



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: August 22, 2022

SUPPENKÜCHE

Application No.: LBR-2021-22-032
Business Name: Suppenküche
Business Address: 525 Laguna Street
District: District 5
Applicant: Fabricius Wiest, Owner
Nomination Letter Date: June 22, 2022
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Suppenküche is a family owned business, opened by Fabricius Wiest and his business partner at the time, chef Thomas Klausmann, at 525 Laguna Street in May 1993. Inspired by the welcoming nature of America, Wiest, who hailed from Germany, chose the Hayes Valley location for its style, creative people, and art.

Suppenküche offers simple German cuisine and the vision for the restaurant was modeled after the Bavarian beer halls which encourage people to sit and eat together. The restaurant is a traditional Wirsthaus, a beer place with food, very similar to the English neighborhood pubs which are popular in Europe. Since its founding, Suppenküche has brought to San Francisco the customs and traditions from Bavaria, which are reflected in its communal dining and upbeat vibes. Over the years, Suppenküche has provided many jobs, food, and a sense of belonging to the people of Hayes Valley and San Francisco. The restaurant prides itself as one of the original businesses that helped revitalize the Hayes Valley neighborhood in the 1990s and is also a founding member of the Hayes Valley Small Business Association.

As a family owned business, operated by Fabricius and his wife Mande, Suppenküche has strived to contribute to the history and identity of the Hayes Valley neighborhood. The exterior and interior of the restaurant have remained intact since it was founded and are a recognizable aspect of its brand.

CRITERION 1

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

No, the applicant has not operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years.

525 Laguna Street from 1993 to Present (29 years)

PER CRITERION 1: Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?

Yes, Suppenküche has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of the Hayes Valley neighborhood and, if not included on the Registry, would face a significant risk of displacement.

Legacy Business Program

Office of Small Business
City Hall Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-6680
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CRITERION 2

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

Yes, Suppenküche has contributed to the history and identity of the Western Addition neighborhood and San Francisco.

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 German/Bavarian cuisine.
- The Laguna Street property is located within the National and California Register-eligible Hayes Valley Residential Historic District. The area consists of two- to three-story buildings and focuses on the architectural themes of the Gilded Age (previously Victorian) and Progressive-Era (previously Edwardian) styles of architecture which include styles such as Italianate, Stick-Eastlake, Greek Revival, and Classical Revival.
- Suppenküche has been featured in numerous articles including the San Francisco Chronicle, The New York Times, the Guardian, 7X7 magazine, The Mercury News, The Washington Post, SFGate, SF Weekly, Hoodline, Thrillist, and Restaurant Guru. It has also won awards, including the Zagat Best Restaurants in Hayes Valley award and most recently SF Weekly's people's choice award in 2020 for the Best German Restaurant.

CRITERION 3

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

Yes, Suppenküche is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Suppenküche 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:

- Communal tables.
- Chalkboard displays.
- Vintage Beer Stein permanent display.

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.

- Restaurant featuring German cuisine.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Suppenküche currently located at 525 Laguna Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
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Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

August 22, 2022

SUPPENKÜCHE

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Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Suppenküche, currently located at 525 Laguna 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 on 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 August 22, 2022, 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 Suppenküche in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Suppenküche.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Communal tables.
- Chalkboard displays.
- Vintage Beer Stein permanent display.

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

- Restaurant featuring German cuisine.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on August 22, 2022.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

Legacy Business Program

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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2021-22-032
Business Name: Suppenküche
Business Address: 525 Laguna Street
District: District 5
Applicant: Fabricius Wiest, Owner
Nomination Letter Date: June 22, 2022
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston

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

525 Laguna Street from 1993 to Present (29 years)

PER CRITERION 1: Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?
_____ ☒ Yes _____ No

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: Commercial lease prices in Hayes Valley have increased dramatically in the last decade while an increasing number of venture capital backed businesses have entered the scene putting independent operators at risk of displacement. Listing on the Legacy Business Registry could help Suppenküche maintain its home in Hayes Valley.

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: June 22, 2022

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

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DEAN PRESTON

June 22, 2022

Office of Small Business
Attn: Legacy Business Registration Application
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: *Letter of Nomination for Suppenkuche to the Legacy Business Registry*

Dear Mr. Kurylo:

I am writing to nominate Suppenkuche, a longtime small business in Hayes Valley, to the Legacy Business Registry.

Suppenkuche was founded in 1993 by Fabricius Wiest and Thomas Klausmann, who shared a vision to bring a Wirtshaus/restaurant with Bavarian cuisine and beer to the United States. They looked far and wide, but eventually found Hayes Valley, where they fell in love immediately. Nearly thirty years later, it's hard to imagine the neighborhood without Suppenkuche.

Suppenkuche is a traditional Wirtshaus, a place to grab a nice beer and enjoy great traditional German food. It brings the familiar feeling of being in a traditional pub that one would usually find in Europe. If a San Franciscans ever wanted a place with delicious beer and great portions of mouthwatering food for a great price, Suppenkuche is always there to offer.

Suppenkuche has grown from serving mainly locals and business owners in the area to being known all around the Bay Area and beyond. Despite its international renown, Suppenkuche remains a family-owned business that, at its heart, is a place for locals to gather. The long wooden tables invite communal discussion, and Fabricius is more than happy to share conversation and a cold beer.

Suppenkuche has been featured in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, *7x7 Magazine*, and the *Buzz Tattler*. It has also won many awards such as the Zagat and most recently the best German Restaurant 2020 People's Choice in the *SF Weekly*.

My office sincerely appreciates the commitment Suppenkuche has shown to both Hayes Valley and San Francisco, which is why I am honored to nominate Suppenkuche to the San Francisco Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,



Dean Preston
District 5 Supervisor

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:	
Suppenküche	
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business):	
Fabricius Wiest	
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE NUMBER:
525 Laguna St.	415-252-9289
	EMAIL ADDRESS:
MAILING ADDRESS – STREET ADDRESS:	MAILING ADDRESS – CITY AND STATE:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business Address	San Francisco, CA
	MAILING ADDRESS – ZIP CODE:
WEBSITE ADDRESS:	
https://www.suppenkuche.com/	
FACEBOOK PAGE:	
@Suppenkuche	
TWITTER NAME:	
@Suppenkuche	
APPLICANT'S NAME:	APPLICANT'S TELEPHONE NUMBER:
Mandee Lopez-Wiest	415-252-9289
APPLICANT'S TITLE:	APPLICANT'S EMAIL ADDRESS:
Co-owner	
SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	
0386143	
SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (If applicable):	
1827542	

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
525 Laguna St.	94102	May 15, 1993
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	May 15, 1993 - 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:

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		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. A business deemed not current 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 grants through the Legacy Business Program.

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.

Mandee Lopez-Wiest

June 21 2022

Mandee Lopez-Wiest

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

SUPPENKÜCHE

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.

Suppenküche is a family owned business in the heart of the Hayes Valley neighborhood. Its central location at the corner of Hayes Street and Laguna has served delicious authentic Bavarian dishes and freshly tapped beer since May of 1993.

It was founded by Fabricius Wiest and his partner at the time, a talented chef by the name of Thomas Klausmann. Their collaboration to open a Wirsthaus restaurant with Bavarian cuisine and beer was born when the two met in Fabricius' hometown of Munich where he worked as a graphic designer.

The vision came to fruition when Fabricius made his move to the U.S. He was captivated by the welcomeness of America, which differed from the restrictive nature of life in Germany. In December of 1992 Fabricius arrived in San Francisco in search of a location for Suppenküche. He chose Hayes Valley for its potential. He saw an area that was filled with style, creative people, and art. Small businesses like cafés and thrift stores began the transformation of the neighborhood which was considered unsafe in the '90s era. The arrival of Suppenküche revived a storefront that had been empty and boarded up for some time.

Offering good, simple German cuisine expertly prepared in a heartfelt space has made Suppenküche a community centered fixture in Hayes Valley. Fabi's vision was modeled after the Bavarian beer halls of his childhood, which encourages people to sit and eat together. Looking back, Fabricius said, "We wanted to invite folks in, sit together. It was something new for Americans. In the old days, you'd sit with your girlfriend at a two-seater table. You were isolated. We were more like 'let's all get together.' It was fun. Everyone was sitting together, old and rich and young, the artists, and the weirdos. That's how we started."

Commercial lease prices in Hayes Valley have increased dramatically in the last decade while an increasing number of venture capital backed businesses have entered the scene putting independent operators at risk of displacement. Listing on the Legacy Business Registry could help Suppenküche maintain its home in Hayes Valley. Although the business has operated in San Francisco for less than 30 years, it is eligible for the Legacy Business Registry because the business is more than 20 years old and has significantly contributed to the history and identity of Hayes Valley.

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

Suppenküche has not ceased operation for over two days. During the COVID pandemic, the business continued to serve the community as an “essential business.”

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

The business is 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. Fabricius Wiest, original owner since 1993, met his wife Mandee in 2002 in front of Suppenküche. They married in 2005 and have three children. Mandee Wiest plays a pivotal role in running the restaurant.

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

The ownership history of Suppenküche is as follows:

1993 to 1995	Fabricius Wiest and Thomas Klarmann
1995 to Present:	Fabricius Wiest

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 since 1993 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 at 525 Laguna Street is classified by the Planning Department as Category A, Historic Resource Present, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. Constructed circa 1890, the structure is a two-story, wood-frame residential over commercial building designed in the Stick/Eastlake style. The building appears to be in good condition and contributes to the Hayes Valley Commercial Historic District on the California Register and determined eligible for the National Register.

CRITERION 2

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

Suppenküche has contributed to both the history and identity of the Hayes Valley neighborhood and San Francisco. The business is associated with German/Bavarian cuisine.

San Francisco is an ever changing, ever evolving whirlwind of enigmatic energy and openness. Some may think that has changed or even been replaced, but if you find yourself in Hayes Valley on the corner of Hayes and Laguna, the worn wooden doors of Suppenküche will invite you back to what makes this city so special. It's the people who work and live here, the camaraderie, the shared history; it's the conversations you find, the food, and most certainly the beer.

Suppenküche started back in the 1990s when much of the Hayes Valley neighborhood was boarded up – a forgotten part of the city. Suppenküche was one of the original businesses that helped revitalize the neighborhood. The restaurant has been a main contributor to Hayes Valley and is well known throughout San Francisco for its traditional Bavarian cuisine and beer.

Suppenküche is a founding member of the Hayes Valley Small Business Association.

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

Suppenküche often participates in festivities that come through Hayes Valley and frequently hosts gatherings and annual community events which is a draw for locals.

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

Suppenküche has been featured in many publications, including the San Francisco Chronicle, The New York Times, the Guardian, 7X7 magazine, The Mercury News, The Washington Post, SFGate, SFWeekly, Hoodline, Thrillist, and Restaurant Guru.

Suppenküche has won many awards, including the Zagat Best Restaurants in Hayes Valley award and most recently SF Weekly's people's choice award in 2020 for the Best German Restaurant.

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

Fabricius Wiest has been the face and soul of Suppenküche since the beginning. He has welcomed so many people throughout the years and is still at the restaurant today ready to serve the community.

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

Suppenküche remains a home away from home to many in the community. Over the years, the restaurant has been a second home to people who hang out in the neighborhood. Suppenküche has provided them with jobs, food, and a sense of belonging, and has generated lasting and loving relationships.

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

Suppenküche serves the local community and other local businesses, including artists and dancers from the nearby Symphony and Ballet. Suppenküche is known worldwide and is an attraction for those visiting San Francisco.

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

Suppenküche is located at 525 Laguna Street in a historic and attractive building in the Stick/Eastlake style. The original architectural features have not been changed.

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

Beloved Suppenküche is a home within the community. It is a place where all are invited, where everyone belongs, and where people feel well. Suppenküche is a place where people come to connect and where many fall in love. If it were to close, the community would grieve the loss of this institution.

CRITERION 3

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

Suppenküche is a traditional Wirsthaus, a beer place with food similar to neighborhood pubs in England which are found throughout Europe. With its communal dining and upbeat vibes, it offers a refuge in the noise of daily life. Known around the world, many restaurants have taken inspiration from Suppenküche. It was a pioneer in bringing the beer culture to San Francisco.

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)

Since 1993, Suppenküche has brought the customs and traditions from Bavaria; their simple and modest establishment continues to bring a sense of familiar coziness for both regular and new patrons. The model they shared has made a big impact on the beer scene in San Francisco, throughout the state of California, and across the United States.

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.).

Suppenküche is a little jewel in the neighborhood of Hayes Valley. With its communal tables, chalkboard menus, and simple food, the vibe of sharing and talking and eating and drinking

together has a home in Suppenküche. Both the exterior and interior of Suppenküche have remained intact with its original configuration and decor and are a recognizable aspect of its brand; it's known as the traditional Bavarian spot in San Francisco.

d. 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 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.

Not applicable. The current owner is the original owner.





FRIDAY
STREET CLEANING

2 HOUR
PARKING

8AM TO 9PM
MON THRU FRI

EXCEPT VEHICLES WITH
AREA S PERMITS

HAPPY
27th
ANNIVERSARY
1993-2020
Beer
To Go

CHOOSE UP TO TWO
BRATWURST







SPEZIALGETRÄNKE



DRAFT BEER SPECIALS:

Key Maibock 5 liter \$10
Keyer Hefeweizen 3 liter \$8
Keyer Sayreback 3 liter \$10
Keyer Gold 3 liter \$10
Key 5 Korns 3 liter \$9

BOTTLE BEER SPECIALS:

Keyer Pilsener 5 liter \$10
Key 5 Korns (special wheat beer) 3 liter \$10
Key 5 Korns (special wheat beer) 3 liter \$10
Key 5 Korns (special wheat beer) 3 liter \$10

WINE SPRITZER SPECIAL:

Wine Spritzer \$10 (glass)

SEASONAL CIDER:

Key 5 Korns (Seasonal) 3 liter \$10



Food

'I hope I can stay': German immigrant tries to keep SF's Suppenkuche open

Grant Marek

June 2, 2020



"It's become a true hangout, a place where the food -- no matter how good -- is overshadowed by the experience."

- Michael Bauer, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2005

...

It's jarring to see a communal table at Suppenküche that isn't completely full on a Thursday. But add it to the Lombard-long list of jarring sights from the last three months - three of the most trying in the city of San Francisco's history.

The lone communal in the sun-lit back room of Hayes Valley's 27-year-old German beer hall is practically empty on this particular Thursday, save two men: owner Fabricius Wiest and general manager Heitor Oliveira.

Their eyes are trained on a Zoom interview as their minds clearly wander.

Suppenküche is scraping by during the coronavirus pandemic like so many other San Francisco restaurants forced into a takeout-only model - with business down 40%, they were forced to furlough their entire 30-person staff and, for the first time in the restaurant's history, they're now part of the delivery app ecosystem.



Blair Heagerty / SFGATE :: General Manager, Heitor Oliveira

"We were very against those delivery apps," Oliveira tells SFGATE. "But we have all the major five now, it's the first time ever we've used any of them. Sales can keep us afloat another two to three months, then we'll see."

Just five people are now running the entire restaurant's operations, including Wiest, who gets nostalgic as he contemplates his life's work's uncertain future.

Born in Heidelberg, Germany, Wiest moved to San Francisco in December of 1992. Six months later, he'd open Suppenküche in a Hayes Valley neighborhood that is almost unrecognizable today.



Blair Heagerty / SFGATE - Pictured: Pablo Lopez

"It was kind of depressed in this area. I didn't know San Francisco at all, but I liked Hayes Valley because it was flat," the 56-year-old Wiest says. "It was just a wild fun neighborhood. People would always tell me, 'You're going in near the 600 block? Are you insane? It's so dangerous.' But I loved it here.

"And I hope I can stay."

"This Spartan-looking space, which once housed a butcher shop, is now the home of some of the best German food you'll find in the city ... Suppenküche offers much more than good food: It's a friendly environment in which to mingle with a new crowd and relax."

- Michael Bauer, San Francisco Chronicle, 1993



Blair Heagerty / SFGATE

"Staying" will be complicated for so many reasons.

According to Mayor London Breed, restaurants will be able to reopen outdoor dining — which Suppenküche has none of — on June 15, and indoor dining on July 13, assuming they can do both safely.



Blair Heagerty / SFGATE

"Staying" will be complicated for so many reasons.

According to Mayor London Breed, restaurants will be able to reopen outdoor dining — which Suppenküche has none of — on June 15, and indoor dining on July 13, assuming they can do both safely.

But how exactly do you socially distance a dining room that's entirely built for communal dining? How do you keep six feet in a restaurant filled with tight cozy corners,

that has — for decades — put people in close enough quarters to ultimately bring them together?

"We want to have a safe space," Oliveira says. "We'd love to have that same atmosphere, but we know that won't be possible, and we're not going to jeopardize anyone. Communal tables will be hard to have anytime soon, but hopefully we can get tables outside."

Wiest, who recently dissolved his partnership with Aaron and Matt Hulme and in turn Suppenküche's relationship with Biergarten and Radhaus, has applied for a curbside pickup permit which would let Suppenküche commandeer some out-front parking, plus applied for a permit for sidewalk seating, plus plus has already begun researching a program introduced by Breed that could allow for additional al fresco dining. They're also contemplating opening up a window in his back dining room to serve as a pickup window.

"We knew the place had a soul when we perused the long beer and wine list featuring German wines, and then saw the oversized frosted Pilsner glasses."

- Michael Bauer, San Francisco Chronicle, 1993

Ultimately, Wiest hopes Suppenküche's 32-ounce mason jars of beer and familial Bavarian food will be what brings people back.

"The city became more and more where you go out with your Louis Vuitton girlfriend and have a \$30,000 salmon — where do you go just to have a full meal?" Wiest says, in the thickest of German accents. "We don't have a huge staff now, so everything you eat is made by us — we really went back to the basics."



Blair Heagerty / SFGATE

And the neighborhood has thrust the full weight of their support behind them.

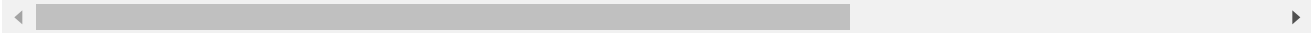
"We wouldn't have been able to stay afloat without our long time residents," Oliveira said. "People just keep stopping by, even just for one pretzel and a beer. That's the thing about us coming back. This place is so beloved, we'll provide a sense of normality to people."

Suppenküche is located at 525 Laguna St. They're currently open Tuesday to Saturday, from 4-8:30 p.m. In addition to delivery apps, you can order by calling 415-252-9289 or by sending an email to suppenkuchehayesvalley@gmail.com.



Blair Heagerty / SFGATE

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SF

REVIEW



Suppenküche

GERMAN

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HAYES VALLEY

VIEW WEBSITE

GET DIRECTIONS

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415-252-9289

HOURS:

THURSDAY

5:00PM TO 10:00PM

▼

PERFECT FOR:

BIG GROUPS

CLASSIC ESTABLISHMENT

▼

TA

Written by
TAYLOR ABRAMS

Sometimes when you go to a Mexican restaurant, or a French restaurant, or a Spanish restaurant, you try to throw out the accent you got your semester wherever and sound like you know what you're talking about as you order. So unless you took German, good luck pronouncing anything correctly at Suppenküche, where everything on the menu is very authentically German. Unless you're ordering the wiener schnitzel, in which case, free pass.

Suppenküche is a serious establishment, and has been holding down a discreet corner of Hayes Valley for over 20 years. We'd argue it's the best German food in town, and definitely less "how fast can you chug a beer" than [Leopold's](#). You enter through a thick blanket hanging over the door, into a space with simple floors and wooden tables that feels like it would be completely appropriate to be wearing ski boots and clunking around with a tray of pretzels and chili.

But no snowsuits to be found here. Instead it's a chill mix of groups, dates, locals, and the friendly staff who serve up hearty, interesting, and overall excellent German plates. The nook behind the bar is a little darker and more chill, and can be a good moderately romantic spot for a date.

Besides the awesome food, we are all about the Suppenküche beer selection. It has a very, very long list of German beers, and if you thought you were headed into more of a Leopold's situation, don't fret, you can still get a boot to drown your sorrows in.

Food Rundown

Bread & Butter

It just shows up so there's not German name for it on the menu, but the brown, dense bread is killer and the creamy, whipped herb butter that comes with is fantastic. Pace yourself.

Reibekuchen mit hausgemachtem Apfelmus (Potato Pancakes)

Potato pancakes, yo. These are a bird's nest of shredded potatoes, with a tangy, not sweet, applesauce. Soft on the inside, crispy on the outside, these are spectacular. Do not skip.

Jägerschnitzel in Champignonsoße mit Spätzle und grünem Salat (Pork Tenderloin)

Tasty pork loin in a rich mushroom sauce. The spätzle is confusingly addictive too, buttery while simultaneously light enough to just keep eating it until it's gone.

Wiener Schnitzel vom Schwein mit Bratkartoffeln und Grünem Salat (Breaded Pork Loin)

Whatever this is sautéed in is delicious, and the breading is appropriately thick. Not crazy exciting, but probably the safest bet if you are a novice German ski chalet menu consumer.

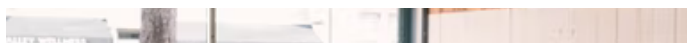
Gebratene Rehmedaillions in Rotwein-Pflaumensoße mit Rotkohl und Spätzle (Venison Medallions)

Here is something we do not like. Perhaps because the red cabbage is deeply, deeply marinated in the red wine plum sauce that comes with the venison. Inedible. Also, the venison is pretty tough.

Gegrillte Nürnberger Bratwurst mit Sauerkraut und Kartoffelbrei (Pork Sausage)

Translation: comes with sauerkraut and mashed potatoes. The pork sausage is perfectly cooked and nicely seasoned. And Jesus the sauerkraut is good. We've contemplating asking for more. Not weird at all.

**FEATURED
IN**





LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: JULY 20, 2022

Filing Date: June 22, 2022
Case No.: **2022-006120LBR**
Business Name: SUPPENKUCHE
Business Address: 525 Laguna Street (Primary Address)
Zoning: Hayes Gough Neighborhood Commercial Transit (NCT) Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0819/001
Applicant: Mande-Lopez Wiest
525 Laguna St
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston
Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: Kalyani Agnihotri - 628-652-7454
Kalyani.Agnihotri@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

Suppenkuche is a family owned business, opened by Fabricius Wiest and his partner at the time, chef Thomas Klausmann at 525 Laguna St in May 1993. Inspired by the welcoming nature of America, Wiest, who hailed from Germany, chose the Hayes Valley location for its style, creative people and art. Suppenkuche offers simple German cuisine and the vision for the restaurant was modeled after the Bavarian beer halls which encourage people to sit and eat together. The restaurant is a traditional Wirsthaus, a beer place with food, very similar to the English neighborhood pubs which are popular in Europe. Since its founding, Suppenkuche has brought to San Francisco, the customs and traditions from Bavaria which are reflected in its communal dining and upbeat vibes.

Over the years, Suppenkuche has provided many jobs, food and a sense of belonging to the people of Hayes Valley and San Francisco. The restaurant prides itself as one of the original businesses that helped revitalize the Hayes Valley neighborhood in the 1990s and is also a founding member of the Hayes Valley Small Business Association. As a family owned business, operated by Fabricius and his wife Mande, Suppenkuche has strived to contribute

to the history and identity of the Hayes Valley neighborhood. The exterior and interior of the restaurant have remained intact since it was founded and are a recognizable aspect of its brand.

The business's primary location at 525 Laguna St is a Category A (Historic Resource Present) structure on the southwest corner of Laguna and Hayes Streets in the Western Addition neighborhood. It is within the Hayes-Gough NCT (Neighborhood Commercial Transit) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District. 525 Laguna is identified as a contributor to the National and California Register-eligible Hayes Valley Residential Historic District.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1993.

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

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

- a. Suppenkuche has operated continuously in San Francisco for 29 years.
- b. Suppenkuche has contributed to the history and identity of the Western Addition neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. Suppenkuche 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 German/Bavarian cuisine.

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

Yes. The Laguna Street property is located within the National and California Register-eligible Hayes Valley Residential Historic District. The area consists of two to three-story buildings and focuses on the architectural themes of the Gilded Age (previously Victorian) and Progressive-Era (previously Edwardian) styles of architecture which include styles such as Italianate, Stick-Eastlake, Greek Revival, and Classical Revival.

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

Yes, the site is listed in the California/ National Register as a contributor to the Hayes Valley Residential Historic District.

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.?*

Yes. Suppenkuche has been featured in numerous articles including the San Francisco Chronicle, The New York Times, the Guardian, 7X7 magazine, The Mercury News, The Washington Post, SFGate, SF Weekly, Hoodline, Thrillist, and Restaurant Guru. It has also won awards, including the Zagat Best Restaurants in Hayes Valley award and most recently SF Weekly's people's choice award in 2020 for the Best German Restaurant.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 525 Laguna Street (1993 – Present)

Recommended by Applicant

- Communal tables
- Chalkboard displays
- Vintage Beer Stein permanent display

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. 1250

HEARING DATE: JULY 20, 2022

Case No.: 2022-006120LBR
Business Name: SUPPENKUCHE
Business Address: 525 LAGUNA STREET (Primary Address)
Zoning: HAYES GOUGH NCT (Neighborhood Commercial Transit) Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0819/001
Applicant: Mande Lopez-West
525 Laguna Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston
Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: Kalyani Agnihotri - 628-652-7454
Kalyani.Agnihotri@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR SUPPENKUCHE CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 525 LAGUNA STREET (PRIMARY ADDRESS), BLOCK/LOT 0819/001;

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 July 20, 2022, 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 Suppenkuche 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 Suppenkuche.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

- 525 Laguna St (1993 – Present)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Communal tables
- Chalkboard menus
- Vintage Beer Stein permanent display

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 2022-006120LBR to the Office of Small Business on July 20, 2022.



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Wright, Black, Foley, Johns, So, Matsuda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Nageswaran

ADOPTED: July 20, 2022