

Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 13, 2017

REAL FOOD COMPANY

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-040
Business Name: Real Food Company
Business Address: 2140 Polk Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Stephanie Hong, CEO
Nomination Date: November 7, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Real Food Company is an independent small business selling natural, organic, non-GMO, and gourmet foods in the Russian Hill neighborhood since 1976, although the business has operated in other locations since 1969. The other business locations have since closed. Referred to as an “everyday farmer’s market,” Real Food Company offers natural and locally-sourced foods, including bulk food options, produce, and nutritional supplements to customers of the Russian Hill neighborhood and surrounding areas including Cow Hollow, Nob Hill, and Pacific Heights. The neighborhood market features a natural meat department, non-GMO and organic dairy, artisan cheeses, beer, and wine, and its inventory includes a number of local brands such as Niman Ranch, Guayaki, Nutiva, Amy’s Natural Foods, Alter Eco, and Numi Tea. The business prides itself in serving as an incubator for up-and-coming local, independently-owned food companies.

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:

1023 Stanyan Street from 1969 to 2002 (33 years)
3939 24th Street from 1970 to 2002 (32 years)
2140 Polk Street from 1976-Present (2017) (41 years)
3060 Fillmore Street from 1997-2016 (19 years)

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 Russian Hill neighborhood’s history and identity.





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

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:

- Real Food Company has served area residents as a walkable option for natural, local, and organic groceries for 48 years, and its historic storefront continues to contribute to the character and identity of the neighborhood.
- The business is associated with the tradition of independently-owned, local, walkable food markets and offers natural, organic, and local groceries for neighborhood residents.
- The 1930 property is considered a "Category B Property" for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The building was recently evaluated by the Planning Department as part of its Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Survey, and was found to be individually significant for the architectural design of its storefront; the Survey, however, has not yet been adopted by the City.
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - SF Chronicle, 9/22/11-9/25/11, "Kimball Allen Obituary."
 - SF Gate, 10/29/2011, "Kimball Allen, opened Kimball's East, dies," by Carolyn Jones.

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

Yes, Real Food Company, it is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define its legacy of offering natural, local, and organic groceries to the Russian Hill neighborhood and surrounding areas.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Real Food Company 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.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Tradition of offering of natural and locally-sourced foods, including bulk food options, fresh produce, natural meats, dairy, artisan cheeses, beer, and wine.
- Practice of serving as an incubator for up-and-coming local, independently-owned food companies.
- Historic storefront, including aluminum sash, angled vestibule entry, and transom, as well as historic tile at the bulkhead.
- Vertically-divided transom with turned mullions and rounded cut corners and applied ornament at the recessed area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Real Food Company currently located at 2140 Polk Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program



Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 13, 2017

REAL FOOD COMPANY

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-040
Business Name: Real Food Company
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Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR REAL FOOD COMPANY, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2140 POLK 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 February 13, 2017, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Real Food Company 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 Real Food Company:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Tradition of offering of natural and locally-sourced foods, including bulk food options, fresh produce, natural meats, dairy, artisan cheeses, beer, and wine.
• Practice of serving as an incubator for up-and-coming local, independently-owned food companies.
• Historic storefront, including aluminum sash, angled vestibule entry, and transom, as well as historic tile at the bulkhead.
• Vertically-divided transom with turned mullions and rounded cut corners and applied ornament at the recessed area.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on February 13, 2017.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

- Ayes -
Nays -
Abstained -
Absent -





**Legacy
Business
Registry**

Application Review Sheet

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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

1023 Stanyan Street from 1969 to 2002 (33 years)
3939 24th Street from 1970 to 2002 (32 years)
2140 Polk Street from 1976-Present (2017) (41 years)
3060 Fillmore Street from 1997-2016 (19 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: December 19, 2016

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

AARON PESKIN
佩斯金 市參事

November 7, 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 Dick-Endrizzi:

I hereby nominate Real Food Company, an emblem of San Francisco values at the intersection of the independent small business community and natural, organic food culture.

Since opening its first store on Carl Street in 1969, Real Food Company has opened stores on Polk Street in District 3 and in the Fillmore. For nearly 50 years, Real Food has championed issues that inure to the benefit of our City's independent small business community. Testament to its ingenuity, its commitment to providing organic and natural produce predates the mainstreaming of those concepts by decades. Real Food's local roots help maintain its status as a favorite of its surrounding communities.

For the foregoing reasons, I am proud to support Real Food Company's inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry and hope for the ongoing success of its Polk Street and other locations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron P. L." in a stylized, cursive script.

Aaron Peskin

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:		
VPSF Inc., dba Real Food Company		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Grace Hong and Stephanie Hong		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:	
2140 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109	415 673-7420	
	EMAIL:	
	shong@realfoodco.com	
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.realfoodco.com	realfoodcompany	real-food-co-san-francisco

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Stephanie Hong	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
CEO	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
2140 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109	415 518-3451
	EMAIL:
	shong@realfoodco.com

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0363571	68-0502716

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
1023 Stanyan Street	94117	1969
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	1969-2002 (Purchased by Nutraceutical)	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
3939 24th Street	94114	Start: 1970 End: 2002 (Purchased by Nutraceutical)

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
2140 Polk Street	94109	Start: 1976 End: Present

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
3060 Fillmore Street	94123	Start: 1997 End: 2016

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

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

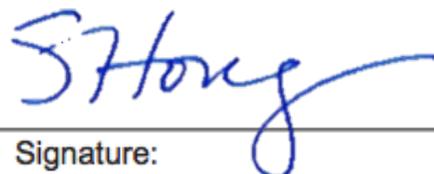
In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

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.

Stephanie Hong

11/01/2016



Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

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.

Real Food Company has been in operation since 1969 and has been continuously serving the Russian Hill neighborhood at 2140 Polk Street since 1976. Its Polk Street location is in a densely populated commercial and residential area is just a short walk from thousands of San Francisco residents. At Real Food Company, people can shop for natural and locally-sourced foods or stop by to grab a quick lunch.

Legendary San Francisco Jazz club owner Kimball Allen and his wife Jane were the original owners of Real Food Company. Mr. Allen became interested in natural foods in the late 1960s and opened the first Real Food Company at 1023 Stanyan Street. That store was very successful being among the first to offer a wide array of bulk foods and high-quality produce. It quickly led to an additional branch on 24th Street and soon after on Polk Street. A Real Food Company store opened in Sausalito circa 1980. Stores also opened in San Rafael and Emeryville. By the 1990s, Real Food Company was a Bay Area destination for natural foods, and a fourth San Francisco store opened on Fillmore Street in 1997.

Mr. Allen was a problem solver, a creative genius, an inventor and an entrepreneur. He developed the first coin operated laundromat and soon had a small chain of laundromats in San Francisco. In addition to Real Food Company, Mr. Kimball opened the Noe Valley Bar and Grill in the 1970s, another restaurant in 1980 called Kimball's which was next to the Opera House on Grove Street, a jazz club called Kimball's East in Emeryville in 1989 and Kimball's Carnival nightclub with an adjacent pool hall and sports bar in Jack London Square.

When Mr. Allen wanted to retire, entrepreneur Stephen Hong - an established natural foods merchant - heard about the stores through his contacts in the industry. Mr. Hong and his family were eager to purchase Real Food Company and continue its legacy in San Francisco.

In the 1960s Stephen Hong, living in Hong Kong, dreamed of America. He saved his earnings and purchased a ticket to America, traveling by boat and arriving in San Francisco to begin his new life. Mr. Hong moved to Southern California where he met and married Grace. In the 1970s, he started learning about healthy living and studied about natural foods and supplements, which completely changed his life. Mr. Hong wanted to share his newly-gained knowledge with the community and committed himself to opening health food stores. Through the '80s and '90s, he was the second largest retailer of natural products on the West Coast.

When Mr. Hong learned about the opportunity to expand into San Francisco by acquiring the existing Real Food Company stores, he jumped at the chance.

In 2002, Kimball Allen sold the Polk Street and Fillmore Street stores to Stephen Hong and three of the Real Food Company stores to Nutraceutical International Corporation of Park City, Utah, through its subsidiary Fresh Organics, Inc.

The Hong's raised their two children Stephanie and Elvis along their side as they served the community in their two stores. The children always had a brilliant smile to share with customers and were always eager to help. As the family grew, so did the passion for offering specialty wellness-inspired products. Stephanie has a personal passion to support local growers and food makers, and hand-selects products for the business. It was a very smooth transition for Stephanie to take the reins of the Real Food Company as a second-generation co-owner as her parents aged.

In 2016, the 3060 Fillmore Street location closed abruptly due to the current landlords wanting to sell the property. The Real Food Company store at 2140 Polk Street is the sole remaining store from the original 1969 operation.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

The Real Food Company has been in operations in San Francisco for 47 years without any break in operations.

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

Kimball and Jane Allen were the original owners of Real Food Company. They opened the first store in 1969 and had seven stores in the Bay Area within three decades.

In 2002, the Allens sold two of the Real Food Company stores to Stephen Hong and three of the stores to Nutraceutical International Corporation of Park City, Utah.

Stephen Hong's daughter Stephanie Hong has since taken the reins of the Real Food Company as a second-generation co-owner.

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

The Real Food Company has had two owners. The founding owner was Kimball and Jane Allen from 1969 to 2002, and the current owner is the family of Stephen Hong.

The Real Food Company started in 1969 with its first store at Stanyan & Carl, right off the N-Judah line (where it remains today as Fresh Organics, Inc.). They added a second location on

24th St in Noe Valley in 1970, a third on Polk Street in 1976 and a fourth in Sausalito circa 1980. Their fifth and sixth stores were in San Rafael and Emeryville. The seventh store opened on Fillmore Street in 1997.

On March 1, 2002, Nutraceutical International Corporation of Park City, Utah, through its subsidiary Fresh Organics, Inc., acquired three of the Bay Area Real Food Company stores (Cole Valley, Noe Valley and Sausalito). Nutraceutical is one of the country's largest marketers and manufacturers of quality-brand nutritional supplements sold to health and natural food stores. They also own Thom's Natural Foods in The Richmond District.

Both the Nutraceutical ownership (for the Stanyan Street store) and the Stephen Hong ownership use the Real Food Company name as a DBA. Nutraceutical's other DBA is Fresh Organics, as their original stated plan was to change the name from Real Food Company to Fresh Organics.

This Legacy Business Registry application follows the lineage of Stephen Hong's two stores, of which only the store at 2140 Polk Street remains. This application also reports the Real Food Company stores owned by Nutraceutical as having closed in 2002 even though the stores themselves remained open at the time. The reported "closures" represent their closures as Real Food Company stores.

e. 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.

None known.

Criterion 2

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

The City of San Francisco has long been known for attracting people from all different cultures from around the world. Following the hippie movement in San Francisco in the 1960s and 1970s, people were very interested in living healthier lives. San Francisco remained the home of many of those involved in the movement. As they began to settle down to raise children, they found that Real Food Company was a wonderful place and support the growing neighborhood.

The beautiful storefront at Real Food Company enables pedestrians to peer into the store and see a bounty of beautiful produce. The business attracts people to come and sit at the bistro tables on the sidewalk after grabbing a sandwich inside. As a community meeting place in the neighborhood, Real Food Company is an important part of the culture of community.

Real Food Company features a 100% organic produce selection that customers see as soon as they enter the store. Known as an "everyday farmer's market," it has had a reputation for

providing fresh, local and organic produce throughout the year. There is a natural meat department at the back of the store. There is also a wide variety of non-GMO and organic groceries, as well as a selection of non-GMO and organic dairy, artisan cheeses, beer and wine.

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

The Real Food Company is proud to be an incubator for small locally owned, independent brands. Many now-established natural foods brands were once young companies who got their start inside of its doors.

Real Food Company has been a brand incubator to local brands such as Niman Ranch, Guayaki, Nutiva, Amy's Natural Foods, Alter Eco, Numi Tea and many other national natural brands. Many of the businesses did customer demonstrations and promoted their businesses within the Real Food Company store when they were just start-ups. Real Food Company continues to focus on independently owned food companies and local artisan food producers to this day.

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

None known.

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

The original owner of Real Food Company, Kimball Allen, was a significant person in San Francisco and the Bay Area.

Mr. Allen developed the first coin operated laundromat. It was such a novel concept that he had to hire an attendant with a white uniform just to explain the concept and the use of the equipment. He soon had a small chain of laundromats in San Francisco. He never stopped inventing and later he developed and patented a coin operated shoe shine machine which he manufactured himself.

In the late '60s, Mr. Allen became interested in the natural food business, and he opened the Real Food Company store on Sanyan Street. This became the first of a small chain of stores that he and his wife Jane, owned and operated.

Kimball and Jane Allen also opened the Noe Valley Bar and Grill, which was known both for its food and the carved redwood decor that Mr. Allen designed and did much of the crafting himself. They followed with another restaurant called Kimball's which was next to the Opera House on Grove Street. Besides serving the patrons and staff of the arts, the restaurant became famous as a jazz club. They also opened Café Allegro next door to the restaurant. In 1989, he and Jane opened Kimball's East in Emeryville where many of the great names in jazz played.

When he was in his 80s, Mr. Allen opened Kimball's Carnival night club with an adjacent pool hall and sports bar in Jack London Square.

Mr. Allen is mostly known for his significant contribution with his "Kimball's East" business. His famous jazz club has been described as the hallmark of music presentation for the Bay Area in a splendid supper club setting. It has hosted such musical luminaries as Max Roach, Stanley Turrentine, Herbie Hancock, Wynton Marsalis, Bobby Blue Bland, Maceo Parker, Nancy Wilson, Peabo Bryson and Eartha Kitt. Dizzy Gillespie gave one of his final performances there.

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

The Hong family quickly became involved with the communities served by the stores he purchased.

The commitment of the Real Food Company to the community is to provide healthy food and products and to share knowledge about healthy living. As a part of the vetting process for products, vendors are screened to have the shared mission for a sustainable food system. Co-owner Stephanie Hong interviews vendors and selects those that are local and offer non-GMO, organic, and sustainable products that people will enjoy. Real Food Company is proud to be the platform where many small businesses get their start. In fact, there are waiting lists for companies who desire to get their product into our store so they can share healthy-living with San Francisco.

The Real Food Company is also committed to the community by taking part in local San Francisco organizations. For many years, the store has been active with the Russian Hill Community Association, Russian Hill Neighbors, Middle Polk Neighborhood Association and the Polk District Merchants Association.

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

All of the districts of San Francisco come together in the beautiful community that Real Food Company calls home. The business is fortunate to be in the corner of the Russian Hill neighborhood and is able to serve residents in that district as well as attracting customers from surrounding areas such as Cow Hollow, Nob Hill and Pacific Heights. The customers represent every walk of life that enjoy shopping for a wellness-inspired life.

As a part of the love for wellness that second generation co-owner Stephanie Hong holds, Real Food Company seeks to share the knowledge for supporting a better food system. This means educating the public about non-GMO products and what "healthy food" really means. Regular events that are offered in the community include nutritional talks, product demonstrations, fine food tasting and wine pairing events.

Russian Hill has always been a community of prestigious citizens and influencers. Many current and former residents of Russian Hill have benefited from shopping at Real Food Company and learning about natural foods and healthy living by shopping there.

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

The building that Real Food Company populates is a 1930s commercial site. The building has changed very little over the years and occupies a great location in the middle of the block. The store is adorned with lovely tiles along the sidewalk, bright storefront windows and an awning that spans the width of the business.

The store's interior is eclectic, warm and welcoming. The bright fruit stands are the first thing customers see as they walk through the doors. Customers are known to be attracted to the store for the wonderful selection of meats and the ease of quick shopping. The building offers a bright setting with wide-open skylights.

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

The Real Food Company is a neighborhood institution and many people that want good healthy food would miss having a convenient, friendly independently owned store right down the street from them if it were to close. The neighborhood has lost the sister store of Real Food Company on Fillmore Street, and the community has offered a huge outreach of support. Residents who desire to live a healthy and natural life will not have a store within walking distance if the store closed and will be required to drive out of the neighborhood in search of natural products.

The store is located in a multi-use neighborhood and has many complimentary stores nearby such as coffee shops, bakeries, restaurants and boutiques. Because Real Food Company attracts a lot of foot traffic, these other stores would suffer with the loss of our business.

Criterion 3

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

Real Food Company is unique in the community because it offers products that are special and unique along with thousands of regular staple items. A shopper can find products like milk, eggs and butter along with handmade bagels, specialty coffees and many wellness selections. Shoppers get personal assistance in selecting vitamins and natural healing products. Real Food Company promotes the sense of community and has been the launch pad for many local brands. Vendors come knowing that their product will be presented to the San Franciscans who are very passionate for healthy living.

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)

When Stephen Hong acquired the Real Food Company, he brought to it his personal touch and belief in building a better food system. The company commits to its customers to bring together fine items such as locally grown produce, nearby bakeries, coffee roasters, nutritional products and local specialty favorites. The commitment from Stephen passed down to the next generation and continues with his daughter Stephanie who hand selects the products for the store. The business maintains the traditions that belong to the store by bringing to the neighborhood products they have loved for many years.

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.). Does the building occupied by the business relate to the immediate neighborhood?

The business has a welcoming storefront with an array of windows completely across the front. The windows are bordered with old tile to the ground making it a beautiful spot to sit for a meal. The sign announcing the Real Food Company across our building establishes our history of the community with its beautiful patina. We have maintained the 1930s feel of the store and have no plans to make changes to the architectural details.



*Real Food
Company*

Natural & Gourmet Foods • San Francisco Est 1969

THE REAL FOOD CO.

The Real Food Company

Twentyone Forty Polk Street

NEW STORE HOURS
11am to 9pm Monday thru Sat/Lab

SUPPLEMENTS & BODY CARE

LOCAL ORGANIC PRODUCE

MEAT & POULTRY

BEER, WINE, & CHEESE

BACKSTAGE
HAIR SALON

PLUMBING AND GEOTECHNICAL



Natural & Gourmet Foods - San Francisco Est. 1969

THE REAL FOOD CO.

The Real Food Company

Twenty-one Forty Polk Street

SUPPLEMENTS & BODY CARE

LOCAL ORGANIC PRODUCTS

MEAT, FISH & POULTRY

BEER, WINE & CIGARETTES





Natural & Gourmet Foods • San Francisco Est 1969

REAL FOOD Co.

BACKSTAGE
HAIR SALON

The Real Food Company

Twenty-one Forty Park Street

OPENING SOON
New to Park Street this Building

bow wow
DOG

bow wow
DOG

DOG
DOG

Natural & Gourmet Foods San Francisco Est. 1969

THE REAL FOOD CO.

Food Company

Twenty-one Fo

California Certified Organic Farmers

GRAB & GO

We're Bringing

MEAT & POULTRY

BEER, WINE

S & BODY CARE

LOCAL ORGANIC PRODUCE

A photograph of the storefront of The Real Food Co. The image shows the interior of the store through large glass windows. On the left, there are shelves with various products, including a sign for 'GRAB & GO' and another that says 'We're Bringing'. In the center, there are several colorful balloons (green, yellow, and red) tied together. On the right, a person in a bright yellow shirt is visible, looking at a display of 'MEAT & POULTRY'. Below the window, there are signs for 'LOCAL ORGANIC PRODUCE', 'BEER, WINE', and 'S & BODY CARE'. Above the window, there are signs for 'California Certified Organic Farmers' and 'Twenty-one Fo'. The overall atmosphere is bright and inviting.

at & Gourmet Foods

San Francisco Est. 1969

THE

REAL

FOOD

The Real Food Company

SUPPLEMENTS & BODY CARE

LOCAL ORGANIC PRODUCE

California Certified Organic Farmers

GRAB & GO

The Real Food Company

Natural & Gourmet Food

THE

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Twenty-one Fo

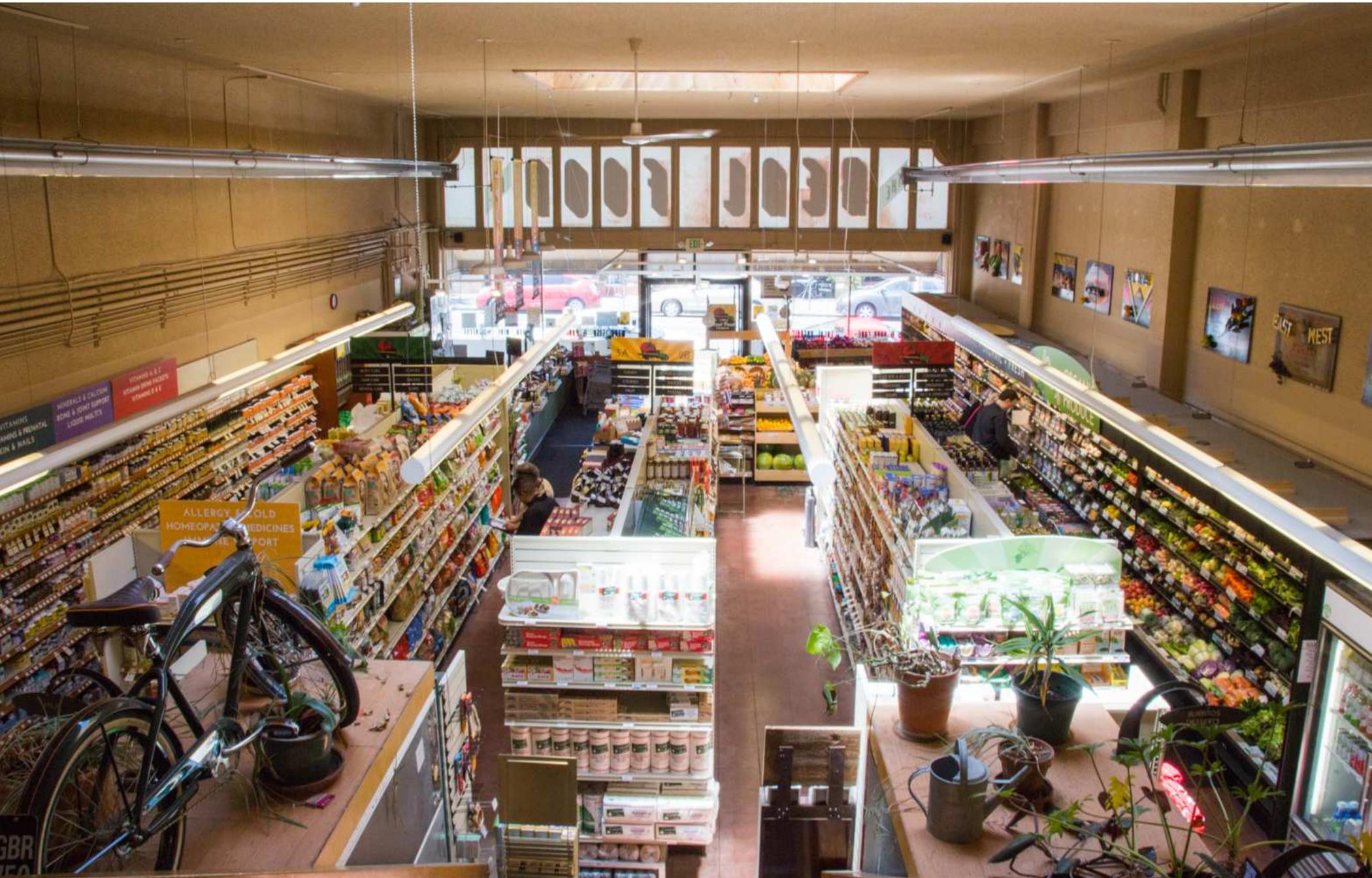


MEAT, FISH, & POULTRY

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VITAMINS
SKINNING & PROMOTING
SKIN & NAILS

MINERALS & CALCIUM
BONE & JOINT SUPPORT
LIQUID MIXES

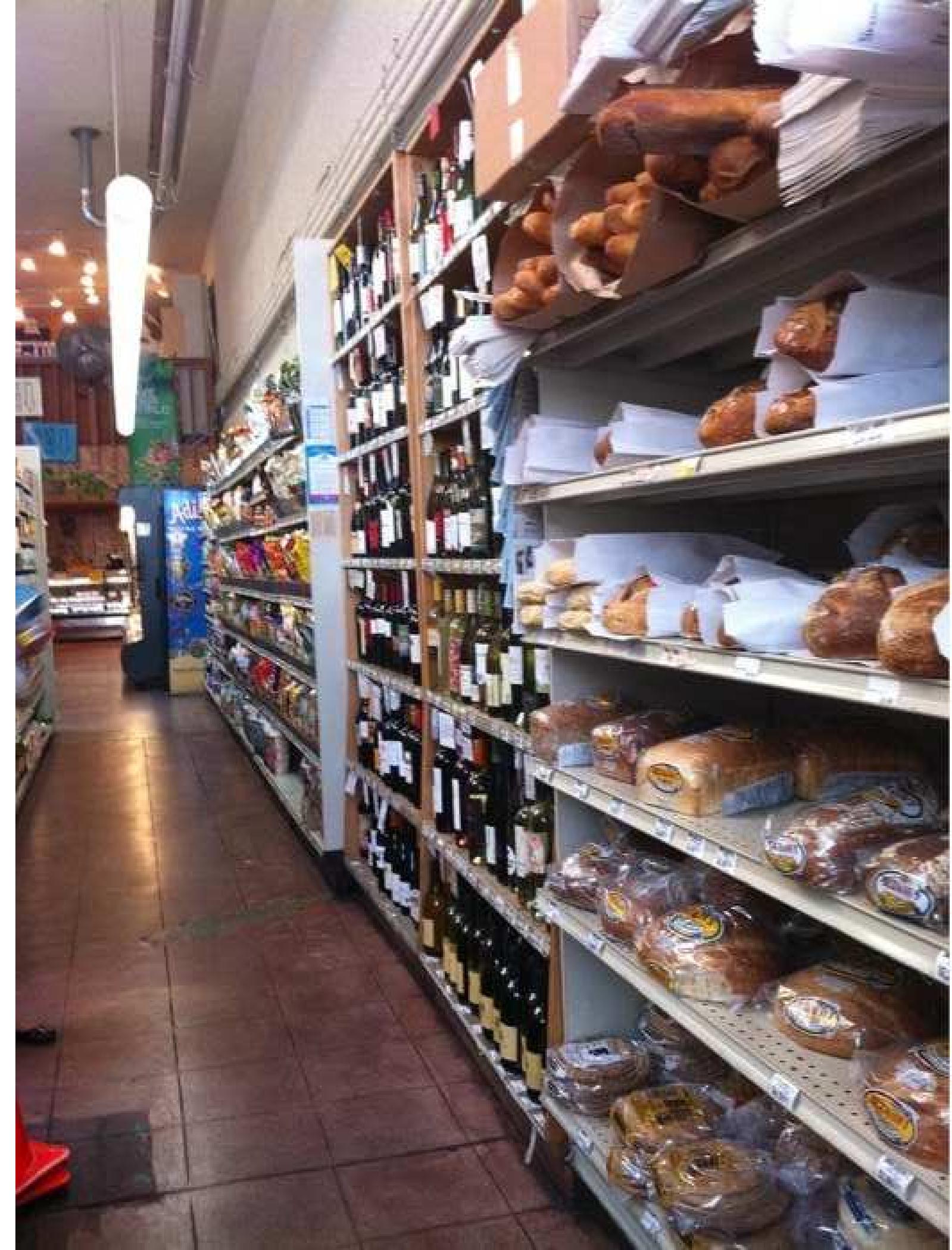
STRENGTH & E.E.
REPAIRS SKIN LESIONS
REPAIRS E.E.

ALLERGY & COLD
HOMEOPATHY
MEDICINES
NATURAL SUPPORT

GBR
TEA

EAST WEST







ORGANIC
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CNCU

ORGANIC
Butter Red Lettuce
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Marlo's
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'SOFT-BAKED' BISCOTTI IS WHAT MEN WHEN THEY

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ORIGINAL

Soft-Baked Biscotti
Classic Coffee Cake

Soft-Baked Biscotti
Chocolate Pumpkin Pie

Kimball Allen

Obituary



Kimball W Allen
9-29-19 to 9-17-11

Kimball Allen died in peace at home on September 17, just short of his 92nd birthday. He was born and raised in Burlington, Kansas and loved to tell stories of his childhood there.

Kimball was a bright and witty young man, but not especially motivated as a student. He dropped out of school after the 6th grade in the midst of the dust bowl and the depression and ventured west to San Francisco, a city he came to love dearly. He was able to find work as a Western Union messenger, a "gofer" with a gold mining company, and iron worker in the Martinolich ship yard.

During WWII he served in the 5th Army Marine Ship Repair Company and spent most of his time during the war in New Guinea and as part of the occupying force in Japan.

Returning from the war, Kimball and a partner purchased a 105 foot surplus boat, named it the Allen-Cody and started a shark fishing enterprise for the Vitamin A content of the liver which was in demand at that time.

Kimball was a problem solver, a creative genius and an inventor. He developed the first coin operated laundry mat. It was such a novel concept that he had to hire an attendant with a white uniform just to explain the concept and the use of the equipment. He soon had a small chain of laundry mats in San Francisco. He never stopped inventing and later he developed and patented a coin operated shoe shine machine which he manufactured himself.

In the late 60's, Kimball became interested in the natural food business, and he opened the Stanyan Street Natural Food Store. This became the first of a small chain of stores still well known as "The Real Food Company", which he and his wife Jane, owned and operated until 2003.

Kimball and Jane also opened the Noe Valley Bar and Grill in the mid 70's which was known both for its food and the carved redwood decor that Kimball designed and did much of the crafting himself.

They followed with another restaurant in 1980 called Kimball's which was next to the Opera House on Grove Street. Besides serving the patrons and staff of the arts, the restaurant became famous as a jazz club. They also opened Caf Allegro next door to the restaurant. In 1989 he and Jane opened Kimball's East in Emeryville where many of the great names in jazz played, including Herbie Hancock, Wynton Marsalis and Dizzy Gillespie among others.

In his 80's he opened Kimball's Carnival night club with an adjacent pool hall and sports bar in Jack London Square.

Into his 90's, Kimball continued to develop new ideas. Kimball always followed his curiosity wherever it led him. He remained brilliant and focused on his latest project up to the time of his passing.

Kimball is survived by his beloved wife of 35 years, Jane Annan Allen, sister Jeanice Pokorny, daughter Annilee Allen, devoted grandsons; Donald Shannon, Patrick Shannon, and Cheyenne Woods and their spouses, Alisa, Katie and Kim, and great grandchildren, Makayla, Hunter, Colton, and Shana. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Kim Allen and his sister, Ruth.

His family and friends will forever remember Kimball for his curious nature, his amazing sense of humor, his charm, his intellect and his integrity.

A remembrance gathering will take place. Friends interested in attending are asked to contact the family at friend.kimball@yahoo.com.

Published in San Francisco Chronicle from Sept. 22 to Sept. 25, 2011

Kimball Allen, opened Kimball's East, dies

Carolyn Jones, Chronicle Staff Writer

Published 4:00 am, Saturday, October 29, 2011



Photo: Jane Allen, Courtesy

Kimball Allen, founder of Kimball's East nightclub and the first laundromat in San Francisco, died Sept. 17, 2011.

Kimball Allen, whose business acumen brought the Bay Area such notable enterprises as a world-class jazz club and one of its first Laundromats, died of kidney failure Sept. 17 in Mill Valley. He was 91.

In his seven-decade career, Mr. Allen ran everything from a shark fishing business to a popular chain of health food stores. But he was best known for opening Kimball's East in Emeryville.

"When it was hot, Kimball's East was one of the best jazz clubs in the world," said John Faraola, who worked as box office manager there in the 1990s. "I don't think Kimball was much of a music guy himself, but what he really enjoyed was creating situations where other people could enjoy themselves."

Mr. Allen left his home in rural Kansas at age 16 to escape the Dust Bowl and landed in San Francisco, where his first job was as a Western Union bicycle messenger.

"He was paid 10 cents per telegram. He thought that was a phenomenal job because he got to wear a uniform *and* ride a bicycle," said Mr. Allen's wife, Jane Allen.

Mr. Allen served in the Army during World War II, repairing boats in the Pacific. When the war ended, he stayed overseas, starting a shark fishing business with friends that took him around the world. At that time, sharks were used as a source of vitamin A, although the business floundered when synthetic vitamin A was invented.

He returned to San Francisco and opened a Laundromat on 24th Street. Customers were so flummoxed by the concept, he hired a uniformed assistant to demonstrate the coin-operated washers and dryers.

In the late 1960s, Mr. Allen became interested in natural foods and, with his wife, opened the Real Food Co. on Stanyan Street. The store, which was among the first to offer a wide array of bulk foods and high-quality produce, quickly led to branches in Noe Valley, Polk Street and Sausalito. In its heyday, the chain had seven stores throughout the Bay Area.

One place he did not open a store, though, was Palo Alto.

"We were going to open a store there, but there was a little mom-and-pop store nearby and he knew we'd put them out of business. So he changed his mind," his wife said. "He had a good head for business, but he also had a lot of integrity."

Mr. Allen owned several restaurants, as well, including Noe Valley Bar and Grill and Kimball's, next to the Opera House on Van Ness Avenue. The problem at Kimball's, though, was that customers would clear out by 8 p.m. every night for opera performances, so Mr. Allen decided to bring in live music to attract late-night diners.

The format was such a success that Mr. Allen in 1989 opened Kimball's East, a spacious, 400-seat club with top-of-the-line acoustics and sound system. Herbie Hancock played opening night, Wynton Marsalis and his brothers were regulars, and Dizzy Gillespie gave one of his final performances there.

"For a period of time, you could hear all the great jazz musicians there," said Jesse Hamlin, jazz critic for The Chronicle. "Stan Getz, Freddie Hubbard, Lionel Hampton. ... They all played there."

Louisa Spier, a former publicist for Kimball's who now works for the San Francisco Symphony, described Mr. Allen as the consummate adventurer.

"He was a risk-taker, a gambler," she said. "You have to be to run a nightclub well. He was this sweet, grandfatherly man, but he was also a tough guy, very salt-of-the-earth."

Mr. Allen was working on new business ideas until his death, his wife said. His latest plans included a pingpong palace, an indoor flea market, dog day care and a new nightclub.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Allen is survived by a daughter, Annilee Allen of Clearlake; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. A daughter, Kim Allen, predeceased him.

Services will be private. The family prefers donations to any local food bank.

Filing Date: December 19, 2016
Case No.: 2017-000144LBR
Business Name: Real Food Company
Business Address: 2140 Polk Street
Zoning: NCD (Polk Street Neighborhood Commercial)/
65-A Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0572/018A
Applicant: Stephanie Hong, CEO
2140 Polk Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Real Food Company is an independent small business selling natural, organic, non-GMO, and gourmet foods in the Russian Hill neighborhood since 1976, although the business has operated in other locations since 1969. The three other business locations have since closed. Referred to as an “everyday farmer’s market,” Real Food Company offers natural and locally-sourced foods, including bulk food options, produce, and nutritional supplements to customers of the Russian Hill neighborhood and surrounding areas including Cow Hollow, Nob Hill, and Pacific Heights. The neighborhood market features a natural meat department, non-GMO and organic dairy, artisan cheeses, beer, and wine, and its inventory includes a number of local brands such as Niman Ranch, Guayaki, Nutiva, Amy’s Natural Foods, Alter Eco, and Numi Tea. The business prides itself in serving as an incubator for up-and-coming local, independently-owned food companies. Located in a 1930 commercial building designed in the Mediterranean Revival style, the building that houses Real Food Company features a mostly original storefront, complete with aluminum sash, angled vestibule entry, and transom, as well as historic tile at the bulkhead. Its most prominent architectural feature is its vertically-divided transom with turned mullions and rounded cut corners and applied ornament at the recessed area.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1969

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

Yes, Real Food Company qualifies in general for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets the eligibility Criteria; however there are outstanding questions about criterion ii and iii as described below:

- i. Real Food Company has operated for 48 years.

- ii. Real Food Company has served area residents as a walkable option for natural, local, and organic groceries for 48 years, and its historic storefront continues to contribute to the character and identity of the neighborhood. The Legacy Business application provided by Real Food Company, however, lacks specific examples and evidence to demonstrate its significance to the community in the present day (i.e. news articles that speak to the significance of the business itself or its importance to the community, letters of support, etc.). Reviews of the business on social media raise questions about the current quality of products and services provided, and site unusually high costs for food products.
- iii. According to Real Food Company, it is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define its legacy of offering natural, local, and organic groceries to the Russian Hill neighborhood and surrounding areas. While it appears the business provided a high level of service in the past, the documentation provided is lacking information as to whether or not the business has maintained that service in more recent years. Again, staff questions its current ability to maintain a high level of service and offerings due to the numerous negative reviews posted online, suggesting a significant change in features and traditions that define its legacy.

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

The business is associated with the tradition of independently-owned, local, walkable food markets and offers natural, organic, and local groceries for neighborhood residents.

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

The 1930 property is considered a "Category B Property" for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The building was recently evaluated by the Planning Department as part of its Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Survey, and was found to be individually significant for the architectural design of its storefront; the Survey, however, has not yet been adopted by the City.

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

No.

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

No.

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

The business' founding owner, Kimball Allen, was mentioned in an article by Carolyn Jones published by SF Gate on 10/29/11 called, "Kimball Allen, opened Kimball's East, dies." This article and an obituary of Kimball Allen mention Real Food Company, but the business is not the subject of the article. No other news articles or publications could be found that discussed Real Food Company.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 2140 Polk Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Tradition of offering of natural and locally-sourced foods, including bulk food options, fresh produce, natural meats, dairy, artisan cheeses, beer, and wine
- Practice of serving as an incubator for up-and-coming local, independently-owned food companies

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Historic storefront, including aluminum sash, angled vestibule entry, and transom, as well as historic tile at the bulkhead
- Vertically-divided transom with turned mullions and rounded cut corners and applied ornament at the recessed area



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 844 HEARING DATE JANUARY 18, 2017

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

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Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR REAL FOOD COMPANY, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2140 POLK STREET (BLOCK/LOT 0572/018A).

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 Russian Hill 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 January 18, 2017, 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 Real Food Company 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 Real Food Company.

Location (if applicable)

- 2140 Polk Street

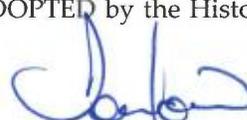
Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- Tradition of offering of natural and locally-sourced foods, including bulk food options, fresh produce, natural meats, dairy, artisan cheeses, beer, and wine
- Practice of serving as an incubator for up-and-coming local, independently-owned food companies
- Historic storefront, including aluminum sash, angled vestibule entry, and transom, as well as historic tile at the bulkhead
- Vertically-divided transom with turned mullions and rounded cut corners and applied ornament at the recessed area

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 2017-000144LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on January 18, 2017.



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Hyland, Johnck, Pearlman, Matsuda, Wolfram, Hasz

NOES: None

ABSENT: Johns

ADOPTED: January 18, 2017