



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: September 28, 2020

SAN BRUNO SUPERMARKET

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-054
Business Name: San Bruno Supermarket
Business Address: 2480 San Bruno Avenue
District: District 9
Applicant: Joe Lien, General Manager
Nomination Date: April 22, 2019
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

San Bruno Supermarket is a local grocery store specializing in Chinese and Southeast Asian products, founded in 1989 in the Portola Neighborhood. The structure was previously a market called Muscat's from the 1950s until 1989, when the Yen family purchased and rebranded the business to its present-day name, San Bruno Supermarket. The business specialized in primarily Chinese fare, and when it was sold in 2005 to the current owners, Andrew and Joanna Lien of the Hing Yue Corporation, very little changed to the business. The Lien family has maintained the business's name, aesthetic features, and specialty offerings, with one exception. After noticing changing demographics and greater diversity in the Portola neighborhood, the Liens decided to incorporate more Southeast Asian items, particularly products sources from the Philippines and Vietnam. The Portola Neighborhood has a rich and diverse customer base and the owners wish to strike balance between inclusively reflecting the changing community and staying true to the business's roots of offering Asian products.

The San Bruno Supermarket is a staple, family-owned grocery in the neighborhood, whose offerings of fresh produce, live seafood, and in-house meat butchery services cannot be found at other markets or chain establishments. The owner-manager, Joe Lien, is an active member of the Portola community and has served as the co-chair of the Portola Business Development Association for the past year. The owners are committed to maintaining the use as a predominantly Asian-serving grocery, and the original signage that adorns the exterior and interior; including the 1950s-era metal panels painted with abstract scenes that hang along the store's interior walls.

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, San Bruno Supermarket has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

2480 San Bruno Avenue from 1989 to Present (31 years)

CRITERION 2

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

Yes, San Bruno Supermarket has contributed to the history and identity of the Portola neighborhood and San Francisco.

Legacy Business Program

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City Hall Room 140
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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:

- The business is associated with specialty grocery items and cuisines, with a focus on Asian products and goods (specifically, Chinese and Southeast Asian items primarily from the Philippines and Vietnam).
- The property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status code of "B" (Unknown / Age Eligible), meaning, the structure has not been evaluated for its potential historic significance. The property is also within the boundaries of an ongoing Neighborhood Commercial Corridors Historic Resources Survey.
- A number of well-known local figures have visited the market to shop for goods, including notorious Raymond "Shrimp Boy" Chow, former Mayor Ed Lee, and Assessor-Recorder Carmen Chu.
- The store was a contributor to a Kickstarter campaign (a public funding platform) to fund the reactivation and restoration of the Avenue Theater façade and neon sign.

CRITERION 3

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

Yes, San Bruno Supermarket is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that San Bruno Supermarket 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:

- Use as a local market, specializing in Asian and Southeast Asian fare.
- Original 1950s-era features from the previous business, Muscat's, including: the murals painted on hexagonal metal sheets that adorn the interior's walls.
- The business's original 1989 awning and signage.

CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Grocery store.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include San Bruno Supermarket currently located at 2480 San Bruno Avenue in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Program Manager
Legacy Business Program

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Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

September 28, 2020

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Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for San Bruno Supermarket, currently located at 2480 San Bruno Avenue.

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 September 28, 2020, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes San Bruno Supermarket 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 San Bruno Supermarket.

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- Original 1950s-era features from the previous business, Muscat's, including: the murals painted on hexagonal metal sheets that adorn the interior's walls.
- The business's original 1989 awning and signage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain San Bruno Supermarket on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Grocery store.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on September 28, 2020.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-054
Business Name: San Bruno Supermarket
Business Address: 2480 San Bruno Avenue
District: District 9
Applicant: Joe Lien, General Manager
Nomination Date: April 22, 2019
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen

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?

Yes No

2480 San Bruno Avenue from 1989 to Present (31 years)

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

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?

Yes No

NOTES: N/A

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: August 19, 2020

Richard Kurylo
Program Manager, Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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Member, Board of Supervisors
District 9



City and County of San Francisco

HILLARY RONEN

April 22nd, 2019

Dear Director Kurylo

I am writing to nominate to the Legacy Business Registry San Bruno Market. First opened in the 1950s as Muscat's supermarket, it was purchased and renamed to San Bruno Market in 1989 by the Yen family who operated the business for 16 years, until it was purchased by the current owners, the Hing Yue Corporation, in 2005. The market is family run and the owner-manager, Joe Lien, is an active member of the Portola community.

San Bruno Market is a Chinese grocery store that stocks fresh produce, meats, and seafood, as well as specialty Asian products, and provides goods to residents who may not be able to travel to larger markets in other neighborhoods. It has historically served the Portola Chinese community and over time has expanded its selection of goods to serve its many Filipino and Vietnamese customers. Additionally, the market is frequented by the local Latino residents as well as newcomers to the neighborhood who are particularly attracted by the on-site butcher, and the owners continue to expand the business to better serve a broader and more diverse customer base.

The business is located on the main commercial corridor of the Portola, and maintains a storefront that adds character to the streetscape, rather than a large grade setback that might be used by larger chain stores. It maintains features from the original design, including hand painted chickens, fish, and produce to represent items for sale in the different sections of the store, and the owners plan to continue to restore more of the building's original 1950s features as a nod to the its architectural history.

Because San Bruno Market is a true neighborhood-serving business that is vital to the local community, it is my distinct honor to nominate it to become part of San Francisco's Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hillary Ronen".

Supervisor Hillary Ronen
San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information.

Please 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:	
San Bruno Supermarket	
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business):	
Andrew Lien and Joanna Lien	
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE NUMBER:
2480 San Bruno Ave. San Francisco, CA 94134	(415) 468-5788
	EMAIL ADDRESS:
MAILING ADDRESS – STREET ADDRESS:	MAILING ADDRESS – CITY AND STATE:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business Address	
	MAILING ADDRESS – ZIP CODE:
WEBSITE ADDRESS:	
www.sanbrunomarket.com	
FACEBOOK PAGE:	
TWITTER NAME:	
APPLICANT'S NAME:	APPLICANT'S TELEPHONE NUMBER:
Joe Lien	
APPLICANT'S TITLE:	APPLICANT'S EMAIL ADDRESS:
General Manager	
SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	
0376952	
SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (If applicable):	

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
2480 San Bruno Ave.	94134	1989
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	1989 to Present	

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:

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

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		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.

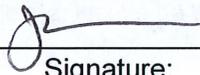
- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards 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.

Joe H. Lien

Name (Print):

11.2.18

Date:



Signature:

SAN BRUNO SUPERMARKET

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.

San Bruno Supermarket ("San Bruno Market"), located at 2480 San Bruno Avenue in the Portola neighborhood, was established as a grocery store under that name in 1989. Originally, the business at that location was a supermarket named Muscat's from the 1950s until 1989, when the business was sold to the Yen family, who renamed the business San Bruno Market.

The Yen family (Cindy Yen, Richard Yen, Elaine Yen and Dat Yen) operated the market for 16 years until 2005 when they sold the business to the Hing Yue Corporation consisting of Andrew Lien and Joanna Lien, the current owners. Hing Yue kept the name San Bruno Supermarket and has since been the owners of the business.

Under the Yen family's ownership, the market specialized in a smaller stock of primarily Chinese goods. When Hing Yue took over ownership of the market in 2005, there was a limited amount of merchandise in the market, so Hing Yue incorporated more Southeast Asian items, particularly from the Philippines and Vietnam.

The current mixture of goods is more diverse than it was prior to 2005 and includes fresh and live seafood (live turtles, frogs, crab, conch, razor clams, crawfish and prawns), a wide variety of fresh produce and an excellent selection of Japanese whiskies.

San Bruno Market has been a mainstay in the Portola District, predominately serving the local Asian community. Currently the market is working on expanding their business and reaching other members of the community by incorporating new employees and merchandise to reflect the current demographics of the neighborhood. They are expanding their online presence and looking to hire about 15 new employees to increase their business.

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

N/A.

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

The business is currently family-owned, and was previously family-owned before the purchase by Hing Yue. Hing Yue Corporation consists of Andrew Lien as President and Joanna Lien as Secretary.

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

The ownership history of San Bruno Supermarket is as follows:

1989 to 2005: Cindy Yen, Richard Yen, Elaine Yen, Dat Yen
2005 to Present: Hing Yue Corporation (Andrew Lien and Joanna Lien)

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Documentation of the existence of the business verifying it has been in operation for 30+ years is provided in this Legacy Business Registry application.

f. 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.

The historic resource status of the building that houses San Bruno Supermarket is classified by the Planning Department as Category B, Unknown / Age Eligible, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act.

CRITERION 2

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

San Bruno Market is currently a primarily Asian business operating in the predominately Asian neighborhood of the Portola. The Portola has been noted as being a Chinatown unto itself, and part of that is due to the strong presence of Asian-owned businesses such as San Bruno Market. The original business specialized in mostly Chinese goods, however that has since expanded to goods from several Southeast Asian countries such as the Philippines and Vietnam to reflect the changes in the neighborhood. The supermarket is a local neighborhood-serving business found in most neighborhoods, however in recent years it also strives to be more inclusive of the changing demographics of the area, as most neighborhood serving businesses do.

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

San Bruno Market took part in the reactivation of the Avenue Theater façade by creating a Kickstarter campaign to fund the refurbishing of the neon lights and exterior fixtures of the building. The fundraising campaign raised nearly \$10,000, which was contributed to façade improvements to enhance the streetscape of San Bruno Avenue and create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.

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

The business owners have no knowledge of any mentions of the business in an historical context at this time.

San Bruno Market has 155 reviews on Google Reviews, with an overall rating of 3.8 out of 5 stars. It is acknowledged that reviews on Yelp are mixed; however, the Yelp page is currently unclaimed by the business and most reviews are out of date (3 to 13 years old). On Facebook, San Bruno Market has a rating of 4.7 out of 5.

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

A small number of well-known local figures have visited the market to shop for goods. Some of these figures include former Mayor Ed Lee, notorious mobster Raymond Shrimp Boy Chow (who would shop in the store with his girlfriend and chat with Joe Lien), San Francisco Assessor-Recorder and former Supervisor Carmen Chu and former Chief of Police Greg Sur.

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

Current owner-manager Joe Lien is a very involved member of the Portola community. Joe has brought the market to its current state and is looking to be more inclusive of the changing demographics of the neighborhood. However, the business also remains true to its roots by serving the local Asian community which remains a strong presence in the area. Through the market, Joe has also helped with refurbishing the Avenue Theater façade, which is a local landmark central to the neighborhood, as well as being the co-chair of the Portola Business Development Association for the past year.

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

San Bruno Market predominately serves the local Asian community in the Portola District. Of this Asian community, there are many customers from China (including mainlanders along with Hong Kong immigrants), the Philippines and Vietnam. San Bruno Market also sees members of the local Latino community and new-arrivals to the neighborhood visit the store, particularly to shop for seafood and meats as these are the more popular items among these new customers.

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

Much of the market has been changed since the original Muscat's occupied the space in the 1950s, however some features remain from this original design. One interior fixture that remains is a metal framing that lines the upper walls of the business that has hand-painted chickens, fish and produce to represent the items for sale below. Joe has also expressed interest in redesigning the exterior of the business to reflect the original design of Muscat's market from the 1950s as a nod to the history of architecture and design in San Francisco.

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

San Bruno Market is a true neighborhood-serving business that is vital to the local community, particularly the local Asian community. If the business were to close, the community would be losing a primary source of fresh produce, seafood and meats that can only be found in certain areas of the city. San Bruno Market's butchery has nearly 50 whole pigs delivered weekly that are butchered and sold on site (every day except Sunday). If the business no longer existed, the area's Asian community would have to venture to Chinatown or the Richmond District in order to find similar items. In addition, the local market provides goods to residents who might not have the ability to venture to larger markets in other neighborhoods like Safeway or Whole Foods. Lastly, the market is a family-owned neighborhood-serving business that adds to the character and streetscape of the Portola district.

CRITERION 3

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

San Bruno Market is a Chinese grocery store that has a stock of live and fresh fish, meats and produce. The business goes through about 1,000 pounds of tilapia, 500 pounds of striped bass, and 1,000 pounds of crab weekly. As for meats, the business brings in 40-50 pigs weekly, and nearly 500-600 free-range chickens per week. The market also provides fresh produce in a large abundance as well. The building in which the business is located is on the main commercial corridor in the Portola of San Bruno Avenue and is 6,200 square feet.

Other items available at San Bruno Market are fresh and live seafood (live turtles, frogs, crab, conch, razor clams, crawfish and prawns), duck embryos, salted duck eggs, quail eggs, Chinese sausages, mooncakes, soft flour cakes, mochi and an excellent selection of Japanese whiskies. The store also carries a wide variety of fresh produce including dragonfruit, durian, Manila mangoes, jackfruit, longans, rambutans and Thai gananas.

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)

San Bruno Market has a tradition of maintaining fresh produce, live seafood and an in-house butchery. The market brings in a large stock of live seafood such as striped bass, tilapia, crab and lobster, as well as specialty items like bull frogs and turtles. The butcher shop is located on site as well and is a primary attraction for visitors to the market. Lastly, it maintains a stock of fresh produce that primarily serves the local community, much as a traditional neighborhood-serving supermarket does.

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 business maintains a traditional supermarket-esque interior, and has maintained some of the original features of the 1950s-era Muscat's market that previously operated the space. The metal mural fixtures on the upper interior walls of the business reflect these features. Furthermore, unlike many newer and chain supermarkets, the business is located in the thick of a busy commercial corridor and maintains a storefront, rather than having a large grade setback as stores such as Safeway or Whole Foods might have. Joe Lien also has plans to restore some the building to some of the original features from the 1950s such as the original awning and the top of the building, which had the business's name in branded lettering. Joe wishes to bring some of these features back to San Bruno Avenue by making these improvements to his store.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Documentation that demonstrates the business has been a grocery store for 30+ years is included in this Legacy Business Registry application.

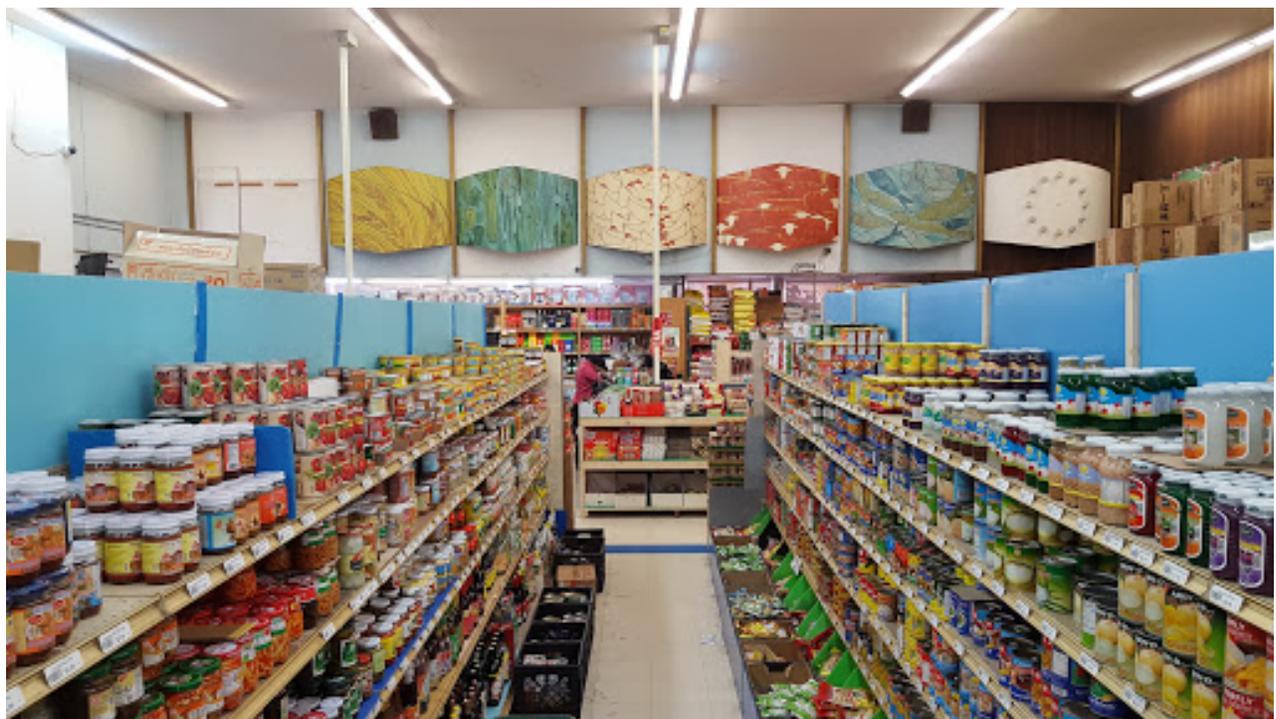


SAN BRUNO SUPERMARKET
海華超級市場

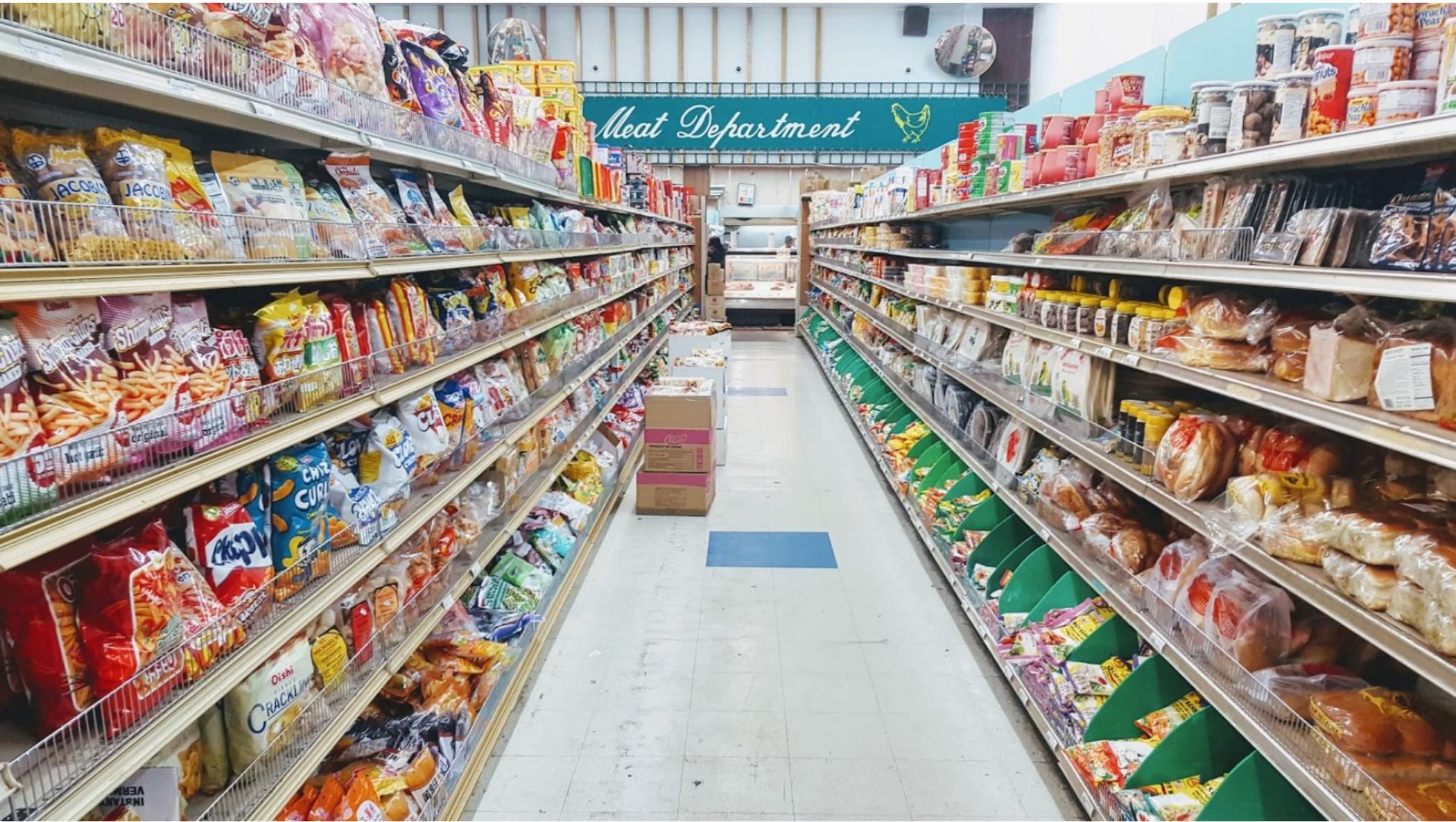
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LIVING IN CALIFORNIA

The Portola, San Francisco: Low-Slung Houses and Rising Prices

Neighborhood residents relish the quiet streets and are working to resurrect the area's heritage as a garden district.

By Debra Kamin

Published Nov. 26, 2019 Updated March 10, 2020

SAN FRANCISCO — When Scott Fletcher and his husband, Parth Vora, closed on their new home in the Portola last year, they had a moment of doubt. The couple had been living in the heart of San Francisco's trendy Mission District, in a three-bedroom, two-and-half-bathroom luxury condo, surrounded by cocktail bars and expensive restaurants.

The Portola felt a world apart from that life. Tucked into the city's southeastern corner, with one lone commercial strip and quiet residential streets lined with low-slung single-family homes, it didn't have the gut-punch beauty of so many of San Francisco's neighborhoods, or the hustle and vibrancy.



By The New York Times

What it did have was homes with large backyards and neighbors who brought over casseroles when they saw the couple's moving truck roll in. Any concerns about giving up access to hip restaurants or thriving night life were short-lived. For Mr. Fletcher, 52, an account manager who had grown tired of hearing late-night parties in his condo complex and waking up to trash on the streets in the Mission, the neighborhood felt like a breath of fresh air.

"Having a yard has replaced both the gym and therapy for me," Mr. Fletcher said. "I grew up on a farm in Ohio and worked in a greenhouse as a kid. I've always had an affinity for plants and flowers. So this has brought me so much joy."

He and Mr. Vora, 35, a data analyst, paid \$1.152 million for a two-bedroom, one-bathroom house built in the 1920s, with lemon trees growing in a mostly concrete-filled backyard.

They moved in at a notable time for the Portola; home values in the neighborhood have more than doubled over the last 10 years, according to data from the San Francisco Association of Realtors.



Downtown San Francisco seen from John McLaren Park, adjacent to the Portola. Peter Prato for The New York Times

Mr. Fletcher tore up the concrete out back and hauled in 13 tons of rocks — including pea gravel, flagstone and Sonoma moss rock — making space for hundreds of pollinating plants that attract bees and butterflies. “It’s like a little oasis,” he said.

The couple’s dog, a bernedoodle named Chai, loves the outdoor space, as well as her frequent walks to nearby McLaren Park.

For Mr. Fletcher, the move to the Portola meant becoming part of a long history of green thumbs. In the early 20th century, the neighborhood was a thriving flower district, with residents cultivating plant nurseries and capitalizing on a microclimate that blesses the area with frequent sunshine.

Barbara Fenech has lived in the Portola for 85 of her 86 years. Her parents, immigrants from Malta, brought her to the neighborhood when she was a baby, and she has watched the neighborhood decline and now begin to flourish again.

“When I was growing up, the Portola was like a city within the city: It was a walking neighborhood where everyone knew everyone,” she said.

Her childhood home was torn down to make room for Highway 101 in the 1950s — and that construction, coupled with the decline of the local flower industry, decimated the area’s commercial sector.

Ms. Fenech’s parents stayed in the neighborhood, eventually buying a three-bedroom house with wide bay windows on a 4,000-square-foot lot. Ms. Fenech still lives there, and the house is currently appraised at \$1.4 million.

“Now we don’t have an empty business on the entire block of San Bruno Avenue,” she said, referring to the neighborhood’s main drag.



The Portola is a neighborhood in transition. The population is now about 55 percent Asian, and San Bruno Avenue is home to Chinese shops and grocers, including the San Bruno Supermarket. Peter Prato for The New York Times

What You'll Find

The Portola is an area in transition. Originally a Jewish neighborhood, it was later settled by Italians and Maltese (the Maltese Consulate is still in the Portola), and now about half of the population is Asian.

The area is ringed by the Bayshore Freeway section of Highway 101 to the east and Interstate 280 to the north; John McLaren Park forms much of the southwestern border. Stores and restaurants are clustered along San Bruno Avenue, where Chinese grocers and noodle shops are slowly being joined by new businesses like Four Barrel Coffee and Churn Urban Creamery, an organic ice cream shop.

Most of the homes are two-story single-family detached structures built between 1920 and 1970, with backyards and ample garage space, a rarity in San Francisco.

According to the latest census data, the Portola is about 55 percent Asian, 26 percent Latino, 22 percent white and 5 percent black. About 65 percent of the residents own their homes, and the population of renters skews younger and more transient.



763 UNIVERSITY STREET | A four-bedroom, four-bath house, built in 1963 on 0.06 acres, listed for \$1.5 million. 415-810-8462 Peter Prato for The New York Times

Joe Lien, 45, is a Vietnamese immigrant and the owner of the San Bruno Supermarket, an Asian grocery on San Bruno Avenue that has been in his family for 16 years.

Most older residents of the neighborhood, he said, have welcomed the changes. “Many older couples who come into our store talk about how they can sell their home and retire,” Mr. Lien said. “And it’s all good.”

But as the neighborhood is changing, he noted, his market must also change. He is planning to install a hot-food area and space for more deli items, a process he calls “an Americanization.”

And as housing prices increase, more of the new homeowners are white or non-Asian. Alexander Hobbs, 37, and his husband, Jonathan McKee, 39, moved to the Portola five years ago from the Castro, thinking it would be a good investment. The couple paid \$772,000 for a four-bedroom, two-bathroom midcentury rowhouse, and their calculations were right: The home is now worth about \$1.5 million.



130 FELTON STREET | A four-bedroom, two-bath house, built in 1934 on 0.06 acres, listed for \$1.25 million. 650-225-0603 Peter Prato for The New York Times

After they arrived, they were excited to learn about the Portola Garden Tour, a now 13-year-old tradition in which neighborhood residents open their backyard gardens to the community. Mr. Hobbs, an architect, decided to do his part to unearth the neighborhood’s gardening heritage, much of which has been cemented over in the past half-century. He joined the Portola Neighborhood Association and began writing to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, requesting permits to plant trees and landscape public spaces.

“We’re trying to rebuild this garden district identity. Because who doesn’t like flowers?” he said.

Along San Bruno Avenue, power lines have been buried and new trees planted. And a tiny public garden, the Burrows Pocket Park, is blooming next to a new coffee shop.

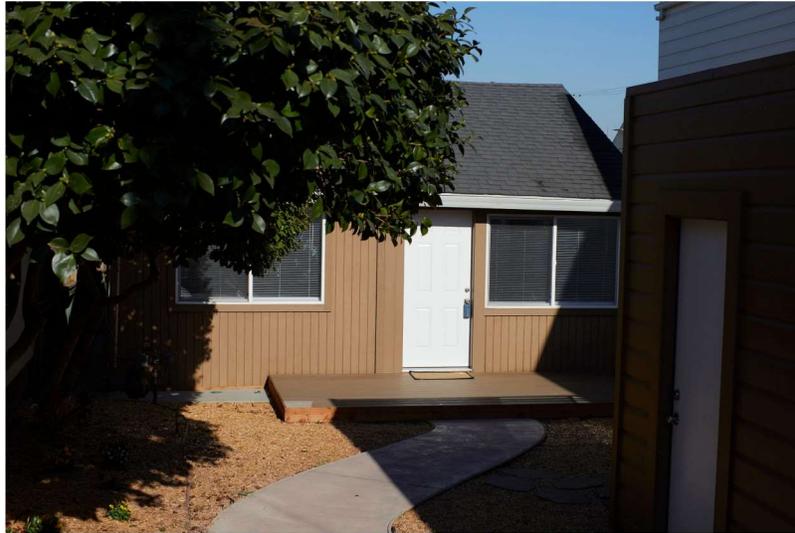


147 SILLIMAN STREET | A three-bedroom, one-bath house, built in 1905 on 0.04 acres, listed for \$898,000. 650-627-3711 Peter Prato for The New York Times

What You’ll Pay

In 2018, the median sales price of a home in the Portola was \$1.185 million; in 2019, through mid-November, the median sales price was \$1.2 million, according to information from the San Francisco Association of Realtors.

Monthly rents for one- and two-bedroom homes run in the high \$3,000s.



224 WOOLSEY STREET | A two-bedroom, one-bath house, built in 1900 on 0.06 acres, listed for \$888,888. 650-834-0572 Peter Prato for The New York Times

The Vibe

Phillip Hua, 40, an artist, moved to the Portola in 2013 with his husband, Eric Rottenberg, 50, because he wanted more space — specifically, a property large enough to have an art studio on site. He also joined the Portola Neighborhood Association, tapping into an alter ego — a drag queen named Severa Wang — for an annual fund-raiser called Drag Queen Bingo.

“There’s such a strong sense of community here,” he said. “We still definitely leave the neighborhood when we want to go out to dinner or have night life, but we wouldn’t trade it.”



Breakfast at Tiffany’s, a cheerful brunch spot known for its hearty tater-tot skillet, has occupied the same corner since 1978. Peter Prato for The New York Times

Will and Felicia Hall, both 43, chose the neighborhood for its family-friendly vibe in 2018, selling their house in Bernal Heights for \$2.1 million and paying \$1.625 million for a three-bedroom home in the Portola.

Mr. Hall, a fund-raiser, and his wife, a dermatologist, have two sons who are 8 and 6, and they enjoy walking and biking to the many parks in the area, including McLaren Park and the Palega playground.

“The homes aren’t as architecturally pleasing as Noe Valley or Pacific Heights,” Mr. Hall said, referring to the Victorian rowhouses that line those neighborhoods’ streets. “But the price point is right.”

He added: “We’ve had neighbors come bring us pie. We don’t have that cool, thriving night-life strip yet, but I think it’s going to happen soon.”



In 2016, the Portola got its own small-batch brewery: Ferment. Drink. Repeat. Peter Prato for The New York Times

The Schools

The San Francisco Unified School District operates two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school in the Portola.

Hillcrest Elementary and Edward R. Taylor Elementary serve students from kindergarten through fifth grade; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School serves students from sixth through eighth grade; and the Phillip and Sala Burton Academic High School serves grades nine through 12.

On state proficiency exams, 39.7 percent of Hillcrest third-grade students and 52.57 percent of Edward R. Taylor third-grade students met proficiency standards in English language arts, compared with 52.3 percent of students districtwide; 46.47 percent of Hillcrest third-grade students and 56.39 percent of Edward R. Taylor third-grade students met proficiency standards in mathematics, compared with 58.4 percent of students districtwide.

At Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, 34.53 percent of eighth-grade students met English standards, compared with 56.96 percent of students districtwide; 35.22 percent met standards in math, compared with 49.81 percent districtwide.

And at Phillip and Sala Burton Academic High School, 58.64 percent of 11th-grade students met standards in English, compared with 63.12 percent of students districtwide; 29.6 percent of 11th-grade students met standards in math, compared with 48.61 percent of students districtwide.

The Commute

Tucked between two highways, the Portola is a 20-minute drive from downtown San Francisco and a 40-minute drive from Silicon Valley, Palo Alto and Mountain View. Glen Park Station, which offers access to four lines of the BART system, is a 10-minute drive away.



Public spaces in the Portola are being spruced up, and along San Bruno Avenue, power lines have been buried and new trees have been planted. Peter Prato for The New York Times

The History

The Portola's greenhouses were built in the 1920s, and for decades most of San Francisco's cut flowers were from flower fields in the neighborhood. The University Mound greenhouses, built by a team of brothers, produced marigolds, dahlias and seven types of roses, according to the Green House Project, which is working to revive the Portola's green identity. Those greenhouses were shut down in the 1990s, but several of the structures still stand. A 2016 resolution from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors officially recognized the neighborhood as the city's garden district.

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LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: September 16, 2020

Filing Date: August 19, 2020
Case No.: 2020-007534LBR
Business Name: San Bruno Supermarket
Business Address: 2480 San Bruno Avenue
Zoning: NCD (San Bruno Avenue Neighborhood Commerical District) Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 5925/034
Applicant: Joe Lien
2480 San Bruno Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Located In: District 9
Staff Contact: Katherine Wilborn – 658-652-7355
Katherine.Wilborn@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

San Bruno Supermarket is a local grocery store specializing in Chinese and Southeast Asian products, founded in 1989 in the Portola Neighborhood. The structure was previously a market called Muscat's from the 1950s until 1989, when the Yen family purchased and rebranded the business to its present-day name, San Bruno Supermarket. The business specialized in primarily Chinese fare, and when it was sold in 2005 to the current owners, Andrew and Joanna Lien of the Hing Yue Corporation, very little changed to the business. The Lien family has maintained the business's name, aesthetic features, and specialty offerings, with one exception. After noticing changing demographics and greater diversity in the Portola neighborhood, the Liens decided to incorporate more Southeast Asian items, particularly products sources from the Philippines and Vietnam. The Portola Neighborhood has a rich and diverse customer base and the owners wish to strike balance between inclusively reflecting the changing community and staying true to the business's roots of offering Asian products. The San Bruno Supermarket is a staple, family-owned grocery in the neighborhood, whose offerings of fresh produce,

live seafood, and in-house meat butchery services cannot be found at other markets or chain establishments. The owner-manager, Joe Lien is an active member of the Portola community and has served as the co-chair of the Portola Business Development Association for the past year. The owners are committed to maintaining the use as a predominantly Asian-serving grocery, and the original signage that adorns the exterior and interior; including, the 1950s-era metal panels painted with abstract scenes that hang along the store's interior walls.

The business is located in a Category B (Unknown / Age Eligible) structure on the west side of San Bruno Avenue between Felton and Silliman Streets. It is within the San Bruno Avenue NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District and is within an ongoing Neighborhood Commercial Corridor

Staff Analysis

REVIEW CRITERIA

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1989.

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

Yes. San Bruno Supermarket qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. San Bruno Supermarket has operated continuously in San Francisco for 31 years.
- ii. San Bruno Supermarket has contributed to the history and identity of the Excelsior / Portola neighborhood and San Francisco.
- iii. San Bruno Supermarket is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

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

Yes. The business is associated with specialty grocery items and cuisines, with a focus on Asian products and goods (specifically, Chinese and Southeast Asian items primarily from the Philippines and Vietnam).

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

No, however a number of well-known local figures have visited the market to shop for goods, including notorious mobster Raymond "Shrimp Boy" Chow, former Mayor Ed Lee, and former Supervisor Carmen Chu. The property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status code of "B" (Unknown / Age Eligible), meaning, the structure has not been evaluated for its potential historic significance. The property is also within the boundaries of an ongoing Neighborhood Commercial Corridors Historic Resources Survey.

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

No, not as of the date of this Executive Summary.

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

No, not as of the date of this Executive Summary.

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

No. However, the store was a contributor to a Kickstarter campaign (a public funding platform) to fund the reactivation and restoration of the Avenue Theater façade and neon sign.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

LOCATION(S) ASSOCIATED WITH THE BUSINESS:

- 2480 San Bruno Avenue

RECOMMENDED BY APPLICANT

- Use as a local market, specializing in Asian and Southeast Asian fare.
- Original 1950s-era features from the previous business, Muscat's, including: the murals painted on hexagonal metal sheets that adorn the interior's walls
- The business's original 1989 awning and signage

Additional Recommended by Staff

- None

Basis for Recommendation

The Department recommends the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a resolution recommending the business listed above be adopted by the Small Business Commission to the Legacy Business Registry.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Resolution

Legacy Business Registry Application:

- Application Review Sheet
- Section 1 – Business / Applicant Information
- Section 2 – Business Location(s)
- Section 3 – Disclosure Statement
- Section 4 – Written Historical Narrative
 - Criterion 1 – History and Description of Business
 - Criterion 2 – Contribution to Local History
 - Criterion 3 – Business Characteristics
- Contextual Photographs and Background Documentation



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 1138

HEARING DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

Case No.: 2020-007534LBR
Business Name: San Bruno Supermarket
Business Address: 2480 San Bruno Avenue
Zoning: NCD (San Bruno Avenue Neighborhood Commercial District) Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 5925/034
Applicant: Joe Lien
2480 San Bruno Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Located In: District 9
Staff Contact: Katherine Wilborn – 658-652-7355
Katherine.Wilborn@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR 2480 SAN BRUNO AVE CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2480 SAN BRUNO AVE, BLOCK/LOT 5925/034.

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 City's history and identity; and

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

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on September 16, 2020, 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 San Bruno Supermarket 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 San Bruno Supermarket.

Location(s):

- *2480 San Bruno Avenue*

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- *Use as a local market, specializing in Asian and Southeast Asian fare.*
- *Original 1950s-era features from the previous business, Muscat's, including: the murals painted on hexagonal metal sheets that adorn the interior's walls*
- *The business's original 1989 awning and signage*

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 to the Office of Small Business on September 16, 2020



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Black, Foley, Johns, Pearlman, So, Matsuda, Hyland

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: September 16, 2020