to think Sam would be proud."



Image 1 of 11

Bartender Denise Tucker gets ready to open at Sam Jordan's Bar in the Bayview.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle

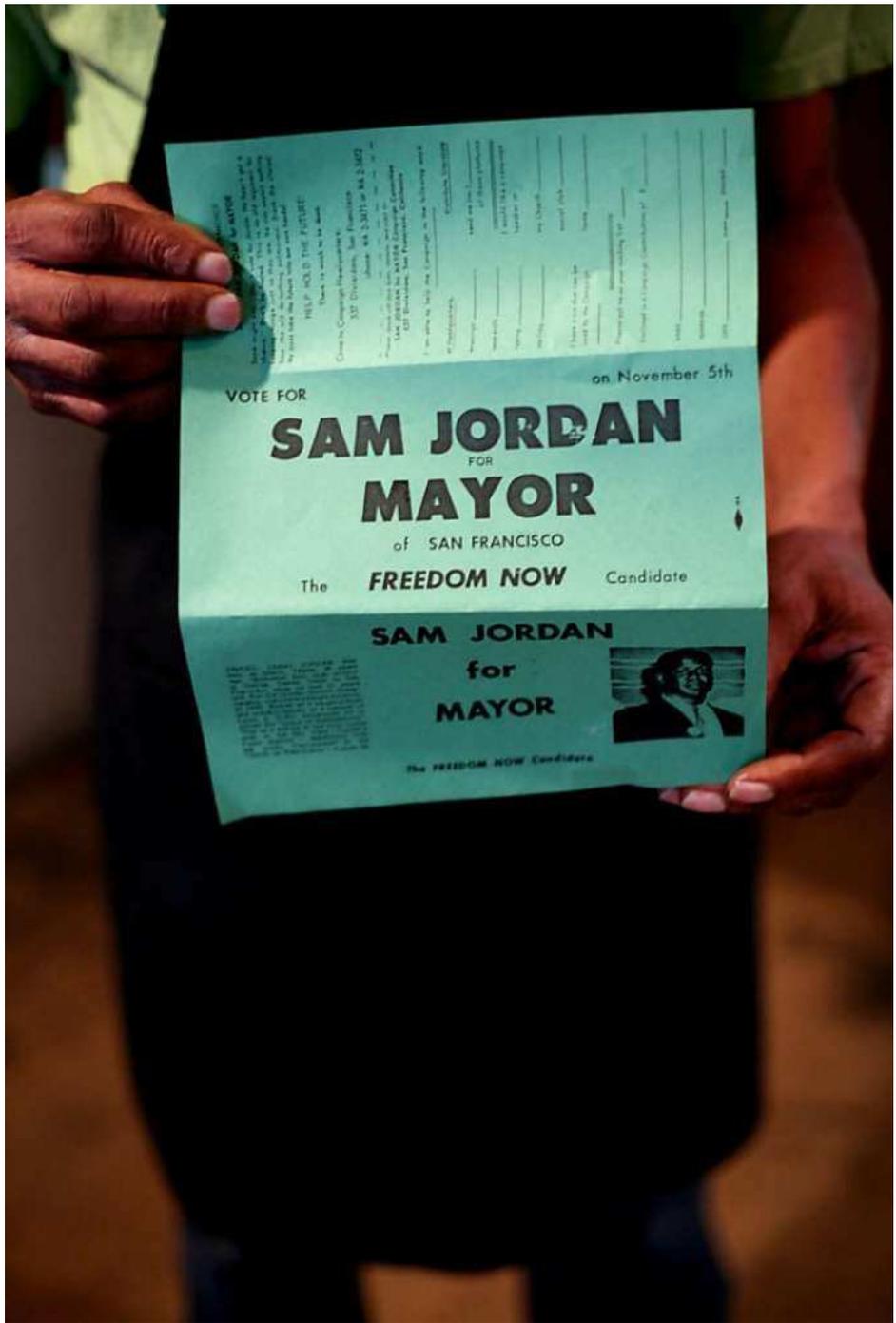


Image 2 of 11

Allen Jordan holds a flyer from when his dad ran for mayor at Sam Jordan's in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. The bar recently obtained landmark status. Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 3 of 11

On Sunday, Sam Jordan's will celebrate its 54th year as the place where the neighborhood goes.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 4 of 11

Sam Jordan's Bar has seen many celebrities over the years. Photos including Sammy Davis Jr., top right, are shown in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. The bar recently obtained landmark status.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 5 of 11

Allen Jordan, son of Sam Jordan, gets ready to open the kitchen at Sam Jordan's Bar.

He has seen generations of customers there.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 6 of 11

A sign on the wall barring rap music from customer appreciation Tuesdays at Sam Jordan's Bar is shown in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. Ruth Jordan, daughter of Sam Jordan, now runs her father's bar, which recently obtained landmark status. The Jordans say Tuesdays draw an older crowd, so they cater the music to their tastes.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 7 of 11

Bartender Denise Tucker gets ready to open at Sam Jordan's Bar in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. The bar recently obtained landmark status.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 8 of 11

Allen Jordan, son of Sam Jordan, gets ready to open the kitchen at Sam Jordan's Bar in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. The bar recently obtained landmark status.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 9 of 11

Sam Jordan's photo, center, is featured along with other family members on the wall of Sam Jordan's Bar in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. The bar recently obtained landmark status.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 10 of 11

Sam Jordan's Bar is shown in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. The bar recently obtained landmark status.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle



Image 11 of 11

Sam Jordan's Bar has seen many celebrities over the years. Photos including Sammy Davis Jr., top right, are shown in San Francisco, Calif., Monday, January 21, 2013. The bar recently obtained landmark status.

Photo: Sarah Rice, Special To The Chronicle

C.W. Nevius is [San Francisco Chronicle](#) columnist. His columns appear Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. E-mail: cwnevius@sfchronicle.com Twitter: [@cwnevius](#)



Features » Food & Drink

June 22, 2014

Sam Jordan's in Bayview keeps its unique vibe alive

By Rhys Alvarado @Rhyseespieces



JESSICA CHRISTIAN/SPECIAL TO THE S.F. EXAMINER

Bartender Channel Beasley talks with customers at Sam Jordan's Bar in the Bayview, where Sam Jordan's children are still keeping his legacy as a community leader alive.

It's Saturday night, and I'm cutting a rug in the middle of a crowd of white collars, gray vests, shiny dresses and high heels at Sam Jordan's Bar.

It's the Jones family reunion at the Bayview watering hole and barbecue joint.

Too \$hort is blaring through the speakers as LED lights are tracing through the room. Some folks are two-steppin', while others are droppin' it low. People are sweating out the problems of the long workweek to the clap and the bass, some with their arms wide as if they're driving a big rig.

And there are dreadlocks, fades, big chains and hoop earrings that you could fit your hand through. Some are drinking Hennessy from plastic cups. Others are imbibing blue curacao and apple puckers. Uncles and aunties. Nieces and nephews.

And then there is Mr. C, an old-school player rocking suede and a turtleneck. So cool he never breaks a sweat.

"You got to keep your bank tight — young women like OGs, we got the manner, we got the money and that's what they need," Mr. C tells me, top hat and alligator wingtips pointed in my direction.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Sam Jordan's is a popular neighborhood bar that's served as a community anchor for generations. It received landmark status from The City in 2013.

In 1959, Texas-born Navy veteran and boxer Sam Jordan opened his namesake bar after renovating a tavern that had occupied the site since the 1880s. At the time, most bars refused to serve black people. Jordan welcomed all races, and even women, too.

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A community man who would often feed homeless people and was involved in the politics of the district, he eventually went on to become the first black person to run for mayor in San Francisco. It was 1963, during the height of the civil-rights movement. Though he didn't win, finishing fourth, he nevertheless became known as the "Mayor of Butchertown," a reference to the Bayview's history of slaughterhouses.

In its prime, Sam Jordan's hosted some big acts — Sammy Davis Jr., Ramona King and Nate Thurman, to name a few.

After Jordan's passing in 2003, his children Allen and Ruth run the operation along with Ruth's husband, Clyde Colen.

Though Jordan was father to eight, he was a mentor to many more.

"He always claimed he had 19 or 20 kids," Allen said. "He was father to a lot by love, not blood."

Ruth and Clyde run the bar portion while Allen runs the kitchen, which pumps out barbecue favorites such as oysters, ribs, brisket, chicken, mac and cheese, and cobblers.

When I asked for Allen's fried chicken recipe, he assured me it was something I couldn't have.

"You want the recipe? Get out your pen and write this down," Allen said. "Here it is: salt, pepper, black power."

The bar still resonates as more of a gathering place than a spot to get drunk. It is believed that the bar is located in what was once an old social-services building.

"It's still like the social-services center, just without the government support," Clyde said. "No problems. Just family."

To carry on what Sam Jordan did for the community, the kitchen serves up a free meal every Tuesday for all bar patrons.

Contrary to the notion that the Bayview-Hunters Point is a dangerous place to go out, I felt completely safe and welcome, like I was part of the family — even in a sea of unfamiliar faces.

I'll be back.

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RHYS ALVARADO

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Bio:

Rhys Alvarado is a cocktail enthusiast and sucker for soul and sweet reggae music. A food and drink blogger since 2009, Rhys has sipped his way from Hawaii to Santa Barbara and up the coast to San Francisco, where he's found a glorious wave of craft concoctions and expert drink-makers.

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February 25, 2016

Sam Jordan's Bar and Grill in San Francisco

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[Historic Bars](#) [Link: /historic-bars]

By:

Lauren Walser

Sam Jordan was a man of many pursuits.

An African-American Navy veteran, he came to San Francisco after World War II. He went on to become a boxing champion, who, as a light-heavyweight won the San Francisco Golden Gloves Diamond Belt in 1948. He earned the nickname "Singing Sam" for serenading the crowd when he won.

He was also a prominent leader in his Butchertown neighborhood, so called for its many slaughterhouses and meat-packing companies. (Today, that neighborhood is more commonly known as Bayview.)

His generosity and commitment to his community earned him the nickname of "The Mayor of Butchertown." And in 1963, he became San Francisco's first African-American mayoral candidate, running on a platform that emphasized equality and civil rights.



photo by: Stacy Farr

Sam Jordan's Bar and Grill is one of the oldest continuously operating African-American businesses along San Francisco's Third Street Corridor

But a few years prior to that, in 1959, Sam Jordan became a business leader when he opened his eponymous tavern. He renovated a circa 1883 structure on Third Street, building a new foundation and adding a new performance stage at the rear of the ground floor in the process. In addition to drinks, live music, and dancing, his bar functioned as an important community gathering space, hosting scholarship drives, neighborhood meetings, networking luncheons, and other community-focused events.

Now, 57 years later, the bar is called [Sam Jordan's Bar and Grill](#) [Link: <https://www.facebook.com/samjordansbar>]. And although Jordan retired in 1995 and died in 2003, his children, Allen and Ruth, continue to provide the same welcoming spirit Sam always did.

Family photos line the walls, along with other memorabilia from its nearly six decades of business—like a photo of Sammy Davis Jr., who was once a customer.

Today, Sam Jordan's Bar and Grill is one of the oldest continuously operating African-American businesses along the Third Street Corridor. San Francisco Heritage named it to its Legacy Bars and Restaurants Project, and it was designated a San Francisco Historic Landmark in January 2013.

Location: 4004 Third St., San Francisco, CA 94124

Hours: 11 a.m.-2 a.m., seven days a week.

You're Having: The brisket, a side of mac and cheese, and a cocktail.

Best Yelp [Link: <http://www.yelp.com/biz/sam-jordans-bar-and-grill-san-francisco-3>]

Review: "Mr Allen is always pleasant and it's always smelling good when you walk in the bar. The brisket is by far the best dish. But I also get the colossal prawns sautéed in garlic on [a] bed of lettuce. When you go in there they make you feel like family not just a customer. Also you have to stay for at least one drink you won't regret it."—Foteche M.



Lauren Walser is the Los Angeles-based field editor of Preservation magazine. She enjoys writing and thinking about art, architecture, and public space, and hopes to one day restore her very own Arts and Crafts-style bungalow.

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Preservation Magazine

Next Chapter For Bayview's Historic Sam Jordan's: A 'Bar Rescue' Makeover



Photos: Meaghan M. Mitchell/Hoodline

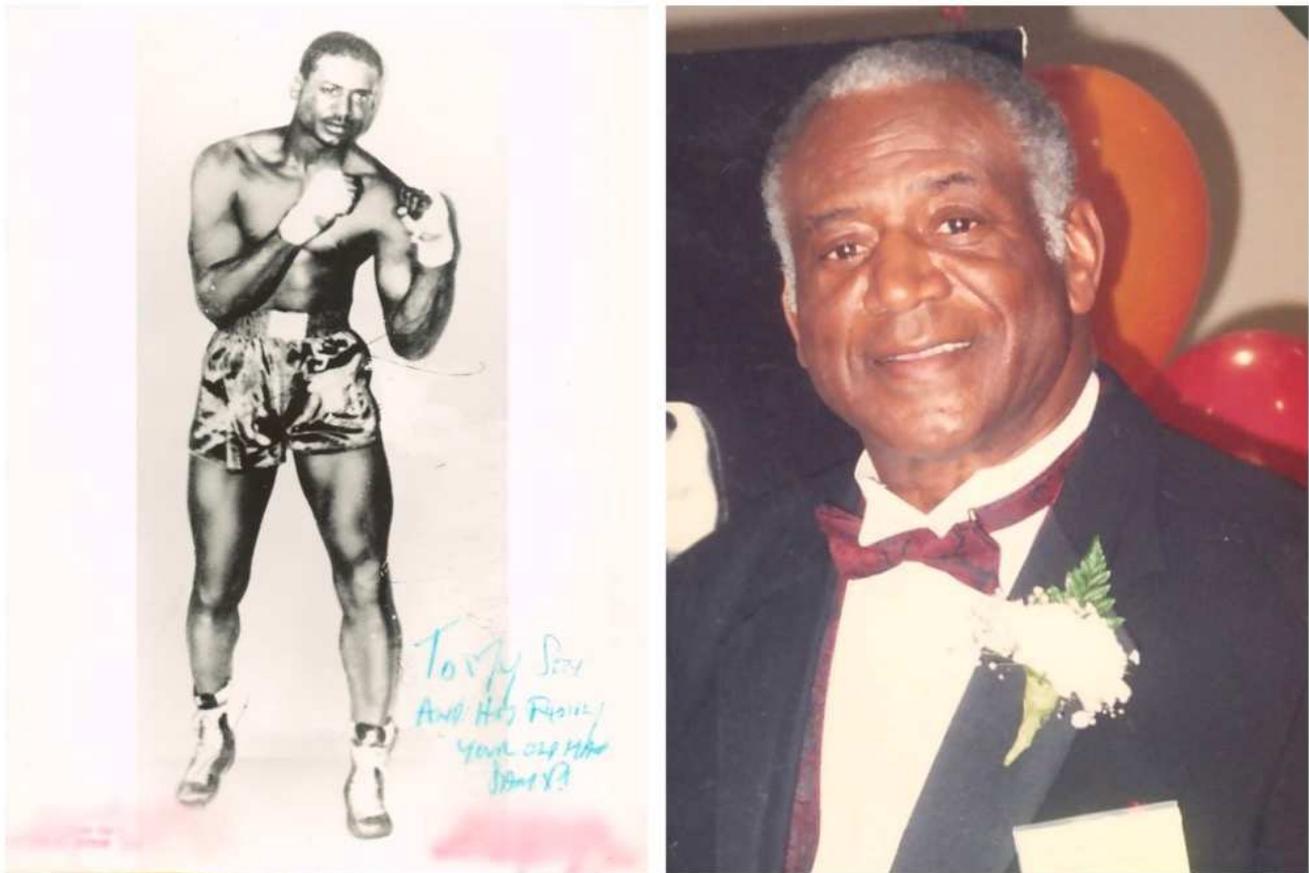
Mon. July 11, 2016, 2:59pm



While cruising down Third Street, you're bound to notice Sam Jordan's Bar & Grill, which has stood between Galvez and Hudson streets since 1959. The bar is named for its founder, a light-heavyweight boxing champion and Navy veteran, who passed away in

2003. It was the first African-American-owned bar in the city, and **received historic landmark status in 2013** (<http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/nevius/article/Sam-Jordan-s-Bar-gets-landmark-status-4217775.php>).

But the next time you stop inside Sam Jordan's, you might notice that it has a new look. That's courtesy of the popular Spike TV show ***Bar Rescue*** (<http://www.spike.com/shows/bar-rescue>), which led a renovation of the bar earlier this month.



Sam Jordan, a.k.a. "Singing Sam."

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAM JORDAN'S BAR & GRILL

The bar's history starts with Jordan, who won the San Francisco Golden Gloves championship diamond belt in 1948. He was nicknamed "Singing Sam" in his boxing days, but in his decades behind the bar, he also became known as the "Mayor of Butchertown," thanks to his strong ties in the community as an activist.

A member of CALPAC, an organization comprised of African-American bar owners, Jordan was known to feed the homeless and host community events like scholarship drives and political brainstorming sessions. His bar brought in customers in from all walks of life, particularly the African-American working class.

In 1963, Jordan was also the first African-American to run for mayor of San Francisco. (He came in third out of eight candidates, with the incumbent, George Christopher, winning reelection.) And his bar played host to a number of celebrities, including musicians Sammy Davis Jr. and Sugarpie DeSanto and former NBA player Nate Thurmond.



A group of Sam Jordan's customers.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAM JORDAN'S BAR & GRILL

Sam passed away in 2003, and the bar is currently operated by his children, Allen and Ruth Jordan. These days, it caters to a mixed crowd of locals spanning all ages, and is active in the local merchant's committee, often hosting events. The Jordans also handle the bar's food: Allen oversees the backyard grill, where he cooks barbecue, seafood, and chicken, while Ruth prepares sides like macaroni and cheese, potato salad and greens in the kitchen.

"I guess you could say that I'm a community activist, too," said Allen, who grew up and attended school in the neighborhood. "I grew up in Bayview and went to school in the neighborhood. In the late '70s and early '80s, I was affiliated with an organization called the New Breeds, and we raised issues around the redevelopment process. We were instrumental in making sure that residents had certificates to come back into the neighborhood."

These days, Allen is supporting new developments on Kiska Road, making sure that apprenticeship opportunities are available to members of the community who are interested in construction and other contract opportunities. So far, 10 community members have been hired.



Sammy Davis Jr. with members of the Jordan family.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAM JORDAN'S BAR & GRILL

Thanks to *Bar Rescue*, Sam Jordan's underwent a massive transformation over the Fourth of July weekend—one that was years in the making.

"My sister Ruth wrote them a letter about four years ago," said Allen. "They get letters from people all over the nation to help them out, so it's kind of like the lottery—and our number finally came up." After interviewing the staff and taking inventory, the show's experts set to work making over Sam Jordan's.



Sam Jordan's now has a sleek, darker look.

The 10-day renovation process resulted in a darker, more modern interior, with marble walls covered in framed photos that showcase the history of the bar. New barstools and tables, complete with customized table tents displaying the food menu, have been added, as have three large flat-screen televisions for sports enthusiasts.

Longtime patrons will notice the bar's mirrored walls are gone. "One thing I'm glad they did was black out those mirrors," said Allen. "I used to think that mirrors made the place look bigger, but man, the mirror really brings out the vanity of people. Every night, I would see at least 10 people in the mirror taking selfies and being into themselves."



The bar installed three new flat-screen televisions for sports enthusiasts.

Allen and Ruth have also adjusted the food menu, adding items like fried chicken and cinnamon toast that were suggested by the show's experts. Allen's three nieces even came onboard to cook for the show.

"When it came down to the show, we did a great job and worked well under pressure," Allen said. *Bar Rescue*'s host, **Jon Taffer** (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jon_Taffer), is "known for belittling people, but he didn't do it to me. He never dampened my spirits, because I know who I am and what I represent."

Overall, "I'm very pleased with what they did," he said. "And anything else that needs to be worked on, we can do ourselves."



A new DJ booth was installed in the back of the bar.

Sam Jordan's Bar & Grill (4004 Third St.) is open daily from 11am-2am. The bar will appear on *Bar Rescue* later this year; for more information on when the episode will air, keep an eye on Sam Jordan's **Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/samjordansbar/?fref=ts>).



LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



Sam Jordan's Bar 4004 - 4006 Third Street

Initiated by the Historic Preservation Commission, June 20, 2012
Approved by the Board of Supervisors, January 29, 2013
Signed by Mayor Edwin Lee, February 6, 2013

Landmark No.

263

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Cover (clockwise from left): Sam Jordan's Bar at 4004-4006 Third Street; Sam Jordan and family at the bar; 4004-4006 Third Street; and Sam Jordan's Golden Gloves boxing portrait, 1949.

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a seven-member body that makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the designation of landmark buildings and districts. The regulations governing landmarks and landmark districts are found in Article 10 of the Planning Code. The HPC is staffed by the San Francisco Planning Department.

Sam Jordan's Bar

4004 – 4006 Third Street

Built: c.1883
Architect: Unknown

OVERVIEW

Sam Jordan's Bar derives its historic significance from its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan. The bar is located at 4004-4006 Third Street in the Bayview neighborhood of San Francisco. The two-story Italianate-style building was constructed c. 1883 and consists of a commercial bar at the first story and a residential unit at the second story. The original owner of the property was a French immigrant named Bernard Lagrave. Lagrave's Tavern served as a gathering place for the area's working men, employed largely in the animal processing trades, which dominated the neighborhood then known as Butchertown. The Lagrave family retained ownership of this property for approximately 75 years, and in 1958 sold the property to Bayview entrepreneur Sam Jordan.

Sam Jordan was an African American Navy veteran who arrived in San Francisco directly after World War II. After a decade spent working as a longshoreman, boxing in the Golden Gloves league, and trying out a variety of entrepreneurial business activities, Jordan purchased the property at 4004-4006 Third Street, renovated it, and reopened it in 1959 as Sam Jordan's Tavern. The bar, which has undergone several minor name changes but has long been referred to simply as "Sam's", quickly became a gathering place for the neighborhood's African American working class. Jordan himself spearheaded a community-minded attitude that distinguished both himself and the bar. Jordan and his bar fostered activities that strengthened the community fabric of the Bayview neighborhood, ranging from scholarship drives and evenings highlighting local musicians, to African American businessmen's luncheons and political brainstorming sessions. Jordan ran for mayor of San Francisco in 1963 — the first African American to do so—running on a progressive platform of social justice and racial equality. Although he was not elected mayor of San Francisco, by the time of his death in 2003, Jordan was widely referred to as the "Mayor of Butchertown" and his influence and reputation have expanded well beyond the bounds of the Bayview neighborhood. The property at 4004-4006 Third Street has been in near-continuous operation as a working-class neighborhood bar for almost 130 years—with 53 of those years as Sam Jordan's Bar. The property continues to be owned and operated by the Jordan family, and retains many of the traditions and the community-supportive tone that Sam Jordan established.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION



4004-4006 Third Street, Sam Jordan's Bar, primary facade.

4004-4006 Third Street is a two-story rectangular plan residential-over-commercial Italianate-style building clad primarily in horizontal wood channel drop siding and capped with a front gable roof obscured by a tall paneled parapet. The building is located on the west side of Third Street, between Galvez Avenue and Hudson Avenue. The footprint of the building occupies the majority of the 2,667 sq. ft. lot on which it sits, and the front facade of the building is angled to match the angle of Third Street.

Primary Facade

At the primary facade, the first story features two entrances. Facing the primary facade, the entrance to the ground-story commercial space is located at right within a shallow squared entrance vestibule. This entrance door is a fully glazed aluminum frame contemporary commercial door with an aluminum frame sidelight to its right. A metal roll-up security door is installed directly above the recessed entry and protrudes from the exterior face of the building. At left, a gated and arched entry vestibule shelters the entrance to the second story residential unit. This entry door is a contemporary metal residential door with a small fan window, topped by a fixed segmented arched transom window. At the center of the first story, the facade features a fixed wood-frame window and an exhaust fan grate.



First story, primary facade.

The facade of the first story is clad in brick veneer to the height of the doorframes, above which the facade is clad in stucco. This stucco area features painted signage which reads “Sam Jordan’s Bar” and the address, “4004.” The first story terminates with a prominent pent roof overhang with exposed rafter tails, constructed of wood and partially resurfaced in stucco, supported by five large stucco brackets and topped by asphalt shingle. This overhang echoes in size and shape one that is visible on the 1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map and may be a (reclad) historic or replacement design element of the property.

The second story of the primary facade is clad in horizontal wood channel drop siding and features three contemporary replacement aluminum-sash sliding windows of varying size, all with simple wood surrounds. Located above these windows slightly right of center is a solid metal sign which projects

perpendicularly from the facade. This sign reads "Sam Jordan's" on both sides in neon, and is topped by a neon cocktail glass. The corner posts of the second story feature wide board molding topped by decorative bracket ends. The second story of the primary facade terminates with a large compound bracketed cornice embellished with paneling, decorative bracket ends, and dentil molding.



Second story, primary facade.



Signage at the primary facade.

South Facade

The south facade is clad in horizontal wood channel drop siding. The first story features no fenestration and is largely obscured by an adjoining structure on the next lot. The second story features four contemporary aluminum-sash sliding windows of varying size, grouped towards the rear of the facade. A horizontal rear addition is visible, and the roofline steps down approximately six feet to the rear addition.



South façade.

North Facade

At the north facade, which is clad in horizontal wood channel drop siding, the first story features no fenestration and is largely obscured by an adjoining structure on the next lot. The rear of the first story is visible and features both vertical and horizontal wood siding. At the second story, the north facade features one contemporary aluminum-sash sliding window with simple wood surrounds. Painted signage at the second story reads "Sam Jordan's." The roofline at the rear of the second story steps down approximately six feet to the rear addition and is clad in vertical wood siding and features one contemporary aluminum-sash sliding window.



North facade.

West Facade

The west facade features a two-story horizontal rear addition constructed in 1967. Fences and yard sheds obscure some facade details. At the first story, a wood staircase rises along the facade from left to right, and the facade is clad in horizontal flush wood siding with no fenestration. The second story overhangs the first story by approximately 1'. Fenestration at the second story includes an aluminum-sash sliding window at center, and, at right, a metal residential door. The second story is clad in vertical wood siding. A sub-grade basement entry door is located at the far right.

The rear yard of the property is paved and enclosed by a wood fence. There is a one-story shed in the rear yard of the property, which encloses a barbeque smoker.



North-west corner of the building, showing rear addition.

HISTORY

Sam Jordan and Sam Jordan's Bar

Sam Jordan's Bar derives its historic significance from its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan. During the years he lived in Bayview and the years he spent behind the counter at his bar, Jordan created a legacy as a community leader that has persevered well beyond his passing in 2003.

Sam Jordan's Life: The Early Years

Sam Jordan was born on July 5, 1925 in Diboll, Texas, a sawmill town located in the eastern part of the state about one hundred miles north of Houston. Sam was raised by his mother, Gerturde Smith Jordan, and his father, William Jordan, who was a farmer. After a childhood on the farm, Sam moved to Dallas, and enlisted at the age of 20 in the United States Navy. After "two years, two months, two weeks, ten hours, thirty minutes, and fifteen seconds," as he would later describe it, Jordan was discharged from the Navy, and settled in San Francisco in early 1947.¹ Like many former servicemen who had traveled through San Francisco on their way to Pacific deployment, Jordan was drawn by both the city's beauty and the promise of employment in the strong post-war economy. Upon arrival in San Francisco, Jordan found work as a longshoreman. In 1948, Langley's San Francisco City Directory lists Jordan as a laborer residing at 73 Doublerock Road, in temporary housing that had been constructed for war industry employees and hastily converted after the war for returning veterans.

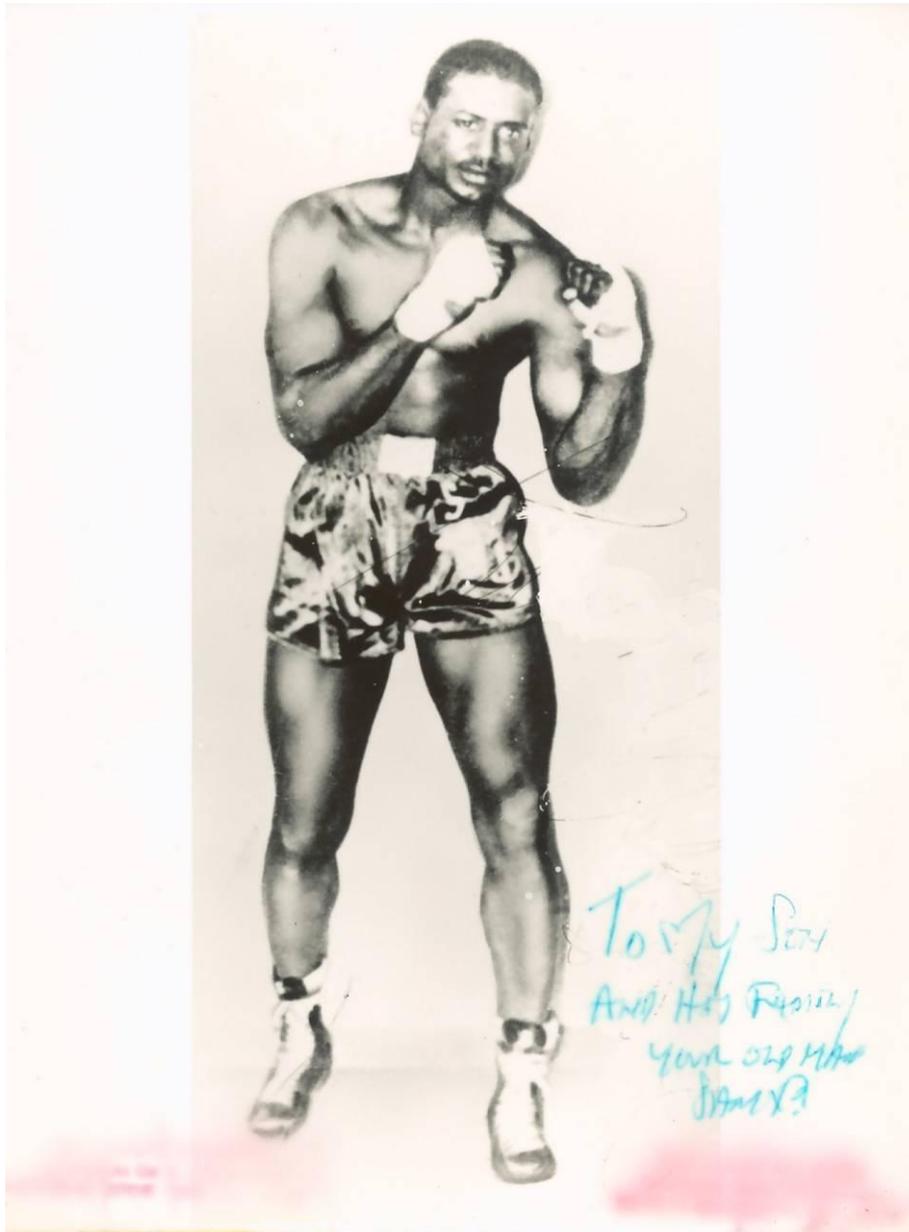
While maintaining full-time employment as a longshoreman, Jordan became active in the local boxing scene. He began fighting with the San Francisco Golden Gloves league, an amateur league established in 1931 by William Randolph Hearst.² The mission of this league, which is still operating, has long been to empower youth and strengthen communities through amateur athletics. Boxing in this league introduced Sam Jordan to his neighbors and to the broader neighborhood of Bayview. He distinguished himself both with his skillful fighting and his crowd-engaging practice of singing songs like "The Star Spangled Banner" and the National Anthem in the ring before and after fights, which earned him the moniker "Singing Sam." In 1948, Jordan won the diamond belt in the San Francisco Golden Gloves light heavyweight championship tournament and racked up an impressive 15-5 record in the ring. Although floating cataracts compelled him to retire from boxing in 1949, Jordan's short dynamic career in the ring raised his profile in the neighborhood and created a web of personal connections that would serve him well as he transitioned into entrepreneurial and business activities later in life.

Through the 1950s, Jordan continued to live and work in Bayview. The 1954 Langley's San Francisco City Directory indicates that Jordan still resided at 73 Doublerock Road and worked as a warehouseman for the DePue Warehouse Company of San Francisco. Throughout the later part of the 1950s, Jordan engaged in a variety of self-propelled entrepreneurial activities, ranging from running a casual barbeque catering service to a more elaborate janitorial service. In an oral interview conducted for this report, Ed Flowers, a long-time friend of Jordan's, recalls, "Sam did a lot of things. He had an entrepreneurial spirit. All these

¹ "Long Shots in the Mayor's Race" San Francisco Examiner, September 26, 1963.

² Golden Gloves League website, accessed March 2012, <http://www.goldengloves.com/history/>.

[neighborhood] guys were hard working guys...nose to the grindstone guys with good ideas and an entrepreneurial spirit. Was he chairman of the board at General Motors? No. But, ... he did all these different things.”³ The ability to transition into other kinds of employment became especially important in the face of gradually decreasing post-war industrial employment. In the course of the 1950s, through working habits that combined the fierce entrepreneurial spirit that Ed Flowers describes and the thrifty approach to money that would become his hallmark later in life, Jordan saved enough money to purchase the property at 4004-4006 Third Street, which would become Sam Jordan’s Bar.



Sam Jordan in his boxing portrait for the Golden Gloves League, 1949.

³ Oral histories for this report were recorded at Sam Jordan’s Bar in July of 2011. Participants are listed in the bibliography section of this report.

Sam Jordan's Tavern: The Early Years

When Sam Jordan bought the building at 4004-4006 Third Street in May of 1958, the bar was operating as Lagrave's Tavern and was still owned by descendents of Bernard Lagrave, the French immigrant who built the bar c.1883. After purchasing the property, Jordan undertook six months of substantial renovations and repairs. Building permit records reveal that Jordan installed new foundations under all of the exterior walls of the building and new piers under the interior supporting posts and columns. The interior of the bar was completely remodeled at this time as well, and what was probably the original bar configuration was removed and replaced with what the permit describes as a "cocktail lounge." The new lounge included a horse-shoe shaped performance stage at the rear of the ground floor, and live music became a regular feature at the bar.



Unidentified singer onstage at the performance space located at the rear of Sam Jordan's Bar, c. 1960s.

Jordan also rebuilt the sidewalk in front of the property: amazingly, in 1958 the sidewalk was still constructed of wooden planks, a tangible link to the area's rough-and-tumble "Butchertown" history.⁴ Jordan removed the plank sidewalk and replaced it with contemporary concrete. Although there is no permit record for the brick facade alterations at the first story, Sam Jordan's son Allen Jordan recalls that this alteration had likely taken place before his father bought the property. Permits for the facade alterations at the second story, namely the removal of original windows and replacement with aluminum sash sliders, have also not been located. These alterations appear to date from the 1950s or the 1960s, and may have occurred prior to the change of ownership, or shortly after. During the year that he was renovating his new property, Jordan moved into the residential unit at the second story of the building—prior to this he had been living further south in Bayview, at 270 Topeka Avenue.⁵

When Sam Jordan opened his bar on January 23, 1959, it was called Sam Jordan's Tavern, closely mirroring the previous name, Lagrave's Tavern. However, the bar soon began to be referred to simply as "Sam's," such was the strength of the personality of the owner. According to the recollections of the men and women who worked at the bar and those who patronized the bar in the early years, Sam Jordan's Bar quickly became known as more than just a place to have a good time. Stories of live music, dancing, and quick camaraderie are balanced by stories of Jordan's no-nonsense approach to fiscal responsibility and a constant willingness to extend a hand—or a hot meal—to those who came to the bar in need. Jordan developed a reputation as the man to talk to about almost anything in Bayview. His leadership activities varied in scope, from acting as a father figure for younger men and women who came through his bar to mentoring other African American entrepreneurs in the neighborhood and providing financial assistance for their fledgling business ventures. Around this time Jordan acquired the moniker "the Mayor of Butchertown." Charles Chiles, a friend of Jordan's and a former regular at the bar, summarized Jordan's early activities in Bayview in an oral interview for this report: "Whatever the power and the structure that was moving and shaping the neighborhood, [Sam] was always a part of it."

Sam Jordan's Bar: A Working-Class Neighborhood Bar

When Sam Jordan took ownership of the bar, the neighborhood had undergone a change in its original industrial use, but the area remained a working-class neighborhood. Since the 1880s, Bayview had been characterized by industrial employment and working-class residential development. Domination of the area by the slaughtering and meat processing industries had waned after the 1906 earthquake, when extensive damage combined with new developments in the food industry caused many firms to relocate further south in South San Francisco and San Mateo. However, the increase in employment in the Hunters Point shipyard during the lead up to World War II and the massive increase in industrial employment that occurred during the war gave this neighborhood a solid working-class tenor through the middle decades of the twentieth century. When Jordan took ownership of the bar, the area was still known to locals as Butchertown, and the slaughterhouse industry retained some presence here through the 1970s. The Allen Meatpacking Plant, located at Third Street and Evans Street, was still operating through the 1960s, and the African American employees of this plant came to Sam Jordan's to socialize after work.

In *Faces Along the Bar: Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1870-1920*, historian Madelon Powers describes the important social function of working class bars such as Sam Jordan's Bar. Powers asserts that bars like Sam Jordan's Bar allowed working-class people to cultivate a space where they could

⁴ San Francisco Building Permit, No. 208079, approved March 19, 1958.

⁵ Langley's San Francisco City Directory, 1957.

participate in the types of social interactions that they found most enjoyable at a time when several powerful forces, including intensified industrialization and zealous social reformers, were acting to reshape the working class to their needs, preferences and expectations.⁶ She states that in safe spaces like these bars, working-class people were free not just to enjoy themselves as they preferred, but to hatch any social, economic, or political experiment they could dream up. These bars also provided social services, ranging from low-cost meals to financial transactions like check-cashing and short-term loans.

Oral histories recorded at Sam Jordan's Bar for the purpose of this report indicate that many of the use-patterns that characterized early working-class saloons continued during Jordan's ownership. Jordan loved to cook and was often found cooking in the kitchen at the rear of the bar. Oral history participant LaShaa Gatlin remembers, "Sam would feed you before he bought you a drink. He figured if you needed a drink then you could afford it. But he would feed anyone." Several patrons remember a small table by the front door, where a man, down on his luck or hungry, could enter the bar, sit down, and wait patiently for Sam to bring him a meal. After the meal, the diner could quietly depart, stomach full, dignity intact. The role of community bank also continued here: Gatlin remembers further, "If you needed money you could depend on Sam. He cashed everybody's check. If they came in he'd cash it. He believed in you." And the general level of camaraderie and respect within the walls of the bar gave rise, over the decades, to several ambitious social and political endeavors, which are detailed in later sections of this report.

Sam Jordan's Bar: Employees and Clientele

Jordan's hiring practices appear to have been based on his own gut feelings rather than candidates' resumes. One of the bar's early bartenders, Bill Scott, describes being hired by Jordan while he was sitting at the bar commiserating about having recently been unjustly fired from his previous job. Charlie Generette Jr., who describes himself as Jordan's first male bartender, had been working at another bar, but came to ask Jordan for a job because he lived in the area.⁷ Gerturde Larry, who began working for Jordan in 1962, was a neighborhood friend of Jordan's family with no experience working behind a bar.⁸

All of these former employees, as well as other regulars from that era, remember Jordan's personal temperance and his attentiveness to the exact measurements that went into every drink that was poured behind his bar. Bill Scott recalls, "Sam could be sitting there half asleep, and if you were pouring his whiskey, he could always tell if you were pouring too much."⁹ These strict rules included the measuring of the bar's signature drink, the Damn Sam. For as frequently as this drink came up in reminiscences about the early days of the bar, bartenders and regulars alike uniformly came up short when trying to recall what went into this "Zombie"-like cocktail. Jordan's attentiveness to measurements and thrifty approach to the disbursement of his product no doubt contributed to the financial success he was able to reap as owner of his bar, and likely enabled him to become the financially generous "one man private foundation" as his long-time friend Ed Flowers described him.

The clientele of the bar at this time was described in reminiscences as primarily a very local crowd. The Allen & Sons slaughterhouse was operating two blocks away, at the corner of Evans Avenue and Third

⁶ Madelon Powers, *Faces Along the Bar: Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1870-1920* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998.)

⁷ Charlie Generette Jr. participated in the oral histories recorded for this report by the author in July 2011.

⁸ Gerturde Larry participated in the oral histories recorded for this report by the author in July 2011.

⁹ Bill Scott participated in the oral histories recorded for this report by the author in July 2011.

Street, and many of their African American employees would drink at Sam Jordan's Bar after their shift. There was also a large group of longshoremen who came to the bar regularly, men who worked at the shipyard and may have been familiars of Jordan's due to his longtime employment as a longshoreman and his continued membership in the ILWU. Other regulars were local shop-owners in the area, automotive repairmen, barbers, and other working class residents of the neighborhood.

While Charles Chiles remembers that Jordan actively enforced a policy of racial inclusiveness at his bar, Chiles and others agree that the majority of the clientele was always African American.¹⁰ Chiles recalls that white employees of Allen & Sons slaughterhouse drank at the Cattlemen's Club, a bar at Third Street and Fairfax Avenue that would cash checks for African Americans but would not serve them drinks. A few blocks to the south, the Victoria Club was also perceived as a bar that only served whites, although Bill Scott recalls that that wasn't strictly enforced; he'd been somewhat grudgingly yet regularly served at the Victoria Club before he discovered that the African American crowd was drinking down the street at Sam Jordan's Bar.

In keeping with the overall atmosphere of respect, Sam Jordan's Bar was also a bar where women both drank and worked, and were treated with respect and felt safe. LaShaa Gatlin, who worked behind the bar for several years, explained that even before she worked there, when she and her girlfriends came to drink at the bar, "you felt very comfortable here, because there wasn't a man in this bar that would not take up the challenge if your honor was being threatened." In addition to the guiding and consistent presence of Sam Jordan behind the bar, Jordan's wife Ruth could also be found working behind the bar. In the first decade of the bar's operation, laws originally intended to curb prostitution prohibited women from pouring drinks at establishments at which they were not owners or related to the owners.¹¹ Nonetheless, Jordan counted many women amongst his earliest employees. Some, including Gerturde Larry, worked at Jordan's informal barbecue catering business before transitioning to work at the bar. Ms. Larry was also encouraged by Jordan to take a union entrance exam which qualified women to tend bar, leading to a lifetime of secure employment at hotels and at Candlestick Park. These female bartenders often remained in Jordan's employ for many years, reinforcing the family-like feeling of the bar. Ms. Gatlin recalls that her daughter once was lost in the neighborhood, and made her way to Jordan's bar, because "she knew that if she could get to Sam's she was safe." In this way Sam's operated as what urban scholar Jane Jacobs describes as "eyes on the street," a stabilizing influence in the community because of the inherent knowledge of neighborhood institutions and their employees.¹²

¹⁰ Charles Chiles participated in the oral histories recorded for this report by the author in July 2011.

¹¹ This law in California was not overturned until the 1971 State Supreme Court case *Sail'er Inn v. Kirby*, 5Cal.3d1 (1971).

¹² Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York, Vintage, 1961.)



Women and families were an important part of the community of Sam Jordan's Bar. Left: Ruth Jordan, Sam's wife, is seated third from the right. Right: Sam Jordan (at right) and family inside the bar.

In addition to the local and working-class men and women who frequented Sam Jordan's Bar, quite a few celebrities also passed through the doors. LaShaa Gatlin remembers, at a young age, being in the bar with her mother and seeing the singer Big Momma Thornton performing. In fact, Ms. Gatlin was swiftly ushered out the doors as Thornton's singing act morphed in to a ribald strip-tease. Sammy Davis Jr. also stopped by and sang a few songs on the bar's small stage. Visits by athletes were also common, including San Francisco Forty-Niners players such as Freddie Solomon after games at Candlestick Park. Both Bobby Bonds and Barry Bonds were known to stop by. Political celebrities could be seen as well. Former mayors Diane Feinstein and Frank Jordan both visited the bar frequently, with Frank Jordan occasionally stepping behind the bar to take over bartender's duties. Local journalist Warren Hinckle was a regular, and many others in the city's political sphere spent time both socializing and strategizing at Sam Jordan's Bar. Jordan counted Jack Berman, Willie Brown, Joseph Alioto, Terrence Hallinan, Herb Caen, and Cecil Williams as friends, and these men were regular visitors to the bar.

Sam Jordan's Bar: Community Connections

Another way in which Sam Jordan's Bar connected itself and its regulars to the larger community was through participation in league sporting events. The practice of sports leagues amongst urban bars arose in the early decades of the twentieth century and is still common today.¹³ The mountain of trophies piled up in the basement of Sam Jordan's Bar today is testament to how active and how accomplished the softball team was through the 1970s and 1980s. The Sam Jordan's Bar team would play against other bar teams in San Francisco, even traveling to play against teams as far away as Los Angeles. Softball practice for the bar's team was held in the Bayview neighborhood, and former participants remember that crowds would turn out to see them practice and play. When Sam Jordan wasn't playing, he could be seen barbecuing on the sidelines and feeding the crowd. In this way Sam Jordan and his bar established a presence in the neighborhood that extended beyond the doors of the bar itself.

One of the most remarkable community actions that arose from within the walls of Sam Jordan's Bar was the creation of a group called the Concerned Citizens Committee. As retold in an oral interview with three of its originators for this report, the Concerned Citizens Committee began over drinks at the bar, around 1989, when former employee and bar regular Bill Scott observed that he was constantly being

¹³ Madelon Powers, *Faces Along the Bar*..

approached to donate money to the charity relief efforts of St. Anthony's, a food bank located downtown in the Tenderloin neighborhood. Curious as to why neighborhood people should have to travel all the way downtown to receive a free hot meal, LaShaa Gatlin opined that they should start something like that in their neighborhood. Roscoe Westbrook volunteered some money to get the project started, but Mr. Scott had a different idea -- a community meal assembled, prepared and served on the basis of food and labor donations, completely cash-free. "I have an idea. Don't give me money. Cook me a chicken," he said, and from this the unique approach of the Concerned Citizens Committee arose.¹⁴ With the goal of creating a free community meal in Bayview-Hunters Point, the Concerned Citizens Committee eschewed the cash-based model of charitable giving in favor of something different. Ms. Gatlin explains: "Our goal was, you can't get away with just throwing money at us. Anybody will give you a dollar. If you really want to help, you're going to *do* something, or you'll *bring* something that's needed." Working from a long, written-out menu, the Committee accepted donations ranging from the use of Sam Jordan's freezers for turkeys to the use of the Grand Hyatt's ovens to cook them; from the donation of fancy glazed hams to the down-and-out man who donated a handful of salt and pepper packets. Gatlin says that the creation of this group while sitting at Sam Jordan's Bar was no accident: "Sam inspired that kind of thing, the give-back thing. Because he did it year-round." When the day of the first meal came, the atmosphere was described as closer to a celebration than a soup kitchen, a condition that Gatlin attributes to that fact that everyone involved had the investment that comes with "giving from your heart," rather than your wallet. These dinners were served once a year during the week prior to Christmas, and continued successfully for four years.

Sam Jordan: Political Involvement and Ambition

Many in the city's political sphere spent time both socializing and strategizing at Sam Jordan's Bar. In addition to visits from leaders like Diane Feinstein and Frank Jordan, Charles Chiles recalls, "Almost all of the power structure, particularly the black power structure, that was in the city at that time all came in here sooner or later for some reason." The level of political investment and involvement that Jordan encouraged throughout his lifetime manifested in ways both high and low, formal and informal. The shape of his personal involvement in the larger political sphere can be seen in the spectrum of organizations to which he counted himself a member by the early 1960s, including the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), the Bayview Citizens Committee, the Neighborhood Negro Labor Council, the Afro-American Association, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Police Community Relations Committee.¹⁵

In 1963, Sam Jordan decided to express his emergent interest in politics in a more formal way: in June of that year Sam Jordan announced he was running for mayor of San Francisco. It was something that no African American had ever done in this city. Interviewed for the *San Francisco News-Call*, Jordan explained his candidacy this way: "I've been thinking for a long time there might be a need for a third party to get back to the principles of government for and by the people."¹⁶ Jordan ran as a candidate of the nascent Black Power political party called Freedom Now, which was formed at the 1963 March on Washington. Employees and regulars of Sam Jordan's Bar remember working on the campaign from within the bar. Jordan was endorsed by the San Francisco branch of the AFL-CIO maritime union. He ran on a platform to address housing, unemployment, crime rates, and the need for better recreational facilities. He emphasized the influence of "big money" on the existing political system, and expressed

¹⁴ Roscoe Westbrook participated in the oral histories recorded for this report by the author in July 2011.

¹⁵ "Long Shots in the Mayor's Race" *San Francisco Examiner*, September 26, 1963.

¹⁶ "Bar Owner in Race for Mayor" *San Francisco News-Call*, June 26, 1963.

doubts that politicians could understand the needs of the “working man and the deprived citizen.”¹⁷ Jordan also addressed the increasing civil rights tensions in the city as a primary issue. In an article in *The San Francisco Examiner*, he explained, “All over America the Negro is waking up. There may be more bloodshed, and it could happen in San Francisco, but not if we have a mayor who honestly believes that all people are equal and should have the same opportunities.”¹⁸



Sam Jordan's mayoral campaign brochure, 1963.

In a crowded race of eight candidates, Sam Jordan came in fourth on election day in November of 1963. In oral interviews for this report, many who worked on Jordan’s campaign describe the memory of his run for mayor as inspirational, and as a groundbreaking first step that paved the way for future African American elected officials, both local like Willie Brown, and nationally like Barack Obama.

An interesting addendum to Jordan’s campaign for mayor was revealed in the mid-1970s with the release of government documents related to a lawsuit filed by the Socialist Workers Party. In a 1978 *San Francisco Chronicle* article by Warren Hinckle, Jordan is revealed to have been the target of covert Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) efforts to undermine his run for office. The San Francisco field office of the FBI sent a false document to Jordan’s campaign headquarters, attempting to create discord by suggesting there were communists secretly infiltrating the campaign. Despite the meticulous effort put forth by the FBI to create a document that would pass muster as the work of a poorly-educated and disgruntled longshoreman, when Sam Jordan received the letter he promptly tossed it in the trash. However, Jordan was harassed during this time in other ways that did detrimentally affect his business, if not his campaign. He was targeted repeatedly by the alcohol licensing board. His military friends told him that the bar was informally off limits to them per a mandate from commanders, and the official records of his campaign run were mysteriously removed from the public register. Jordan walked away from this experience feeling like he had been the victim of “racism, pure and simple,” and professed a weariness with politics overall, “I wouldn’t run for dog catcher now. I’ve had it with politics.”¹⁹

¹⁷ Sam Jordan’s Mayoral Campaign brochure, collection of Jordan family.

¹⁸ “In Mayor’s Race, He’ll Fight for the Little Man” *San Francisco Examiner*, June 27, 1963.

¹⁹ “FBI’s Dirty Tricks in SF” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 13, 1978.

Jordan did continue to serve in local political leadership roles in Bayview including a term in the 1970s on the Model Cities Commission, charged with managing the five million dollar redevelopment program in Hunters Point. As the years went on, Jordan did not lose his desire to effect positive change within his community, and the bar continued to stand as the centerpiece of these actions. Starting in the 1980s, Sam Jordan's Bar began to host a monthly gathering called the Black Businessman's Lunch. On the third Friday of every month, African American business owners from the neighborhood and other people active in the city's larger civic and political spheres met to discuss relevant topics of the day. Of these lunches, long-time friend Charles Chiles explains, "When the guys started it was just for camaraderie, and to talk about some of the things that were going on. Out of that some pretty good things developed, some ideas to take downtown [to City Hall] and discuss."

Sam Jordan's Bar: Later Years

In the 1980s, Sam Jordan was hit by a car while he was standing in front of his bar. The injuries he sustained were substantial, and his restless and active nature impacted his ability to stay off of his injured leg as long as was recommended. Friends recall that these injuries slowed Jordan down, but didn't stop him. Jordan remained very active in managing the bar and in community activities into the latest years of his life. He was involved with neighborhood senior citizens, and organized a senior theater group that performed regularly at the Bayview Opera House.²⁰ Even when he was no longer working behind the bar on a daily basis, it was well known that you could call on Jordan at any time and he would come down from his apartment above the bar to talk or administer mentorship or advice. Local business-owner and friend of Jordan's, J. Y. LeBrane, recalled in an oral interview that when he planned to open a bar on Third Street across the street from Sam Jordan's Bar, he approached Jordan first for permission and second for business advice. LeBrane was happy to find that Jordan was enthusiastically supportive of his new venture. The two men even collaborated on a special Monday night bar crawl, with a unique business-boosting angle: every Monday night, participating neighborhood bars would redirect business to the one bar that was being spotlighted that week. Each week, a different bar was picked, receiving more than its usual share of neighborhood business. This practice reinforced the association of bar owners in the area and encouraged the commingling of patrons who would perhaps not have encountered each other otherwise. The venture was regarded as highly successful, and eventually spread to include bars in Oakland. This innovative business idea highlights Jordan's commitment to promoting local business ownership and strengthening the economic and social connectivity of the neighborhood which he had made his home for 50 years.

At the end of his life, Sam was cared for by not just his loving family but also by the many friends and former employees he had made during his time in Bayview. His family had grown to include the men and women to whom he had extended a hand during his long career. "Sam was like a father to me," explained Roscoe Westbrook. LaShaa Gatlin describes Sam and his wife, Ruth, "like mentors, surrogate parents, and friends." Bill Scott, to whom Jordan gave a job after Scott had just lost one, said, "When [Sam] got sicker, I used to come by to help; I owed him a lot, he saved my life." When Jordan died in June 2003, he was surrounded by his family and the family of friends he had made through his life at the bar and his engagement within the larger community. Although his viewing was held at the Bayview Mortuary and his burial took place at the Golden Gate Cemetery in San Bruno, family and friends recall that the real memorial for Sam Jordan took place in the weeks after his death in the place he loved the most, his bar at 4004-4006 Third Street.

²⁰ This part of Jordan's life was shared in an oral interview with Sylvia Jones, July 2011.

Sam Jordan looked upon his business not just as a money-making venture but as a way to create community, sustain his spirit, and boost the potential that he saw in his neighborhood. His lasting importance to the neighborhood and to the African American community of San Francisco at large is reflected in his inclusion in two community murals. One is located in Bayview at the corner of Third Street and Palou Avenue; it commemorates the bar's musical contribution to the neighborhood. The other is located across town, at the Ella Hill Hutch Community Center in the Western Addition at Webster Street and Golden Gate Avenue. This mural depicts Jordan, as an "entrepreneur" amongst several influential African American citizens of San Francisco. Additionally, the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, a citywide micro-enterprise development organization, has recently named one of its annual business awards after Sam Jordan.²¹ Through his inherent personality and his external commitment to supporting the Bayview neighborhood, Sam Jordan created a lasting neighborhood establishment that continues to operate under the same guiding principles that he ran it. These principles, and the guiding spirit of Sam Jordan's life, can be seen in this description of the man by long time friend Ed Flowers:

"When you were around Sam, you know what you were in danger of? Having something done nice to you by Sam. That was your danger. None of us are making this stuff up. You were in danger, not of having him getting you to do something for him, you were in grave danger of having him do something nice to you."



Two community murals honoring Sam Jordan / Sam Jordan's Bar. Left: Located in the Bayview neighborhood at Third Street and Palou Avenue. Right: Ella Hill Hutch Community Center, Webster Street and Golden Gate Avenue, in the Western Addition.

²¹ "Annual Business Awards Ceremony", published at the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center website, <http://bayviewrecenter.org/news.htm>.



Above:

Sam Jordan favored monogrammed one piece jumpsuits which - as with much of his clothing - were often monogrammed "SamX?" to reflect the African family name that he would never know. Various historic and contemporary signs within the bar likewise carried this signature. As noted in the signage atop the cigarette vending machine (above), Sam Jordan was an early critic of smoking. Despite the cigarette sales, smoking in the bar was not allowed. Undated photo.

Left:

Sam and Ruth Jordan atop the bar's horseshoe stage, c. 1960s.





Sam Jordan used clothing to express pride in his African American heritage. Many photographs from the Jordan family collection show Sam wearing large African necklaces, African clothing, and shirts with Black Power slogans. Undated photo.

African Americans in the Bayview-Hunter's Point

As an emblem of the African American demographic transition in San Francisco in the middle decades of the twentieth century, the transfer of ownership of the property at 4004-4006 Third Street in 1958, from French ownership to African American ownership, functions as a small-scale example of a larger change that was happening during this time in the city in general and in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood specifically.

In 1940, the Bayview-Hunters Point area was a remote outpost of the city of San Francisco, characterized in part by industry but also by small-scale farming, sunny weather, and sweeping bay views. The area's population was largely white and working class: merely 2% of the population of the area, according to the 1940 census, was nonwhite.²² The area population was 30% foreign born (higher than the San Francisco average), with most of these immigrants coming from Italy, Malta, France, Mexico, and Germany. During this time, the African American population in San Francisco as a whole stood at 5%.²³

Between 1940 and 1945, the population of San Francisco rose nearly 25%, from 634,536 to 827,400.²⁴ Within this rise is nestled an even more dramatic statistic: the African American population in San Francisco at the same time increased 665.8%.²⁵ Census data for the area records this increase: in 1940, Bayview-Hunters Point had claimed a mere seven African American residents; by 1945, the area was home to 9,547 African Americans, comprising nearly a quarter of the neighborhood population.

This rise can be traced to the recruitment efforts of the U.S. War Manpower Commission, which solicited workers, without regard to race, from the South and Southeast regions of the United States to work in the booming naval production centers of the Bay Area. Although arriving African American workers initially settled in existing African American neighborhoods in the Western Addition and the Fillmore, the desire to be closer to locations of employment and the construction of federal housing for war-industry workers combined to rapidly increase African American settlement in Bayview-Hunters Point.

African American migration to San Francisco continued after the war, as the city had gained a reputation as a place free of Jim Crow laws. Many of the thousands of servicemen who had embarked for the Pacific through San Francisco during the war returned in peacetime to make their homes and start families. By 1950, the African American population of San Francisco rose 900%, from slightly less than 5,000 in 1940 to 43,402 in 1950.²⁶

A combination of factors led to an increased concentration of African Americans in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood. Housing in Bayview-Hunters Point originally constructed for war workers was reconditioned after the War to provide (segregated) housing for returning veterans of all races. This provided a housing opportunity for African Americans, important especially because the residential climate of San Francisco as a whole was still mired in exclusionary racial covenants that kept many areas off-limits to African Americans. Additionally, the release in 1945 of Japanese Americans from wartime

²² Bureau of the Census, *Population and Housing Statistics for Census Tracts L4 and L5, San Francisco California* (1940), pulled from Bayview Hunters Point Context Statement, KVP Consulting, 2010.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ Bureau of the Census, *Population and Housing Statistics for Census Tracts L4 and L5, San Francisco California* (1945), pulled from Bayview Hunters Point Context Statement, KVP Consulting, 2010.

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ Bureau of the Census, *Population and Housing Statistics for San Francisco California* (1950), pulled from Bayview Hunters Point Context Statement, KVP Consulting, 2010.

internment saw these former residents of the Western Addition and the Fillmore returning to their old neighborhoods, reasserting land claims and pushing African American tenants out in the process. The initiation of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's plan for the Western Addition in the mid-1950s increased the Bayview-Hunters Point's African American population as well. In an interview for this report, a friend of Sam Jordan's named Charles Chiles remarked, "Bayview was the mecca during that time because redevelopment had gotten to the Fillmore." Additionally, employment opportunities remained fairly strong throughout the 1950s in Bayview-Hunters Point, with increased military production leading up to and the years during the Korean conflict.

By the time Sam Jordan purchased 4004-4006 Third Street from the Lagrave family in 1958, both the city and the neighborhood surrounding the bar had undergone a radical demographic transformation which saw the dissolution of a heterogeneous white population and the emergence of a racially mixed population. This transition was taking place in the decade before Sam Jordan bought his bar and was firmly established by the close of the 1950s. Additionally, this transition set the demographic foundation for the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood that continues to this day. The neighborhood retains the largest concentration of African Americans – above 30% in 2010 – in San Francisco.²⁷

Early History: Lagrave's Tavern and Butchertown

The building at 4004-4006 Third Street is also an example of a Victorian-era working-class saloon. The property has been in near-continuous operation as a liquor store, saloon, tavern, or bar since it was constructed. Although the original construction permits were lost in the fire that followed the 1906 earthquake, the appearance of the building and the history of the neighborhood support an estimated construction date of 1883. The building first appears in the 1883 edition of Langley's San Francisco City Directory as a liquor saloon, located near the corner of Railroad and Trinidad (now Third Street and Galvez Avenue, respectively) and operated by Bernard Lagrave, a French immigrant from the Basses-Pyreneese (southwest) territory of France.²⁸

Lagrave had been the proprietor of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, two blocks north on Railroad Avenue, since 1878.²⁹ At this time, the area was undergoing rapid change in response to an 1870 city ordinance that forced the city's slaughtering and butchering industries to relocate from near the city center to the sparsely populated southeast corner of the city. Employees of these industries supported the development of a commercial corridor on Railroad Avenue. By the 1880s, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps reveal a mixture of saloons, rooming houses, saddleworks, and similar businesses lining sections of Railroad Avenue. The Legallet Tanning Company, a large tannery and wool pullery owned by a French immigrant family, was located on Sixth Avenue (now Fairfax Street) directly west of Railroad Avenue, and the largely French workforce may have formed the bulk of the clientele at both Lagrave's Fifth Avenue Hotel and, later, his saloon. Directly across the street from Lagrave's Tavern was McMahon's Tannery. Located a few blocks to the northeast was a large slaughterhouse compound containing lard rendering and canning facilities, a tripe works, and a series of large hog holding pens. Much of this facility was constructed atop raised wooden piers above a tidal slough in order to exploit the tidal action to wash away offal.

²⁷ San Francisco Planning Department, *San Francisco Neighborhoods Socio-Economic Profiles, American Community Survey, 2011*. Accessed online, May 2012, <http://www.sf-planning.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=8501>.

²⁸ 1883 Langley's San Francisco City Directory, 1880 United States Census Data.

²⁹ 1878 Langley's San Francisco City Directory

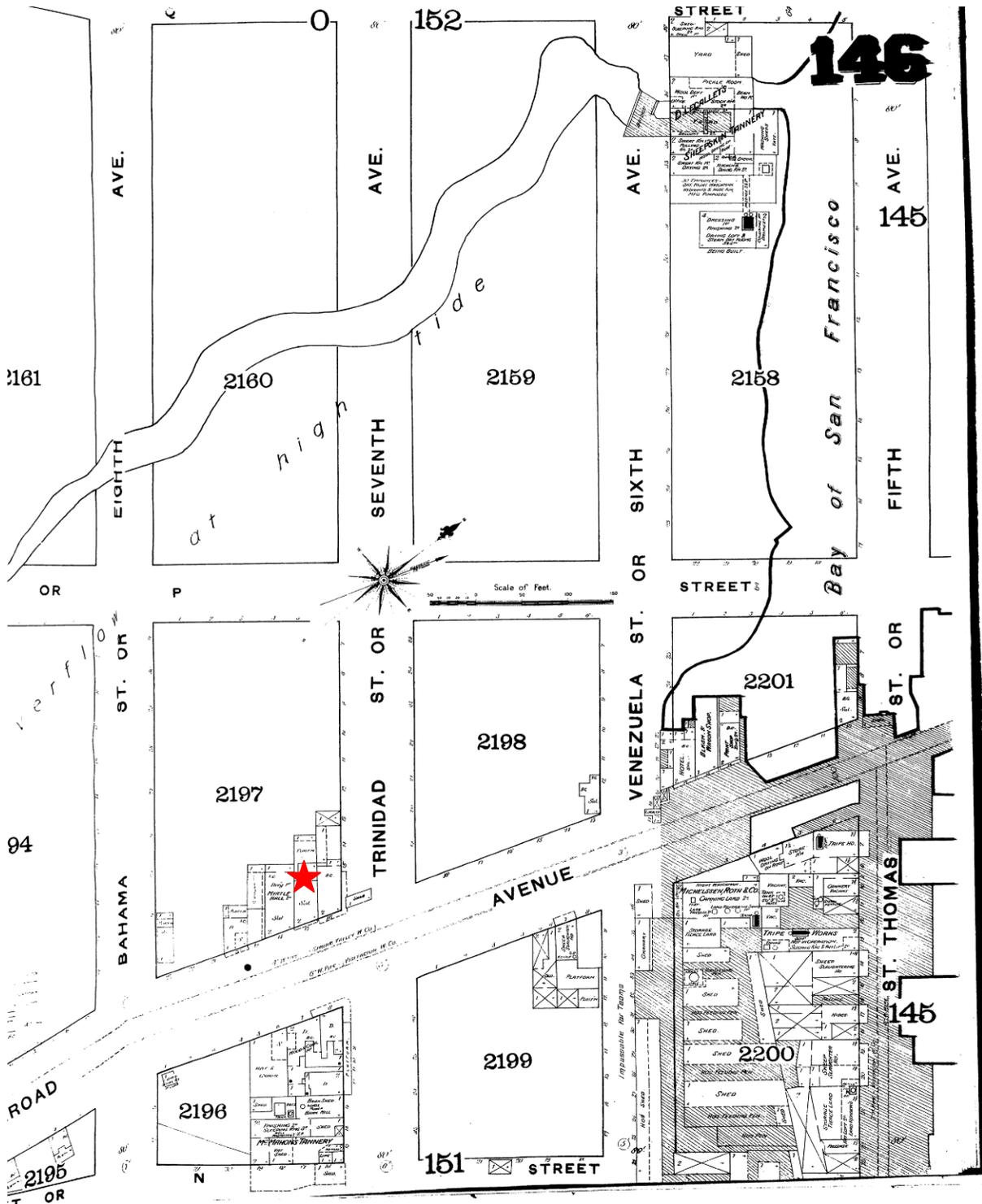
In his book *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*, urban historian Paul Groth describes saloons such as Lagrave's as an important component of the built environment in working class urban areas. Rather than centers of vice or depravity as they were often depicted by social reformers, Groth writes that these saloons worked as a complement to the boarding houses and rooming houses that housed working class men during this era. Saloons commonly offered free or low-cost meals to their patrons, and some were known to cash paychecks and offer credit to regular customers.³⁰ In an oral history of Butchertown recorded in 1979 by Roger and Nancy Olmsted, a slaughterhouse employee named Ted White remembers that he and the men he worked with often took their meals in the area's many saloons.³¹ In this way, saloons built a loyal clientele, and offered a space where social cohesiveness replaced the alienation and anonymity that could characterize rapidly industrializing areas such as the early Bayview. Inspection of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from this era reveal that the area offered very little in the way of formal community gathering places or public spaces of leisure. The neighborhood bar at this time offered a space of community that the area otherwise lacked.

Bernard Lagrave resided in the residential unit above his saloon, with his wife Catherine and their four children. By 1886, while he owned his saloon, he was also working as the foreman at Eugene Avy, a wholesale sheep dealer. Lagrave died in May of 1888 and left his property to the ownership and operation of his wife Catherine. By 1905 the saloon was being operated by Bernard P. Lagrave Jr. A daughter of Bernard and Catherine, Annie Pyle, owned and operated the bar through the 1930s and 1940s; it was Ms. Pyle, daughter of the original owner, who sold the bar to Sam Jordan in May of 1958.

The property has been in near-continuous operation as a commercial bar with residential space on the second story since it was constructed in the early 1880s. Since that time it has served as a "home away from home" for working-class people in Bayview-Hunters Point and exhibits a 130-year pattern of use as a working-class neighborhood bar.

³⁰ Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*

³¹ Roger and Nancy Olmstead, *Rincon de las Salinas y Potrero Viejo: The Vanished Corner -Historical Archeological Program, Southeast Treatment Plant* (San Francisco, San Francisco Clean Water management Program, 1979.)



The 1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows Lagrave's Tavern (4004-4006 Third Street), a smattering of rooming houses, saloons, and large-scale tanning and slaughtering facilities present during the "Butchertown" era. The blocks west of Lagrave's Tavern were undeveloped and subject to flooding at high tide. The French-owned Legallet's Tannery, raised in part on wooden piers atop a tidal creek, is shown at the top right of the map. At the bottom right of the map is a large-scale slaughtering and processing facility, also raised atop wooden piers. Portions of the tidal Islais creek estuary (labeled Bay of San Francisco), prior to channelization, are visible along the right side of the map.

ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK DESIGNATION

This section of the report is an analysis and summary of the applicable criteria for designation, integrity, period of significance, significance statement, character-defining features, and additional Article 10 requirements.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

National Register Criteria

Check all National Register criteria applicable to the significance of the property that are documented in the report. The criteria checked is (are) the basic justification for *why* the resource is important.

- Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 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.
- Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

Statement of Significance

Characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation:

Sam Jordan's Bar is significant for its association with the life of a person significant in our past – it is the physical location and the geographic locus of the life's work of Sam Jordan. Jordan was a prominent business, political, social, and cultural leader in Bayview through the middle decades of the twentieth century. His influence extended far beyond the neighborhood of Bayview to include the larger sphere of San Francisco: in 1963, Jordan became the first African American to campaign for mayor of San Francisco. Jordan used his bar as the center of his neighborhood community-building activities, and the business supported the community in a myriad of ways, ranging from an occasional free hot meal for men in need to a much-needed offer of a job behind the bar; as an informal lending organization for neighborhood entrepreneurs and host to a weekly businessman's networking lunch that exerted political influence at City Hall. He was known locally as "the Mayor of Butchertown," which was the historic name for the immediate area surrounding the bar. Sam Jordan's support of African American entrepreneurship, civil rights, business ownership, and political involvement began before 1958, when he took ownership of the bar, and remained constant until his death in 2003. His efforts to establish a place of community and empowerment within his bar created a legacy in Bayview for which Jordan is well remembered to this day.

Period of Significance

4004-4006 Third Street has a period of significance closely aligned with the life of its namesake and long-time proprietor, Sam Jordan. Sam Jordan purchased the building in 1958 and quickly established himself as an influential figure in the Bayview neighborhood. Jordan's influence lasted through the 1990s, during which time he continued to operate the bar and live in the residential apartment at the second story of the building. The period of significance for 4004-4006 Third Street is from 1958, when Jordan purchased the

property and began renovations to the bar, to 1995, when Jordan transitioned to semi-retirement and passed operation of the bar on to his family.

Regarding the near-contemporary end-date for this period of significance, it should be noted that the property is exceptionally significant under this criterion because it was owned and operated by Sam Jordan during the entirety of the period of significance and served as Sam Jordan's residence until the end of his life. This level of connection between the property and the life of Sam Jordan justifies the extended period of significance end-date.

INTEGRITY

The seven aspects of integrity are location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association in relation to the period of significance established above. Cumulatively, the building retains sufficient integrity to convey its association with Sam Jordan, as detailed in the integrity analysis below.

The property at 4004-4006 Third Street was constructed at its current location in approximately 1883 and has not been moved. A review of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps reveals that the building was one of the earliest constructed in a sparsely populated neighborhood characterized by slaughterhouses and supportive commercial uses. Although the nature of industrial production and employment in the area has shifted through the twentieth century, the appropriateness of this supporting commercial use at this location has remained unchanged. Likewise, the neighborhood retains its working-class demographics

Sam Jordan's Bar was the geographic locus of the life's work of Sam Jordan, who operated the bar and lived in the residential unit above the bar for the entirety of the established period of significance. All of Jordan's community-building and political activities either operated out of the bar or had their origin within the bar. The property is still operating as Sam Jordan's Bar, it is still owned and operated by the Jordan family, and it continues to serve as both a visual and community centerpiece in the neighborhood.

The exterior of the building retains several design features that were present during the established period of significance, including its form, massing, wood siding, parapet, pent roof overhang, brick veneer facade, recessed entry vestibules, window opening at the commercial story, and projecting neon sign. Some design elements have been moved or modified. The sign has been moved from its original location directly above the commercial entrance to its current location at the second story, though its integrity is not diminished by this relocation. A horizontal addition was added to the rear of the building and is not considered character-defining. Though altered from the original configuration, the second story fenestration appears to date from within this period of significance.³² The interior of the bar, however, was remodeled after the established period of significance, resulting in a lack of integrity for the interior only.

³² Building permits have not been located for these second story window alterations.

ARTICLE 10 REQUIREMENTS SECTION 1004 (b)

Boundaries of the Landmark Site

Encompassing all of and limited to Lot 30 in Assessor's Block 5253 on the west side of Third Street, 26' south of Galvez Avenue.

Character-Defining Features

Whenever a building, site, object, or landscape is under consideration for Article 10 Landmark designation, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to identify character-defining features of the property. This is done to enable owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

The character-defining *exterior* features of the building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations and rooflines with the following exceptions:
 - Horizontal rear addition (from 1967)
 - Upper story window pattern at the primary facade
- Angled massing that matches the angle of Third Street
- Italianate parapet, including bracketed cornice, paneling, dentils, and decorative bracket ends
- Projecting metal sign with neon lettering and martini glass
- Bracketed pent roof overhang with exposed rafter tails
- Exterior cladding to include wire-cut brick veneer and stucco at the commercial story and horizontal wood channel drop siding at upper elevations
- Window opening at commercial story
- Recessed commercial entry vestibule
- Recessed residential entry vestibule and historic segmented arch transom window

The character-defining *interior* features of the building are identified as: None

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Historic Name: Lagrave's Tavern, Sam Jordan's Tavern, Sam's Personality Club, Sam Jordan's Bar

Popular Name: Sam Jordan's Bar, Sam's

Address: 4004-4006 Third Street

Block and Lot: 5253 030

Owner: The Bertha Ruth Jordan Irrevocable Trust: Allen Jordan, Sam Jordan, Ruth Jordan, Norma Filer, and Patricia Chessa

Original Use: Tavern and Residential

Current Use: Bar and Residential

Zoning: (M-1) Light Industrial

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1889, Volume 5, Sheet 146b

ORAL HISTORIES

Oral Histories recorded by Stacy Farr and Tim Kelley, July 2011 at Sam Jordan's Bar, San Francisco, California.

Participants include:

Fred Zupancic
LaShaa Gatlin
Barbara Duty
Roscoe Westbrook
Gerturde Larry
Sylvia Jones
Gwen LeBrane
J.Y. LeBrane
Edgar Flowers, Jr.
William Henry Scott
Charles Chiles
Norma (Perky) Filer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

San Francisco City and County

Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

Malia Cohen, District 10 Supervisor

Historic Preservation Commissioners

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Tim Kelley (pro-bono consultant), editing and review

Karin Sidwell (pro-bono consultant), research

Mary Brown, research, editing, and review

Additional Support

Ruth Jordan

Allen Jordan

Clyde Colen

Oral history participants

Photography and Illustrations

By Stacy Farr, pp 4-9, 20.

By Mary Brown, p 1.

From the Sam Jordan Family Collection, pp 1, 11-12, 16, 18, 20-22.

From Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, p 26.

Filing Date: October 17, 2016
Case No.: 2016-013591LBR
Business Name: Sam Jordan's Bar
Business Address: 4004 3rd Street
Zoning: M-1 (Light Industrial)
65-J Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 5253/030
Applicant: Ruth Jordan, Treasurer
4004 3rd Street
San Francisco, CA 94124
Nominated By: Mayor Edwin Lee
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Founded in 1959 by Sam Jordan, an important local African American community leader, Sam Jordan's Bar (formerly Sam Jordan's Tavern) has served as a neighborhood gathering spot and as hub of African American community organizing for over 50 years. The business is located on Third Street between Galvez and Hudson Avenues in the city's Bayview neighborhood. Its two-story residential over commercial building, designed in the flat front Italianate style, is designated as San Francisco Landmark #263 for its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan. Through Jordan's advocacy and leadership, the bar was used to support the educational, economic, political, and cultural vitality of the Bayview's African American community by hosting scholarship fundraisers, hosting African American businessmen's luncheons, political brainstorming sessions, and the Black Panther Breakfast Program that provided hot meals to school children. Cultural events at the bar highlighted local musicians as well as famous musical performers including Ike and Tina Turner, Sugar Pie DeSanto, and Bobby Freeman. Jordan was the first African American to run for San Francisco Mayor and although he did not win, he made significant contributions to the local African American civil rights movement and left a lasting impact on his community. Upon Jordan's passing in 2003, his wife, Bertha Ruth Jordan, and their two children, Ruth and Allen, took over the bar operations. Today, Sam Jordan's Bar continues to function as a thriving social gathering place for Bayview residents, offering karaoke nights, live broadcast of sports games, and SF Open Studios events that display the work of local artists. The bar serves local beer from a fellow Bayview-based business, Speakeasy Brewery, as well as traditional American bar fare such as fried chicken, seafood, burgers, and salads. The family-owned business is committed to serving as a place where the neighborhood can convene, drink, eat, and enjoy each other's company.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1959

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes, Sam Jordan's Bar qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Sam Jordan's Bar has operated for 57 years.
- ii. Sam Jordan's Bar has contributed to the Bayview community's history and identity by serving as a neighborhood and community gathering spot, especially for the neighborhood's African American working class community.
- iii. Sam Jordan's Bar is committed to maintaining the physical features that define its tradition of serving bar food and drinks, hosting social and nightlife events, and continuing to promote the legacy and history of the bar's namesake, Sam Jordan.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

Yes. Sam Jordan's Bar is associated with the tradition of serving as a neighborhood and community gathering spot, especially for the neighborhood's African American working class community.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

Yes. The building is designated as San Francisco Landmark #263 for its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan, a person significant in our past. Jordan was an American Navy veteran, a longshoreman, a professional boxer, entrepreneur, and community leader. He was the first African American to run for San Francisco Mayor. When in 1959 he opened Sam Jordan's Tavern, as it was named at the time, the establishment became a hub for the Bayview neighborhood's African American working class community. Jordan worked tirelessly to advance the condition of his community, hosting scholarship drives and political brainstorming sessions.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

Yes. The building is designated as San Francisco Landmark #263 for its association with the life and work of Sam Jordan, a person significant in our past.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

The business is mentioned in the *Draft Citywide African American Historic Context Statement*.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. Sam's Jordan's Bar has been featured in numerous publications, including but not limited to: Curbed SF, 6/20/2012, "Bayview's Sam Jordan's Bar Up For Landmark Status," by Alex Bevk; SF Examiner, 7/4/2012, "Sam Jordan's seeking landmark status after 5 decades in Bayview," by Ari Burack; SF Gate, 1/24/2013, "Sam Jordan's Bar gets landmark status," by C.W. Nevius; The Examiner, 6/22/2014, "Sam Jordan's in Bayview keeps its unique vibe alive," by Rhys Alvarado; The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2/25/2016, "Sam Jordan's Bar and Grill in San Francisco," by Lauren Walser; Hoodline, 7/11/2016, "Next Chapter for Bayview's Historic Sam Jordan's: A 'Bar Rescue' Makeover."

Legacy Business Registry
November 16, 2016 Hearing

2016-014209LBR; 2016-013529LBR; 2016-013530LBR; 2016-013557LBR;
2016-014320LBR; 2016-013558LBR; 2016-013561LBR; 2016-013587LBR;
2016-013588LBR; 2016-014214LBR; 2016-013591LBR; 2016-013782LBR;
2016-013785LBR; 2016-013788LBR; 2016-013922LBR

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 4004 3rd Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Tradition as a communal space for the Bayview neighborhood where customers convene, drink, eat, and enjoy each other's company
- Function as a social gathering spot and nightlife destination offering karaoke nights and televised broadcasts of sports games
- Offerings of bar food and drinks, including local products
- Promotion of the history and legacy of Sam Jordan

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Location within the historic building at 4004 Third Street, where it has operated since its founding
- Character-defining features that are listed in the designating ordinance for Landmark #263
- Historical photographs of the Sam Jordan's community that are on display inside the bar



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE NOVEMBER 16, 2016

Case No.: 2016-013591LBR
Business Name: Sam Jordan's Bar
Business Address: 4004 3rd Street
Zoning: M-1 (Light Industrial)
65-J Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 5253/030
Applicant: Ruth Jordan, Treasurer
4004 3rd Street
San Francisco, CA 94124
Nominated By: Mayor Edwin Lee
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
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ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR SAM JORDAN'S BAR, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 4004 3RD STREET (BLOCK/LOT 5253/030).

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the Bayview neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on November 16, 2016, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** that Sam Jordan's Bar qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Sam Jordan's Bar.

Location (if applicable)

- 4004 3rd Street

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- Tradition as a communal space for the Bayview neighborhood where customers convene, drink, eat, and enjoy each other's company
- Function as a social gathering spot and nightlife destination offering karaoke nights and televised broadcasts of sports games
- Offerings of bar food and drinks, including local products
- Promotion of the history and legacy of Sam Jordan
- Location within the historic building at 4004 Third Street, where it has operated since its founding
- Character-defining features that are listed in the designating ordinance for Landmark #263
- Historical photographs of the Sam Jordan's community that are on display inside the bar

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs** its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2016-013591LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on November 16, 2016.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: