

Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE APRIL 8, 2019

UPTOWN

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-034
Business Name: Uptown
Business Address: 200 Capp Street
District: District 9
Applicant: Shae Green, Partner
Nomination Date: February 20, 2019
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

The bar, Uptown, was opened in late December 1984 by G. Scott Ellsworth. Reconstructed in the immediate aftermath of the 1906 earthquake, Uptown's building is believed to have housed a neighborhood bar continuously since its construction in 1910. Ellsworth's intention with the bar was to create a true community-wide public house. Scott encouraged spirited conversation and debate and impromptu performances by the bar's many artistic and musical patrons, and the bar featured the work of local painters and craftsmen on its walls. Uptown became a favorite location for reading and discussion groups on weekend afternoons and in the early evenings. Since Uptown became a mainstay of the Mission's artistic community in the '80s and '90s, many locally-prominent (and in some cases nationally prominent) musicians, artists and writers were (and are) regulars of the bar and count themselves as "Friends of Uptown."

Ellsworth resisted making physical changes to the bar as the city and the neighborhood changed, making patrons appreciate Uptown as an anchor to the Mission's past. If an Uptown patron had moved away in 1987 and returned for the first time in 2018, his or her impression would be that the bar looked and felt almost exactly the same way it did when they were last inside. When Ellsworth passed away suddenly in April of 2014, his sister, as executor of his estate, understood that her brother wanted the business to be a community gathering spot, and she made it possible for the core long-term employees and a close friend of Ellsworth's to buy Uptown and continue its neighborhood character and place in the Mission community. The new ownership group took possession in 2015.

From its inception through the '90s, Uptown opened at noon every weekday to serve people who worked in this light-industrial part of the Mission, and locals who worked elsewhere but made their way home for lunch. Like the bar's founder, the current Uptown ownership is acutely sensitive to the institutional importance, and fragility, of neighborhood taverns. This was evident after the Lexington Club, the last remaining lesbian bar in the Mission, was forced to close when it lost its lease in 2015. The new Uptown owners hired some former Lexington bartenders and reached out to the old regulars. Today, a significant number of former Lexington patrons regularly visit Uptown, and the bar hosts a monthly Lex "reunion night."

The business is located on the southwest corner of Capp and 17th S streets in the Mission neighborhood.





OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

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:

200 Capp Street from 1984 to 2019 (35 years in December)

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 Mission neighborhood's history and identity.

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

- Uptown has contributed to the history and identity of the Mission neighborhood and San Francisco.
- Uptown is associated with the tradition of public houses.
- This building is individually significant under California Register of Historical Resources Criterion 1 (Events), because it is associated with the broad patterns of physical rebuilding and neighborhood "reconstruction" following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire in San Francisco's Mission District; and Criterion 3 (Architecture/Design), because it exhibits physical designs, features, materials, and/or craftsmanship that embody the distinctive characteristics and high artistic expression of "Edwardian-era" architecture from the early 20th century.
- In 1992, music magazine Superdope featured Uptown (See printed article "Drinking in San Francisco"). Over the years, Uptown has been acknowledged as a favorite hangout by local publications, including: Best Hipster Mission Bar (2009 SF Weekly), Best Bar That Has Been A Bar Since Before 1915 (2015 SF Weekly), Where Bartenders Drink (2015 Thrillist).

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

Yes, Uptown is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Uptown 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:

- Pool table.
- Lounge area.
- Jukebox.
- Stained glass window above the bar.
- Large canvas painting and work by local artists.
- Exterior sign.
- December crafts fair.





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

- Bar's birthday and "Founder's Day" celebrations.
- Corner and side storefront entries and windows.

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.

- Bar.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Uptown currently located at 200 Capp Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Program Manager
Legacy Business Program



Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE APRIL 8, 2019

UPTOWN

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

<i>Application No.:</i>	LBR-2018-19-034
<i>Business Name:</i>	Uptown
<i>Business Address:</i>	200 Capp Street
<i>District:</i>	District 9
<i>Applicant:</i>	Shae Green, Partner
<i>Nomination Date:</i>	February 20, 2019
<i>Nominated By:</i>	Supervisor Hillary Ronen
<i>Staff Contact:</i>	Richard Kurylo legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR UPTOWN, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 200 CAPP 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 April 8, 2019, 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
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Uptown 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 Uptown:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Pool table.
- Lounge area.
- Jukebox.
- Stained glass window above the bar.
- Large canvas painting and work by local artists.
- Exterior sign.
- December crafts fair.
- Bar's birthday and "Founder's Day" celebrations.
- Corner and side storefront entries and windows.

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

- Bar.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on April 8, 2019.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-034
Business Name: Uptown
Business Address: 200 Capp Street
District: District 9
Applicant: Shae Green, Partner
Nomination Date: February 20, 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? X Yes No

200 Capp Street from 1984 to 2019 (35 years in December)

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: N/A

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: March 6, 2019

Richard Kurylo
Program Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 9



City and County of San Francisco

HILLARY RONEN

February 20th, 2019

Dear Director Kurylo

I am writing to nominate to the Legacy Business Registry, Uptown. Founded in 1984, Uptown has served as a neighborhood bar that doubles as a creative space and boasts a diverse and inclusive environment that truly reflects the spirit of the Mission District. Its unique layout includes features such as a lounge area, retro jukebox and pool table for everyone's enjoyment.

Uptown actively supports its home district by offering a safe space for open discussion and prides itself in building a community of people who attend on a regular basis and have a special connection to the business. Additionally it preserves the artistic soul of its neighborhood by exhibiting works from resident artists whether they be musicians, painters or other craftsmen. It has been home to multiple celebrations adored by locals including its annual Holiday Craft Fair, and monthly "Uptown Homos" reunion parties for members of the former Lexington Club. Furthermore, the building is of historical significance by the standards of the California Register of Historical Resources due to its architectural style dating back to the post-1906 earthquake reconstruction era. The Mission District has been rapidly changing over the past years and similar bars have been forced out, leaving an empty space in the collective memory of an entire geographical sector and generations of San Franciscans. Uptown is one of the last remaining bastions of the funky and free spirited history of the area. To this day, it embodies the vision of its founder of creating a working class "public house" that is also a center of creativity and innovation.

Because Uptown is a cherished space in the Mission, it is my distinct honor to nominate them 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. 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:		
Uptown		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Tim Butler, Ken Cohen, Jessica Gensley, Shae Green, Jennie Mellenbruch, John Nero, Peter Turner (BYODB LLC)		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:	
200 Capp Street San Francisco, CA 94110	(415)861-8231	
	EMAIL:	
	None	
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
None	Instagr: uptownsanfrancisco	Uptown

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Shae Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
Partner	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
[REDACTED]	([REDACTED]) [REDACTED]
	EMAIL:
	[REDACTED]

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
1016417	201500910423

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
200 Capp Street, San Francisco, CA	94110	12-26-84
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	12-26-84 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:
		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.

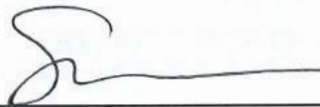
In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

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.

Shae Green

1-25-19



Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

UPTOWN (MISSION BAR)

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.

The bar Uptown, located at 200 Capp Street, was born on Boxing Day in 1984 when founder G. Scott Ellsworth (Scott) closed escrow and got keys to the front door. He put word out to his friends to come down and celebrate, and they drank and fested all night until Scott flew to Chicago the next morning for his grandmother's funeral. The bar opened to the general public that last week of December 1984, and a Grand Opening was held in early January.

Reconstructed in the immediate aftermath of the 1906 earthquake, Uptown's home at the southwest corner of Capp and 17th streets is considered "individually significant" under California Register of Historical Resources. Consistent with the history and character of the Mission, it is also believed to have housed a neighborhood bar continuously since its construction in 1910.

The Mission was grittier and more diverse in the mid-1980s, home to many artists and musicians because of its relative affordability, and to many working people. These were Uptown's primary audience, so to speak, but Scott wanted it to be a bar for the entire neighborhood, and a true community-wide public house. Erudite and extremely well-read, Scott encouraged spirited conversation and debate and impromptu performances by the bar's many artistic and musical patrons, and the bar featured the work of local painters and craftsmen on its walls. Uptown became a favorite location for reading and discussion groups on weekend afternoons and in the early evenings. That continues to be true to this day.

Scott remained true to his vision for Uptown — to make and keep it community-centered and a true neighborhood bar — from 1984 onward. Scott took some grief from friends and patrons because he resisted making physical changes to the bar. But as the city and the neighborhood changed, patrons appreciated Uptown even more as an anchor to the Mission's past, yet also a beacon to a future in which the past would be remembered, not eviscerated. When Scott passed away suddenly, in April of 2014, his sister, as executor of his estate, understood that Scott wanted his business to be a community gathering spot, and she made it possible for the core long-term employees and a close friend of Scott's to buy Uptown in order to continue its neighborhood character and place in the Mission community. The new ownership group took possession in 2015.

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

Uptown has operated continuously with no significant breaks since it opened in late 1984. After Scott's unexpected death in April 2014, the bar remained open under the direction of Scott's sister, Pam Ellsworth, until the current ownership group (consisting of core long-time employees and one of Scott's closest friends) took control in July of 2015.

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

The business is not a family-owned business, defined here as any business in which two or more family members are involved and the majority of ownership or control lies within a family. However, the present owners are like family and were close to Scott. Ken, one of the present owners, knew Scott for over 35 years. A majority of the other present owners worked for Scott for at least 15-20 years. It was not uncommon to hang out in Scott's garden, drinking tea, looking at his newest plant or to gather at the Rite Spot or Makeout Room for the music show of a bar customer or friend. Thanksgivings are celebrated together, as well as birthdays, weddings and other life markers.

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

The ownership history of (the business) is as follows:

1984 to 2014:	G. Scott Ellsworth
2014 to 2015:	Pam Ellsworth
2015 to Present:	BYODB LLC (Tim Butler, Ken Cohen, Jessica Gensley, Shae Green, Jennie Mellenbruch, John Nero, Peter Turner)

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, including a copy of the original lease. Although dated January 1985, the lease was signed in late 1984, and Scott took possession on December 26 (Boxing Day) in 1984.

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 at 200-218 Capp Street is classified by the Planning Department as Category A, Historic Resource Present, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. The building was constructed in 1910 and retains all or most aspects of historic design, materials and workmanship. The building is individually significant under California Register of Historical Resources Criterion 1 (Events), because it is associated with the broad patterns of physical rebuilding and neighborhood "reconstruction" following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire in San Francisco's Mission District; and Criterion 3 (Architecture/Design), because it exhibits physical designs, features, materials, and/or craftsmanship that embody the distinctive characteristics and high artistic expression of "Edwardian-era" architecture from the early 20th century.

CRITERION 2

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

Uptown has been part of the fabric of the Mission for over 35 years, as a center for good conversation, spirited debate, artistic expression and fun. If you know someone aged 40 to 65 who has lived in San Francisco for more than 20 years, they almost certainly have an "Uptown story," probably a number of them. At this point, the bar is possibly the oldest continuously-operated neighborhood bar in the Mission. Notably, one of the first blogs about life in the revitalized Mission, Uptown Almanac (still in operation), was expressly named for the bar, because the blog's founder loved it and believed it best reflected the neighborhood's eccentric character and appeal.

Uptown has long been a favorite spot for discussion groups and book clubs to meet, facilitated by the couches and tables that the bar has always maintained at the back of its main room. Founder Scott Ellsworth encouraged enlightened discourse, and that has remained a large part of Uptown's legacy.

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

Uptown has hosted many events over the years. Every Oscars Award Show, Super Bowl and major election is celebrated with buffets of tamales or barbecue and drink specials. On the second Wednesday of each month, Uptown hosts "Uptown Homos," a reunion party for the community of the now shuttered Lexington Club. Every year, Uptown opens early to provide the best indoor seating to view the Carnival Parade. Each December, Uptown invites community artists and craftspeople to sell their wares at our Holiday Craft Fair. For a while in the 2000s, Uptown hosted a weekly open night comedy show.

Uptown has two annual events that celebrate the Uptown community – an anniversary party on December 26th to commemorate the day the bar opened and Founders Day around April 25th, which is Scott's birthday.

Uptown held an art auction in 2017 to benefit the Saint James Infirmary, a non-profit health and safety clinic for sex workers. Uptown has sponsored San Francisco Cinematheque, which has showcased experimental film for over 50 years.

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

In 1992, music magazine Superdope featured Uptown (See printed article "Drinking in San Francisco"). Over the years, Uptown has been acknowledged as a favorite hang out by local publications, including: Best Hipster Mission Bar (2009 SF Weekly), Best Bar That Has Been A Bar Since Before 1915 (2015 SF Weekly), Where Bartenders Drink (2015 Thrillist).

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

Since Uptown became a mainstay of the Mission's artistic community in the 80s and 90s, many locally-prominent (and in some cases nationally prominent) musicians, artists and writers were (and are) regulars of the bar and count themselves as "Friends of Uptown." This includes artist and musician Deborah Iyall (Romeo Void) during the period she and her band were at the top of their fame, Punk rock musicians Steve DePace and Bruno de Smartass (Flipper), various writers associated with the Bay Guardian (including Tim Redmond, Bruce Brugmann), Beat poet and artist Jack Micheline, and such artists as Kal Spelretch and Chris Johanson. Members of the collective Survival Research Lab, sometimes including artist Mark Pauline, met weekly at Uptown during the 90s and into the 2000s.

Other notable artists, musicians and writers who have frequently given their custom to Uptown over the last 35 years include Matt Gonzales (during his mayoral run), Warren Hinckle (got a haircut at Uptown), Michael Stipe of REM (while recording nearby), Duff McKagan (musician), musicians Bill Spooner Rick Anderson (The Tubes), Tommy Guerrero (musician, famous skateboarder), Kelley Stoltz (musician), Virgil Shaw (musician), Sonny Smith (musician), Wee Man (Jackass), Margo St. James (COYOTE founder), Michelle Tea (author), and William T. Volmann (author).

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

Uptown is committed to serving the entire Mission community (and visitors to the neighborhood), in the old tradition of a "public house." This ethos was instilled by its founder from the bar's beginnings in 1984, and continues to this day.

To give but one example, from its inception through the '90s, Uptown opened at noon every weekday to serve people who worked in this light-industrial part of the Mission, and locals who worked elsewhere but made their way home for lunch. This was not especially profitable, and Scott took the opening shift himself because he did not deem it worthwhile to pay someone else to do it; but he was adamant that the bar should be open for those neighbors who wanted to eat, shoot a game of pool and maybe have a beer before heading back to work. Because that

was what a neighborhood bar was supposed to do — serve its neighbors, broadly defined. In the same spirit, Uptown has historically featured the work of local artists (many of them bar regulars), and from time-to-time, performances by local musicians.

Like the bar's founder, the current Uptown ownership is acutely sensitive to the institutional importance, and fragility, of neighborhood taverns. This was evident after the Lexington Club, the last remaining lesbian bar in the Mission, was forced to close when it lost its lease in 2015. The new Uptown owners hired some former Lex bartenders and reached out to the old regulars. Today, a significant number of former Lex patrons regularly give their custom to Uptown, and the bar hosts a monthly Lex "reunion night."

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

Uptown proudly serves the entire Mission community including neighbors, Mission residents, and visitors to the neighborhood. In the beginning, Uptown's primary audience was artists and musicians and working people. Today it has expanded to include the changing nature of the neighborhood. Everyone is welcome as long as they respect one another.

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

The exterior sign is a remake of the original that hung above the entrance for years.

A stained-glass window that was originally installed on the Capp Street side of the building had to be removed due to damage. It was restored, framed and now hangs above the bar in the interior.

An extremely large canvas hangs on the back wall near the couch area. It's a bizarre rendering of an Elvis-like man playing pinball in an imaginary Uptown and is an icon and customer favorite. During the recent earthquake retrofit we had to temporarily take it down. Customers were horrified, thinking that perhaps it was gone for good, but comforted when it returned to its reign above the gathering area.

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

It is well known that neighborhood (sometimes called "dive") bars are an endangered breed in San Francisco, and especially in the Mission District. Although this trend accelerated and became more prominent in the public's consciousness during the "Mission Gold Rush" of approximately 2013-2015, it actually goes back decades, as bars here and there were converted into restaurants or other uses. Today, the numerous new cocktail bars on Valencia Street (many of which were able to circumvent the City's restriction on new liquor licenses in the Mission by exploiting ABC loopholes) create an even more challenging environment, by pushing up rents and creating competition for customers.

This is not meant to insult cocktail bars or suggest that they do not have their place in the community and the market. Everyone enjoys an artisanal cocktail now and then. But cocktail bars do not create a sense of community, or try to anchor its patrons to the neighborhood. Cocktail bars may get regular customers, but they do not develop, or even try to develop, a community of "regulars." By contrast, that is usually the focus of a neighborhood bar. It certainly is Uptown's focus. And without such anchors, the neighborhood effectively loses its past.

CRITERION 3

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

Uptown is a gathering place for neighbors, Mission residents, and visitors to the neighborhood (especially those visitors who want to get a sense of what the Mission has been historically). The pool table is also an important feature, since pool is a classic neighborhood bar activity, and fewer and fewer Mission bars have them. The business also attempts to maintain a sense of casual comfort with the lounge area at the back of its main room, where patrons can sit around a coffee table on couches and ottomans.

Uptown's jukebox is highly praised, and has traditionally included music of local bands. In 2019, Foursquare listed Uptown among the 13 Best Places with a Jukebox. In 2018, Uptown was the runner up in 48 Hills Best Jukebox category. The jukebox is the variety that plays CDs, not the dreaded internet jukebox. The popularity of the jukebox must be due to the range of its selections in genre and release date. The offerings run the gamut – everything from Rush to Janelle Monae. Seasonally, CDs are added – think Christmas country compilations and Halloween "mixed tapes" including The Cramps and the Rocky Horror Picture Show tracks.

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

As it has since its inception in 1984, the bar encourages enlightened conversation and debate. The "lounge" area in the back of its main room is ideal for groups of friends to get together, as well as for meetings of organized book clubs and discussion groups. Uptown features the work of local artists on its walls (much of it work that Scott collected during the last 30 years of his life), and holds a crafts fair every December to allow local artists and craftsmen to show and sell their work.

Since the current ownership group took possession in 2015 (following the founder's death), it has celebrated the bar's birthday each Boxing Day. Uptown also holds an annual celebration of Scott's legacy on "Founder's Day," which is Scott's birthday (April 25).

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.).

Uptown is a pretty "divey" neighborhood bar. It tries to retain most of its features while also making certain upgrades to incorporate modern comfort and conveniences, not always an easy balance to strike. Although individual art pieces are added or rotated periodically, most of the art works, neon signs and stained glass works have been on the walls for many, many years. Although the business commissioned a new front sign from a local artist about two years ago, the design of the new sign references images and logos that have been part of Uptown's heritage since the 1980s.

Overall, if an Uptown patron had moved away in (say) 1987 and returned for the first time in 2018, his or her impression would be that the bar looked and felt almost exactly the same way it did when they were last inside.

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 neighborhood bar for 30+ years is included in this Legacy Business Registry application.





















T-SHIRTS
POCKET T's
Longsleeves
Hooded

20
0
25
35

CASH ONLY

Manhattan
- Maker's Mark
- Tangerine Juice
Drink Special \$4

SPARKLING

CHAMPAGNE \$25.00
BRUT
MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA 16.50
BRUT
CHAMPAGNE \$25.00
BRUT
MALBEC 7.00
SAUVIGNON 5.00
CHARDONNAY 7.00

CAFE
BUST







**San Francisco Planning Department Historic Resource Survey (Mission District)
Property Summary Report**

Street Address: 200 - 218 CAPP ST

Assessor Block/Lot: 3575/044

Resource Attribute (Primary): HP3. Multiple family property

Resource Attribute (Secondary): HP6. 1-3 story commercial building

Year Built: 1910

Source(s) for Year Built: San Francisco Assessor

Architectural Style/Type: Edwardian (Classical Revival)

Photographic Image:



California Historical Resource Status Code: 3CS

Resource Type: Individual historic resource

Resource Eligibility: Appears eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources

Historic District: Not located within an identified historic district

Integrity Analysis:

Retains all or most aspects of historic design, materials, and workmanship.

Statement of Significance:

This building is individually significant under California Register of Historical Resources Criterion 1 (Events), because it is associated with the broad patterns of physical rebuilding and neighborhood "reconstruction" following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire in San Francisco's Mission District; and Criterion 3 (Architecture/Design), because it exhibits physical designs, features, materials, and/or craftsmanship that embody the distinctive characteristics and high artistic expression of "Edwardian-era" architecture from the early 20th century.

Notes:

SATURDAY JANUARY 20 TH
FOOD & COCKTAILS BEGIN AT 7:30 P.M.
LIVE MUSIC & DANCING BEGINS AT 9:00 P.M.

WHAT IS THE OCCASION?

UPTOWN'S FIFTH ANNIVERSARY PARTY !!!!

LIVE MUSIC FOOD COCKTAILS

San Francisco Examiner
Thursday, December 27, 1984



MISSION TRANSITION — The day after Christmas, and you probably thought nothing's going on. Well, *PM* was out stalking the night and found that Macante's, formerly a "women's bar" on 17th and Capp, has changed hands. It's called Uptown and is run by Scott Ellsworth and Larry Baune. Ellsworth, former Rite Spot chef, and Baune, bartender from the same, are hoping to give the Rite Spot a run for its money. A grand opening is in the offing, and the two new owners are looking for a mixed clientele. "What we need," says Baune, "is a swift kick in the career."

Scott Ellsworth and Larry Baune, owners of new bar called Uptown, want 'swift kick in the career'



**Since
1984**

ANNIVERSARY

Birthday Reunion Party

Friday, Dec. 26 • 6—10pm

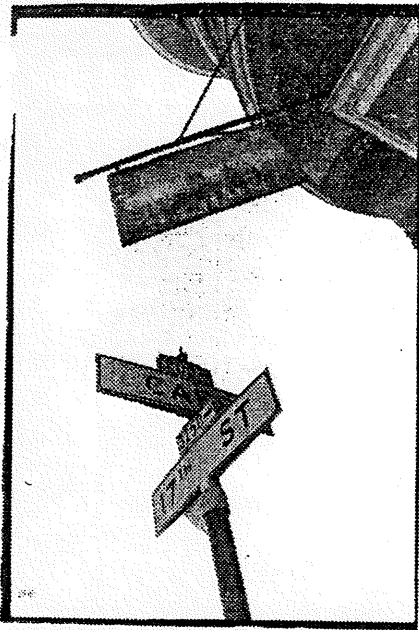
Wear an Uptown T-Shirt and pay 1984 prices!

LET'S GO....

DRINKING IN SAN FRANCISCO

**Chapter One: THE UPTOWN
(17th & Capp, Mission District)**

**Text: Jay Photos: Nicole
Model: Steve Watson**



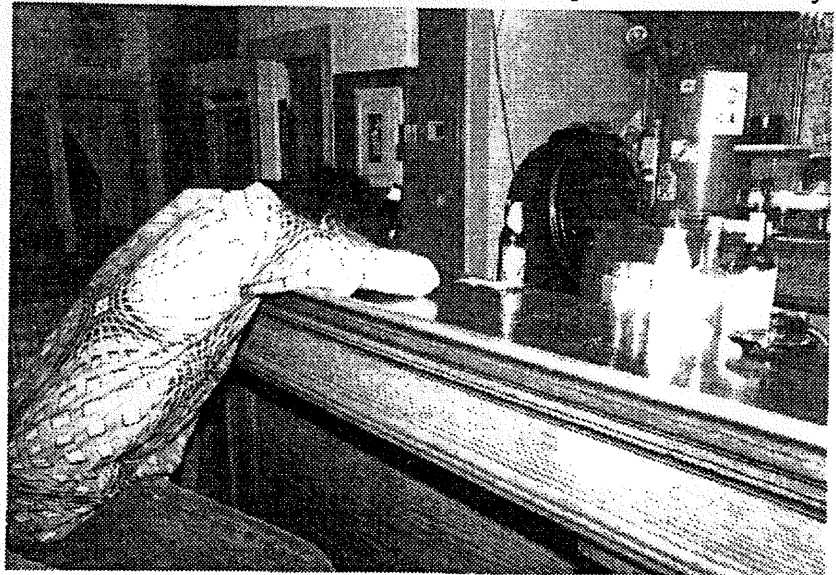
In my relatively young drinking career I've been to a few bars that have offered oceans in the way of visual stimuli; Seattle's *Rendezvous* comes gushing to mind for its parade of "one-eyed, four-fingered people" & 12-oz. cans of Rainier served cocktail-style by "Satan's Sadists" extras, as does Hollywood Blvd.'s *Frolic Room* (recently glorified in *Fiz* mag) for speed freakdom above & beyond the call and faded might-have-beens bombed out of their collective mind. In the Bay Area we have SF's *Sumiko's Lounge* & Oakland's *Stork Club* for such frivolous peeks into the human condition, yet I'd hate to hang my hat at either bar any more than a couple times a year so that's about how often I do. Plus when the choice is Bud or fucking Miller I'll opt out for a double greyhound or twisted puffin, thanks.

You've probably figured out that there's a bar in San Francisco that has the aforementioned viewable depravity in plain sight, has comfortable couches to hobnob or even take a lil' siesta on, conveys a sense of everyman's neighborhood-ness despite being nowhere near my neighborhood & also features a brief but "buoyant" array of beer on tap + the essential knockout mixed beverages served up by "jus' folks" *The Uptown* has so much going for it that I'm hard-pressed to explain why I'm not there drinking, laughing and generally carrying on right now. Since they call us a "rock" magazine, let's start w/ the jukebox: a mere two quarters nets you not three but FOUR essential James Brown sides from His Ants-In-My-Pantsness' sweatiest late 60's/early 70's period, and if you've got another one how about elevating yourself socially in SF's punk nostalgia-crazy vicinage by plunking down for Flipper's "Love Canal" and by *raising the goddamn flag* w/ a twofer of "I've Got To Run" & "My Rules". These classics don't ever seem to be loud enough at the Uptown but then they never do.

It just so happens that 17th & Capp is the Mission District's prostitution hotspot, but these

your garden-variety ladies of the evening & from where I sit I don't think they're working for any kind of pimpman; most look like super drug-addled ex-punkers, tarted up like a combination Malibu Barbie/Olga de Volga & stumbling back and forth around the bar vicinity until some Ken Doll/J. Sats Beret-type comes creeping by in a Trans Am to whisk them off to payday. Every now & again one will check her makeup in your window-to-the-crime without even so much as an acknowledgement, go figure. Uh, hey there, little lady! I guess I get the same kind of perverse "thrill", if you can call it that, out of misery parading itself under my reddening nose as a couple of certain someones do out of a pathetic mini-mall strip club in L.A. called *Jumbo's Clown Room*. If you think about it a little too much it quickly loses its entertainment value & then your only recourse is another round. "Funny" how this happens all too often.

If I've already made the bar sound like an "unsafe" place to grab a pint of Watney's or "Albino Rhino" well I sure am sorry. The fact is, *The Uptown* serves an a genuine oasis in an area that's really not at all inhospitable in the first place. This appx. 4 block-x-4 block concrete chunk of the Mission is roundly celebrated by those who care as the "drinkers' district", and since the scene-overlord Club Chameleon is but a soft-shoe shuffle away the Uptown is a, shall we say, *wonderful* place to escape any particularly putrid rock act. The clientele don't act, they *are*; thankfully I've yet to see a whooping fraternity clown brag to his fellow patrons re: how "fucken hammered" he feels but I *have* had a lengthy argument/slur session w/ a "fucken hammered" sweet young thing about the Irish Republican Army & came out more than a little intellectually battered. You know the old & famous saying "It takes all types to call the kettle black" (you know the one I mean)? *The Uptown* is home for all these creatures great and grogged, from your requisite down-n-outers to giggling pool floozies to vintage clothing & cufflink dress-to-impressers to verbose young



Socialists to the omnipresent singer of the Icky Boyfriends. They meet to loll on the "luxurious" peeling couches to grapple w/ the various issues of the day & maybe tackle a game of Whirlwind or glaze over at the truly wacked community-college art projects that adorn the sitting-area walls. And who knows, maybe you too can get involved in a little drunken tete-a-tete w/ the Friday nite bartenderess over whether the song "You Light Up My Life" was a result of the equally fine film or vice versa.

One thing I should mention by way of a warning: the men's bathroom graffiti is positively third-rate and is ostensibly The Uptown's only real shortcoming. Any bar

worth its salt in this town should have several running P.C./Not P.C. back & forth diatribes (w/ at least one wall filled with a good vegan/carnitarian war) & hopefully a scribbled "Tales Of Terror" logo in a corner somewhere. If I have to read "God Is Love, Love Is Blind, Ray Charles Is Blind, Ray Charles = God" one more time I might just have to "fucken hammer" someone. My quibble, however, is a minor one; The Uptown has got the unbeatable panache that other bars take out big ads in the SF Weekly to try & cultivate. This brand of insulated "charm" can't be bought nor bartered for all the tea in China, and for you unaware locals and you hepcat tourists I can't recommend a better place in Frisco to let it loose & tie one on.

PUBLICATIONS

MOTORBOOTY: These guys are becoming a sort of *Spy Magazine* for post-indie laugh lovers of the underground, and it's always a conversation starter around town when a new issue hits the stands. The latest, #6, features the best strip I've seen of Lloyd Dangle's & you know he's absolutely right about people's freakoid fascination w/ Detroit--the editors know it & have parlayed their Motor City-ness into a few discernable re-occurring musical themes (P-Funk/Bootsy and rock-based jazz/funk in general; 60's Detroit R&R) and vis-a-vis comic art & text they've given birth to a few others (a bizarre fascination w/ clowns; a bizarre fascination w/ outrageous black people, i.e. #6's pseudo-interview w/ Blowfly). This issue's top example of bozo underground satire is a piece entitled "The Motorbooty Generation", hopefully the last word on the media-mythed "slack" tendencies of my shiftless peers; I suspect Mike Rubin, who penned the brilliant "When Good Bands Start To Suck" a couple issues ago, is the main fella behind it. The nicest thing I can say in sometime-contributor Barry Henssler's favor is he's rumored to have convinced Mark Arm that Ann Arbor has a great Stooges wax museum (see their last issue) & if enough of you feel like springing for "Stooges Wax Museum" t-shirts they'll then hopefully have the lucre to put out some more fine issues. (P.O. Box 7944; Ann Arbor MI 48107)

SHUT UP LITTLE MAN: REAL TALES OF DOOM, SHAME & DEGRADATION: We don't read so many comic books around here, but this one's subject matter is such an unhealthy obsession for a few close-to-home folks that has been so painstakingly actualized that I have to admit I'm a little worried. Pete & Ray were two very non-upstanding San Franciscans whose domicile disputes, which, to call them "irregular" or perhaps "queer" is merely scraping the proverbial surface. Their quarrels were captured by someone acquainted with famous Guerneville resident Seymour Glass & transcribed for a puzzled public in the last *Bananafish*, and as well as having been the impetus for a staged production & sporty *Bananafish* t-shirts, their words and deeds have popped up on a number of local musical releases by artistes associated w/ the Glass/Nuf Sed "gang". Now it's been documented beyond redundancy in a series of drawings that range from hilarious to terrifying, and the poor bastard that's still alive (the story being that Ray has since died) has barely a clue. You really must own the puke-covered flannel square that comes w/ the mag (presumably Ray or Peter's) just to say you DO, right? Penultimate line in Raymond & Peter's whole sad history: "If you wanna talk to me, then shut your fuckin' mouth". (Tedium House; P.O. Box 424762; San Francisco CA 94142)

LIBERTY: I'm of the feeling that the grand majority of "mainstream" political discourse is so tired, dogmatic & out-of-synch w/ anything resembling unshackled, tolerant, rational thought, be it manifested in *The Nation* or in the *American Spectator* or even your local paper, that I myself am turning to tired, dogmatic, intolerant Libertarian publications just to get a fresher whiff of it all. Actually that's not entirely fair, because *Liberty* promotes & debates the ideals of true unfettered personal & economic freedom in a semi-intellectual setting better than anyone save *Reason* magazine, but their mostly-unchecked stridency keeps them kinda oxymoronically (or perhaps just moronically) trapped in "the well-lit prison of one idea", as noted wildman George Will said after interviewing blustery Libertarian presidential candidate Andre Marrou. It's not that the "idea" isn't worthy of heavy consideration or even that far from much of what's on the table now, and it's not altogether difficult to imagine a future America giving side-by-side shrift to traditional "liberal" ideas of social tolerance and one-worldism alongside "conservative" positions grounded in personal responsibility & accountability and enterprising, economy-stimulating capitalism. But it ain't going to be in the 90's, folks, not the way things are going now. That's why it's important to take the pulse of those fighting the good fight in the trenches once in a while. (P.O. Box 1167, Port Townsend WA 98368)

LIIMANARINA "Lantinen Pornokatu 25 B 13" 7"EP

Anyone worth their salt'll tell you the blurred vision & racket of Olli Pauke & company is pretty tremendous. This is the third EP of their unstoppable (& by now) "trademark" smashed-yap-basheroo, plus the latest fat in the fire seems to be some sort've tape speed/fuck manipulation that's chucked onto all the tracks, & if these guys were Japs instead of Fins, why, it'd be a whole 'nother world...John Zorn's ass, weekends at the Knitting Factory, "special guest" participation...can you imagine? If there was ever a time to consider the triple-LP box, it's now. Bad Vugum's most consistent & best. (Bad Vugum; Box 362, 90101 Oulu, FINLAND) -- Tom Lax

The Uptown Reimagined With Dogs, Dinosaurs and Unicorns

— By Kevin Montgomery (@kevinmonty) | December 13th, 2010 @ 12:45pm



The Uptown, the dimly-lit bar full of beer-soaked couches, vandalized wooden tables, a machine full of 80s arcade games, and jukebox that has both Crystal Castles *and* Metallica on it, is already a rad spot. Hell, I cannot think of a single thing I'd change about it. That said, *if* they changed their name to Downtown, started serving root beer floats and began admitting dogs from the 70's, I don't think I'd complain.

\$350. On sale now at [Fabric8](#).

(Work by Adrianna Bamber)

from MISSION MISSION

Keep in Touch, Ol' Scott

Posted Apr 25, 2014 at 5:04 pm by [Ariel Dovas](#)

The first bar I ever went to (besides with my dad as a kid) was the Uptown. It was a great experience, just what I always thought a bar would be like: Dark, damp and a little scary. I felt totally at home. Last week the owner, Scott Ellsworth, passed away unexpectedly from a heart attack. I didn't know Scott that well, but the couple times we talked he was always really friendly, and very supportive of the weird artsy place my buddies and I were building across the street. He ran a bar that didn't have a cocktail program or a dress code. He ran a bar where you could sit down, have a shot and a beer and chat with familiar regulars. Inside the Uptown I've stored paintings during a scavenger hunt art show, made business deals, broken up fights, maybe gotten in a fight, tried in vain to get up the nerve to talk to a girl, watched my team dominate the World Series, and seen Sean Penn close it down.

[The Bold Italic has a great tribute to him today](#), which would have been his 60th birthday.



[In 2011, when I posted a picture of "KiTOS"](#), the letters on the back of the bar, Scott wrote in to tell us that it stood for the previous owner's names, Kim and Tony. Let's just say now it stands for "Keep in Touch, Ol' Scott."

The passing of the Mayor of Capp Street

May 22, 2014



By Stephany Ashley

The intersection of 17th and Capp Streets is many things to many people. To many homeless folks, it's a site of respite, where they can get support and shelter at the Mission Neighborhood Resource Center. To the San Francisco Police Department, it's a hub of illegal activity, where undercover decoys entrap slowly moving men. To mechanics and artists, it's where work lives, housed in industrial warehouses that seem to somehow (for the moment at least) function as a blockade to the development that surrounds them.

A friend visiting from New York City asked me, *is this the only block in the Mission that's not being completely gentrified?* This question is an oversimplification of course,

but it hints at the steadfast nature of the block, where a few institutions have kept true to their missions despite an aggressive economy forcing every façade into getting a facelift. One of these institutions is Uptown, and another is its founder, Scott Ellsworth, who passed away unexpectedly at the age of 59 in April.

Ellsworth took over the space at 200 Capp Street in 1984, turning it into what would become one of the most beloved dive bars in San Francisco. Worldly and neighborly, Scott created a space where working-class people of all stripes could gather for banter and camaraderie over some of the cheapest drinks in the city. Boasting little more than affordability, lack of pretension and a pool table, the space soon became a living room of sorts for school teachers, musicians, artists, mechanics and neighbors. For years, perhaps due to the anonymity of the address, the worn in couches served as an after-hours conference room for progressive electeds and their political strategists.

In time, Scott became the unofficial "Mayor of Capp Street" and began tending to the block outside of his bar. A strong advocate of urban trees and gardens, Scott was significantly responsible for the pillowy pink cherry blossoms that burst out of the pavement from 16th street to 26th. Against the opposition of the SFPD, who feared that planting trees on Capp Street would provide more places for people to stash their drugs, Scott, supporting the efforts of Friends of the Urban Forest, successfully managed to plant dozens of trees on the neglected stretch of sidewalk; trees that signal spring to hundreds of Mission residents.

While he was often disgruntled and dismissive of local politics, Scott was invariably engaged in them, and Uptown developed its own political pulse that led to phone-banks organized by bartenders and fundraisers for progressive politicians with sloppy joes cooked by Scott himself. The bar became a favorite meeting place for Mission neighborhood activists, many of whom liked to discuss the issues of the day with Scott. On special occasions, like Barack Obama's inauguration or Carnival, Scott would open the bar up first thing in the morning and serve food and drinks to anyone who needed a place to celebrate.

Scott's vision of Uptown was one that resisted change, despite the pressures that surrounded it. He avoided raising prices at all costs, and shirked the media when it tried to shine a spotlight on the establishment. His loyalty was to his regulars, and few financial incentives could tempt that allegiance. His love for the neighborhood made him a litmus test of sorts for businesses in the surrounding area. He was quick to let his customers know who was a good business owner, and who was short on regard for the community. His litmus test for politicians was similarly on point. Finding most of them crooked, he was a discerning progressive, who weighed each issue on its own merits and never toed a party line.

In 2013, the building that houses 200 Capp Street, as well as the dozen or so residential units above, it went up for sale. Fingers crossed as Scott contemplated a bid to become its owner. The neighborhood grimaced as the building was bought, instead, by Kaushik Dattani. Having Ellis acted 25 residential units, Dattani has earned himself a spot on the "Dirty Dozen" list- the top twelve serial evictors in San Francisco.

The more difficult nature of the relationship surfaced not long after Dattani assumed ownership of the building. Uptown's lease, which has eight years left on it, allowed for the landlord to increase the rent by up to 10% each year. The previous landlord had often raised the rent by less than the maximum, or not at all; but Dattani took the position that the 10% annual increase was not enough, and that the rent could be raised much more than that in 2014. This was, to say the least, an aggressive interpretation of the lease - some would call it completely unreasonable - and it caused Ellsworth to have to enter into battle with Dattani.

The ensuing affair would not tarnish Uptown, but it would take a toll on Scott. The physical, emotional and mental stress of having someone try to weasel the result of 31 years of work out from under you should not be downplayed. In his last days, as Scott felt his health decline seemingly out of the blue, he would misdiagnose the symptoms of a heart attack for stress. In one of his last posts on facebook, Scott said *"My sense of humor is kind of dulled these days since I've been in a nasty legal fight with the avaricious asshole who bought the Uptown building, he's trying to take me to the cleaners, jacking the rent 34%, though my lease limits it to 10%."*

Today, Uptown remains open, with the steadfast and heartfelt determination of the bar staff Scott pieced together over the years. In the days after Scott's passing, the bar would function as a sacred place of sorts, with impromptu toasts to Scott's memory raised frequently. With eight years left on the lease, the bartenders remain grounded in Scott's vision for the establishment, and there is a recognition among neighbors and regulars that there is upholding to do, in Scott's honor.

A note hangs on the gate of Uptown. It reads, in part *"He felt strangely like the glue holding our neighborhood together."*

The intersection of 17th and Capp Streets is many things to many people. To many, including artists and musicians and mechanics and school teachers and sex workers, it is home of Uptown- an institution built by Scott Ellsworth, who loved the neighbors and the neighborhood just as they are, and who set a table for all to gather around for banter and camaraderie and the betterment of San Francisco. May that glue hold fast against the deteriorating forces of greed and development.

For those who wish to celebrate the life of Scott Ellsworth, a memorial will be held on Sunday, May 25th at the Bay View Boat Club from 4-8pm.

BY TIM REDMOND 48 HILLS

<https://48hills.org/2014/05/passing-mayor-capp-street/>

Eater San Francisco

Mission Dive The Uptown Rescued By Employees

The bar is celebrating 30 years in business next month.

by [Andrew Dalton@dolftown](mailto:AndrewDalton@dolftown) Nov 3, 2014, 1:35pm PST
[Share](#)



[Ariel Dovas/Flickr](#)

Although things were a little uncertain for **The Uptown** at 17th and Capp after the loss of owner Scott Ellsworth in April of this year, there is apparently some good news in store for the bar's future. As alleyway blog [Capp Street Crap reports today](#), a group of the bar's employees and friends of Ellsworth have banded together under the name "Buy Your Own Damn Bar" and done just that.

According to Uptown bartender Shae Green, the new owners are on good terms with the landlord and are currently tying up the legal loose before they take over from Ellsworth's sister, who lives in Colorado but hoped to see the space remain a community fixture. The ownership group's cheeky new name, by the way, comes from Ellsworth's own words: it

was a common refrain from the bar's original owner whenever a customer offered their own opinion on how to run the place.

As for renovations and upgrades, Green explains that the changes will be minor and cosmetic in nature: "I like the aesthetic of Uptown," Green told CSC, "but I agree it needs a little touch up. All the things I associate with a good neighborhood bar are going to stay the same."

Next month, the bar will celebrate 30 years in business with a five-day blowout starting on December 26th that will include barbecue, poetry readings and possibly some live music.

The news of the bar's rescue comes shortly after news that the **Lexington Club**, the city's only (debatable) remaining lesbian bar. Likewise, Mission dive bar patrons experienced something of an existential crisis earlier this year when **Pop's** changed hands and [re-opened in September](#) after a little sprucing up.

Capp Street Crap
November 3, 2014

<http://cappstreetcrap.tumblr.com/post/101691657707/ill-drink-to-this-uptowns-employees-are-buying>

I'll drink to this: Uptown's employees are buying the bar

Some good things are meant to last, even in the Mission in 2014.

After months of uncertainty following the death of owner Scott Ellsworth, Uptown's bartenders are about to finalize a deal to buy the beloved Mission dive bar. Uptown bartender Shae Green said she, the five other bar employees and one of Ellsworth's good friends, have just a few legal loose ends to tie up with Ellsworth's siblings before the bar is theirs.

According to Green, Ellsworth's sister in Colorado, Pam Stutheit, made it happen.

"She wanted to keep the bar open to honor Scott (and continue to provide) a community center for folks," she said.

Luckily, the soon-to-be owners are also on good terms with the landlord and are taking over the lease, which has four more years on it, with an option of renewing for an additional five years.

News of Uptown's purchase is a bright spot in what lately has felt like a sea of disappointment.

Longtime businesses on Valencia Street have been fading faster than cheap curtains and last month, the owner of the Lexington Club, the Mission's only lesbian bar, [announced](#) that she's selling.

Ellsworth, who opened the Uptown at 17th and Capp streets with former partner Larry Baune in 1984, died this past April of a heart attack. While a bit daunting, Green said the idea of his employees buying the bar "just seems right."

Uptown's new ownership group will be called "Buy Your Own Damn Bar," Ellsworth's frequent response to unsolicited advice about how to improve his business.

Green said she and the other new owners will be making some small upgrades, though, like painting and redoing the floors.

"We're going to do some minor things, deal with the door that smacks. I like the aesthetic of Uptown but I agree it needs a little touch up," she said. "All the things I associate with a good neighborhood bar are going to stay the same."

The bar will celebrate its 30th anniversary over five days starting Dec. 26, with a barbecue, an Uptown poetry reading and possibly bands. Green attributes Uptown's longevity to the fact that Ellsworth welcomed all different kinds of customers – from artists and bike messengers to entrepreneurs – and encouraged his employees to do the same.

"Uptown's never been trendy," she said, noting it's not uncommon to see a 21-year-old enjoying a beer near a 65-year-old at the bar.

In that spirit, Green said Uptown also welcomes members of the tech community who have recently moved to San Francisco. Still, with all the neighborhood changes lately she said it's nice to know Uptown will still be there for those who have been going there for years.

“Everyone’s exasperated and it will great to have a place for (people of) our ilk to go,” she said. “We won’t be inched out.”

From Capp Street Crap

In an ode to the Lexington Club, “Uptown Homos” debuts tonight

August 12, 2015



Missing their old haunt, two devotees of the shuttered Lexington Club are putting on the first of what they hope will be a monthly queer night at the Uptown bar. [Uptown Homos](#), “a dyke, lesbian, unicorn, trans queer night of flirtation,” takes place tonight, from 6 to 11 p.m.

Kelly Robbie Hansen and partner Tanya Wischerath worked with Uptown to put together the event which will feature \$5 Jameson and tequila drink specials. Wischerath, a former Lexington Club bartender also known as “Hot Tanya,” will be helping out behind the bar.

Hansen, a long time regular at the Lex, said Uptown Homos was conceived in response to the loss the couple and their friends have felt since the bar [closed in April](#). The last lesbian bar in the city, it was sold to the PlumpJack Group earlier this year.

Hansen said the closure of the Lex “felt like our home was being taken away.

“We all kept asking one another ‘where are we going to end up?’ ‘Where are you all going to hang out?’ No one had a concrete answer,” Hansen wrote in a message on Facebook. “The Lex closed end of April, and still no one knows where to go. It’s been sad to want to go out on any given night and not see your chosen family, or be surrounded by your people.”

Uptown, at 17th and Capp streets, was an obvious choice, Hansen said, noting its dive bar philosophy, cheap drinks and friendly neighborhood vibe.

“Uptown Homos is really a response to try and get queers together for a night, early, not a dance party scene; something far more mellow and sweet,” she wrote. “I keep saying ‘come to Uptown Homos and be with the people you love and want to be loved by.’”

Hansen said her hope is that “people feel comfortable in the space.

“We will never have the Lexington Club back, but we can still try and create spaces where we can be ourselves and connect with our community,” she said.

[[Art](#) by Tanya Wischerath]

Go Eat This Now: ‘Bring Your Own Brunch’ at Uptown

Sometimes, a hangover cure means a quick trip around the Mission before \$5 Bloody Marys at one of S.F.’s best dives.

[Ryan Basso](#)

Wed Dec 12th, 2018 2:23pm



Egg and cheese sandwich. Photo by Ryan Basso

If there is one thing San Francisco loves, it’s lines. There’s nothing like a long line of curious pedestrians to vault your business into the stratosphere. Unlike most of my comrades in S.F., though, I hate waiting in lines — especially on a Sunday morning when I’m hungover and ravenous. I just crawled out of bed and I need a booth to sit in, some grub, and the hair-of-the-dog to nurse me back to health. And I need it immediately. That’s why on the weekends I head over to [Uptown](#) for breakfast, my favorite saloon that doesn’t even serve food.

When most people hear the letters “BYOB,” they often associate it with a dimly lit bohemian cafe or the mom-and-pop Italian restaurant where you always bring your favorite bottle of Barbera. But Uptown already has the booze — not to mention a pool table and a jukebox. On Saturdays and Sundays, the bar opens at noon, offering a “**Bring Your Own Brunch**” special for which they only charge \$5 for Bloody Marys and mimosas. Half the fun of coming to Uptown for breakfast, besides the cheap cocktails, is personalizing each visit with the components of brunch. It’s only fitting that patrons should support a 35-year-old bar that suffered an existential crisis when longtime owner Scott Ellsworth died in 2014, but whose future seems secure. Here is a short list of perfect little spots for putting together a saloon spread:

[Church Street Groceteria](#)

300 Church St.

This cluttered grab-and-go market makes gooey little breakfast sandwiches on English muffins. Similar to a New York bodega, it’s fully equipped with a sandwich station and a glass case full of cold cuts and mayonnaise-based salads. Wrapped in checkered paper, the egg-and-cheese only costs \$2.49 (or \$4.29 with the addition of avocado, bacon, or ham).

[Katz Bagel Bakery](#)

3147 16th St.

Now that we've picked up a handful of warm, cheesy sandwiches, bagels are next. At this underrated shop that boils its own bagels — and serves 10 different types of schmears — order a big bag of them and a few tiny tubs of chive, sun-dried tomato, lox, and honey-date cream cheese for a delectable buffet. Each spread ranges from \$2.95-\$4.50, so you might as well throw in some whitefish salad too while you're at it.

Bi-Rite Market

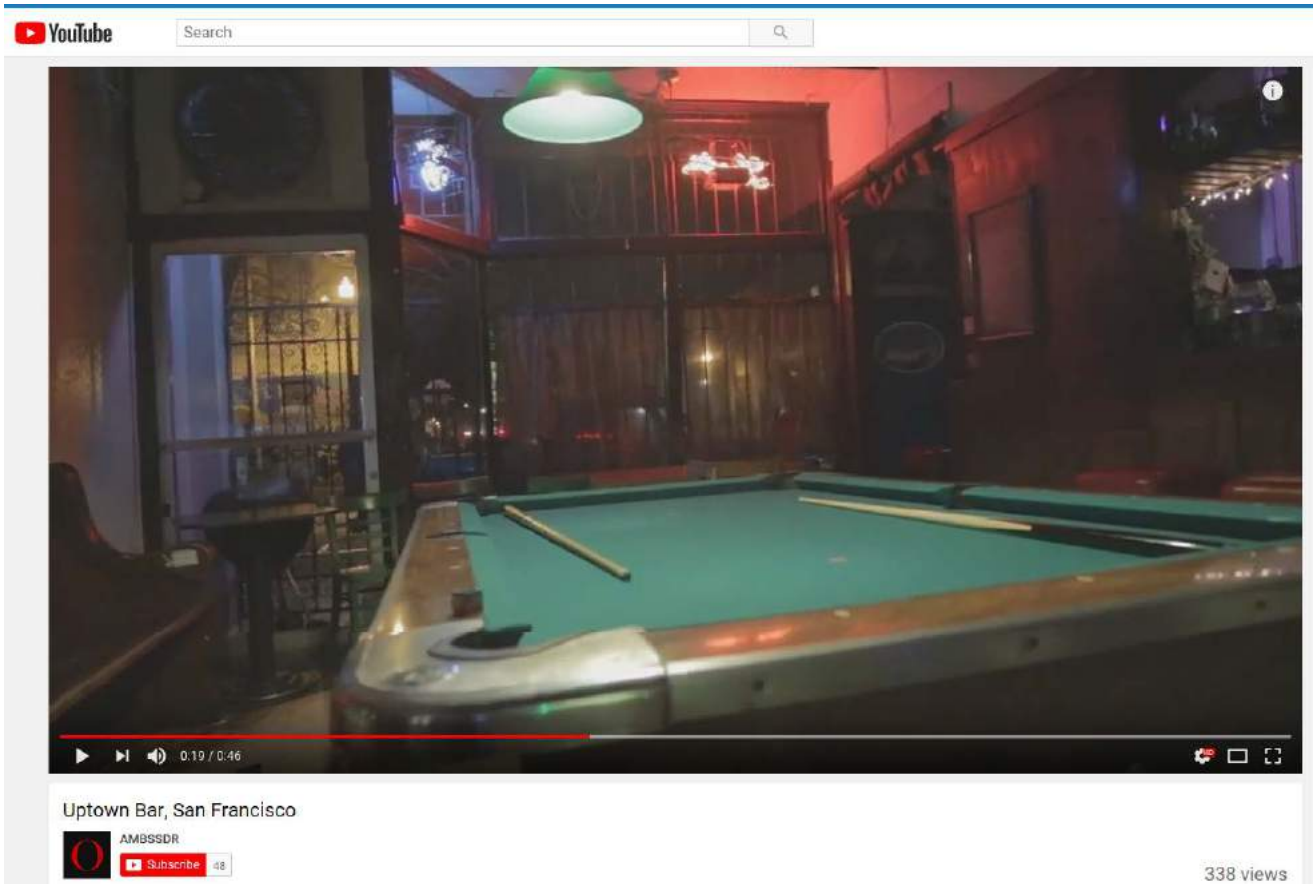
3639 18th St.

Bi-Rite has some of the ripest and prettiest produce around, and it can't hurt to throw in a little fresh fruit with all the cholesterol and booze. (It helps with the guilt.) Given that we are right in the middle of citrus season, pick up some oranges, tangelos, and maybe a grapefruit to complement the heavier portions of your bounty.

And there you have it, the perfect "BYOB" picnic. All that's left to do is skip on over to Uptown for cheap drinks and 25-cent rock-'n'-roll songs. There is no pressure to eat and get out. No starving family staring at you as they await their turn to eat. There is no \$15 avocado toast — and no line.

Uptown, 200 Capp St., 415-861-8231

VIDEO



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEoWgW_Lq4g

“Uptown Bar, San Francisco”

Published on Aug 16, 2015

Uptown is a comfy neighborhood bar located in the Mission District of San Francisco. It doesn't get much more divey than this – you've got pool, TVs, pinball, an indoor bike rack, and a bar staff that's dog friendly. If you can't find a reason to stop by Uptown, well ... you're not trying hard enough.

200 Capp St.

San Francisco, CA 94110

Phone number: (415) 861-8231



shae green [REDACTED]

Legacy Business 1/25/19

Douglas Reed [REDACTED]

Fri, Jan 25, 2019 at 2:21 PM

To: shae green [REDACTED]

To Whom It May Concern;

I am writing to voice my strong belief that Uptown, 200 Capp St., receive legacy business status. I have been a loyal customer and member of the Uptown family for almost 35 years. I have frequented the club even before its current incarnation when it was owned by Toni Mecante and was one of the many women's bars that dotted the Mission in the mid-eighties. I have lived in the Bay Area my whole life and have witnessed many changes, but I am pleased that Uptown has remained a consistently positive influence on the San Francisco club scene.

Scott Ellsworth and Larry Baune had been employees at the Rite Spot just down the street at 17th and Folsom before venturing out on their own to create Uptown. Many thought that the new bar would be in direct competition the Rite Spot, but a symbiotic relationship ensued where any given night patrons would visit both establishments. Mr. Baune eventually moved on and started Zanzibar with other partners. Scott remained the sole owner until his untimely death in 2014.

My life has been intertwined with the many people I have met at Uptown and the bar itself. I lived in the apartment building above Uptown for five years and had a bartending stint there for one year. Both Scott and Larry were proud of one facet in particular about Uptown; the diversity of its clientele. The group included lawyers, teachers, bike messengers, sole proprietors, musicians, artists, engineers, members of many working class occupations, and politicians. People from literally every walk of life met there, and continue to do so. Couples now blessed with adult children either met at Uptown or spent a good deal of their courtship there. I have many good friends whose gift of friendship was first bestowed at this business. It truly is a family as was demonstrated at the memorial for Scott that filled the Bayview Boat Club.

Scott was a civic-minded, political sort who enjoyed being involved in the community. He began a tradition that still continues of using Uptown for political rallies on important San Francisco issues. Banners and posters decorate the windows prior to elections. He liked honoring voting stubs with a free drink on election day. Mr. Ellsworth was an important member of the Capp Street Merchant Association. He was also integral in getting Friends of the Urban Forest to plant trees that beautify Capp Street to this day. The current owners (former employees) continue these traditions

as well as holding Craft Fairs and celebratory parties that honor many different occasions and bring the community together.

This particular neighbor was once known for drugs, violence and prostitution. There have been improvements to the quality of life in this part of town and Uptown has remained a steady beacon through it all. At times it felt like an oasis in a sea of insanity. For many years it was the one place that people would visit in the neighborhood. That has changed and Uptown has been an important catalyst in that transformation.

When Scott passed away I feared that Uptown I knew would disappear. It was not meant to be. Scott's relatives felt his wishes would be that his staff continue the legacy he started. Thus the essential mission of Uptown survives; an affordable place that is fun, interesting, intelligent, and a vital contributor to the community. Uptown deserves legacy business status. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Douglas Reed

Barbara Attard
[REDACTED]
San Francisco, CA 94110
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

January 25, 2019

SF Planning Commission
Legacy Business Registry

RE: Uptown Bar

Dear Commissioners:

I urge you to confirm the Uptown Bar as a Legacy Business.

I've been part of the Uptown Community since 1984. I don't use the term "community" metaphorically. The Uptown has developed an extended community of friends through its many years of operation, and the Uptown has also become connected to the larger community in the vicinity of the establishment.

Some examples that demonstrate the depth of the bond of the Uptown Community include:

During the years that Uptown founder Scott Ellsworth was alive, the Uptown began its tradition of serving as a place that philosophical, historical, scientific, environmental, political and current event conversations abounded. The Uptown was never a place where all patrons agreed, but lively discussions on a wide variety of topics were and continue to be ongoing. Uptown drinkers regularly gather for dinners, travel, and holiday celebrations. Although former owner Scott might not approve, patrons flock to the bar to watch as our teams become champs.


As with any community that survives 35 years, members have come and gone. The bar serves as a place for celebrations of birthdays, weddings (many couples having met at the Bar), divorces, baby showers, graduations, as well as a place for memorials. Some Uptowners bring their grown children in for a celebratory cocktail!

An amazing testament to the significance of the Uptown is the beautiful transition that took place when the former owner, Scott Ellsworth died unexpectedly. Scott's sister came to San Francisco expecting to assess Scott's property and sell it, as she did not live in the area and was not interested in becoming an absentee bar owner. She was so impressed with the amazing Uptown community, she decided it was important to keep the Bar alive. She sold the Uptown to the bartenders (and bar lawyer)—developing one of the few, if not the only co-op bar around. The Uptown continues to function well under the cooperative management.

The Uptown serves as a space involving the larger community in many ways. Several years ago when the lesbian bar, the Lexington, shut its doors, the Uptown provided space once a month for the Lexington's bartenders to come in and serve its patrons—a great ongoing event!! The Uptown provides space for community groups and non-profits to host fundraisers. The Uptown is a melting pot of patrons of all ages (over 21 of course), all races and ethnicities, a wide variety of occupations and lifestyles, and welcoming to regulars regardless of housing status.

Thank you for your consideration of the application for Legacy Business status for the Uptown Bar. As a second generation San Franciscan, I know the Uptown to be a great Bar and important Community resource! Recognizing established community-minded businesses is so important to retaining the unique character of San Francisco, and preserving the City's traditions and institutions.

Best regards,



Barbara Attard



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Legacy Business Registry Case Report

HEARING DATE: APRIL 3, 2019

*** This report provides recommendations for two (2) Legacy Business applications. ***

Filing Date: March 6, 2019
Case No.: 2019-002877LBR
Business Name: Uptown
Business Address: 200 Capp Street
Zoning: NCT (Mission Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit) Zoning District
55-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 3575/044
Applicant: Shae Green, Partner
200 Capp Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen, District 9
Supervisor District: District 9
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

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

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

The bar, Uptown, was opened in late December 1984 by G. Scott Ellsworth. Reconstructed in the immediate aftermath of the 1906 earthquake, Uptown's building is believed to have housed a neighborhood bar continuously since its construction in 1910. Ellsworth's intention with the bar was to create a true community-wide public house. Scott encouraged spirited conversation and debate and impromptu performances by the bar's many artistic and musical patrons, and the bar featured the work of local painters and craftsmen on its walls. Uptown became a favorite location for reading and discussion groups on weekend afternoons and in the early evenings. Since Uptown became a mainstay of the Mission's artistic community in the 80s and 90s, many locally-prominent (and in some cases nationally prominent) musicians, artists and writers were (and are) regulars of the bar and count themselves as "Friends of Uptown."

Ellsworth resisted making physical changes to the bar as the city and the neighborhood changed, making patrons appreciate Uptown as an anchor to the Mission's past. If an Uptown patron had moved away in 1987 and returned for the first time in 2018, his or her impression would be that the bar looked and felt almost exactly the same way it did when they were last inside. When Ellsworth passed away suddenly in April of 2014, his sister, as executor of his estate, understood that her brother wanted the business to be a community gathering spot, and she made it possible for the core long-term employees and a close friend of Ellsworth's to buy Uptown and continue its neighborhood character and place in the Mission.

community. The new ownership group took possession in 2015.

From its inception through the '90s, Uptown opened at noon every weekday to serve people who worked in this light-industrial part of the Mission, and locals who worked elsewhere but made their way home for lunch. Like the bar's founder, the current Uptown ownership is acutely sensitive to the institutional importance, and fragility, of neighborhood taverns. This was evident after the Lexington Club, the last remaining lesbian bar in the Mission, was forced to close when it lost its lease in 2015. The new Uptown owners hired some former Lexington bartenders and reached out to the old regulars. Today, a significant number of former Lexington patrons regularly visit Uptown, and the bar hosts a monthly Lex "reunion night."

The business is located on the southwest corner of Capp and 17th S streets in the Mission neighborhood. It is within an NCT (Mission Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit) Zoning District and a 55-X Height and Bulk District.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1984.

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

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

- i. Uptown has operated continuously in San Francisco for 35 years.
 - ii. Uptown has contributed to the history and identity of the Mission neighborhood and San Francisco.
 - iii. Uptown 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 Uptown is associated with the tradition of public houses.
 4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

Events and Architecture

Yes. This building is individually significant under California Register of Historical Resources Criterion 1 (Events), because it is associated with the broad patterns of physical rebuilding and neighborhood "reconstruction" following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire in San Francisco's Mission District; and Criterion 3 (Architecture/Design), because it exhibits physical designs, features, materials, and/or craftsmanship that embody the distinctive characteristics and high artistic expression of "Edwardian-era" architecture from the early 20th century.

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.?*

Yes. In 1992, music magazine Superdope featured Uptown (See printed article "Drinking in San Francisco"). Over the years, Uptown has been acknowledged as a favorite hangout by local publications, including: Best Hipster Mission Bar (2009 SF Weekly), Best Bar That Has Been A Bar Since Before 1915 (2015 SF Weekly), Where Bartenders Drink (2015 Thrillist).

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 200 Capp Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Pool table
- Lounge area
- Jukebox
- Stained glass window above the bar
- Large canvas painting and work by local artists
- Exterior sign
- December crafts fair
- Bar's birthday and "Founder's Day" celebrations

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Corner and side storefront entries and windows



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No.

HEARING DATE: APRIL 3, 2019

Case No.: 2019-002877LBR
Business Name: Uptown
Business Address: 200 Capp Street
Zoning: NCT (Mission Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit) Zoning District
55-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 3575/044
Applicant: Shae Green, Partner
200 Capp Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen, District 9
Supervisor District: District 9
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

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

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR UPTOWN CURRENTLY
LOCATED AT 200 CAPP STREET, (BLOCK/LOT 3575/044).**

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 April 3, 2019, 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 Uptown 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 Uptown.

Location(s):

- 200 Capp Street

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Pool table
- Lounge area
- Jukebox
- Stained glass window above the bar
- Large canvas painting and work by local artists
- Exterior sign
- December crafts fair
- Bar's birthday and "Founder's Day" celebrations

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 2019-002877LBR to the Office of Small Business April 3, 2019.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: