



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: December 11, 2023

IL POLLAIO

Application No.: LBR-2020-21-007
Business Name: Il Pollaio
Business Address: 555 Columbus Ave.
District: District 3
Applicant: Maria Castellucci Bautista, Manager
Nomination Date: August 25, 2020
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Il Pollaio is an Italian restaurant with Argentinean influence best known for their grilled chicken. It was opened by husband and wife, Marta and Guiseppe Castellucci, in the heart of North Beach in August 1984. Il Pollaio is an Italian phrase that translates into “the chicken coop” in English.

Guiseppe Castellucci was born in Calabria, Italy, and his family moved to Argentina when he was 11, and then to San Francisco in 1980. Four years later, with no restaurant experience, he opened the restaurant in North Beach. Today the restaurant is run by Marta and Guiseppe’s daughter, Paula Castellucci Bautista. Well known for its delicious grilled chicken, generous portions, reasonable prices, and family-friendly atmosphere, Il Pollaio has become a regular dining spot for locals, tourists, and celebrities alike.

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

555 Columbus Ave. from 1984 to Present (39 years)
2859 Mission St. from 2020 to 2023 (3 years)

CRITERION 2

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

Yes, Il Pollaio has contributed to the history and identity of the North Beach 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 Italian and Argentinean-inspired cuisine.
- The property at 555 Columbus Ave. was identified in the 1984 North Beach Survey as eligible for listing on the California Register and National Register.

Legacy Business Program

Office of Small Business
City Hall Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-6680
legacybusiness@sfgov.org
www.legacybusiness.org





- Il Pollaio was reviewed on April 25, 2018, by former San Francisco Chronicle restaurant critic Michael Bauer who gave it an excellent review and called it, “The Mothership of Grilled Chicken.”
- Il Pollaio is an immigrant-, minority-, and woman-owned business that contributes to the cultural fabric of San Francisco by providing Italian and Argentinean-inspired food, a friendly atmosphere, and affordable prices. The business is also a member of North Beach Neighbors and the North Beach Business Association and supports community endeavors.

CRITERION 3

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

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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Il Pollaio 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:

- Restaurant featuring reasonably priced Italian and Argentinean-inspired cuisine.
- Family-friendly atmosphere.

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 Italian-inspired cuisine.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Il Pollaio currently located at 555 Columbus Ave. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

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Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

December 11, 2023

IL POLLAIO

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Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Il Pollaio, currently located at 555 Columbus Ave.

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 December 11, 2023, 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 Il Pollaio 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 Il Pollaio.

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Restaurant featuring reasonably priced Italian and Argentinean-inspired cuisine.
- Family-friendly atmosphere.

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

- Restaurant featuring Italian-inspired cuisine.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on December 11, 2023.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2020-21-007
Business Name: Il Pollaio
Business Address: 555 Columbus Ave.
District: District 3
Applicant: Maria Castellucci Bautista, Manager
Nomination Date: August 25, 2020
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin

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

555 Columbus Ave. from 1984 to Present (39 years)
2859 Mission St. from 2020 to 2023 (3 years)

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

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

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: October 18, 2023

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
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Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

AARON PESKIN
佩斯金 市參事

August 25, 2020.

Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi
San Francisco Office of Small Business
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
regina.dick-endrizzi@sfgov.org
(415) 554-6134

Dear Director Dick-Endrizzi:

I am writing to nominate Il Pollaio for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

Il Pollaio, a restaurant on Columbus Avenue, has been producing exceptional grilled chicken for decades. The restaurant was opened in 1984 by Giuseppe Castellucci and is now run by his daughter Paula Castellucci Bautista. Castellucci was from Calabria, Italy; his family moved to Argentina when he was 11, and they came to California in 1980. Four years later, with no experience in the restaurant business, he opened the storefront in North Beach. With this background it makes sense that the food would take inspiration from both Italy and Argentina, yet it seems to have universal appeal.

Il Pollaio would benefit greatly from inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry, and it is my honor to nominate it for inclusion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aaron Peskin".

Aaron Peskin



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: Il Pollaio

Business owner name(s): Marta Castellucci and Giuseppe Castellucci

Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business

Current business address: 555 Columbus Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94133

Telephone: (415) 362 - 7727 **Email:** ilpollaiosf@gmail.com

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website: https://www.ilpollaiosf.com/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ilpollaiosf/ **Twitter:**

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0 1 4 7 7 7 5

Do any of these describe your business? (select all that apply)

Requires at least 51% of the business be owned, operated, and controlled by the business designation below.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Immigrant-Owned Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Owned by Person with a Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ+-Owned Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran-Owned Business |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minority-Owned Business* | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woman-Owned Business |

**Minority is defined as one or more of the following racial or ethnic groups: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; Middle Eastern or North African; Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander*

Contact Person Information

Contact person name: Maria Castellucci Bautista

Contact person title: Manager

Contact telephone: () - **Contact email:**

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.

Original San Francisco address: **Zip Code:**

Is this location the founding location of the business? (Y/N):

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other Address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Applicant Disclosures

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.

Name: Maria Castellucci Bautista

Signature:



Date: 10/03/2023

IL POLLAIO

Written Historical Narrative

INTRODUCTION

a. Describe the business. What does it sell or provide?

Il Pollaio is a full-service restaurant located in the heart of North Beach. The restaurant sells primarily grilled chicken, thus the name Il Pollaio, which loosely translates to chicken coop in Italian. Since it was founded, the menu has pretty much stayed the same. Over the years, they have added some sandwiches, hamburgers, a caprese salad, and a well-priced rib-eye steak. The restaurant is a staple in the neighborhood with close to 90 percent of its customers being locals from the immediate area.

Well known for its delicious grilled chicken, fresh and healthy side salads, and reasonably priced house wine, Il Pollaio has become a regular dining spot for locals and celebrities alike. Former restaurant critic Michael Bauer wrote reviews about it and often dined there regularly.

b. Describe whom the business serves.

Being centrally located on North Beach's busiest street gives diners at Il Pollaio a bird's eye view through its large picture window of all that is happening in the neighborhood. It is a meeting place where old friends sit and chat and catch up on their lives. On any given day, you're likely to see at least two generations of a family there speaking Cantonese, Italian, Spanish, and even Russian. You'll see grandparents feeding their grandkids, moms and dads with kids in tow, and friends and neighbors having a quick lunch before getting back to work. Lunches are busy with the restaurant filled with local police and fire fighters and even other restaurant owners! During the dinner hours, there are lots of 'to go' orders of their famous grilled half chicken with choice of a salad or French fries.

The demographics for Il Pollaio are diverse. Young, old, single, married with families are all part of their customer base. Most are locals, but savvy tourists looking for a dining deal have found them as well.

c. In about 2-5 words (15-30 characters), describe what the business is known for.

Delicious grilled chicken made with love.

CRITERION 1: The business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years

a. Provide a short history of the business, including locations and owners.

Il Pollaio, located at 555 Columbus Avenue diagonally across from Washington Square Park in North Beach, was founded in that location by spouses Marta and Giuseppe Castellucci on August 28, 1984.

Marta and Giuseppe migrated to the United States in 1980 from Argentina. It was a difficult political time, and they decided that it was time to move the family. Giuseppe's younger brother Tony already lived in San Francisco, so it was a natural fit to move to here. In San Francisco, Giuseppe flipped homes for a living, but in the 1980s it was a very difficult time to do that kind of work with interest rates being extremely high. After about three years of trying to renovate homes, Tony came up with the idea of Marta and Giuseppe opening a restaurant. Giuseppe has always been a great cook. He really is a grill master. He learned his craft in Argentina where they are very famous for grilling.

In 1984 Marta and Giuseppe opened Il Pollaio at 555 Columbus Avenue. In the beginning, it was extremely slow. After a few months, Michael Bauer from the San Francisco Chronicle wrote an article about how good the restaurant was, and after that, they were extremely busy. Marta and Giuseppe have always been extremely grateful to him for that article. Opening a restaurant was not something that they ever thought they would do, but as an immigrant you do what you have to do to feed your family and get ahead.

A second location of Il Pollaio at 2859 Mission Street opened on August 21, 2020. The timing of the second location did not work out well because the business opened during the COVID pandemic. The entire process was incredibly difficult with construction stopped while continuing to pay rent as well as insurances. The business was open for three years but didn't qualify for any COVID assistance since it opened during the pandemic. The Mission Street location closed on August 5, 2023.

Today Marta and Giuseppe are retired, but still retain ownership of the business and help out in many ways. Marta still helps with payroll and Giuseppe is always quick to fix anything that may need a handyman. Whenever they come for lunch, all the regulars remember them and always come to their table to say hello. The Castellucci family loves being a part of the North Beach neighborhood. They are a part of peoples families and traditions, and the restaurant is just a nice place to have a decent, well priced meal, which is very hard to find these days.

b. Provide the ownership history of the business in a consolidated year-to-year format.

1984 to Present: Marta Castellucci and Giuseppe Castellucci

c. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for any significant length of time.

During the COVID pandemic, Il Pollaio at 555 Columbus Ave. closed for two months from March to May 2020.

CRITERION 2: The business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community

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

Residents of North Beach have been loyal and continue to frequent Il Pollaio because of the consistently great tasting food, generous portions, reasonable pricing, and friendly atmosphere. A patron may run into a neighbor or friend at any time in the restaurant. Il Pollaio is considered a staple in the neighborhood.

Many other restaurants have come and gone along the Columbus Avenue corridor while Il Pollaio has survived. Several years ago, there was another grilled chicken restaurant right around the corner on Union Street and Columbus Avenue. It was more expensive and had a smaller brick-and-mortar footprint. It failed and is no longer in business. At least five restaurants located on the same block have closed, yet Il Pollaio remains.

b. Is the business associated with significant people or events, either now or in the past?

According to former San Francisco Chronicle restaurant critic Michael Bauer, "It's one of the restaurants that is vital to preserving the soul of North Beach." Bauer was a frequent patron of Il Pollaio and enjoyed not only their grilled chicken but also their grilled rabbit.

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

Il Pollaio is a member of North Beach Neighbors and the North Beach Business Association. It has always supported community endeavors.

d. Has the business ever been referenced in the media, business trade publication, and/or historical documents?

Il Pollaio was reviewed on April 25, 2018, by former San Francisco Chronicle restaurant critic Michael Bauer who gave it an excellent review and called it, "The Mothership of Grilled Chicken."

The restaurant continues to get very positive reviews on Trip Advisor, Open Table and Yelp.

e. Has the business ever received any awards, recognition, or political commendations?

Not applicable.

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

If the business were to close, the North Beach community would lose a gathering place that has been a cornerstone of the neighborhood since 1984. The community would lose a restaurant

that offers delicious food at a reasonable price with a comfortable atmosphere. It would be sorely missed. There is no other restaurant in the vicinity offering the quality of food and the generous portions at as reasonable a price as Il Pollaio.

CRITERION 3: The business is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business

a. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building, structure, object, signage, mural, architectural detail, neon sign, or any other special physical feature that defines the business?

The building at 549-555 Columbus Avenue appears to be historically significant.

b. In a few words, describe the main business activity you commit to maintaining.

Il Pollaio is committed to continuing to serve good food at a reasonable price in a family atmosphere.

c. What challenges is the business facing today?

One of the biggest challenges the restaurant faces are the rising costs of food. Another challenge is the loss of foot traffic because of San Francisco's PR problem and loss of tourists. Tourist traffic counts are down, which has definitely impacted the business.

Legacy Business Program staff will add the following details:

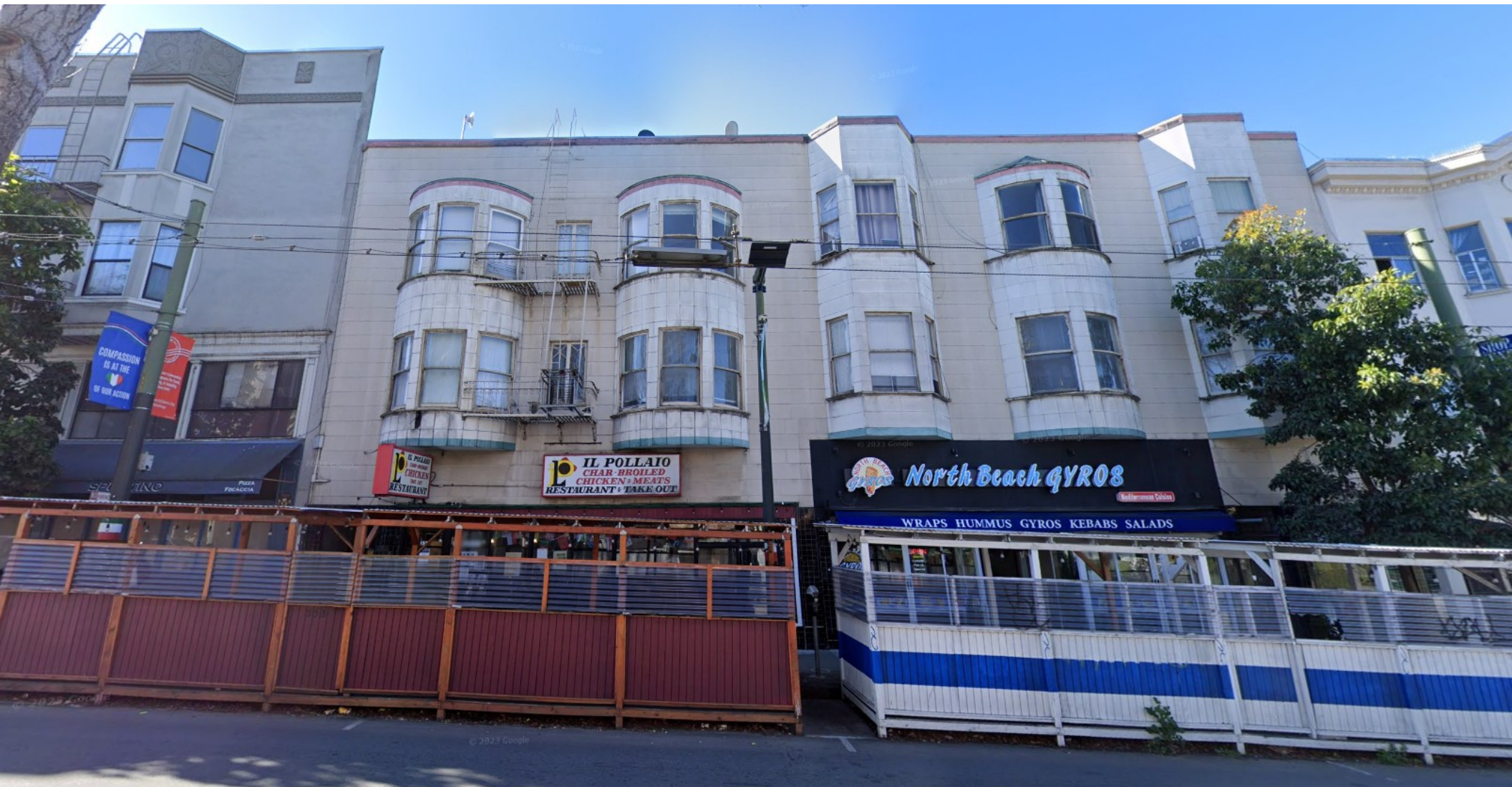
a. Features or traditions that define the business and should be maintained for the business to remain on the Legacy Business Registry.

Restaurant featuring Italian cuisine.

b. 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 Planning Department Historic Resource Status of the building at 549-555 Columbus Avenue is "A - Historic Resource Present." The building appears to be eligible for the National Register or California Register through survey evaluation in 1984.

The Planning Department Historic Resource Status of the building at 2857-2859 Mission Street is "C - No Historic Resource Present."



COMPASSION IS AT THE HEART OF OUR ACTION

IL POLLAIO
CHAR-BROILED
CHICKEN
RESTAURANT

IL POLLAIO
CHAR-BROILED
CHICKEN & MEATS
RESTAURANT TAKE OUT

© 2023 GYROS
North Beach GYROS
WRAPS HUMMUS GYROS KEBABS SALADS

IL POLLAIO

EST. 1984



Siguro Bros. & Co.
Decorators de Interiores
2857 Mission Str
San Francisco, CA
(415) 401-8

MISIÓN

CLOSED

2859

IL POLLAIO





IL POLLAIO
CHAR-BROILED
CHICKEN
TAKE OUT
RESTAURANT

SHOP & DINE
49
SHOP SMALL

We Open
AT LUNCH
11:30 TO 2:30 PM
AND DINNER
4:00 TO 8:00 PM



il o
IL POLLAIO
CHAR-BROILED
CHICKEN
TAKE OUT
RESTAURANT









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(28 MAY)

IL POLLIO



HAS

FOOD THAT'S OUT OF THIS WORLD BUT IS AT THE SAME TIME DOWN TO EARTH!

PREPARE TO LAND IN NORTH BEACH AT IL POLLIO.
I GET FIRST GRAB AT NORMA'S MINISTRONI SOUP.
GORT, YOU MAY EAT THE SUPPLY OF CHEF JOSE'S
DELICIOUS CHICKEN AND ZELMAR YOU CAN
STUFF ALL FOUR OF YOUR FACES
WITH THE BIG, HOT AND CRISPY
IL POLLIO'S FRENCH FRIES!



IT'S THE 3-BEAN
COMBO GIANT SALAD FOR US



LOOK
THERE ARE 2
IFO'S...
IDENTIFIED FLYING
OBJECTS FROM
OUTE SPACE
OR TELEGRAPH
HILL!

IT MUST BE ALMOST
SUMMER THAT HUNGRY
CREW FROM THE PLANET
ZARCON ARE
COMING TO IL POLLIO

IF YOU
INCREASE THE
ZOOM ON THE MONITOR-
SCOPE YOU CAN SEE
THE NEW HAIR DO ON
RAMIKA CREATED
BY THE TALENTED
TRAPAE THE
HAIR STYLIST!



GET THE
SOUP READY
THE ALIEN
TOURISTS
ARE ABOUT
TO LAND!

WILL PEOPLE
REALLY READ ALL
THIS TEXT?!



A Ramika TOON

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Il-Pollaiio-in-North-Beach-The-mothership-of-12858657.php>

San Francisco Chronicle

FOOD//RESTAURANTS

Il Pollaio in North Beach: The mothership of grilled chicken

[Michael Bauer](#)
April 23, 2018



Restaurants are increasingly building their menu around chicken. Local examples are RT Rotisserie in San Francisco, the Joinery in Sausalito and Limón, serving Peruvian-style chicken at several locations around the city.

Often overlooked in this chicken onslaught is Il Pollaio in North Beach, a modest restaurant on Columbus Avenue that has been producing exceptional grilled chicken for decades.

The restaurant was opened in 1984 by Giuseppe Castellucci and is now run by his daughter Paula Castellucci Bautista. Castellucci was from Calabria, Italy; his family moved to Argentina when he was 11, and they came to California in 1980. Four years later, with no experience in the restaurant business, he opened the storefront in North Beach. With this background it makes sense that the food would take inspiration from both Italy and Argentina, yet it seems to have universal appeal.



1 of 4

Il Pollaio always has chicken on the grill, so it can come to the table quickly.

Michael Bauer / The Chronicle

Castellucci Bautista says she's always surprised when people from the Middle East, France and Italy tell her the chicken brings back memories of their childhood.

"It's got that taste of home like your grandmother used to make," she says. "It speaks to many different cultures."

The chicken (\$11 for half; \$18 whole) is coated in a dry rub with many spices, including oregano, basil, rosemary and garlic. It's then grilled and served with wedges of lemon.

There are other items on the menu, but most people are there for chicken so there's always a dozen or more spatchcocked birds on the grill in various stages of doneness. Once the chicken is ordered, it comes out quickly, with an herb-flecked bronzed exterior and a few charred patches from the grill.





3 of 4

Michael Bauer / The Chronicle

The grilled rabbit (\$25) has also found a following, and when we ordered it, the waiter let us know that it took a half hour, wrongly thinking we wouldn't want to wait. We did.

The rabbit comes to the table nestled next to three thick slices of tomatoes garnished with fresh herbs, and a wedge of lemon cut from the pile of whole lemons that decorate the top of the counter in front of the open kitchen. It comes with either a salad or thick-cut fries.

Other items that come off the grill, such as the lamb chops (\$19.50) and rib eye steak (\$25), are accompanied by chimichurri. If you look on a shelf above the door, you'll see vats of lentils and split peas that are used in the daily soups (\$5.50 a cup or \$7 a bowl, and both are \$1.50 less if you order it with a meal).



4 of 4

French fries at Il Pollaio

Michael Bauer / The Chronicle

The one thing you won't see, which is a rarity in North Beach, is pasta.

The wine is serviceable, with only about 10 selections, but a bottle will cost you between \$22 and \$25. The interior is modest with tile floors and tables arranged in front of the storefront windows with the open kitchen in the rear.

While the restaurant's concept may be simple, Castellucci Bautista says that the upkeep is not. Because of the grease from the grill — the restaurant serves up to 100 chickens a day — they repaint the interior every six months.

That's the way it's been since she can remember. She started working at Il Pollaio, which roughly translates to "chicken coop," in high school, and her brother and husband also worked there.

Her father wanted her to escape the daily grind of running a restaurant, so she went to the University of San Francisco, where she earned a degree in political science. Her father said it would be over his dead body that she would come back to work in the restaurant, but the pull was too great. “To this day, the whole family knows not to bring it up,” she says.

Business has slowed recently, with several surrounding places going out of business. Just down the street, a fire in March took out another group of businesses.

Il Pollaio is fighting the downturn by doing what it has always done: putting out plates of good food with service that’s warm and familial. That seems to work — while we were there, a group of cops came in for dinner. They always seem to know the places that have generous portions.

Il Pollaio checks all that box and more. It’s one of the restaurants that is vital to preserving the soul of North Beach.

555 Columbus Ave., San Francisco; (415) 362-7727. Open 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Saturday.



LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2023

Filing Date: October 18, 2023
Case No.: 2023-009851LBR
Business Name: Il Pollaio
Business Address: 555 Columbus Avenue
Zoning: NCD (NORTH BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL) Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: Not Applicable
Block/Lot: 0117/019
Applicant: Maria Castellucci Bautista
555 Columbus Avenue
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Honora Montano - 628-652-7402
Honora.Montano@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

Il Pollaio is an Italian restaurant with Argentinean influence best known for their grilled chicken. It was opened by husband and wife, Marta and Guiseppe Castellucci, in the heart of North Beach in August 1984. Il Pollaio is an Italian phrase that translates into “Chicken Coop” in English. Guiseppe Castellucci was born in Calabria, Italy, and his family moved to Argentina when he was 11, and then to San Francisco in 1980. Four years later, with no restaurant experience, he opened the restaurant in North Beach. Today the restaurant is run by Marta and Guiseppe’s daughter, Paula Castellucci Bautista. Well known for its delicious grilled chicken, generous portions, reasonable prices, and family-friendly atmosphere, Il Pollaio has become a regular dining spot for locals, tourists, and celebrities alike.

The business’s location at 555 Columbus is a Category A (Historic Resource Present) structure on the west side of Columbus Street between Beach Blanket Babylon Blvd. (Green Street) and Union Street, near Washington Square Park in the North Beach neighborhood. It is within the North Beach NCD (Neighborhood Commercial) Zoning

District, the North Beach Special Use District (SUD), and a 40-X Height and Bulk District. 555 Columbus was identified as eligible for listing on the California Register and National Register in the 1984 North Beach Survey.

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

- a. Il Pollaio has operated continuously in San Francisco for 39 years.
- b. Il Pollaio has contributed to the history and identity of the North Beach neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. Il Pollaio is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

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

Yes. The business is associated with Italian and Argentinean-inspired cuisine.

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

Yes. 555 Columbus was identified as eligible for listing on the California Register and National Register in the 1984 North Beach Survey.

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

No; however, 555 Columbus was identified as eligible for listing on the California and National Registers.

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. Il Pollaio was reviewed on April 25, 2018, by former San Francisco Chronicle restaurant critic Michael Bauer who gave it an excellent review and called it, "The Mothership of Grilled Chicken."

Racial and Social Equity Analysis

On July 15th, 2020 the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission adopted [Resolution No. 1127](#) centering Preservation Planning on racial and social equity. Understanding the benefits, burdens, and opportunities to advance racial and social equity that proposed Preservation Planning documents provide is part of the Department's Racial and Social Equity Initiative. This is also consistent with the Mayor's Citywide Strategic

Initiatives for equity and accountability and with the Office of Racial Equity, which required all Departments to conduct this analysis.

The Legacy Business Program is deeply intertwined with these goals. One of the primary purposes of the Legacy Business Program is to maintain San Francisco's cultural fabric and to foster civic engagement and pride by assisting long-operating businesses remain in the city. The Legacy Business Registry was established to recognize longstanding, community-serving businesses that are valuable cultural assets of the city. These businesses, ranging from restaurants to art galleries to tire shops to community shelters, are key to sustaining the racial and social diversity in San Francisco and adding to the identity and character of our city and the many communities within it.

Il Pollaio is an immigrant, minority, and woman-owned business that contributes to the cultural fabric of San Francisco by providing Italian and Argentinean-inspired food, a friendly atmosphere, and affordable prices. The business is also a member of North Beach Neighbors and the North Beach Business Association and supports community endeavors.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 555 Columbus (1984 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 2859 Mission Street Street (2020-2023)

Recommended by Applicant

- Restaurant featuring reasonably priced Italian and Argentinean inspired cuisine
- Family friendly atmosphere

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. 1356

HEARING DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2023

Case No.: 2023-009851LBR
Business Name: Il Pollaio
Business Address: 555 COLUMBUS AVENUE
Zoning: NCD (NORTH BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL) Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0117/019
Applicant: Maria Castellucci Bautista
555 Columbus Avenue
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Honora Montano - 628-652-7402
Honora.Montano@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR IL POLLAIO CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 555 COLUMBUS AVE, BLOCK/LOT 0117/019.

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 November 15, 2023, 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 IL POLLAIO 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 IL POLLAIO.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

- 555 Columbus (1984 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

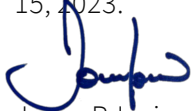
- 2859 Mission Street Street (2020-2023)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Reasonably-priced, family-friendly Italian cuisine

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file to the Office of Small Business on November 15, 2023.



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Campbell, Vergara, Wright, Foley, Nageswaran, Matsuda

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: November 15, 2023